

## ADAM PANASIEWICZ

On 26 August 1947 in Warsaw, a member of the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, Acting Judge Halina Wereńko, heard the person named below as an unsworn witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the obligation to tell the truth, the witness testified as follows:

---

Name and surname	Adam Panasiewicz, former prisoner of the concentration camp in Majdanek
Parents' names	Jan and Kazimiera, née Zachoiasiewicz
Date of birth	23 March 1898, Krystynopol, Lwowskie voivodeship
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Place of residence	Warsaw, Daszyńskiego Street 12
Nationality and citizenship	Polish
Education	secondary
Occupation	radio manager at the <i>Czytelnik</i> cooperative

---

From 17 January 1943 until 22 July 1944, I was a prisoner of the concentration camp in Majdanek. I spent about six months, with breaks, working at the administrative office of the third field and of the camp. Erich Muhsfeldt was the camp's crematorium *Kommandoführer*. I often met him when he came to the administrative office on official business, always carrying a whip.

It is difficult to recognize Muhsfeldt in the photograph shown to me. (The witness was shown a photograph captioned "Erich Muhsfeldt," sent with the letter from 7 August 1947, no. 779/47 from the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Łódź).

Muhsfeldt was obese, and he looks gaunt in the photograph. He is so changed that I could only recognize him in person. I don't know when exactly Muhsfeldt arrived at the camp, but I do remember that he left two or three months before the camp in Majdanek was liquidated, that is, before 22 [July] 1944. *Unterscharführer* Wend became his deputy.

I didn't see Muhsfeldt's criminal acts in person, I only know them from what the prisoners of the crematorium *kommando* told me. No prisoners from that *kommando* remained alive. It was common practice at all camps that the crematorium *kommando* workers were treated better: they were well fed and received a liter of vodka every day, but they lived for six months at most, then they were sent to be killed at another camp.

Thus, in the spring of 1944 in Majdanek, 20 Jews from the crematorium *kommando* in Auschwitz were murdered, and one month later, the Lublin *kommando* from Majdanek was killed in Auschwitz.

It was commonly known at the camp that Muhsfeldt shot the prisoners himself, and he himself threw Jewish children into the gas chamber and performed selections among the chosen prisoners, sending them to the gas chamber.

Working at the administrative office, I knew that Muhsfeldt wasn't obligated to commit these murders due to his function, as the [duties] of his *kommando* only included burning the corpses. Up until the fall of 1943, in the old crematorium and then in the new one with five furnaces, Muhsfeldt murdered people in person.

Muhsfeldt directed the extermination of 18,200 or 18,300 Jews from Majdanek and the surrounding camps, performed on 3 November 1943 on the sixth field. Two weeks before the extermination, trenches were dug in the sixth field. One day before the execution, loudspeakers were installed and extremely loud tractors were brought to the fifth field. On 3 November 1943, after the morning roll call, the Jews were led to the sixth field, near the crematorium. They were told to lay their clothes on a pile, then – naked – they were herded to the trenches, where they were told to lie down. They were shot and then showered with hand grenades. The next groups walked onto the corpses lying in blood, and the next groups carried the corpses onto a pile and then lay down to die. For two days before the massacre of the Jews, Muhsfeldt didn't show himself at the camp, making preparations. After the execution, his *kommando* burned the corpses for two weeks.

In March or April 1943, Muhsfeldt, along with several SS officers, performed a selection, choosing over a hundred Polish prisoners from block 19 that were to go to the gas chamber. That was the first and the only batch of Poles sent to the gas chambers, because, as I suppose, Berlin forbade further selections among Poles.

Further information about Muhsfeldt's acts can be given by the following persons:

1) Engineer Jan Zakrzewski (residing in Dąbrowa Górnicza, Piłsudskiego Street 17), who was the manager of the administrative office at the camp, and who kept bringing registers for Muhsfeldt;

2) Edward Karabanik (residing in Bytom, Witczyki Street 51, flat 4), former *kapo* of the camp in Majdanek, nevertheless a good Pole;

A lot of material could be contributed by the doctors, who were present at the selection or at the death of prisoners who were shot, for example:

3) Dr. Henryk Wieliczański (residing in Łódź, Piotrkowska Street 152), he was present on the fifth field during the extermination of the Jews on the sixth field;

4) Dr. Romuald Sztaba (residing in Dąbrowa Górnicza, Sienkiewicza Street 15);

5) Dr. Piotr Matera (residing in Radom, 3 Maja Street 6);

6) Dr. Kopczyński (residing in Gdańsk, Social Insurance);

7) Dr. Konopko (Ministry of Health);

8) Dr. Nowak from Warsaw;

and other prisoners, such as:

9) Andrzej Stanisławski from PAP [Polish Press Agency] in Poznań;

10) Józef Olszański (residing in Łódź, Legionów Street 25, flat 48), who was the first manager of the main administrative office at the camp; he was in possession of reports and registers;

11) Jerzy Nowak from Białystok (Okopowa Street 52).

At this the report was concluded and read out.