

Going to start, you ready?

Yes. We'll be able to shoot for maybe another 10 minutes or so.

We're rolling? As we made our way down here, we've spoken to people who were affected by these programs as children. What made them particular targets for some of these eugenics programs?

They are disproportionately dependent on their parents. For example, you had colored children, about 600 colored children who were all sterilized. And obviously they, as colored children, they were sterilized because their father was a French black soldier and that was it. So clearly, the father's existence kind of--

We ran into-- not ran into, we spoke to people who, it seemed like, a lot of the only crime was that they came from very poor, large families. And they had--

They, too.

--families with 12 children.

Yeah.

The kids were out on the street begging. And they ended up being institutionalized and sterilized.

Yeah, exactly. Because the parents were analyzed by these people. They came out with very, very low IQ. In the eyes of the eugenicists, they belonged to these people with low intelligence.

And then obviously, they are children. If the whole thing is genetic, their children must have the same genes. Obviously, then, if you sterilize the parents, you have to sterilize the children, clear.

From this type of logic, not that I'm for it. I'm simply following this type of logic. Within this type of logic, it makes sense here.

A lot of-- again, we spoke to people who had had relatives who had been to Hadamar.

Yeah.

And there wasn't just sterilization that was going on. There was medical experiments. There was-- these children were starved--

In Hadamar.

--to death and left for dead.

Yeah, yeah.

Again, how is this part of this program?

Now here, you had the moment this euthanasia program became real, then obviously, some research-interested psychiatrists kind of thought interesting possibility. Now, let's do all those experiments which we now can do, which we couldn't do before. And in this type of argument, when you say this person will be anyhow killed, then of course, I can do an experiment with the person before. Because he will die anyhow.

And this type of logic obviously led to experiments. In particular, in Heidelberg, in the institute of Carl Schneider, who had a relatively large institute who started a large research project exactly on this type of thing. And then also was in the

place which is in a place in North Germany, near Berlin, where also similar things went on.

I think there is a certain logic in that. If these guys think the death of these persons has been anyhow already determined, so then under these conditions you can do an experiment with the person. And unfortunately, if you lost all humanity, then you argue this way.

Why were they starved, or not fed, or malnourished? Why did that sort of thing go on?

No, that was, I guess, simply in order to have them die faster. Although, let's say the killing with carbon monoxide ended, I think, in August '41. Yeah. So now, but then, from then on, the argument was, OK, there is no more general killing. But so let's say we have now relative non-organized killing.

And that's obviously-- if you don't get people to eat and to drink, and if you don't heat in the winter, then sooner or later, they will get [INAUDIBLE] and a lung inflammation. And sooner or later, they will die. I think it's as simple as that.

And in fact, I don't know whether you saw that in France, there was a similar situation in '43 and '44. In '43 and '44, the number of deaths, the people dying in these mental institutes, increased drastically. They are about, if I recall it correctly, about 40,000 people in France who died from hunger and cold in the various institutions.

And without-- and the most amazing thing is that the French psychiatrists didn't even realize that. They kind of took it for granted, yeah? Obviously, they were not in the kitchen when the food was served. You know, they didn't really care about these minute details. And then at the end, their patients were dead. And they were astonished. They even published about that.

So that's, I think, pretty straightforward. Ugly, but straightforward.

In '41, why did they stop the gassing?

Now yeah, I think two reasons. On the one hand--

I'm sorry, could you start the sentence with telling me you think the two reasons why they stopped the gassing.

I think there are two reasons why they stopped the gassing. On the one hand, the opposition had become very strong. And it was a real muddle. You know, you had courts busy with this question, whether is this murder, isn't this murder, and so on, and so on. So this was really annoying.

And under these conditions, they simply could not support the possibility that a large majority of the population really were suddenly against when they started just the war against Russia. This was impossible. So and then this was one thing.

And then the other thing was ah-ha, but we can make use of these guys, we can use of the [GERMAN], we can use of the guys who were involved in the program. We can start now the Endlösung in the Soviet Union and in Poland. And this is exactly what they did.

So I think on the one hand, they said, OK, let's stop it. And then the Catholics can be quiet again. And on the other hand, but we use the same experience persons now for perhaps even more important, as we think, purpose. So from this point of view, I think it makes sense.

The more important purpose being?

The killing of the Jews, the Final Solution, yeah.

If you would repeat it again. Because we had some sound problems. What the bad part of eugenics is.

I think the eugenics has two parts. One part is obviously the genetic analysis of humans in regard of their spiritual capabilities. Intelligence and so on. Is this genetic? How far is it genetic and not? And I think that's fine. That is certainly-- that's a valid thing.

But then the bad thing is that you come to the conclusion that those who have low intelligence should be sterilized, and only the other ones are allowed to have children. I think at that point, there's something basically, fundamentally wrong, yeah.

And obviously, it's this mixture between something which may be hard science that is human genetics and then political decisions. What do you do then with this? Which became so explosive, yeah.

If you would-- because we talked about this, actually, early on. And maybe even the camera was running or not. About your anger, your feelings about what some of these people who were involved in these programs after the war, and how they continued their lives, let's say.

They are. You know, when I, 20 years ago now, when I got interested in the whole problem, I just realized that there was just nothing written about it. There were neither had the historians any interest to write about that. There was just virtually nothing.

Either the historians of medicine were silent, gone totally silent. Not true. There was one of them in Germany who was interested. But by and large, there was just total silence. And silence both from the historians and silence from the people who were involved.

You may think that some of those who were involved would have written autobiographies which they may have published only after their death. No, just nothing. Just absolutely nothing. And this is something which I have difficulty to understand.

That this torture-- how can you go on after such a disaster afterwards as if nothing has happened? How can you believe that you enter again in psychiatric hospital after these things which happened there? How can you believe that you say any sentence to a psychiatrist after this, what has happened there? And again, I find it very difficult to understand. Very difficult.

You have no theories, shall we say, as to how this was able to be?

Yeah, theories. Unbelievable stupidity. Unbelievable, unbelievable. You know, that the history-- there, let's put it that way. Obviously, after now, after 50 years, one can talk about it. But it's a little bit too late. Yeah.

I think then one should have been able to talk about that then. For example, when my book appeared in '84 in Germany, there was total silence. There was one single journal in which there was-- in which it was reported. Just one journal, yeah. And yeah, silence. Silence, silence, silence. And that, I find I find disquieting. I find truly disquieting. Truly disquieting.

Thank you.

OK.

OK. If you could just sit there for about 30 seconds. We do room tone where we just pick up the sound.

Room tone.

There you go.

OK, thank you.

OK.