



Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

NEWSLETTER

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International Symposium on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide Vancouver, June 3-4, 2011

Make plans to attend the *Third International Symposium on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide* at the Vancouver Airport Marriott Hotel, June 3-4, 2011.

The Euthanasia lobby in the United States is planning, in several states, to attempt to legalize assisted suicide.

The Euthanasia lobby in

Australia and New Zealand have announced their plans to legalize euthanasia.

The Euthanasia lobby in the UK is attempting to legalize euthanasia in Scotland and they are planning to try, once again, to legalize assisted suicide in the UK.

We must become ready to push-back and defeat the euthanasia lobby worldwide.

The symposium will

be divided into two sessions. The Friday session is oriented to providing the information that is necessary for defeating the euthanasia lobby. The Saturday session is oriented to providing the strategy that is necessary for defeating euthanasia and assisted suicide - bills and initiatives.

When we are organized, unified, and ready, we win.

Attend this important symposium and become part of the winning team.

We are organizing an international leaders' meeting for Thursday, June 2, at the same location. We are also organizing a tour for people who wish to arrive June 2.

Experience why Vancouver is known as one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Quebec - Select Committee on Dying with Dignity

This fall, the Select Committee on Dying with Dignity in Quebec held several hearings in regions throughout Quebec. The government established the Dying with Dignity committee to assess the willingness of the Quebec people to legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Since the establishment of this committee, many groups and individuals have expressed their opposition to euthanasia and assisted suicide. We have real hope that Quebec will not legalize euthanasia.

The first great voice in Quebec has come from *Vivre Dans la Dignité* (Living with Dignity). This is a grassroots group formed in Quebec to be a voice for the silent and vulnerable in Quebec. This group, under the leadership of André Bourque (president) and Linda Couverture (director) has worked to establish a strong opposition to euthanasia and assisted suicide. Learn more about *Vivre Dans la Dignité* at: www.vivredignite.com

(French and English)

Recently, the Quebec nurses came out against legalizing euthanasia. Gyslaine Desrosiers, the President of the Quebec nurses stated,

"The risks to legalizing the medical means to ending life are very real."

She then suggested that the Quebec government should invest more money into palliative care.

Amy Hasbrouck, a Montreal lawyer and disability rights advocate with Not Dead Yet, challenged the premise of the euthanasia lobby in Quebec. In a press release dated October 14, she stated,

"When a person with a disability becomes suicidal due to depression, hopelessness, anger and isolation that can result from such ongoing discrimination, a nasty surprise awaits her if she asks for help. Instead of treating the person for depression, she will be allowed, even encouraged, to kill herself. ... This response is discriminatory. If

the National Assembly puts in place a law that codifies such discrimination by making suicide easier for this sub-group, the assembly itself would be violating the protections guaranteed in both the Quebec and federal Charter of Rights."

Robert Greig, the disability advocate, stated that a law to legalize euthanasia will only protect the doctors who accidentally or intentionally end a person's life. Families would not be able to fight back due to the costs of legal intervention.

"I would hate to see euthanasia legalized because it would change things," Grieg said. "We need to be a leader in care and not a follower. We need quality end-of-life care, not euthanasia."

He then stated,

"I want to see an end to this constant propaganda in the media in this country to legalize euthanasia. People with disabilities want quality of life not euthanasia."

Australian speaking tour leads to creation

By Alex Schadenberg

After the defeat in Canada by a decisive vote (228 to 59) of Bill C-384, the bill that would have legalized euthanasia and assisted suicide, I received an e-mail from Babette Francis, a great leader in Australia.

Babette informed me of the many attempts by the euthanasia lobby to legalize euthanasia in Australia and she asked me if I was willing to come to Australia to speak about how we worked to defeat Bill C-384 in Canada.

At that time I was not aware of the push that the euthanasia lobby was making in Australia to legalize euthanasia.

Australia is composed of five States and three Territories. The Northern Territory was the first jurisdiction in the world to legalize euthanasia in 1995, but that Act was overturned by Australia's federal government in 1997.

Australia has either recently defeated or is currently facing bills to legalize euthanasia in every state as well as in the federal government. The Green Party has made the legalization of euthanasia as their primary priority.

After negotiating the time and the cost involved with my trip to Australia it was arranged that I would speak in every state capital and the national capital.

I spoke in Perth (Western Australia), Adelaide (South Australia), Melbourne (Victoria), Hobart (Tasmania), Canberra (National Capital) and Sydney (New South Wales).

Perth (Western Australia).

To get to Perth I flew from London to Toronto, Toronto to Vancouver, Vancouver to Sydney and Sydney to Perth. By the time I had arrived in Perth on October 9, I had been traveling, almost continuously, for more than 30 hours.

The next day (Sunday) I spoke to an ARPA group in the afternoon and another ARPA group in the evening. What is interesting is that the ARPA group in Australia is directly connected to the ARPA group in Canada.

On Monday, I met with a federal

Senator and then I met with Hon. Nick Gorin, a Liberal member of the Western Australia legislature and his legislative assistant Annuska.

Nick was instrumental in the defeat of a euthanasia bill last month, by a vote of (21 to 11).

Nick organized presentations by palliative care and disability leaders and personally met with members of the legislature to discuss the issue.

Nick has agreed to be a speaker at the Third International Symposium in Vancouver on June 3 - 4, 2011.

I then spoke to a large audience that evening.

Adelaide (South Australia)

On Tuesday morning I flew to Adelaide. In Adelaide I had a lunch meeting with a group of state leaders who quickly informed me of the situation in their state.

Last year a bill in the South Australia parliament that was introduced by the Green Party was defeated by a vote of 11-9 after David Ridway, changed his position at the last minute and Ann Bressington decided to abstain from the vote when her amendments to the bill were defeated.

In March the election resulted in three of the eleven members who voted against the euthanasia bill being defeated. Green Party member Mark Parnell, has reintroduced his bill to legalize euthanasia in the upper house and Stephanie Key has introduced an identical bill to legalize euthanasia in the lower house. To make matters worse, another euthanasia bill has also been introduced in the upper house by Bob Such.

The Parnell & Key bill is similar to Bill C-384 that was defeated in Canada by a vote of 228 - 59. The bills legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide for people who are: terminally ill or who have an illness, injury or other medical condition that (1) results in a permanent deprivation of consciousness or (2) irreversibly impairs the person's quality of life so that life has become intolerable to that person.

In other words, the Parnell/Key bill would allow euthanasia for a person who is in PVS or a person who is living with a disability and considers their life intolerable (no definition for intolerable). This bill is so wide that you could drive a hearse through it.

The bill excludes euthanasia for depression but it uses similar language to the Oregon statute which has failed to protect depressed people from death by assisted suicide.

The battle in South Australia will be difficult to win because of the hardening of the positions of the current elected representatives.

We have hope. In fact Paul Russell, who lives in Adelaide South Australia, is launching a new group in Australia that will specifically focus on euthanasia and assisted suicide under the name HOPE. He is establishing a website and putting a leadership team in place.

After meeting Paul Russell I have great hope that he will accomplish the goal of defeating the bills in the State Parliament and organizing an effective response to the bills throughout Australia. Go to www.no euthanasia.org.au.

Melbourne (Victoria)

On Wednesday morning I flew into Melbourne in the State of Victoria. The plane arrived late, due to thick fog. Upon arrival I was brought immediately to a lunch meeting (I was one hour late) where I immediately began my power point presentation to around 50 people. This group included several political leaders.

I then went back to the home of Babette Francis who made a fantastic meal. We were joined at dinner by Peter Kavanagh who is the member of the Victoria legislature who worked very hard to defeat a euthanasia bill in September 2008 by a vote of 25 to 13.

The Green Party has indicated that there will be another attempt to legalize euthanasia in the State of Victoria after the next election.

The evening presentation was sponsored by the Endeavour Forum. It was

of more groups that oppose euthanasia

well attended and included several politicians and Bishop Peter Elliott.

The Melbourne visit was well organized and I was particularly impressed by the strong interest of the many political representatives who took time out of their schedule to attend and ask questions.

Hobart (Tasmania)

Hobart was significant for several reasons. First by the crashing impression I made on the Tasmanian parliament and second by the commitment that was made by the many political and community leaders that attended my talks.

My plane arrived late in Tasmania because of the weather conditions. When I arrived, I was brought straight to the State Parliament to have lunch with Hon. Michael Polley (the speaker of the House) and Rene Hidding. Polley is from the Labour party and Hidding is a Liberal.

When we arrived in the Tasmanian legislature, we were told that Hon. Polley could not join us for 30 minutes because the House was still sitting. We decided to watch the last few minutes of debate in the House.

We entered the House and sat in the speaker's gallery. We noticed that all the furniture, including the chairs in the speakers and visitors galleries, were new. I turned to speak to one of our group and my chair shattered and I crashed to the floor with a loud noise. Everyone was concerned if I was OK. They must have feared a lawsuit.

We then had a very productive lunch with Polley and Hidding.

Polley informed us that a euthanasia bill will be brought forward by the Green Party next fall. They were very concerned about the bill.

The evening presentation was held in the speakers room in the Parliament building. There was a large crowd of people which included the local Anglican Bishop.

After the evening talk, I went out to test Tasmanian beer. At a local establishment we met Charles Wooley, a famous

co-host of 60 minutes Australia. Wooley was very receptive at first. Wooley talked about how much he likes Canucks and Chinese. My friend is Chinese. We then told him what we were doing in Tasmania. Wooley was disgusted. When I challenged Wooley with the facts, he said: 'There will be collateral damage from euthanasia, but so what. There are six billion people in the world, why would you be worried about a few people who die by euthanasia without request or consent?'

As I say, the issue really isn't about choice.

The next morning I spoke again to a smaller crowd of people. The evening and the morning presentations were filmed.

Tasmania is a smaller and less wealthy state within Australia. The people were very receptive to the message and my hosts were incredibly hospitable.

Canberra (Capital Territory)

I arrived in Canberra late because of the weather delay.

It is interesting that Australia had been experiencing drought conditions previous to my arrival. In Canberra, I was given a tour of the federal parliament and then brought to dinner where I met many local leaders.

I then spoke to a large audience.

That night I met Daniel Pask, a disability right advocate, who was really interested in starting a Not Dead Yet group in Australia. Daniel has Spina Bifida and has experienced many surgical interventions throughout his life. I was very impressed with Daniel's command of the language.

Sydney (New South Wales)

I arrived in Sydney and was picked up by Chaing Lim, who had organized the Tasmanian and Sydney parts of the tour. Chaing was the person who was with me when I met Charles Wooley in Tasmania.

Chaing arranged for a lunch meeting with leaders in New South Wales at a restaurant on the Manly Wharf. It was a great location but having a meeting at

the Manly Wharf required us to take the Ferry from the Sydney Harbour. It was a great experience.

Chaing then took me on a site seeing tour around the North Sydney region. This was only my second opportunity to see a few Australian landmarks.

The evening talk was at the Epping Club in Sydney. Leaders from many groups came out to this event.

I had the opportunity to meet a federal politician as well as I met Andrea Calilhanna who started the Facebook site - Australians Against Euthanasia.

There is currently a bill in the New South Wales that was sponsored by the Green Party, to legalize euthanasia.

The Premier of New South Wales, Kristina Keneally stated, "As a former minister for aging, this is an area that I see as incredibly difficult, one that is complex, one that raises a number of significant moral and ethical issues."

On Sunday, I flew home to Canada.

The Australian tour was the result of the incredible defeat of Bill C-384 and the pressure by the Green Party in Australia to legalize euthanasia. The Green Party has gained influence in the Australian state and national parliaments and they have stated that the legalization of euthanasia is their top priority.

Key points that were made to the Australian audiences:

- 1. Choice is an illusion.** We need to dispel the choice rhetoric before society will reject euthanasia. I emphasized the recent study in Belgium and the past studies in the Netherlands that prove that euthanasia is often done without explicit request or consent.
- 2. Euthanasia is a threat to vulnerable people.** We need to be concerned about elder abuse and societal attitudes toward people with disabilities.
- 3. Safeguards don't work.**

Nitschke in Canada

By Alex Schadenberg

Philip Nitschke, Australia's "Dr. Death," was doing a tour of Canada when I was on a speaking tour of Australia.

Before coming to Canada, he created a stir by attempting to have a TV ad, which was rejected by Australian broadcast regulators, approved for use in Canada to promote his Canadian tour.

In a September 20 media release, Nitschke stated his TV ad had been accepted for use in Canada.

That day, I contacted the Television

Bureau of Canada and asked them what criteria were used to approve the Exit International ad? They responded: "The ad has not been approved for use in Canada."

For the next week, I was featured on TV news programs, and radio talk shows being attacked as anti-free speech. In each interview, I turned the issue around by speaking about Nitschke and what he does.

Nitschke spoke in Vancouver on October 7 and Toronto on October 13. Nitschke then announced that he would be doing a suicide seminar in Montreal on October 16 because the U.S. govern-

ment needed more information him before issuing him a visa to enter their country.

Thirty-five people attended in Vancouver; 50 people attended in Toronto, and three people attended in Montreal.

I must remind everyone that Nitschke promotes suicide devices and information on a worldwide basis.

In June, it was reported that Robert Miller, 19, and James Robertson, 20, were found dead in a hotel room in the UK after following instructions that they obtained from Nitschke's Exit International website.

Nitschke is like a suicide predator.

Hinkle: Aid in Dying is Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

By Senator Greg Hinkle -

The Missoulian - Oct 13, 2010

Victor Lieberman, who claims that aid in dying is not euthanasia, needs a dictionary and/or history lesson.

In the 1980s, law students in Iowa drafted a model euthanasia act called the "Model Aid-in-Dying Act." It was published in the *Iowa Law Review*.

The foreword to the act contains a discussion of euthanasia and how the act was written. Moreover, it defines "aid-in-dying" as euthanasia. It states that "aid-in-dying means ... the administration of a qualified drug for the purpose of inducing death."

In 1991, there was an aid-in-dying initiative in Washington State. If passed, it would have legalized euthanasia in the state of Washington.

More recently, the Montana Supreme

Court gave doctors who participate in aid-in-dying a potential defense to criminal prosecution. When doing so, the Court described aid-in-dying in terms of a doctor providing the means for a patient's death, but not directly participating in the death. This is physician-assisted suicide, not euthanasia. But how long will that distinction be remembered? The term "aid-in-dying" also means euthanasia.

Lieberman also claims that aid-in-dying is legal in Montana, which is not the case. The Supreme Court's opinion is limited to giving a doctor, and only a doctor, a potential defense against a homicide charge. The opinion offers no protection against civil liability.

Aid-in-dying is a recipe for elder abuse. For that reason, it should be prohibited in Montana.

Holocaust display sends strong message about euthanasia in our day

The *Los Angeles Times*, October 15, reported on the holocaust display at Loyola Marymount University in L.A.

The display entitled "Deadly Medicine" includes pictures, videos, samples of medical equipment and other artifacts that illustrate the Nazi eugenics program, in which scientists called for mass sterilization – and eventually euthanasia for people with a variety of sometimes haphazardly defined physical and mental illnesses.

The article quotes Susan Bachrach, of the United States Holocaust Museum and curator of the exhibit:

"There's a tendency to dismiss everything done under the Nazis as pseudoscience, to distance ourselves. That's dishonest. A lot of the scientists we feature in this exhibit were legitimate."

The article states, "The euthanasia program provided a model for the much larger project."

The killing techniques were created in the psychiatric hospitals and exported to the death camps.

Kristine Brancolini, dean of the university libraries at Loyola Marymount stated,

"The exhibit raises thought-provoking questions about how good science – and good scientists – turn bad. At what point does something become unethical?"

'I refused to help my father die'

An article from theatlanticwire.com on October 18 reported how Christine Odone refused to assist the suicide of her famous father Augusto Odone.

Odone explained that her father was in pain, feeling humiliated and vulnerable, but I did not want to kill him. She stated, "They could have treated him with respect, managed his pain, even maybe engaged with him to raise his spirits but they did none of these things."

She said: "those who favour assisted suicide should realize that it would not be the same for all people. What if you are disadvantaged, your family is in dire financial straits?"

The article reported that Odone's father recovered, and she does not regret her decision. She stated: The "chattering classes" love the idea of assisted suicide but that doesn't mean we should listen to them.