

*Psychiatry and Nazism.
The Role of Dr. Berthold Kihn**

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Berthold Kihn was professor of psychiatry at Jena and from the beginning agreed to participate in the Nazi "euthanasia" programme. The essay takes this into account in a first part by outlining Kihn's career up to the National Socialist takeover in January 1933. The second part focuses on his specific participation within National Socialist genetic health, race and extermination policy.

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1. *A thought leader of Nazi "euthanasia programme"*

With the beginning of the Second World War, German psychiatry was the scene of a unique type of mass murder. In the mental ill hospitals that were under German occupational control during the Third Reich, approximately 300,000 physically and mentally disabled people were murdered. In the linguistic parlance of the perpetrators, euphemisms like "euthanasia" or "mercy death" were used to describe the mass killing. Behind this are extermination measures that took place partly simultaneously, partly consecutively. Probably the best known «euthanasia measure» was the centrally carried out T-4 Action program.

In August 1939, Berthold Kihn, professor of psychiatry at Jena, attended a meeting at the *Kanzlei des Führers* [Chancellery of the Führer (KzdF)] in Berlin. He was greeted by the Führer's doctor Karl Brandt, head of the KzdF Philipp Bouhler and his deputies Viktor Brack and Hans Hefelmann. Also present were "National Medical Leader" [*Reichsärzteführer*] Leonardo Conti, his assistant from the Reich Ministry of the Interior Herbert Linden and another eight to ten psychiatrists who, like Kihn, were invited to this event. Philipp Bouhler introduced the attending psychiatrists to plans for a programme of murder. He informed them that the implementa-

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