



## JAROSLAV DRABEK

(Following a recess)

**Presiding Judge:** Please summon the witness, Prosecutor Drabek. Is the Czech interpreter present?

(The Czech interpreter, Franciszek Wesely, 34 years old, an associate judge, comes forward.)

**Presiding Judge:** Would the parties like to submit any motions regarding the swearing in of the interpreter?

**Prosecutors:** We would like to release the said from the obligation to take an oath, pursuant to article 141 in connection with article 108 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

**Defense attorneys:** Ourselves also.

**Presiding Judge:** The interpreter shall be released from the obligation to take an oath, this with the consent of the parties. The obligations of an interpreter are known to you, sir.

I would like to instruct the witness pursuant to article 107 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the obligation to speak the truth, which in any case is known to the witness due to him being a prosecutor. Do the parties wish to make any motions as to the procedure according to which the witness is to be interviewed?

(The Prosecutors and Defense Attorneys release the witness for the obligation to take an oath.)

**Presiding Judge:** Please provide your personal data.

**Witness:** Dr. Jaroslav Drabek, born on 16 May 1901 in Budzin, resident in Prague 1, 3 Krocynowa [Krocina] Street, a lawyer by profession, previously a Prosecutor at the Extraordinary People's Tribunal, religion – Evangelical Protestant, married.

**Presiding Judge:** The witness has no relationship to the parties?

**Witness:** No, none.



**Presiding Judge:** The witness has been released from the obligation to take an oath. What can the witness say about the camp at Auschwitz, and in particular as regards the accused?

**Witness:** I arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau with a Czech transport on 18 January 1943. I spent 14 days in Birkenau, whereafter I was taken to the main camp, to quarantine block no. 11. Since an epidemic had broken out at that block, I was forced to stay there for more than a quarter of a year.

The transport with which I was sent to Birkenau numbered 700 people and was decimated within a few weeks, so that only a few prisoners remained alive. These were all political prisoners, among them eminent representatives of the Czech nation.

Immediately after the train drew up to the ramp, we witnessed the unloading of a transport of peasants whose nationality remains unknown to me. It included a few hundred women and children – a great many were dead, having suffocated or been crushed to death in the wagons. The rest were unloaded onto some trucks, and they were handled as if they were things, not people.

These people were sent directly to the gas chamber. I surmise as much because a few – the physically weaker, humpbacked and otherwise handicapped – were taken from our group and attached to the hapless deportees whom I have just mentioned; we never saw them again.

When we arrived at the camp, the SS men at the gate greeted us with the words *herzliche Grüsse*, while just behind them the orchestra started playing marches from a Czech opera – obviously, these songs had not been selected randomly. The Germans led us into the camp and left us standing for a good few hours. It was then that we understood where we were – there were bodies strewn all over the grounds, while the *kommandos* that were returning from work dragged their dead, wounded and sick. It was a frosty January day. We saw the sick being placed in the mud, while the dead – since no one cared for them – were thrown down anywhere. Or should I say – nobody dared care for them, because everyone had to stand in line.

We spent the night in a barrack that used to be a stable. A bunch of German functionaries attacked us. They were employed as camp elders and *kapos* and, threatening us with death, they robbed us of our watches and wedding rings.



On the second or third day we were herded into a hot bath house, and thereafter forced to take a cold shower. We were given clothes, or rather rags, that were nearly impossible to put on. They were painted with colored crosses. Already then we started experiencing disease and death. You were not allowed to go to the lavatory when you wanted to. They would take us there only at fixed times and in groups. But the lavatories – pits, in fact – were in such a condition that you had to be careful not to fall in, and I must say that I saw the drowned bodies of people who had. We did not go to work, instead being endlessly summoned to roll calls. As a result, our transport started to die off. One of the greatest terrors were the young boys, the so-called *pipels*, and there were a dozen or so of them, whom the Germans – in particular the camp elders and *kapos* – kept to satisfy their homosexual cravings. I saw one of these boys murder a great many prisoners. The camp was full of dying people. Unable to walk to the lavatory or block, they died along the way, finished off by the *kapos*. I also witnessed the execution of such people. In the majority of cases, they did not even have the strength to get onto a truck. And thus I saw one ragged skeleton ask that he be taken to the gas chamber, for he preferred death to the horror of Birkenau. I once saw an SS man who was on duty in the guard tower shoot at the prisoners for fun, allowing those whom he hit to freeze in the snow. His hapless victims had been looking for some clean snow to satiate their thirst, for there was no water at all in the camp, and so we prisoners had to suffer the endless torment of filth.

In February, I was transferred to the main camp, to block 11 in Auschwitz. This was a quarantine area for those who were to leave the camp. The conditions there were awful, too. The entire courtyard was a place of suffering and torture. There was a Heracleian wall there, at which people would be shot or hanged on two gallows. Executions were very frequent and would last a few hours each. The windows of our block opened onto the courtyard where the killings took place. Before each execution, we would be forced outside, and allowed back in only after it had been carried out. After an execution, the entire courtyard would be covered with human blood. There was so much of it that it gushed out of the drainage channels. Herded into the blocks, we had to wade through human blood. In the block, I saw people being terribly beaten and otherwise tortured, I saw the Germans organize “sports” – this practice has been widely described. During these “exercises” people were hounded from place to place and thrown into the mud until they were completely exhausted. I also know that terrible things went on in the bunkers, for we often heard dreadful cries, and on a number of occasions I saw bodies being

carried off. I once witnessed a hapless prisoner, tortured to madness, jump out of a first-floor window onto a concrete slab. One of the *kapos*, "Jakub", who was the block's executioner, walked up to him and – even though the man was bleeding profusely – dragged him away like a log of wood. The *kapo* assisted in the killing of prisoners in the bunkers and in the courtyard, and for this he received numerous privileges. For example, he walked around well-dressed, as he had access to clothes from the so-called "Kanada" barracks. As I later learned, he managed to survive the camp even though he was a Jew. He now lives in Tel Aviv. Such mistreatment of prisoners was introduced to block 11 by a *Scharführer* or an *Oberscharführer* whose surname I do not remember, for it was dangerous to ask about such trifles. It was he who organized all the torments that occurred in block 11. Next to us was block 10, where the women and children were kept. I often heard them crying and saw these women and children being subjected to frightful experiments. And I often saw SS doctors walking up to that block. This would be more or less everything that I am able to say about the situation in Birkenau, and in particular in block 11.

**Presiding Judge:** Does the witness recognize any of the accused?

Witness: No. But I would like to touch upon one more topic. When I was in Birkenau, none of the SS men dared to enter the camp, for an epidemic was raging within and the SS men made every effort not to go there. For this reason I did not encounter any of them in person during my brief period of incarceration. When I was in block 11, the quarantine block, no one from outside was allowed to approach, and thus the only SS man whom I encountered was the one whom I have already mentioned, the *Blockführer* [block leader] of block 11. I do not see him in the dock today.

**Presiding Judge:** Are there any questions in connection with the testimony?

Prosecutor Cyprian: The witness mentioned that he was a Prosecutor at the Extraordinary People's Tribunal for German Criminals in Prague. While working in this capacity, did the witness become aware of the disclosure in the course of hearings at the Tribunal of any documents which would have indicated that the German state had elaborated a specific plan to exterminate the Czech nation by gassing it to death in Auschwitz in the immediate future?

**Witness:** As a prosecutor at the Extraordinary People's Tribunal in Prague I was in charge of all the cases against the main German criminals, that is against Frank, the German Protector

Daluege [Deputy Protector for the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia], against Sudetan Germans who served as members of parliament, and against Titzner, the *starosta* [senior official of the civil administration] of Prague. In connection therewith I traveled to Nuremberg on a number of occasions and put in a lot of effort to unearth any documents that would have indicated that the Germans treated my nation in accordance with a predetermined plan and – having found such a plan – to demonstrate in the course of these trials what it consisted in. As a result of the unbelievable precision of the Germans, who drew up minutes of even the tiniest activity and of each meeting, the archives of our courts – and in part those of the court in Nuremberg – contain documents which show with complete clarity that the Germans did in fact have plans at the ready, and according to these not only the Czech nation was to be wiped out, but also the Polish, in the same way as they proceeded with the Jews.

If the Esteemed Tribunal will allow, I may cite pertinent fragments of the originals and inform where they are currently located.

I would like to start off by saying that during his first examination, Karol Herman Frank confirmed that such a plan had been discussed in Hitler's presence as early as 1932. The documents that I take the liberty to quote inform us clearly that Auschwitz was one of the main elements of the plan to bring about the extinction of the Czech nation, and thus the largest number of representatives of the Czech nation who perished in concentration camps, perished in Auschwitz. Insofar as this can be verified, the number totals 150,000. However, the most important document in the case was found in the secret archive of Karol Herman Frank, in the so-called Štěchovice archive, which was discovered during Karol Herman Frank's trial in a forest close to the village of Štěchovice near Prague, while another memo was discovered in the archives of Konrad Henlein. These documents complement each other remarkably, and the first that I intend to quote is entitled *Grundplan OA*, which comes from Henlein's archive. This plan was drawn up by Henlein's German-Sudetan party a long time before the War broke out. It comprises two parts: one concerns the war against Czechoslovakia, while the other contains recommendations for the period when Czechoslovakia would be occupied by the Germans. These "recommendations" are a precise, point-by-point guide on how to proceed – and this is stated directly therein – so as to separate and pulverize the Czech nation. Another topic touched upon therein is the far-reaching campaign of Germanization, while the authors also mentioned the Gestapo regime and murders. We also found charts drawn up by the *Sicherheitsdienst* [security service] and

Gestapo for occupied Czechoslovakia as early as 1938. When we compare the pertinent points of *Grundplan OA* with what the Germans did during the attack on Czechoslovakia and later, following its conquest, we see that they were following this plan to the letter. It was, however, improved, and the term “to exterminate the nation” was written down openly, with no concealment. Two further documents, which were drawn up in 1940 and exchanged in correspondence with Auschwitz, reiterate these points; as a matter of fact, these two letters are the memorandum of Karol Herman Frank and Neurath, by-now legendary. They were found in the Štěchovice archive together with a letter written to Dr. Lammers, dated 31 June 1940. In it, Frank and Neurath presented to the *Führer* a plan for exterminating the Czechs and asked Lammers to submit it to Hitler, and also organize a meeting at which they would both be present in order to attempt to have the plan accepted.

These two memorandums were elaborated separately, but they nevertheless come to the same conclusion. The leading principle – roughly speaking – was to introduce Germanization, whereas elements incapable of assimilation would, according to Neurath’s proposal, be *abzustoßen* [rejected or cast aside], whereas Karol Herman Frank opted for their *Sonderbehandlung* [“special treatment”].

Recovered Gestapo documents and trials held before Czech courts make it absolutely clear that Karol Herman Frank decided upon a campaign of murder that was to be carried out by sending people to concentration camps, wherein they would be marked as “RU” [return undesirable]. For Karol Herman Frank, the intended victims included the intelligentsia, members of the Pan-Slavistic “Sokol” athletic club, former soldiers of the Czech Legion, etc.; and indeed, the actual extermination of the Czechs was conducted along these lines. The victims included Czech students, while the upper echelons of the Pan-Slavistic “Sokol” athletic club also found their way to Auschwitz – as did university professors and the intelligentsia in general. The plan was fulfilled with great zeal, personally by Karol Herman Frank, who – as we have now learned – was in excellent relations with the Prague Gestapo, and indeed himself held interrogations and sent individuals or larger groups of people to concentration camps.

Characteristically, Frank’s memorandum ends with the words that one must use *Zucker, Brot und Peitsche* [a German idiom meaning “the carrot and the stick”].



I would like to stress that the documents in our possession and the trials conducted in Czechoslovakia have demonstrated with great clarity that the plan was approved by Hitler and conducted under his auspices. Its part was, for example, the crime committed against Lidice, where not only the residents were murdered, but the village itself was razed to the ground. The women were sent to Auschwitz, while the children – all 600 of them – were taken from their parents and deported to Germany, where they were to be brought up.

I will allow myself the liberty of citing two of Himmler's orders, which have already been quoted before the National Tribunal in Nuremberg:

1. Whatever happens with a Russian or a Czech, I do not care in the least. What good blood these nations can provide us with, we shall ourselves take. And, if need be, also by kidnapping the children and raising them amongst ourselves. Whether or not nations perish of starvation interests me only insofar as we need them as slaves for our culture. Apart from this, I am completely disinterested.

2. I am of the opinion that when dealing with the citizens of foreign states, and in particularly those of Slavic nationality, we cannot proceed from the German standpoint, we cannot enrich these people with healthy German ideas and logical conclusions, which they are in any case incapable of comprehending, but we must take them as they are... Naturally, it is to be understood that in such a mix of nations there will always be some racially good types. And therefore I think it is our duty to take their children from them, to sever their ties with their surroundings, if need be by kidnapping them. We shall either obtain good blood, which we may use for ourselves and incorporate into our nation, or we shall destroy this blood.

I would like to add that of the 106 children kidnapped from Lidice, only a few have been found. Whatever traces remain of those poor children who went missing, all lead to Auschwitz.

I mentioned block 10, where experiments were performed on women. These were carried out by Dr. Clauberg with the objective of making the Polish and Czech nations extinct by bringing about the mass infertility of their womenfolk.

The documents that I have cited previously, and which should be supplemented with the letter of General Friderische, which was sent to the OKW [*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*; High Command of the Armed Forces] and thereafter submitted to the International Tribunal



in Nuremberg, all clearly indicate that the extermination of the Czech nation had been thoroughly planned. In his memo, Friderische came to the conclusion that the history of Czech-German relations was that of an endless struggle for power, in which the Czechs or the Germans would alternately gain the upper hand at the cost of the other, and that this conflict could only be resolved, once and for all, by brute force. He further elaborated that in 1940 the Germans finally had an occasion to do so, and that it was necessary to use force in order to annihilate the Czech nation.

By way of an ending I would like to stress that I have given testimony fully aware of the obligations incumbent upon a witness. I am equally aware, however, of the fact that a death sentence had been passed against both the Czech and the Polish nations, and that Auschwitz was one of the most important instruments for ensuring enforcement of the genocide of the Poles and the Czechs. Indeed, the only factor that prevented its implementation was Germany's military collapse in the east.

**Prosecutor Cyprian:** Is the witness aware whether mass executions of peoples were to be carried out in the gas chambers of Auschwitz, in the following order: Jews, Poles, Czechs, Russians, and so on, including the Caucasian nations?

**Witness:** Indeed I am, and I also know that there was a variant confirmed in the plan, which provided for the simultaneous extermination of the Polish and Czech nations. And so it was commenced.

**Presiding Judge:** Are there any other questions to the witness?

**Prosecutor:** No.

**Defense attorneys:** No.

**Presiding Judge:** The witness may step down. I hereby order a recess.