

ALFRED WOYCICKI

On 3 October 1946 in Kraków, Investigative Judge Jan Sehn, a member of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, at the spoken request of and in the presence of a member of that Commission, Deputy Prosecutor Edward Pęchalski, in accordance with the provisions of and procedure provided for under Article 4 of the Decree of 10 November 1945 (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland No. 51, item 293), in connection with Articles 254, 107, and 115 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, heard the former prisoner of the Auschwitz concentration camp named below, who testified as follows:

Name and surname	Alfred Woycicki
Date and place of birth	21 June 1906, Lwów
Parents' names	Władysław and Stanisława
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Citizenship and nationality	Polish
Occupation	secretary of the municipal theater
Place of residence	Kraków, [...]

I was arrested on 18 February 1942 in Kraków and, after a short stay in the prison on Montelupich Street, I was sent to Auschwitz in a transport consisting of 62 persons. I arrived on 11 June 1942, and was given the prisoner number 39,247. Initially, I was assigned to work at the Buna factory *Kommando*, but my good friend Adam Koryciński intervened on my behalf and I was moved to the *Erkennungsdienst* [identification service] *Kommando* in the Political Department. The Kapo of this *Kommando* was a German prisoner from Szczecin, a communist by the name of Franz Malz. Like most Kapos he had an unfavorable attitude towards the prisoners and took every opportunity he got to mistreat us. He especially hated the Poles and the Russians. The Political Department was

divided into a number of sections: *Aufnahme* (the admissions office), *Erkennungsdienst* (the identification service, which included fingerprinting and photography), *Standesamt* (the Civil Registry office), and *Vernahmungsabteilung* (the prisoner interrogation section). A man from the Katowice Gestapo unit was also part of this Department, although he didn't report to the chief of the Department but to his own Gestapo superiors. The Gestapo officer was *Reichsdeutsch* [ethnic German] Wosnitza. The chief of the Political Department was *Untersturmführer* Grabner. The interrogation section was staffed by SS-men Boger, Lachmann, Dylewski, Claussen, and others. The *Erkennungsdienst* was led by *Hauptscharführer* Bernard Walter and his deputy was *Unterscharführer* Ernst Hoffmann. The chief of the Aufnahme section was *Unterscharführer* Stark. I don't remember the name of the *Standesamt* chief.

After I arrived at Auschwitz, I met some friends of Tadeusz Lisowski, who was in the camp under this assumed name, but whose real surname was Paulony [Paulone]. He informed me that a Polish military organization operated in the camp; I didn't initially know who the members were. Later, I found out that it was headed by Colonel Gilewicz, the commanding officer of the air force regiment stationed in Lida, who was nicknamed "Gil" [Finch]. His unofficial aide was Henryk Bartosiewicz, an air force officer, and other members of the group included: Major Bończa from the 1st Chevau-léger Regiment, Major Dziama – the commanding officer of the air force academy in Toruń – Captain Kazuba, Bernard Świerczyna, and others. I cannot confirm whether the men I just mentioned held the military posts I listed; that is how they were described to me by other, better informed members of the underground military group. This group aimed to form an organization among the Polish prisoners such that, if conditions ever became favorable, they could stage an uprising and escape from the camp.

Political groups operated in the camp separately from this military group. They included: the Peasant Party movement, the Polish Socialist Party group led by Adam Kuryłowicz, and the nationalist group headed by Mosdorf. Each of these groups operated separately – there was no cooperation and no joint leadership. In the autumn of 1942, a prisoner by the name of Józef Cyrankiewicz arrived in the camp. I knew he was a delegate of the Polish Socialist Party to the Government Delegation for Poland [an agency of the Polish Government in Exile]. I established closer contact with him and I know that he intended to coordinate the activity of all the underground political groups; with that goal in mind, he initiated talks with

the group leaders. There were two goals to be reached: firstly, that the world be informed about happenings in the camp in a consistent, unified manner; secondly, that all camp prisoners – irrespective of nationality, race, or creed – develop trust and support each other, which would undermine the destructive intentions of the camp administration. In the spring of 1943, I managed to ascertain that Cyrankiewicz did, in fact, convince all the political groups in the camp to work together.

The military organization and the political groups didn't initially cooperate or see eye to eye because the military wanted a primarily Polish leadership, while the political group led by Cyrankiewicz was in close contact with German communists who had frequently expressed hate towards Slavs – especially towards the Poles and the Russians. This led to distrust from the members of the military organization, who feared that any plans they devised would not be carried out. In view of this, I facilitated a meeting between Cyrankiewicz and a member of the military group, specifically their liaison Bartosiewicz, and I know that, as a result of that meeting, the two camp factions at least began coordinating some of their plans and activities.

Both the military organization and the political groups maintained rather extensive contact with the outside world, using special liaisons. These people would receive news from the camp by various means and at different times – the communication was, obviously, strictly confidential. Use was made especially of those groups of prisoners who worked outside of the camp, particularly in the town of Auschwitz itself. I do not know if there was any device in the camp that was used to send messages to the outside; however, one way or another, news was circulated so quickly that international radio stations would often report on events from the camp on the following day. The images shown to me on the two pieces of paper are copies of photographs dated 8 September 1944 and signed "Rot" – which I know to be Cyrankiewicz's *nom de guerre*. They list the SS staff of the Auschwitz camp as of that day and they were sent to the outside using liaisons. According to the data, there were then in total 3,342 SS-men on staff in all of Auschwitz (camps I, II and III); that number includes commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers and privates. I know that similar information and other news was sent out from the camp very frequently. For instance, there were cases when original photos of camp apparatus and camp life were sent out. One of those involved photos made by a *Hauptscharführer* whose name I do not know, but who arrived by special order of the RSHA [*Reichssicherheitshauptamt* – The Reich Main Security

Office] and photographed the women's camp in Birkenau. It was in the end of 1943 or in the beginning of 1944. The camp was informed by phone that he would be arriving and we were ordered to facilitate his work in any way he wanted. He made lots of photos in the women's camp and brought the film to the *Erkennungsdienst* on the same day, to be developed and to check if the photos came out right. I have, therefore, seen all of these photographs and to this day I don't understand why they were made, because they were highly disgraceful and incriminating to the camp administration. One of them showed a pile of female bodies with two smiling SS women standing atop, while a male SS officer was raising one corpse's leg and seemed very amused by it. Another showed the women's hospital where the sick lay in complete disarray, a few on each bed, some stark naked and completely emaciated. All the other photos were of a similar sort. I personally spoke to the *Hauptscharführer*, who was very polite to the *Erkennungsdienst* staff and even shared cigarettes with us, and he told me that the photos were intended personally for Himmler. Because I befriended and completely trusted some of the people working in the *Erkennungsdienst*, especially in the photo development section, such as Józef Pysz from Bielsko and the late Władysław Wawrzyniak from Łódź, I managed to get single copies of each of those photos, despite being closely guarded by the SS. I then delivered all of them – along with photos of SS-men obtained in the same way from the Political Department and the Camp Command – to Cyrankiewicz, with the intention that they be smuggled outside. After some time, Cyrankiewicz assured me that the photos had arrived at their destination but would only be used after we were freed. When I asked him about them after we were freed, he first told me they hadn't yet been retrieved from their hiding place and then gave me some other noncommittal answer, so even now I do not know where they are. I had also asked Ms. Teresa Lasocka from Kraków, who had received some of the correspondence from the camp during the occupation, but she too told me she didn't know. By that route we had also sent to the outside original photos made during the gassing and the burning of corpses in pits. These photos were shown to me and are part of the crematorium examination protocol – they are photos nos. 33 and 34. The handwriting on photo no. 35 is Cyrankiewicz's.

I've heard that there were individual cases of prisoners being provided with guns by the resistance, including the smuggling of guns into the camp. They were, however, not common and I definitely do not believe there was any substantial store of prisoner-owned weapons in the camp. My opinion on this seems to be confirmed by what happened in August 1944,

when the *SonderKommandos* that worked the crematoriums wanted to stage an uprising but the military group advised against it on the grounds that the uprising would fail due to being insufficiently armed.

There were also plans to stage a camp-wide uprising when the Soviet offensive against the Nazis started in 1944 but, since it was halted in the summer of 1944, the uprising plan was put on hold until better conditions would arise, i.e., when the Soviet Army would be closer to the camp and the Polish guerillas could assist the prisoners, leading to a successful fight. That plan was, however, never carried out – in the meantime, the Nazis evacuated the prisoners to other camps located in the Reich. The Nazis began shutting down the Auschwitz camp in the summer of 1944. At first they sent out small transports of Czechs and Poles, a couple hundred people each. One of the larger transports – involving only Poles – was sent out on 25 October 1944: 2,000 prisoners were sent to Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald. I too left Auschwitz in that transport. By that time the process of closing down the camp was well on its way and, in particular, nearly all Poles had been sent elsewhere. The only Polish prisoners left in Auschwitz were those who had jobs that would be required in the further process of closure. Besides those, quite a few Poles were left in the hospitals. While this closure process was underway, there was nevertheless talk among prisoners of a possible violent and bloody closure method. Specifically, prisoners were speculating about the so called “Moll Operation”, whereby German planes would bomb the camp but it would be presented to the international community as an Allied bombing. I know that the underground organizations working in the camp sent special dispatches outside, hoping to warn the international community of this.

The main Auschwitz camp had a dedicated canteen for Aryan prisoners where we could initially buy cigarettes, better soup, stationery and toilet paper. Over time fewer things were in stock, until finally they only had toilet paper. Initially, these goods were bought with cash (which we were given monthly, based on money transfers made by our families) and then with coupons; their nominal value would be deducted from the money the prisoner had on account (the account balance was based on the aforementioned transfers).

In the middle of 1943 a brothel was founded on the second story of block 24, i.e. officially in block 24a. I don't know how many women worked there but they were all prisoners and mostly former prostitutes. There were, however, cases when women who had never done

that before went to work there of their own will because they were driven to the edge of death by camp life and hoped that they might save themselves. It was known in the camp that a 17-year-old reported her willingness to work there to Höbller, the commandant of the women's camp, and he showed uncharacteristic decency. He questioned her about it and she told him that she was seventeen, never had intercourse but wanted to save her life and, seeing no alternative, was volunteering for work at the brothel in the hope that her situation would improve and that she would survive. Reportedly, Höbller sent her to a better work *kommando* instead. Another known case involved a man seeing his wife in the window of the brothel when he was returning from work — up until that moment he had no idea his wife had been sent to Auschwitz.

The right to use the brothel was a reward for good work and an incentive to keep working well. Initially, coupons for brothel services were distributed after the evening roll call in front of block 24. At that time, they were given to the prisoners by the *Rapportführer* [reporting officer] of the main camp. However, because this method of distribution led to a great commotion, later on the *Rapportführer* would send the coupons to be distributed by the *Kommandoführers* [*kommando* leaders]. Only Aryan Germans, Poles and Czechs had the right to use the brothel. The visit lasted 15 minutes and was regulated by an SS man who would sound a gong. After the assigned time elapsed, all men had to leave the block. The SS men themselves would also use the brothel in secret, behind the backs of the camp administration. The women from block 24a were given better food and provided medical care, but there were, nevertheless, cases of venereal infections.

Once, block 24a was used to house a newlywed couple on their first night together. An Austrian prisoner named Rudi (whose surname I don't remember) was allowed to marry in the camp as a reward for good behavior. The ceremony — photographed by the SS men — took place in the local Civil Registry Office. His bride, a Spanish woman, was allowed to stay in the camp for the next 24 hours. The brothel women were thrown out and, for that night, the brothel was converted into a space for the newlyweds. The next day the bride left the camp. Rudi, who was a good friend of mine, took part in undercover resistance work and was later hanged for this involvement.

As I testified at the beginning, I arrived in Auschwitz on 11 June 1942. I was assigned to block 11, which was then used to house the punitive unit and the arrivals' quarantine unit.

On 12 June 1942 we were chased into the camp street and were given dinner there, next to the wall separating the men's and women's camps. During dinner I was approached by a prisoner by the name of Kurt Machula, whom I hadn't met before. He told me that he had come as a substitute for Władysław Tempka, the attorney from Katowice who was supposed to contact me. Machula stated that Tempka had just been shot dead in block 11. Since this was just my second day in the camp, I remember this date quite precisely and can therefore say with complete confidence that Tempka was executed in the yard of block 11 on 12 June 1942, between noon and 1 o'clock. It follows that the personal file of Władysław Tempka which I have been shown here, which states that he died on 14 June 1942 of double pneumonia, is falsified. Providing a false cause of death was quite common when mass executions took place. The executed prisoners would be divided up and recorded in the camp documentation over the next few days, to hide the mass murder and give the impression that they died natural deaths.

The report was read out. Thus the hearing and the report were concluded.