



KIRSTEN BRUNVOLL

The second day of the trial, 12 March 1947.

Presiding judge: Please call witness Kirsten Brunvoll and interpreter of Norwegian Dagny Bengtson.

(The witness enters accompanied by the interpreter.)

(Interpreter Dagny Bengtson is sworn in by the Presiding Judge in accordance with Articles 133 and 140 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.)

Presiding judge: (to the witness) Please provide your name, surname, year of birth, marital status, occupation, and relationship to the defendant.

Regarding herself, the witness provided the following information: Kirsten Brunvoll, born in 1898 in Oslo, Norway, married, Protestant, no relationship to the parties.

Presiding judge: (to the interpreter) Please tell the witness that she is obliged to tell the whole truth under pain of legal consequences for making false declarations.

Do the parties wish to submit any motions regarding the mode of hearing the witness?

Prosecutor Siewierski: The Prosecution asks for the witness to be heard without an oath.

Attorney Umbreit: We leave it to the Supreme Tribunal to decide, but we agree to hear the witness without an oath.

Presiding judge: The Supreme Tribunal has decided to hear the witness without an oath, as requested by the parties. Will the witness please tell us how she got to the Auschwitz camp and what her life in the camp looked like? What were the conditions, etc.?

Witness: I was arrested in Norway in the middle of January 1942, together with my entire family: my older and younger sons, and my husband. I was placed in a German prison in Norway. Later on, I was sent to the Ravensbrück concentration camp, where I spent a year. In Ravensbrück, I got sick many times and I stayed in the epidemic ward. This was the ward where the Germans performed experiments on the sick. In Ravensbrück, I had



erysipelas and eczema all over my body, and I was operated on three times. In February 1944, I was transported to Majdanek together with seriously ill people, who had undergone horrible operations, and the infirm elderly. A total of 800 people from different countries and of different nationalities were transported in cattle cars, 60 prisoners in each one. We arrived there in winter, in February 1944. There were three Norwegian women in that transport. In April 1944, Majdanek was evacuated because the Russians were approaching Lublin. Some of the healthy prisoners who were able to work were transported back to factories in Ravensbrück, and some of them – to Auschwitz. I was assigned to the latter group. In Auschwitz, I spent a total of ten months: from April 1944 to January 1945. As for Auschwitz, it was the worst camp of all. The most horrible thing was the killing of people in the crematoria. When I arrived at Auschwitz, I fell ill with typhus and was sent to the epidemic ward.

Presiding judge: Will the witness please describe the treatment she received, what was done to her, and provide us with a more general picture?

Witness: I was placed in the typhus ward, which was a picture of misery, despair, dirt, and the greatest neglect possible. In the ward, there were patients not only with typhus, but also with malaria and other epidemic diseases. From that block, people were sent to the crematoria. The experiments consisted in, for example, introducing a probe into the stomach through the nose and administering a variety of injections. The experiments were done by SS men, and almost all of them ended in death.

Presiding judge: What kind of experiments were these?

Witness: Various types of lethal injections.

Presiding judge: Will the witness please explain what types of injections?

Witness: I do not know what type they were, but they were harmful because people died.

Presiding judge: How long did the witness stay in the typhus ward?

Witness: Two and a half months.

Presiding judge: What treatment did the witness receive?

Witness: I was very lucky because I was not subjected to any experiments.



Presiding judge: Did the witness receive any treatment or did she recover on her own? Was there any medical assistance?

Witness: Once every three days, we were visited by an SS doctor who only checked the beds, if they were all right, and did not pay any attention to the patients.

Presiding judge: Were there any medicines?

Witness: I was not given any medicine. When I was suffering from typhus, I had an ulcer. Once a week, I had a dressing applied to the ulcer so that it healed.

Presiding judge: What kind of dressing?

Witness: It was just a piece of gauze; the rest of it was paper.

Presiding judge: So it was a paper dressing?

Witness: Yes.

Presiding judge: And it was changed once a week?

Witness: Yes.

Presiding judge: When the witness left the camp hospital, where was she employed and what was the nature of her job?

Witness: When I left the epidemic ward, I was placed in the convalescent ward.

Presiding judge: During the treatment, when the witness was suffering from typhus, did she receive better food, and if yes, what kind of food?

Witness: According to regulations, seriously ill patients were supposed to be given white bread. They usually received it in small quantities. I was not seriously ill, so I did not receive it.

Presiding judge: And what was the witness given?

Witness: I usually got the same food as in prison, that is, black coffee, whole-meal bread, and rutabaga soup.

Presiding judge: Were other patients with typhus given the same food, or was the witness's case an exception?



Witness: There were also a few people who were less sick than I, and they were given whole-meal bread. Apart from that, all the sick were given a very small amount of margarine and a teaspoon of marmalade.

Presiding judge: The witness has said that when she recovered, she was sent to work. What did she do?

Witness: A lot of Jews and prisoners of all nationalities were brought to the camp at that time, and there was not enough work for them. For some time, I knitted sweaters.

Presiding judge: Were any other prisoners from Norway brought to the camp in that period?

Witness: No, there were no transports from Norway. As for the work, my friends who were there with me loaded train cars. They loaded the cars with stones at the siding, and they pulled them back to Auschwitz.

Presiding judge: The witness has mentioned that the sick were taken to the crematoria. What did it look like in practice? Were the sick pulled out of beds and transferred to gas chambers or were their corpses taken to the crematoria after they died?

Witness: I saw them being pulled out of beds in the ward where I stayed. Mostly Jews. Those who were stronger walked. I believe some patients were carried to the crematorium. I saw how it happened – they were first taken to have a shower, and afterwards to gas chambers.

Presiding judge: So they had a shower before they were gassed?

Witness: No, they were being prepared to have a shower, but I did not see them showering.

Presiding judge: So they never came back?

Witness: No.

Presiding judge: The witness has said that she stayed in the camp until January 1945.

Witness: Yes.

Presiding judge: Where did the witness go when she left the camp?

Witness: In January 1945, the camp was liquidated and I was transported back to Ravensbrück. We walked for three days, hungry and cold. Those who were too tired to walk



were shot on the way. Then, we were transported in open cattle cars for three days. When we came to Ravensbrück, the camp was so crowded that there was no room, and I stood outside for a day and a half.

Presiding judge: Did the witness know, from her own observations, that prisoners were abused and beaten in the Auschwitz camp? Did she ever see such scenes?

Witness: They would not leave us in peace for a single day. They would murder and beat prisoners every day, and I saw it myself.

Presiding judge: How was it done? How were those people tortured? What were they beaten with? Will the witness please describe it?

Witness: It usually happened during roll calls and at work. People were beaten and killed.

Presiding judge: Does the witness know the defendant?

Will the defendant please stand up? Did the witness meet him in the camp?

Witness: I saw him.

Presiding judge: Did the witness ever see the defendant hitting or beating anyone?

Witness: No, I did not.

Presiding judge: When did the witness see the defendant?

Witness: I saw him during an inspection.

Presiding judge: That is impossible because the defendant was no longer in Auschwitz.

Why was the witness arrested?

Witness: I was engaged in a resistance movement, an underground organization. For this reason, I was arrested and transported to Ravensbrück, Majdanek, and Auschwitz.

Presiding judge: The witness has said, among other things, that the Auschwitz camp was one of the harshest and most dreadful camps. What made the witness think so?

Witness: When you arrived at the camp, you became disheartened only by looking at the emaciated and murdered people. Besides, smoke would come out of the crematorium day



and night. Every day, every minute, and every hour someone was taken to the crematorium. You were always uneasy; you lived in tension and waited. Many inmates died in this horrible way. We constantly felt the breath of death in the air.

Presiding judge: I have no more questions. Do the parties have any questions? (No.)

The witness is excused.

Please call the second witness from Norway.