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The Nazi Camps and the Persecution and Murder of the Jews – Nazi Labor Camps

Translation: *A02 Testimonies given to the Department for War criminals of the Central Committee of Liberated Jews of forced labor camps in the Tarnopol region in 1942/43*

Sworn declaration.

On 22 January 1948, Mister Zucker Josef, born on 7 May 1909, residing in Leipheim bl[ock]. 28, appeared in the bureau of the Jewish community in Leipheim and submitted the following sworn declaration:

In 1942 in the month of June or early July, while I and other Jews were working as forced laborers at the Jewish cemetery in Tarnopol (Poland) where we took apart [zernomen] the tombstones and memorials to use these for building a causeway [Schoseebau] for the distance between Jezierno-Tarnopol[;] the building of the causeway was executed by the company Bergauer & Kassecker[;] the owner arrived, Mister Bergauer, together with the following people (employees of the company Bergauer & Kassecker) 1) engineer Jenö, 2) foreman [bauführer] Eibel, 3) office employee Eckstein, 4) chauffeur [szofer] Majer, 5) garage foreman [garagen meister] Schmidt, 6) foreman [bauführer] Franzl, 7) [szachmeister] Abezot, 8) [szachmeister] Korb, 9) [szachmeister] Bürkner or Brükner and around 15 office employees in company of 25-30 Ukrainian policeman armed with machine guns. With the policeman the SS-Scharführer arrived too, the camp commander [lager schef] of Zagrobela Hassenberg. The cemetery was surrounded [herumgeringelt] of the mentioned under the lead of SS-Scharführer Hassenberg. In a certain moment the [Szachmeister] Korb ordered us on demand of Mr. Bergauer, Eibel, eng. Jenö and SS Scharf[f]ührer Hassenberg to put the tools together [?, zusammenlegen das geschür] and to assemble on the building lot. Back then eng. Jenö ordered us to form groups of eight in a row and the others, to wit Hassenberg, Bergauer, and Eibel, requested us to keep calm, to wait for the cars [autowagen], which will bring us away[;] at the same time our attention was drawn at the fact, that those who try to escape will be shot. We recognized that something was wrong, some tried to flee, back then they shot on command of the above mentioned, so two were shot death and many were wounded. After loading us (some hundred people) on one lorry [autowagens] they drove us away and brought us to the forced labour camp [Zwangsarbeitslager] in Zagrobela near Tarnopol, where we were beaten murderously while leaving the cars with rubber and iron sticks, rifle butts as well as all kind of working tools [Arbesgezeug] as shovels and hammers. Those who were wounded by the shooting were beaten to death. At the convocation [apel] on the second day 25-30 people of those who had arrived together with me were missing, some of them were carried out by us on covers, dead. Among [zwischen] the people giving orders there was also the son in law of Kassecker, whose name I have forgotten; he exhibited heavy brutality before the others.

They made us work hard, we got up at 4 a.m. for roll call, until 6 a.m. they let us do some maltreating exercises. At 6 a.m. we got black coffee, and for 12 people a bread of one kilo with 800 gram. We were also beaten while eating.

In the middle of July a boy escaped by bribing a Ukrainian policeman but he was caught in the Ghetto and brought to Zagrobela, where he was hung on order of Mister Bergauer and Kassecker at the roll ground ground [Apel platz] also in front of us. Eng. Jenö, Eibel and camp commander Hassenberg were also present. All this was guarded by the Ukrainian police. They told us that we could take this as an example. It was also mentioned that if one of us would run away, his two

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roommates who sleep with him, would also be hung and so it was done.

Every day Eng. Jenö tried to come to the cemetery unnoticed to see who was working too weakly; these were noted down by him and beaten until death. He also gave one who no longer had any strength to work to the police, who shot him on his orders. He didn't leave the work area until he had sent three or four victims to the [Himmelkommando] (his favoured expression) like this. He ordered the burial of the murdered a few hundred meters away. He promised us the same fate. In August 1942 Jenö also came to the cemetery unnoticed, where he looked at how we were working from beneath a tombstone. I was exhausted and did work a bit weaker, so Jenö came to me from below and hit me with a branch several times on the neck [halsnaken]. Then he showed me how to work with my hammer. Afterwards he scratched a route [into the ground] with a specially cut branch to indicate where I should go and walk around so he could beat me 30 times. In doing so, he emphasised, that if I cried out, he would add three beats for every scream. He did so – my whole face and body were bleeding afterwards.

Jenö was so cruel in his deeds that it was sufficient to hear his name in order to make us tremble. During a pogrom, Jenö was the most active participant. He pulled the Jews from their houses himself and struck them all dead at this opportunity. He came to the cemetery to pick those who were swollen by hunger and were working weakly, and sent these to Belzec to the crematory from which no one returned. He replaced them by fresh people. Once he noticed six people were walking on the road, who had fled from a transport, so he got the Gestapo from Jezierna which came and shot the six people. He always participated in the pogroms and made the companies' cars available for transporting the Jews to the train station.

On 23-24 July 1943, during the liquidation of the camp in Tarnopol, together with the other employees and workers of the company Bergauer & Kassecker, in the presence of the son in law of Kasseker and Bergauer himself and accompanied by SS-men, Jenö searched houses and beat to death a hidden Jew and afterwards shot him.

I and some others who were hidden, left our hidings on the 26th and were made to clean up the camp. We removed all the dead and helped Mister Jenö, Eibel, Korb and Kassecker's son in law to pack up all the better pieces of clothing and bedding which were carried off to the village Smykowce with company cars and traded there for bacon, eggs, butter and liquor from the farmers. The [Schachmeister] Alisot beat me using a hammer. In the month of June 1943 he killed two of us by beating them at the Tarnowaka Street (Ostland Street) near the iron bridge.

At the end of February or early March, when we were clearing snow, he hit one person with a shovel until he was bleeding and didn't allow us to take him home, so that he froze to death.

Foreman Eibel und [Schachmeister] Korb made a selection in the month of April 1942, from which 60-70 persons were brought to Hluboczek Wielki and shot by their order. In July 1942, near Zagrobela on the causeway, Eibel hit us so hard two people died.

About April [Schachmeister] Korb hit one person who was swollen by hunger and was unable to work on the head with a pick axe and murdered him by doing so. Every day he had some shot by the Ukrainian police.

Garage worker Schmied, who came to us on the cemetery for stones, hit us murderously at every opportunity.

Foreman Franzl hit me [/] us with a rubber stick, generally I am not able to express all that I and others went through by writing it down.

I confirm solemnly the correctness of all statements above, I am conscious of the consequences of wrong statements and I am prepared to appear in court as a witness.

Leipheim, 22 January 1948.

[Signature]

The signature of the witness Josef Zucker above is certified herewith.
Leipheim, 22 January 1948.

[Stamp and signature]

translated by Regina Sandler and Giles Bennett