

JAN KASZYŃSKI

Warsaw, 29 October 1946. Acting Investigative Judge Halina Wereńko, delegated to the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Warsaw, heard the person named below as a witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Jan Kaszyński, former prisoner no. 4,070 of the Auschwitz camp
Date of birth	19 November 1920 in Warsaw
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Citizenship and nationality	Polish
Marital status	married, with a half-year-old son
Place of residence	Warsaw, Łochowska Street 36, flat 23
Education	secondary
Occupation	Citizens' Militia functionary

On 19 September 1940 between 8.30 a.m. and 9.00 a.m., I was taken by the Gestapo from the house at Łochowska Street 36 in Warsaw. That was a general manhunt. Together with other tenants of that house, I was escorted to a meeting point at Otwocka Street. From there, under the escort of the Gestapo, we were transported in cars to the former riding arena at Szwoleżerów Street.

On site, we were brought by batches into a building which looked like an officers' casino, where the Gestapo officers sat at tables set with cookies and coffee. With the help of translators, they collected our personal data.

Some of the arrestees, who proved their employment at institutions working for the Germans and branch offices of the Municipal Council, were released; and so were adolescents up to seventeen years old. The process of releasing people was chaotic, [led] by a Gestapo officer. It was difficult to force one's way through to him. Sometimes he would tear the documents shown to him without reading them. Moreover, there were instances where men whose documents hadn't been checked by the Gestapo officer joined the group of people to be released, and there were instances of adolescents leaving with the transport that was going to the camp.

I stayed in the riding arena premises from 19 until 21 September, four o'clock. On 20 September 1940, we were arranged into columns in alphabetical order, preparing the transport for departure. While staying at the riding arena, we weren't given anything to drink and I only got a slice of bread to eat. I would like to emphasize that I'd been taken from home without breakfast. There was one tap at the riding arena and people were constantly fighting for water next to it. The more than 2,500 thousand prisoners grouped there, who had no dishes, could not quench their thirst. We spent the night sitting in the hall guarded by Czech SS men with four machine guns. We sat in tight rows on the floor. We weren't allowed to get in touch with our families. The police were warding off the families, threatening the disobedient with shooting and beating them with rifle butts.