

# EUTHANASIA

INFORMATION SERVICES TEAM

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## EUTHANASIA VALIDATES MURDER AND GENOCIDE



Propaganda for Nazi Germany's Action T4 euthanasia program: "This person suffering from hereditary defects costs the community 60,000 Reichsmark during his lifetime. Fellow German, that is your money, too" - from the Office of Racial Policy's Neues Volk.

'Euthanasia' is defined as the mercy killing of humans, typically those suffering from an incurable and painful illness, but is forever associated with the involuntary killings of people deemed "life unworthy of life" by Nazi eugenicists. These were not mercy killings as few of the victims had a terminal disease or even a painful condition, and most died in great pain (gassed or starved) or a state of terror (lethal injection).

'Action T4' was the name of the Nazi program for the involuntary euthanasia of people with a physical or

mental disability. From 1939 to 1945 an estimated 275,000 adults and minors were killed in gas chambers, with lethal injections, or starved to death.

The first attempt to legalize [voluntary] euthanasia in modern times occurred in 1906 in the American state of Ohio, but efforts to legalize such killings in the US and other nations failed for decades until the rise of Nazi Germany. The first state-sponsored euthanasia in modern times occurred in Germany on July 24, 1939, in which a severely disabled infant named Gerhard Kretschmar, born blind, with

missing limbs and subject to convulsions, was given a lethal injection. While Kretschmar's killing received parental consent, most of the infants killed afterwards (at least 5,200) were forcibly taken from their parents and killed without their consent in order to "purify society".

Voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide for people with a terminal and painful illness is now legal in a small number of nations, which has coincided with an increase in the suicide rate.

Legalizing voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide promotes suicide and values that naturally lead to the non-consensual killing of people who are considered a burden on the state and taxpayers or "life unworthy of life".

It is not in keeping with human dignity to kill human beings as if they were a sick old dog, nor in the public interest to create a class of legal serial killers.

As in France (since 2016), people suffering from a terminal illness can rightly choose to end life sustaining measures (LSM) and die painlessly of dehydration via continuous deep sedation until death (CDSUD) while unconscious, not killed.

Such deaths must occur in 'End of Life' clinics so eligible people are removed from an environment where they may be pressured to die.

Palliative care for such people must be fully funded (a basic human right) or such people are being coerced into choosing death due to inadequate pain relief. ■

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

It is not in keeping with human dignity to allow any form of euthanasia or assisted suicide, which validate suicide and the killing of the vulnerable.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

All forms of euthanasia and assisted suicide are rightly banned, but people suffering a terminal illness have a right to end life sustaining measures (LSM) and access continuous deep sedation until death (CDSUD), which must be in 'End of Life' clinics to remove people from environments where they could be pressured to die.

### FURTHER READING

*A Concise History of Euthanasia: Life, Death, God, and Medicine*, Ian Dowbiggin, Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

*A merciful end: the euthanasia movement in modern America*, Ian Dowbiggin, Oxford University Press, 2003.

"Euthanasia": *A confusing term, abused under the Nazi regime and misused in present end-of-life debate*, A. Michalsen and K. Reinhart, *Intensive Care Med* 32 (9): 1304–10 (September 2006).

*Human dignity in the Nazi era: implications for contemporary bioethics*, Dónal P. O'Mathúna, *BMC Med Ethics* 2006.

