



SALA FEDER

Witness interview report made on 1 December 1947 in accordance with Article 20 of the provisions introducing the Code of Criminal Procedure. The Prosecutor's Office of the District Court in Kraków, this in the person of the Prosecutor of the Supreme National Tribunal, Dr. Mieczysław Szewczyk, and Trainee Judge Jerzy Kotowski (MA). Witness:

Name and surname	Sala Feder
Date and place of birth	2 January 1918, Pilica, Olkusz district
Parents' names	Szlam and Perla, <i>née</i> Rosenblum
Place of residence	Sosnowiec, Prezydenta Bieruta Street 27a, flat 7
Religious affiliation	Jewish
Criminal record	none
Relationship to the parties	none

Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

In August 1943 I was deported together with my family (27 people, including nine children aged from one month to eleven years) from the ghetto in Środula near Sosnowiec to Auschwitz, in a transport numbering some 5,000 people.

At the ramp in Birkneau, the transport was awaited by the defendant Mandl accompanied by SS woman Margot Drechsel, and as soon as the transport had arrived, Mandl carried out a selection, sending approximately 90 percent of the transport to the cars which transported these people to the nearby crematorium. There were about 10 cars, and they had to come back several times to take new victims. This selection was personally supervised by the defendant Mandl, and she made the decision who would be sent to the crematorium. During



these selections, defendant Mandl tortured the prisoners in a cruel way, beating the women, the men and the children with a whip and kicking them blindly. She would tear the children from the arms of their mothers, and when the mothers tried to come near the children and defend them, Mandl would beat the mothers horribly and kick them. I saw – right next to me – a young, 20-year-old mother, who tried to go near her two-year-old child thrown onto the car, and Mandl kicked and beat her so cruelly that she didn't get up any more. She was probably kicked to death, because she didn't give any signs of life and was thus thrown onto a car and taken to the crematorium.

I held my four-year-old child by the hand. The defendant Mandl approached me, tore my child away from me and threw the child onto a still empty car so that the child got wounded in the face and began to cry and call me, but I was put aside to the group that wasn't loaded onto the cars. When I tried to reach the child, crying on the car, Mandl began to beat me so cruelly that I fell. Mandl continued to kick me although I was lying on the ground, and she knocked out almost all of my teeth with her shoe. I was lifted up by the prisoners who helped to load people onto the cars and who sorted our belongings, and I was taken aside and advised to summon all my strength, because otherwise Mandl would send me to the crematorium. From the entire transport, only about 200 people remained at the ramp, all women, while the rest, including my entire family and all the children from the transport, were taken to the crematorium. I was in the group of 200 people; we were marched to the camp, to block 15.

Six weeks later, around 20 September, the defendant Mandl ordered *Blocksperre* [curfew] and carried out a selection. We all had to go outside and strip naked, and Mandl went from block to block and reviewed the women, putting aside those whom she didn't like, that is, those who were thin, emaciated or had some ulcers on their bodies. In my block, 700 women were chosen out of 1,000; in the whole camp (that is, in lager A, where we stayed in the so-called quarantine), Mandl selected several thousand women, and all of them – naked – were crammed into one block no. 25, where they stayed for seven days and nights without food or water. On the night of 27 September, they were transported to the crematorium. For the period of these seven days, we heard horrible screams and groans issuing from that block, and when the women were taken to the crematorium, the block elder, a Slovakian woman named Cyla (who had already been tried in Czechoslovakia), told us that after those seven days there were more corpses than living people in that block, and that almost all of them had bitten fingers and breasts and plucked out eyes. During these seven days, if



any prisoner wanted to carry water or some food to that block, she was arrested there and perished along with the rest. The above-described selection was carried by the defendant Mandl in person, with the help from *kaapos*: Stenia, Leo and Maria, all of them cruel and used to torturing the prisoners in a horrible manner.

For the whole period of my stay in Lager A in the so-called quarantine, the defendant Mandl harassed and tormented us cruelly. For instance, we had to kneel in front of the block for the entire day, or when it was raining, she wouldn't let us enter the block but we had to stand all day in the rain, clinging on to one another because we were very cold.

Once, I "organized" two potatoes for myself, which the defendant Mandl found on me. She gave me a terrible drubbing for that, she ordered that my hair be cut to the skin and I had to kneel for the entire day in front of the gate.

After three months in the quarantine, I was sent to Lager B and I went to work with the 103rd *kommando*, one of the worst: we had to carry heavy stones, pointlessly, from one place to another.

When we were leaving for work, the defendant Mandl received a report at the gate and checked whether any of us wore two pairs of underwear or a sweater, and when she found something like that, she beat the prisoner and ordered her to kneel in front of the gate for the entire day. On Sundays, Mandl organized exercises aimed at achieving total exhaustion of the prisoners; for instance, through carrying stones, squatting, falling to the ground etc., which would last from the morning roll call to two or three in the afternoon. When we came back from these "gymnastics" to the block, all covered in mud, Mandl would storm in only 15 minutes later to check whether we were clean, and when someone had soiled clothes, she had to kneel and, more often than not, receive a beating.

I cannot mention every beating, because the defendant Mandl used to beat the prisoners with a whip and kick them at every opportunity and for no reason whatsoever.

Towards the end of 1944, I was transferred to Auschwitz, from where I fled on 17 January 1945, a day before the evacuation of the camp.

As regards the defendant Brandl, I can testify that she was one of the cruelest *Rapportführers* [report leaders] and a terror of the camp. She beat and tortured the prisoners and tormented



many of them to death. Once, I saw that a young political prisoner, Jasia from Kraków, who was one second late to the roll call, was beaten and kicked to death by Brandl. There were dozens of incidents of this kind.

The defendant Brandl also carried out selections and took every opportunity to harass the prisoners. Once, she found a bone in our block and ordered that the block elder, the room elders, and the entire personnel of that block, 13 women in total, have their hair shaved to the skin; she also beat them and ordered them to kneel for the whole day and finally sent them all to the *Strafkommando* [penal company].

At this point the report was concluded and, after being read out, signed.