

MIECZYŚŁAW MICHAŁOWICZ

Day 9 of the trial

(Hearing resumed after a break)

Presiding Judge: – I hereby resume the hearing. Call in all remaining unsworn witnesses.

The following witnesses report: Janusz Machnicki, Jankiel Wiernik, Dr. Major Władysław Mazurek, Engineer Jerzy Kawecki, Prof. Mieczysław Michałowicz, Prof. Władysław Szenajch, Dr. Mikołaj Łącki, Konrad Okólski. The witnesses are advised of the criminal liability [for false testimony] and sworn in.

Witness Mieczysław Michałowicz remains in the courtroom. Aged 70, residing in Warsaw at Litewska Street 16, professor at the University of Warsaw, physician, unrelated to the parties.

Presiding Judge: – Please inform the Tribunal what you know in the case.

Witness: – In order to structure my testimony, I will tell you what perspective I shall take. It is one of a physician, who was active under the occupation, and one of a professor.

When it comes to a physician's perspective, the situation was extremely difficult, as one was unable to practice the profession as well as to perform the honorable duty of teaching future doctors that we as physicians have.

I have been the director of the University of Warsaw Children's Clinic for 25 years. The very first disposition regarding the premises of the hospital was a statement by Dr. Schrempf that any teaching activity is as of now forbidden, as he put it, and, perhaps a with a touch of exaggeration, punishable by death. Therefore, no academic gathering was allowed: 'should I come across an academic gathering of any sort, I will start shooting'. However, we did not cease to teach. We carried on, having laid out patients' records on the table to make it look like a purely administrative enterprise. Thus we managed to survive these times. It goes without saying that receiving subscriptions to any magazine and keeping up to date with academia in Poland and worldwide were impossible. The same went for instructing young doctors and the staff of health professionals. When visiting, Dr. Schrempf demanded to see

staff registers laid out in writing. Whenever he met someone passing by, he would ask them to present credentials. If they were not employed permanently, dire consequences would ensue, he threatened.

Therefore, what is called contributing to academia would have been thoroughly eliminated had we adhered to the regulations. The elimination did go ahead, though. After I was detained on 10 November 1942, I was thrown into a cell in the Pawiak prison. There I met Drewnowski, rector of the University of Technology, Rev. Archutowski, rector of the Seminary, and other numerous eminent figures, Poland's brain in a word. Out of 28 detained in that cell, four have survived. It must be said that *eine Aktion* [AB-Aktion], as it was called, resulted in the death of 46 percent of University of Warsaw professors. Certain faculties, for instance the Faculty of Law, were nearly wholly liquidated.

I have spoken broadly, now let me refer to a minor detail. Rector Rev. Archutowski was wearing clerical clothing. It was enough pretext to be maltreated and severely beaten. After he was thrown back into our cell, his cellmates wanted to sympathize with him as well as show him respect. Therefore, they approached him, trying to calm him down, some of them kissed his hands, etc. Suddenly the door opens, and an SS guard storms into the cell. He beats us all. Then, he commands that the reverend's clothes be ripped off and then put on Bombel, who was a Jew. So he does this, makes him stand up and orders us to jump around him and kiss his hands, until we almost passed out. This is how basic human emotions were mocked.

As regards the food, twice a day we were given dirty water, incredibly stinky, with rotten rutabaga floating in it. From time [to time] it included some potato shreds. They would dissolve and disappear.

This was all we got. Under such circumstances, I lost 9 kilograms within 12 days. Every day, each one of us lost three fourths [of a kilogram] of weight. If some, like myself, were able to endure it, it was thanks to their health, others took it worse. By the end of that period, they were mere bags of water, no more. What I want to say is that all vital substances that produce water and distribute it throughout one's body were leached. There were emaciated people, with swollen limbs, bags under eyes and severe avitaminosis. Only those who were admitted to the hospital, where Polish doctors shared their food, trying to nourish them, managed to survive. The extermination [of the intelligentsia] would have been completed far

earlier, if it had not been for Poland's Red Cross and the prisoners' welfare committee, which added another loaf of bread.

It must be taken into account that these are merely mild fragments so to speak, which at that point had not yielded the desired effect of extermination yet. Right in front of me, professor Kopeć was executed. It was carried out so swiftly that there was no question of any trial or even procedure of any sort. Then it was professor Zakrzewski and many others.

There was another torture in our cell. Namely, only once a day were the detained escorted out, and that was at a gallop. There was only one bowl for excrements, for which about 40 or 50 men queued. Our return was also carried out hurriedly. The Germans screamed *schneller, schneller*, chasing the detainees to one side or the other and then meting out lashes.

These are merely fragments. Fragments of plans and of their being put into action.

Presiding Judge: – What happened with the children's clinic?

Witness: – The clinic was described by professor [no name in the document] as *eine Oaze, eine Perle*. After a few months we were told that such a *Perle* is not for Polish children, that such a *Perle* is only for German kids. The clinic was thus forcefully evacuated to the Baumans and Bersons Hospital [Szpital Bersohnów i Baumanów], a Jewish hospital. The clinic was used solely for the needs of German kids and *Volksdeuschers*. Once we returned, there were bare walls, nothing more. To such an extent that even entire drawers were taken out of desks.

As regards the very heart of the clinic, which is a scientific institution, all Polish books were burned and thrown away. They stoked furnaces with them. Books in foreign languages were taken away to Germany. The apparatus, expensive machinery, labs, all disappeared. So much so that still today we are unable to begin scientific work as we are lacking the simplest objects like scales, etc. Interestingly, the defendant Fisher took one scale. Others followed suit, taking away newborn scales. So whenever someone from the General Government arrived, we knew that joy had befallen some family, that a new citizen of the Reich had come into the world. This was a fair indicator of the birth rate.

Presiding Judge: – Have you ever seen the defendant Fischer in person?

Witness : – No.

Presiding Judge: – Was it made known to you why you were detained?

Witness : – No.

Presiding Judge: – Had you been interrogated?

Witness : – Yes.

Presiding Judge: – What were the charges?

Witness : – They were very imprecise.

Presiding Judge: – Were you made to account for any crime?

Witness : – No.

Presiding Judge: – Was it made known to you why you were later transferred to a concentration camp?

Witness : – Absolutely not.

Presiding Judge: – No sentence was pronounced?

Witness : – No, no sentence.

Presiding Judge: – What about your cellmates? Were there any charges made against them? Any pronounced sentences?

Witness : – There was no question of sentences. It was not according to the custom. No one whatsoever, out of 28 [people] detained in that cell, was put on trial.

Attorney Śliwowski: – Professor, when did you come in contact with Dr. Schrempf?

Witness : – Straight away, within a few hours following the capitulation.

Attorney Śliwowski: – That is in October 1939?

Witness : – Three orderly days lapsed, I believe, between the capitulation and the entering of the German troops.

Attorney Śliwowski: – Is it known to you in what capacity Dr. Schrempf arrived in the hospital?

Witness : – As *Distrikt Arzt*. I remember it precisely, because every day I was obliged to write correspondence, reports and, on each such occasion, address him as *Distrikt Arzt*.

Attorney Śliwowski: – Did this *Distrikt Arzt*, as the term seems to suggest, report to any administration authority? If so, was it the municipal or district one?

Witness : – Initially he resided in the Brühl Palace, then in the municipal building.

Attorney Węgliński: – Therefore, am I correct to suggest that according to what you have stated Dr. Schrempp reported to the district, as his title suggests?

Witness: – Since *Distrikt Arzt* was an official title, I deem it logical that he reported to the district.

Presiding Judge: – Were district authorities concerned about the provisions?

Witness: – The provisions were highly modest. Accordingly, regarding the intake of calories, our needs were supplied only partially. That is, at least according to the research conducted by an expert in the field, Dr. Vieweger, professor of physiology, Rector of the Free Polish University. Having devoted plenty of time to it, he estimated that it was 1,800 calories instead of 2,400 for adults. This was, of course, proportionate to body weight, therefore readily calculable for children as well. If it did not mean death by starvation, it was only thanks to private initiative, social charity and Polish municipal authorities, which tried to help and to intervene in a not-quite-legal way.

Prosecutor Siewierski: – In relation to the last statement by the witness, I wish to submit to the Supreme Tribunal an official German publication from 1942, entitled *Wytyczne dla Żywienia Chorych w GG* [Guidelines for Nutrition of the Sick in GG]. I only wish to make a brief statement regarding this publication. It is obvious that nutrition depended strictly on one's ethnicity or race. Physicians decided who was considered German and who was not. It was published in 1942, that is, at a point when attention was no longer being paid to Jewish hospitals, as the extermination of Jewish inhabitants of the GG was in full swing. I solely wish to emphasize that page 8 includes a detailed table on the nutrition of sick Germans, while page 31 deals with the nutrition of sick Poles. It goes without saying that recommended rations for Poles are considerably lower than the ones for Germans. For instance, it advises 30 grams of meat for Germans and 20 grams for Poles; half a liter of milk for Germans

and 0,2 liter for Poles, etc. It also goes without saying that a typically neutral indication to a doctor 'not to give too much to patients' takes on especially ironic meaning against that background. Another sentence, highly revealing, regarding some special patients' treatment: 'According to the present guidelines, asylums for the insane, shelters for the blind or other handicapped people or other institutions of that ilk are not considered hospitals. The patients and the staff of such institutions are entitled to non-German food rations'. This means that mental asylums and shelters for the blind and for the handicapped were not even entitled to this minimum ration that other hospitals enjoyed.

Defendant Fischer: – I wish to ask the witness if he was informed that I intervened on his behalf after he was detained?

Witness: – Yes. My granddaughter, then a little girl, aged ten, no more, had submitted an application. She received an answer from the governor's office stating that this dossier had already been submitted to an office, which did not report to you, Mr. Governor.

Defendant Fischer: – I intervened in relation to another case. On the Polish side, there were many requests that I intervene in on your behalf, Professor. I did so, very energetically, with the Gestapo. Personally with Mr. Hahn to be precise. However, the Gestapo informed me that the release was not possible, because you were a member of the resistance, Professor.

Presiding Judge: – Had you known about this intervention, Professor?

Witness: – No, I did not have any knowledge of it.

Due to the lack of further questions, the witness is excused.