



## STANISŁAW KOCZANOWICZ

Twelfth day of trial, 6 December 1947

**President:** Please call the next witness, Stanisław Koczanowicz.

Pursuant to Article 107 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, I advise the witness of the obligation to speak the truth and that making false declarations is punishable by imprisonment of up to five years. Do the parties wish to make any representations concerning the procedure of interviewing the witness?

**Prosecutors:** We want to release the witness from an oath.

**Defense attorneys:** We also wish to release the witness from an oath.

**Witness Stanisław Koczanowicz, 27 years old, student at a university of technology, Roman Catholic, no relationship to the accused parties.**

**President:** I hereby ask the witness to give facts pertaining to the behavior of defendants who are present in the room and whom the witness recognizes.

**Witness:** Since I spent many months in the camp throughout 1943, up until February 1944, and left the camp completely exhausted, I find it difficult to use exact dates, hence, for reference, I'll use longer periods of time such as spring, autumn, and winter.

Among the defendants I recognize Aumeier and Breitwieser.

As far as the treatment of prisoners is concerned, Aumerier, who was the commandant of the camp, was perfectly aware of what it was like. I worked in the *Werkhalle* [factory], where we carried bricks and cement. If, for instance, someone stumbled and fell and the cement sack broke, severe corporal punishment would be inflicted, and as a result, the *kommandos* coming back to the camp from the *Werkhalle* – each *kommando* numbering a hundred prisoners – carried a dozen or several dozen friends, including those already dead and those in their death throes. Since Aumeier was very often present on our marching into the camp, he must have seen that people who had left for work in perfect health were now coming back covered in blood. However, he never enquired into that.

In regards to the defendant Breitwieser, I came across him when I worked in Buna [factory] – it was in May 1944 – as a *Reiniger* [cleaner] in the commandant's office. I had to go to the *Unterkunft* [camp storerooms] to fetch underwear for the SS men and I used to come back from there with other *kommandos*. Then all *kommandos* would be gathered in front of the *Unterkunft* and a search would be carried out. If someone "got" a sheet for a sick friend or a shirt for himself, he was put aside. Breitwieser, who often went to the *Unterkunft*, meted out the punishment himself and beat the prisoners.

Breitwieser was then a deputy head or a head of a department in the *Unterkunft*.

As far as the defendant is concerned, we knew that he was from Lwów, but my friends warned me not to address him in Polish, as it could have unpleasant consequences.

In regards to Aumeier, I won't talk about his general activities. I will describe one particular event. It was in the autumn and there were frosts. The year was 1943. After work in one *kommando*, we heard a fire alarm. We saw the prisoners from the fire brigade run towards the gate. Curious, we gathered in a group of some hundred men between blocks 14 and 15, opposite the entrance gate. At that moment Aumeier sprang at us from the gate, pulled his gun from the holster and began to shoot at the crowd. I don't know how many people were killed and how many wounded for we ran in a frenzy to a barrack.

I would also like to describe what a release from a block after an illness looked like. A selection was to be carried out. The doctor could to some extent conjecture who would be selected. It was in the block for convalescents. I was lying in that block in the spring of 1943 after pneumonia. Then Dr. Kruczek sent me to the camp, although I ran a fever of 39 degrees. I was very happy to have been released. I ran naked from block 19 to block 1. I had a hot bath there. After the bath we had to wait for several hours in front of the block, freezing.

**President:** Are there any questions to the witness?

**Prosecutor Szewczyk:** Did the witness have contact with Breitwieser for a longer period of time?

**Witness:** I was in Buna for two, maybe three months in 1944.

**Prosecutor Szewczyk:** Did the defendant Breitwieser treat all prisoners equally bad? Or was there a difference in the way he treated his own *kommando* and people from the outside?



**Witness:** I don't know exactly what it looked like. Anyway, other prisoners didn't come there.

**Prosecutor Szewczyk:** Can the witness provide any information pertaining to the activities of Breitwieser from another period of time?

**Witness:** No, I cannot.

**President:** Are there any questions to the witness?

**Attorney Czerny:** The witness mentioned a search carried out by the defendant Breitwieser. Did he carry it out in person, or did someone else conduct it?

**Witness:** There were also other SS men who worked with him.

**Attorney Czerny:** Was commandant Schindler among them?

**Witness:** I am unable to say whether he was there or not.

**Attorney Czerny:** Were the searches carried out on a regular basis or only from time to time?

**Witness:** From time to time.

**Attorney Czerny:** Did the defendant Breitwieser mete out the punishments himself?

**Witness:** Yes, he beat prisoners with a stick.

**Attorney Czerny:** Once or more than once?

**Witness:** Many times.

**Attorney Czerny:** Did he beat many prisoners?

**Witness:** That I didn't see.

**President:** Do the defendants wish to make any representations or ask any questions?

**Defendant Aumeier:** I ask permission to ask the witness when the shooting took place during which I allegedly shot at the camp.

**Witness:** There was no shooting; the defendant was shooting alone. He shot towards the camp premises.



**Defendant Aumeier:** When was it?

**Witness:** In the autumn of 1943.

**Defendant Aumeier:** I wasn't present in the camp at the time.

**Witness:** I might be mistaken as to the date, but it was either in spring or in autumn.

**Defendant Aumeier:** There is a huge difference between spring and autumn and a long interval between these two seasons. The witness distinctly said that it was in the autumn of 1943, but I cannot understand why I would shoot. It is a mystery to me.

**Witness:** I made a reservation at the very beginning that I won't use dates but seasons. I remember that the weather was frosty, so it must have been either in early spring or in late autumn.

**Defendant Aumeier:** I have to say that if one were to rely on the testimonies made so far by the witnesses, one would conclude that nothing else was done in Auschwitz but shooting. Imagine what Himmler would say to that! He would have us all executed in a blink.

**Prosecutor Brandys:** Since Aumaier questions the statement made by the witness in file no. 54, page 327, I request that the document where the witness testified that the event took place in the spring of 1943 be read out. Moreover, I can name a witness who had been shot and wounded during the shooting in question. He is Władysław Kozdrój from Rabka.

**Prosecutor Szewczyk:** I would like to answer the defendant Aumaier and remind him that according to the findings of the Supreme Tribunal in the case against Höß, neither Höß nor Himmler held anyone accountable for the fact that three million people perished in Auschwitz.

**Defendant Aumeier:** I have one more question to the witness. Did the witness see from where I took out my gun? I had to take it out from some place if I fired it.

**President:** Does the witness remember that?

**Witness:** Yes, I do remember. I am unable to say on which side of his body he had it, but I know that he pulled it from a holster.



**President:** The witness has answered the defendant that the defendant pulled the gun from a holster. Please read out the requested document.

Trainee Judge Jaślan reads out from file no. 54, page 328, a fragment of the testimony of Stanisław Koczanowicz made on 29 September 1947: "I saw myself how once Aumeier shot at the prisoners for no reason whatsoever. It was some time in the spring of 1943."

**Prosecutor Brandys:** Thank you.