

## JAKUB PENSON

### The ninth day of the trial

**Presiding Judge:** – Defendant can make a statement at every stage of the trial. May I call the witness, doctor Jakub Penson.

**Witness Jakub Penson, 47 years old, a physician; place of residence: Łódź; relationship to the parties: none; by the parties' mutual agreement he testifies without an oath.**

**Presiding Judge:** – Please present to the Tribunal, precisely but not wordily, everything you know about this case.

**Witness:** – As a chief physician of infectious diseases in the hospital in Czyste, where I was working for the whole period of the ghetto's existence, that is, from September to July 1942, I had an opportunity to watch, observe and have contact with the work of the medical administration – first of all in the sanitary field, during the epidemic, and generally during work. Actually, during sham-cooperation between the German sanitary apparatus, which was subject to Governor Fischer, and the Jewish medical world, which was active in the area known as the Jewish quarter.

**Presiding Judge:** – Was it a unit of the district?

**Witness:** – Yes, it was a civil authority. It was called *Gesundheitsamt* [Health Department]. I will start from September 1939. The hospital in Czyste, the biggest hospital in Poland, was intended for injured soldiers and civilians from Wola [a quarter in western Warsaw] and its surroundings. It was filled to the brim with the badly wounded. Amid blasts of bombs, which fortunately damaged only some hospital buildings, and not the most important ones, we were working day and night, and the German occupation caught us during our work. The military operations of 1939 damaged the sewage system in Warsaw and, almost immediately, this caused an outbreak of typhoid epidemic at the end of September and in October. In connection with that epidemic, for the first time, we had an opportunity to experience German culture, this time in the sanitary segment. One day a long string of sanitary ambulances pulled up to the hospital and started to take away all the wounded, soldiers and civilians, from the hospital grounds. It was the end of September. We didn't know what was

going on, but the chauffeurs explained it to us. That was the time when doctor Schrempf, an SS-man, was appointed the sanitary physician of Warsaw, and his first ordinance ran as follows: Jews can't be treated in Aryan hospitals, Aryans can't be treated in Jewish hospitals, Jews are not allowed to treat Aryans, and likewise the other way round. In connection with that ordinance, which was supposed to be executed within 24 hours, all wounded Aryan soldiers and civilians had to be evacuated. Indeed, it was carried out instantly – like the Germans do. Almost all the soldiers took their blankets with them, and, while taking away the injured, the Germans also took almost all the underclothing and bedclothes from the hospital. Needless to say, the hospital was in bad sanitary condition, filled to the brim with wounded people. There was no underclothing or bedclothes.

**Presiding Judge:** – How many beds were in the hospital?

**Witness:** – Before the war it was designed for 1,200 permanent beds, and at that time we had 2,500 patients. Just after the patients were evacuated, the same ambulances started to bring in the sick Jews from all the municipal hospitals. Of course, the drivers were ordered to deliver the patients to the hospital and they weren't concerned if we had free beds. All patients were laid on the ground in the hospital yard. It was a mix of sick people: typhus, tuberculosis, and all the other patients they could find. They were all brought together, tossed onto the lawn and left there at the mercy of fate. At the same time, Schrempf's ordinance said that the Jewish hospital, which was a municipal hospital under municipal guardianship, is no longer a municipal hospital, but it belongs to the Jewish Community, so the municipal authorities don't have the right to provide it with food or coal. We were completely helpless. There were many more patients than the hospital could accommodate, we were short of bedclothes, underclothing, water, food and coal. In these conditions, the patients were lying on the floors and in the attics, which was of course better than lying on the bare ground in the autumn cold. It's easy to comprehend that most of those patients died, because they weren't provided with normal sanitary conditions.

This was our first experience with doctor Schrempf. However, bit by bit, thanks to the fact that we had water again and the epidemic wasn't that big, the disease quickly faded out. Because new patients coming in weren't that numerous and were only Jews, we managed to get the situation under control within several weeks. Partly because we divided the patients into those with infectious diseases and those with internal diseases, gradually by

December the epidemic had almost completely faded out. Here begins a new period, in my opinion a very important one, which casts light on the actions of both the German sanitary authorities and administrative authorities. Namely, the issue of typhus, which was discussed here yesterday. Actually, it was the bugbear of the typhoid epidemic, which was probably defendant Fischer's main and only argument on which he based the necessity of creating the closed ghetto.

I would like to say a few words about that. First of all, how did the problem of typhus look in Poland before the war? It was very rare condition before war. It appeared only endemically not epidemically, only in small concentrations in the East, especially in Podlasie [region in the north-eastern part of Poland]. In Warsaw it appeared very rarely. It is enough to say that while working for several years in the hospital in Czyste, the biggest hospital in Poland, I saw only two cases of typhus. Meanwhile, at the end of December and at the beginning of January 1940, a wave of Jews, brutally thrown out from the territories incorporated into the Third Reich, that is from Łódź, Kalisz, Piotrków and many other cities and towns, was coming to Warsaw. Generally, they were making their way to Warsaw. We were trying to understand why here – mainly because they had family here, and because they were looking for support from the great number of Jews who lived in Warsaw. They thought that they would find protection here. Unfortunately, it was the time when the unprepared Jewish Community had to take management over this large group of people. What's more they were scattered over the whole city. There was no means to control the tens of thousands of people who came here battered, emaciated, dirty and lice-ridden. They were lice-ridden because these people were kept in transports from nearby cities, let's say from Łódź to Warsaw, for weeks. The transport was carried out like this: people were closed in the rail wagons and transported near Brześć, there the rail wagons stood for weeks on a side-track, and so clean people, let's say intellectuals, came here dirty and lice-ridden. The whole mass was directed to places called points for the homeless which were situated in movie theatres, schools, factory halls. Thus, no wonder the Community couldn't get the situation under control. Then, the first typhoid epidemic broke out. I would like to remind you that it was at the beginning of January 1940.

The epidemic lasted exactly until May 1940. Eight thousand people suffered from this illness, and almost one hundred percent of them were people from the points, so they weren't the Jews who lived in Warsaw, but only those from the points for the homeless.

The hospital was still in its pre-war location, and it made it quite easy to bring the epidemic under control. The sick from the points were directed to the hospital, all wards were turned into infectious diseases wards. In this way, the epidemic was subdued by April 1940, and after that only individual cases of the disease appeared.

And I would like the Tribunal to remember that from April 1940, that is through spring, summer and autumn 1940, and winter 1941, in the Jewish quarter (at the end of 1940 the Jewish quarter was formed) in Warsaw there was no typhoid epidemic. There were only its individual cases.

In spring 1940, when the epidemic had completely subsided, and when there were no new waves of so-called refugees from the Third Reich, the situation was under control – then, in the German press, a huge propaganda farce began. That is what defendant Fischer was talking about. In the tabloid "Nowy Kurier Warszawski" ["New Courier of Warsaw", a German propaganda newspaper], in "Warschauer Zeitung" and in "Krakauer Zeitung" numerous articles were published. They were written in this German style: very wordy, based on numbers and diagrams, supported with quotes from physicians of great reputation, for example professors Kudicke, Lamprecht, Schrempf, and others. The articles were saying that the Jews are carriers of typhus, but when they suffer from the disease, the symptoms are very light and it rarely ends with death. On the other hand, the Aryans are very sensitive and non-immune to it, and if, God forbid, this hazardous illness breaks out among them, they will be in grave danger. The titles of those articles were as follows: "Great danger for the Aryan world", "We should separate ourselves from the devilish Jews", "*Satanjuden*". It was the devil's work that the Jews suffered very lightly from the disease, and the noble Aryans were in mortal danger. That was the stereotypical content of those articles published in the press.

Apart from that, large posters were put up in Warsaw. There was this enormous poster with a picture of a ghastly Jew and gigantic louse, and in big lettering next to it: "Jews, lice, typhus". Besides, there were propaganda movies, but I didn't watch them. Although they were shown even to school children.

Finally, at some places in the city which were most frequently inhabited by the Jews, actually, on the borders of those areas, the barbed-wire entanglements appeared, together with boards saying: *Seuchengefahr, Durchgang verboten – nur Durchfahrt* [Epidemiological Risk, No Passage – Transit only]. They were placed on the corner of Złota Street, Sienna Street,

etc., in an area which was much smaller than the area initially marked out by the barbed-wire entanglements and boards.

We couldn't understand what the meaning of all that was. I repeat, the typhoid epidemic had been already subdued, there hadn't been patients suffering from it in the hospital in Czyste. At that time a conversation between doctor Schrempf and doctor Hagen had occurred. Doctor Schrempf was claiming that there is no typhoid epidemic anymore and that he deserves the credit for that. And then, this propaganda farce about the danger of typhus was unleashed.

Around that time, a certain incident occurred. It gives evidence that even in the sanitary field of the hospital, where, it seems, life should go calmly and undisturbed, the German sadism, brutality and cruelty appeared. Doctor Schrempf suddenly called us in and demanded a report concerning the number of the patients. The report was delivered with a number of twenty-one patients. When it was checked, it turned out that there were twenty-four of them. Then, doctor Schrempf rushed in the patient room shouting that he would kill all physicians for that report. He grabbed a 75-years-old chief physician, Doctor Rotszadt, the pharmacist and the hospital quartermaster, and ordered them to be taken into custody, where they were kept for eight days and freed only because of an intercession. They were stripped naked and beaten up two times a day, and they were treated horribly.

This is how German scholars' scientific justification looks. They harnessed themselves to Hitler's chariot, and they were blown away and pushed down to the bottom of moral degradation.

I can say with some satisfaction, that there was only one true German physician among all the others that I've met. He was an anatomical pathologist from Hamburg, and he was performing post-mortem examinations of the patients who died of typhus, because he was interested in pathological changes in the brain taking place during this illness. He was talking with us properly, greeting us, and when he got sick, he called us in to examine him. We told him that we couldn't treat Aryans. He was so upset about this, that he started to circle around the room rapidly, shouting that he didn't know what was happening here.

In November 1940 there was no typhoid epidemic. If defendant Fischer claims that during this time a major typhoid epidemic broke out, and that's why he created the ghetto,

I declare, and I remember it perfectly because it has left a firm imprint on my memory, that it is a brazen lie and in that time there was no typhoid epidemic.

After the ghetto was formed, the hospital in Czyste was outside its area.

After the ghetto was closed, a new period began, which was inevitably leading towards the outbreak of a major typhoid epidemic. The events were unfolding fast and taking place very quickly. Within improbable limits, more and more people were packed into the ghetto in two ways. Firstly, by a constant trimming of the quarter – more and more streets were excluded from the ghetto, for example Sienna Street or others. Secondly, by bringing in the Jewish masses from the whole district, from towns like Żyrardów or Grodzisko, and announcing in the press that they were *Judenfrei*. The enormous masses were thrown into the closed ghetto. People were going on foot, by carts or by trams. Every week there were five or ten thousand of them. Inevitably, it had to lead to an epidemic outbreak.

It has to be said that the spectre of hunger hung over the closed ghetto, because the rations amounted to ten percent of nutritional requirements, but they were low value elements like potatoes or groats, not proteins, fats and vitamins. A lot of people became part of an unproductive mass, because their work places had been taken away from them. They were living from hand to mouth and waiting for a miracle. Hunger was almighty God on these terrible streets.

The contraband market was expanding, there were partnerships within the walls and outside them which were working very well and were very dedicated, but no contraband could satisfy the lack of ninety percent of nutritional requirements. What's more, it was the rich people who benefited from the contraband.

Yesterday, defendant Fischer was arguing that he wanted to industrialize the ghetto, to create manufacturing plants, workshops and factories. But let me recollect some interesting ordinances. When the ghetto was created, there was Fischer's order saying that only the unemployed should relocate, because workshops, factories and craftsmen would have a special area. However, on 15 November new orders appeared, one saying that nobody is allowed to leave the ghetto, and also Fischer's order saying that all workshops outside the ghetto are subjected to confiscation. It would have been much simpler to let those people take their workshops than to confiscate them, and later try to create them from scratch.

The sanitary conditions were getting more and more awful, there were more beggars on the streets, people were collapsing and dying of starvation, there were dead bodies of children and adults covered with paper which was weighted down with bricks so the wind wouldn't blow it off. This is what death looked like on the ghetto streets in 1940.

While doing autopsies of the dead, nobody could see adipose tissue. Even with patients who died of malignant diseases, like cancer or tuberculosis, we always found some adipose tissue. However, here we couldn't see any. The first time we saw adipose tissue in the autopsy room was when we were performing the autopsies of Jews brought from the west, who, after being thrown into the ghetto, quickly became infected and died.

American researchers, who like doing experiments, conduct their research studies creating little ghettos – mouse or rabbit towns – and observing the development of infectious diseases in those towns. That is, they infect a town with a disease and throw in some uninfected specimens or they throw some infected specimens into an uninfected town. The German administration did similar experiment on a human mass of 400,000 people that were closed and packed within an unbelievably small space, deprived of undergarments, soap or the chance to earn money. Into this mass, new uninfected groups were thrown in. Needless to say, it had to end with a major typhoid epidemic. It wasn't in autumn of 1940 but at the end of June or in July of 1941.

Not until July 1941 did the second enormous typhoid epidemic in Warsaw break out, so it was more than six months after the ghetto was formed.

We couldn't get this second epidemic under control and it lasted until April 1942, so it was ten months. The plague was violent, 100,000 people suffered from it, which was  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the whole population. It was more malignant than the first one. Previously, the death rate was about ten percent, so 800 from 8,000 cases ended in death. This time, the death rate was twenty-five percent, so from those 100,000 people, 25,000 died.

The timing of epidemic outbreak was highly unfavorable for fighting it, because the hospital in Czyste was outside the ghetto and we had to go there with special permits issued by doctor Schrempf. The way from the Jewish quarter led through the Aryan quarter, so we were vulnerable to the German soldiers' harassment.

Military policemen were the worst. They were amusing themselves by catching the physicians who had to go through the Aryan quarter with bands on their arms and

identity cards in their hands, and ordering them to pick up bricks or rocks and do gymnastic exercises.

This was the kind of entertainment we provided when we got off the tram that was bringing us to work. Nevertheless, everyone was coming to work – many of us were beaten up or bruised, but we always came. While it was in Czyste, the work conditions in the hospital itself were good and the building was well organized. During the first months after the ghetto was formed, that is in February 1941, the order came to transfer the hospital into the Jewish quarter. Instead of the big hospital, we received two buildings, one at Stawki Street and the second one at Leszno Street. We had to accommodate ourselves in places which were completely unprepared for hospital purposes. The transportation of hospital property was not an easy task. Doctor Schrempp assured us that we could take everything, but at every exit there was a military policeman who could inspect us and take whatever he wanted. The famous German discipline concerning Jewish issues didn't apply here. Everyone could do as they pleased. After several days' experience, it came to be that we were transporting more valuable things, like instruments or microscopes, in the coffins together with dead bodies. We had to transfer them somehow to the new hospital quarters. No wonder that, in these work conditions, the second major epidemic that broke out caught us unprepared in the new buildings. The work conditions were terrible, we didn't have the space to lay the patients out. In the best cases there were two or three of them in one bed. All corridors were full, the whole hospital was heavily contaminated. We couldn't do anything about it. No wonder that in these conditions the whole hospital staff got infected. In that time, we lost a dozen or so physicians and several dozen nurses and hospital workers who died because of typhus.

**Presiding Judge:** – Doctor, could you, please, tell us something about the consequences of under-nutrition? Did you notice any rapid increase concerning pulmonary diseases?

**Witness:** – I will talk about it in a moment.

Now, I would like to say a few words about the German fight with typhus. How did the German administration fight with this disease in the Jewish quarter? As always with the Germans, it was only keeping up appearances. They were masking their real goal, which was to get people killed in the highest possible numbers. Under the pretence of a fight, they were working, which was a parody. And it could sound weird, but this fight led by the German administration was even worse than the typhoid epidemic itself. Because typhus, even



during the second epidemic, killed one in four people, but  $\frac{3}{4}$  came back to health. The fight was conducted in this way: if there was a case of typhus in a house, the sick person had to go to the hospital. The people responsible for that were the patients themselves, their family and the physician, but there was no place in the hospital. It was terrible, but the patient had to go to the hospital. For months, we were struggling with doctor Hagen, and finally convinced him that if a patient had a clean room, he or she should stay at home. Finally, he agreed to that. The whole house and two neighboring houses were closed by police order for the period of several weeks. All the people from this house had to go to the baths and for disinfection. And here we had the parody of fighting with the epidemic. You see, in the whole Jewish quarter the maximum number of people who could be bathed during one day amounted one or two thousand. And they ordered five to ten thousand people to those baths. So crowds were standing in the lines for days, and what was worse, the clean together with the dirty. The clean people got infected and lice-ridden, and this is how the epidemic really spread.

Why was it necessary? So that *Ober Desinfektor Braun*, who had the whole Jewish quarter under his jurisdiction, could make a profit. He created a disinfection column with Germans, Poles and Jews. The only thing he did was take bribes, he was never doing anything else and it was his main occupation. When they came to a typhus-stricken house, they said that all things had to be disinfected, that the compartments had to be made. They never chose poor flats, only the richest ones, which had been clean. If they got the bribe, they made a libation on the spot, and if not, they brought dirty rags and this clean flat got lice-ridden. They also threatened that they would make such a disinfection that everything would be ruined, and all things were precious at that time. So these were two ways of fighting.

The third method was a quarantine warrant, which meant if there was a typhus-stricken apartment, all residents of the flat had to be quarantined for several weeks. This is possible if an epidemic is small, but when it is major like this one was, the whole quarter should be quarantined, because there were no flat or houses without typhus. And this was again the source of bribes and abuses. The Germans didn't do anything more to contain the epidemic. In this way 25,000 people died in the second epidemic.

But one would be mistaken in thinking that the main cause of death in the Jewish quarter was typhus. No, the main reasons for the increased death rate were starvation and

tuberculosis. We could see the pathology of starvation in such enormous size, that probably only the physicians in the concentration camps could see this on a similar scale. Because the Jewish quarter was actually one big concentration camp. There were two types of starvation diseases: the unfortunates were either swelled because of hunger and changed into big bulbs filled with fluid, or they were half-dead skeletons. So they either became awfully thin or they had colossal hunger swelling. Both forms led to an inevitable death. The typhoid epidemic faded out in April 1942, and it faded out inherently because that's the fate of all epidemics. Despite of worsening conditions – the filth and lousiness were getting worse and worse – it died out because that's the law of nature. When a part of a population suffers from a disease, the epidemic fades out, it gets less mordant and it dies out. So the epidemic faded out inherently, but the whole hospital was filled with the unfortunate hunger-sick people. And we were completely helpless, because hunger can be treated only with appropriate nutrition. Most importantly it should contain proteins, fats and vitamins, and we had groats, poor bread and potatoes. If a hungry person who is swelled eats only groats, it makes him of her swell even more and die even faster.

Next to that, tuberculosis was spreading alarmingly. It is a disease in which the most important thing is to increase the organism's immunity. It's obvious that an undernourished and starved organism can't defend itself against the illness. The disease concerned especially children, who were dying in masses because of tuberculosis. And again, another interesting thing is that this tuberculosis had a very different course than the one before the war or the ghetto. It was like an acute infectious disease, like pneumonia, and it put an end to life during several days or weeks. We didn't see chronic tuberculosis, and if we did, it was very rarely.

There were German excursions to the Jewish quarter to show them this new Europe, and there were excursions to the hospital. Almost every week, beautiful buses filled with German physicians, who usually were fresh graduates of medicine, arrived at the hospital. They were guided by older physicians, very often from the General Government administration. These tour groups asked us to demonstrate to them typhus, and if there weren't any typhus cases, they asked us to show them starvation and the course of starvation pathology. There were plenty of those tours and plenty of physicians. They were turning the poor patients from side to side and asking, usually us not them, substantial questions, like: "How long do you have to starve to bring yourself to that state?" or "How many days before this kid dies?" Those

were the questions our German colleagues were asking us, but none of them, not even once, asked why those people didn't have anything to eat. There was no such issue. None of them asked if they could help in some way or if they could arrange some food for us. There were no such questions from the German physicians.

Speaking of the outbreak of the typhoid epidemic, a vivid example were places called work camps organized in the Warsaw district by the labor office – *Arbeitsamt*. As always, it started with snide and brazen lies. In the same way that civilian clerks were turning to the community, a German physician was turning to the hospital saying: "We have to organize camps in which young people will be trained to work, and we would like to ask you to delegate physicians to those camps. My son and daughter have to go to such camps each year, so you have to do this too." The physicians were sent there, but what kind of work camps were they? They were death camps in the precise meaning of these words. The physicians who came back from these were telling us about them. After several months a major typhoid epidemic always broke out in those camps. And then, depending on the whim of the camp director – and the directors were particularly sadistic SS-men (among others, there was Dahl who was distinguished by his special cruelty) – either all sick people were killed or they were graciously transported to us, to the hospital. A couple of months after the camps were formed, the whole hospital was filled with patients who, before they got sick, were maltreated in many horrible ways; for example, one of them was kept in cold water reaching his chest for ten hours a day three months in a row. It was obvious that we couldn't save such patients.

In spring 1942 the situation in ghetto was horrifying. The typhoid epidemic had subsided, but starvation and tuberculosis were spreading in a dreadful way. During that time a film crew appeared in the ghetto, and they were filming the quarter. Defendant Fischer probably also knows about this crew. This movie was remarkably characteristic of German propaganda, how they were creating it and what were its limits. Of course, the German crew was equipped perfectly. They had beautiful moveable cameras on their cars and the newest devices. They started with filming innocent scenes, for example, a Jewish tram marked with a Zion star, and a horde of poor gaunt begging children who were clinging to its back. But the next day there were different scenes arranged. So a young elegant Jewess was going in a rickshaw and, threatened with a beating and a gun, she had to raise her leg high enough to show her thigh and kick the beggars, who, also threatened with guns, were going after the

rickshaw. Another edifying scene: a ball at Chłódna Street 20, where the only nice house in the ghetto was standing. There were liveried butlers with white gloves on their hands, dancing and champagne. And during this dance, people, threatened with guns, had to look promiscuous to show how immoral the Jews are.

Another picture presents a common bath of boys and girls. The next one shows a restaurant at Karmelicka Street, where the Jews were told to tear at the chops with their hands and to eat greedily. As such scenes were filmed, of course, they were accompanied by beating and threatening with guns. An echo of that movie were pictures that I saw on the Aryan side in 1943, in the newspaper "Illustrierte Völkischer Beobachter", where they showed how wonderful Jewish life was in the ghetto in Poland. And at that time, the ghetto didn't even exist anymore.

In these conditions the death rate was increasing: before the war in Warsaw it was around ten per mil, that means while there were 350,000 Jews, 350 of them died during one month, which gave an average of 30 people a day. Meanwhile, in 1940 the number of dead bodies amounted 3,000 per month; in 1941 it was 4,000 to 5,000; and in 1942 it increased to 8,000 per month. So the increase of the death rate was 15-fold or sometimes even 30-fold. In this way, during Fischer's 2,5-year rule, 120,000 people died in the Warsaw ghetto, and as for the rest, according to our calculations, 1/3 were in such an advanced state of cachexia due to starvation, that, as a matter of fact, they would die in a short time. It's obvious that if the ghetto had lasted another three to four years, the entire population would have died. Despite the death rate increase, at the moment of the ghetto's liquidation, there were still over 400,000 people in there. The death rate was growing and the number of inhabitants also was increasing, but, of course, it wasn't because of reproduction. The reproduction was close to zero, but when there were no more Jews in Poland, the Jews from the whole of Europe were rounded up in Warsaw. They came from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece and even Norway – and all of them found their death here. Apparently, in July 1942, when grim clouds were coming from the East and the Jews' pace of dying wasn't fast enough, it was decided to commit mass murder on a gigantic scale: to liquidate the ghetto. Here governor Fischer was replaced by new Nordic knights, who volunteered at that time. Like him they were tall, blue-eyed, long-headed and music lovers. Because every day, after packing up several thousand people into rail wagons going to the extermination camp in Treblinka, after killing several hundred people on the spot, and after smashing children on the pavement, they gathered at Żelazna Street, where they had

their *Umsiedlung Heim*. And there, to the accompaniment of music, their night's recreation took place.

As regards the period of the ghetto's liquidation, the hospital was situated on Stawki Street and its windows looked out on the infamous *Umschlagplatz* – the place of horror for the Jewish people of the Warsaw ghetto. For many weeks from the beginning of the operation, the Germans didn't march into the hospital. They were saying that the hospital was a sacred place for them; but later they began the liquidation of patients and physicians as well. There was that one time when doctor Lamprecht, being a little tipsy, said to one of our physicians: *Die Ärzte werden die letzte erschossen* [the physicians will be the last ones to be shot dead]. For now, they needed the physicians, and the gravediggers who were *letzte erschossen* as well. Every day from the hospital windows onto Stawki Street we could see the masses of people being packed into the infamous rail wagons going to the extermination camp in Treblinka. We could see our relatives, close ones, friends, who were looking up with a plea in their eyes, seeking some help. Sometimes we managed to pull someone out from this square, because they were pretending to be sick or wounded, and then the Germans let us take them to the hospital.

However, there were always some new ordinances being prepared for us. Those gentlemen like Brandt, Heyman, Michelson, Münde and others were making sure of that. For example, they burdened us with this mission: There were houses where German refugees were staying. And the physician from the hospital was supposed to go to such a house and decide who is *transportfähig* [fit for transport] and who's not. A person who was *transportfähig* would go to the extermination camp in Treblinka, and the one who was *transportunfähig* [unfit for transport] would be shot dead on the spot. The physicians from our hospital were the ones who were supposed to make such decisions right away.

And another mission. At that time a lot of people were committing suicide. Mainly, they were poisoning themselves with cyanide. Because the cyanide was stale, they often didn't die immediately. Our duty was to collect all poisoned people, because "culture" required that they should have medical attention. And we, who had seen thousands of young healthy people going for certain death, we had to rescue those who committed suicide.

Of course, the German physicians were taking part in all this, because there was always a German physician-assessor at the hospital.

Next order: A transport to the extermination camp in Treblinka is leaving. An SS-man rushes into the hospital, calls the chief physician and says that the transport is going west, to the colonies, and they need a physician because how they could go without one. In this cultural state, a transport can't do without medical care. Volunteers are needed. At that time, they hadn't been taking physicians to Treblinka yet, but sometimes on a whim they would take them along. So the issue arose: who would go to their death right now. Horrible scenes were taking place. We wanted to escape all that. We were told that the chief definitely had to appoint two physicians.

Or another issue. Because there were fewer and fewer people due to transports to the extermination camp in Treblinka, the hospital staff had to be reduced. The hospital director was ordered to make a list, that is, to sentence his closest colleagues to death. Those were the methods they were using.

During the liquidation of the ghetto the infamous *szops* [forced labor manufacturing plants] were formed. Those were manufacturing plants working for the army. And they required setting up medical care for them. So we were constantly and steadily tormented. In this light, you can see how the course of the epidemic looked.

One more time, I would like to emphasize the thing that was discussed here yesterday, that is, that the typhoid epidemic in the Jewish quarter didn't exist during autumn 1940, when the ghetto hadn't been formed yet. The epidemic broke out in spring, well actually in June 1941. If German physicians signed articles saying something else, it was because the propaganda required that – typhus was only a pretext to create the closed ghetto.

It was all for the sake of propaganda. If they were writing those things, it was only in the General Government. At that time, we hadn't known yet that apart from the physicians who were prowling around in Warsaw and in the General Government territory, there were physicians in the concentration camps who were doing those infamous experiments. That there are physicians like professor Schrill [Schilling?], a world-known haematologist, an 80-year-old grandpa, who was doing research in Ravensbrück [Dachau?], and who was hanged. We couldn't believe all those things, that physicians could sign such cynical nonsense: the Jews don't die of typhus. After all, there were piles of dead bodies lying around and those physicians saw them. And it was confirmed that the death rate among the patients in the hospitals on the front in the east was about seven or eight percent, so it was

three times less than in the second epidemic in the ghetto. In any case, if Fischer is referring to the medical authorities, he's referring to the German physicians, because before the war there was no physician from anywhere in the world, in Europe or in the USA, who would write such lies and nonsense.

**Prosecutor Siewierski:** – Was doctor Schremppf directly subject to the district or to the *Stadthauptmann* office?

**Witness:** – I have to admit that I'm not informed enough in this field, but I suppose he was subject to the district. It came from Kraków, the central office was there, so I assume that the *Stadthauptmann* wasn't the one deciding about that.

**Prosecutor Siewierski:** – Did the Germans provide hospitals with medications? In what way were they fulfilling the hospitals requirements? Did the physicians and the patients in the ghetto have the opportunity to legally supply themselves with medications?

**Witness:** – At the beginning, when the hospital was deprived of municipal aid, there was total chaos. Later, they let us buy medications in the municipal department of the Polish Municipal Government, but the supplies there were very scarce. However, when we're dealing with infectious diseases, the medicaments don't play a great role there.

**Judge Grudziński:** – How did the issue of nourishment look? How many calories were rationed for a healthy person and a sick person?

**Witness:** – As I've already said, the official rations amounted to ten percent of the requirement, so it was 200–250 calories, while the normal requirement is 2,500–3,000 calories. These official rations were distributed by the *Transferstelle* [Transfer Office]. We had to buy the rest through philanthropic institutions. Later we had an opportunity to buy some food at a free-market price from the Community funds.

**Judge Grudziński:** – Did the hospital rations have the same caloric value or were they different?

**Witness:** – We were trying to buy some more valuable articles, that is, some fats and proteins, for the hospital on the free market. Instead of proteins, we fed the patients with concentrated blood. After it was fried, it was a good nutrient, and the patients were eating

this. Apart from that, nourishment in the whole quarter, and in the hospitals, was insufficient by all accounts.

**Attorney Chmurski:** – Tell me doctor, were the German physicians, who signed the opinion concerning the typhus and the epidemic itself, ordinary, average physicians or were they medical authorities?

**Witness:** – They were very different. There were average ones and famous ones, like professor Kudicke, known for his work in the fields of bacteriology and serology, who was in Kraków, but he was coming to Warsaw. But there were also lesser known ones like Schremppf, Lamprecht and others.

**Attorney Chmurski:** – Besides Kudicke, were there other prominent theoreticians?

**Witness:** – No. The articles in “Warschauer Zeitung” and in “Nowy Kurier Warszawski” were not signed or were signed by less famous persons.

**Attorney Chmurski:** – How did the management of the German sanitary administration look in the ghetto during the time you kindly described to us?

**Witness:** – There was the sanitary physician of Warsaw and at the same time of the Jewish quarter, doctor Schremppf, and then Hagen.

**Attorney Chmurski:** – Did other physicians from the central office, from the General Government, come to do inspections?

**Witness:** – Maybe they did come to the district, but I don’t know anything about it. It was really difficult to talk to them because they didn’t greet us, shake hands with us, or take off their hats. There was assistant professor Menk coming in, he wanted to do scientific work. He wanted to cure typhus with convalescents’ serum. It is a method that was used earlier, but it’s completely ineffective.

He was coming to the hospital with two Germans and three physicians from National Institute of Hygiene. This team was working on our patients, and when they were doing so, we didn’t have access to them. *Nota bene*, Menk never greeted us or took his hat off. He was doing his work, but there were no results. However, afterwards in 1944, in the publishing houses of Ausserwald and Bayer, they were writing that professor Menk (because



he had already been promoted from assistant professor) was working on curing typhus with convalescents' serum and it was giving excellent results.

Doctor Schremppf was jealous of Menk's success, and he also wanted to do some scientific work. He did a similar thing like Ausserwald, who ordered the Jewish Community to prepare a silver chamber pot. So Schremppf sent us a large sheet of paper with questions written on it. We had to fill them all within a week on the basis of the hospital records of the past patients, we were supposed to hire three special clerks at the Jewish Community's expense, and later Schremppf was going to write a dissertation about typhus. There were sections in there that were really difficult to answer, so we were writing anything. I don't know if he wrote some dissertation on the basis of that, but once I found a reference in a periodical about assistant professor Schremppf. I think he died during the bombing of Lübeck.

**Attorney Chmurski:** – Did you or your colleagues file complaints to the higher administration authorities regarding the sanitary conditions, which were, putting it gently, completely defective?

**Witness:** – Unquestionably. I'm a clinical doctor, but there was this Health Council, with Hirszfeld, Zweibaum and others. They were going to Lamprecht, to the *Gesundheitspflege Amt* [Health Care Office], but there was no result.

**Attorney Chmurski:** – Did they turn to Kraków?

**Witness:** – I think they did that too, but you have very wrong idea of how those talks and conferences looked. We were supposed to stand and listen, and if not – we got punched in the face.

**Attorney Chmurski:** – If you did that in the written form it was hard to get punched.

**Witness:** – Professor Hirszfeld was writing memoranda, but there was no outcome. The memoranda were written not one time, but ten times. Everything was futile. The epidemic was caused by the Germans because they wanted to have propaganda material. Although typhus has always been called the hunger disease or the war disease, we can without hesitation call it the German disease.

**Attorney Śliwowski:** – When did doctor Schremppf come?

**Witness:** – In October 1939.

**Attorney Śliwowski:** – On whose behalf?

**Witness:** – He didn't use to say anything. He had a gun and a whip in his hands.

**Attorney Śliwowski:** – Hadn't he gotten his nomination from the *Reichsgesundheitsamt* [Reich Health Care Office]?

**Witness:** – I don't know.

**Defendant Fischer:** – Doctor Schrempf and doctor Hagen were physicians of the Warsaw sanitary office and they had control over the ghetto. I can't add any special explanations to the witness's statement. Those are medical matters. I can only say that we were acting upon the German physicians' requests.

**Attorney Śliwowski:** – I don't have more questions to defendant Fischer, whereas, in connection with this, I do have a question for the witness. Did you ever, in connection with health issues in the Jewish quarter or with the later forming of the closed ghetto or the Jewish quarter, have contact with the *Abteilung Gesundheit* [Health Department]?

**Witness:** – I can say that I've never worked in the sanitary administration. I was working in the hospital. However, I know that all delegations went not to the magistrate, but to the Brühl Palace, where Byliński, a *volksdeutsche* who is now near Poznań, was residing.

**Attorney Śliwowski:** – Had you or your colleagues, or other persons from the hospital administration or connected with the sanitary service in the ghetto or in the Jewish quarter, ever have any contact with defendant Leist?

**Witness :** – I hadn't, and if others had – I can't say.