

e-Deliverance

A PEACEFUL DEATH IS EVERYBODY'S RIGHT

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20TH ANNIVERSARY RIGHTS OF THE TERMINALLY ILL ACT (NT)

On 1 July 2016 it will be 20 years since the world's first Voluntary Euthanasia law - Rights of the Terminally Ill Act (ROTI) - took effect in the Northern Territory. Since that time there have been more than 20 attempts to change the law in Australia without success.

Meanwhile, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, the US States of Oregon, Washington, Vermont, California and now Canada have all changed their end of life laws. What has gone wrong in Australia?

One common explanation is that the lobbying power of the church is too strong, and Australian politicians, when confronted with religious argument, are too weak. The response to these failures has been to propose increasingly restrictive legislative models, with greater 'safeguards' to 'protect the vulnerable'. These law reform models enshrine the medical profession's gate-keeping role.

Another explanation, one proposed by Dr Deb Campbell in her new book *Doing us Slowly - What's happened to the Australian*

Voluntary Euthanasia Debate? (a keynote speaker at Exit's forthcoming conference *From Voluntary Euthanasia to Rational Suicide*) is that trying to super-safeguard the safeguards is the wrong approach. Dr Campbell argues that models such as 'Not only - But also' (NOBI: not only do you have to be nearly dead, but also, you'll need medical permission!) do not address the growing clamour by the elderly for absolute control over when and how they die. And she may well be right. Maybe an elective decision to die is fundamental, a

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1- 2 20th Anniversary of Rights of the Terminally Ill Act (ROTI)
- 3-4 Exit Conference Final Program
- 4 Tom Curran Oz/NZ Tour Report
- 5 Exitorial
- 6 Australian Border Force Seize Books
- 6 UK Meeting Dates: August 2016
- 7 Dicing with Dr Death: Darwin Premiere
- 8 Join Exit & Peaceful Pill Store



Philip Nitschke with the original Deliverance Machine, Darwin in 1996

20TH ANNIVERSARY - ROTI ACT (NT)

human right, not a conferred privilege. These are the arguments that will be discussed in detail at the September conference.

Going back over the 20 years since the NT's *Rights of the Terminally Ill Act* there are lessons from history. Specifically, the role played by the Member for the Melbourne seat of Menzies, Kevin Andrews.

In early 1997, a mere nine months after the *ROTI Act* was implemented, Kevin Andrews proposed a Private Members Bill that led to the Euthanasia Laws Bill being passed in Federal Parliament. This Act led the Parliament of Australia to 'overturn' the Northern Territory's law. This was only possible because of Section 122 of the *Australian Constitution*.

Section 122 - Government of Territories

The Parliament may make laws for the government of any territory surrendered by any State to and accepted by the Commonwealth, or of any territory placed by the Queen under the authority of and accepted by the Commonwealth, or otherwise acquired by the Commonwealth, and may allow the representation of such territory in either House of the Parliament to the extent and on the terms which it thinks fit.

This loophole allows the Federal Parliament to make laws for the Territories. The same does not apply to the States. A relic from a time when it was deemed that the Territories were not grown up enough to make their own laws, the *ROTI Act* came to an end because the Federal Parliament was able to make a law that said that the Parliament of the NT could make any law it wanted, but not **a law about Voluntary Euthanasia**.

The history of the politics is explained in Philip's first book with Fiona Stewart, titled *Killing Me Softly*. Originally published by Penguin, the book is now reprinted and available from the Exit website.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The recent **Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry** into end of life choices is a step in the right direction. But the recommendation falls into the same trap: even stricter safeguards and with gatekey firmly in the hands of the medical profession. A cross-party committee has recommended that people who are 'suffering from a serious and incurable condition [and] who are at the end of life ... be provided assistance to die in certain circumstances'. Those seeking assistance would need to be in the final weeks of their life. And they must be 'experiencing enduring and unbearable suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner which they deem tolerable'.

Meanwhile, **Canada has** passed Bill C-14 which allows 'medical aid in dying'. This law has strict criteria and 'protections for the vulnerable' which include a mandated 15-day waiting period, the need for two independent witnesses to a written request by the patient, and an expressed exclusion of chronic degenerative diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis. In other words, a person must be nearly dead to qualify, AND you will need to obtain medical permission to die! Another 'NOBI' solution.

Both the Victorian proposals and the Canadian law amount to small steps in the right direction, but are they enough? Until dying well is accessible by all elderly adults of sound mind who seek it, Exit would say 'no'. This is why you can't miss Exit's 2016 Bob Dent Day Conference on 22-23 September in Melbourne, Australia.



The Canadian Supreme Court which, following Carter v Canada, instructed the Parliament to act

EXIT CONFERENCE: WHATS IT ALL ABOUT?

It is not long to go until Exit's *Bob Dent Day 2016, 20th Anniversary Conference: From Voluntary Euthanasia to Rational Suicide* which will be held at the State Library of Victoria in Melbourne.

This is no ordinary conference. This is a conference that will shift the dying debate: from a right of a chosen few (those who have the misfortune to be terminally ill) to a right of every adult of sound mind. Is or isn't a good death - or a rational suicide - a fundamental human right? This conference will create discussion to help us better answer this question.

In doing so, the power brokers of life and death will be in the cross-hairs. This means the medical and psychiatric professions. Already the Director of the Brain and Mind Institute at the University of Sydney, Professor Ian Hickie has called for the conference to be shut down stating 'I find it a totally unacceptable and appalling idea that age is a proxy for the end of your useful life. To reinforce that is an abhorrent idea' (*The Guardian*, 11 December 2015).

Continuing 'Hickie said he welcomed the debate about voluntary euthanasia for the terminally ill but he strongly rejected the idea that all people over a certain age should be issued with Nembutal.

If you believe your life is your own, and that you should not be beholden to others to determine when and how you die, then this conference is for you. If you believe we need a new language to enshrine our autonomy in dying as a human right, come along. Be engaged, be challenged and be wiser!

CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS

Exit Member Registration - \$275 inc GST
Public Registration - \$365 inc GST
Conference Dinner - \$150 inc GST
(2 course meal, drinks, 'lock-up' experience & Phillip Adams as host speaker)

FINAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

DAY 1 - THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

9 - 9.15am Conference Opening
- Dr Philip Nitschke & Mrs Judy Dent

9.15 - 10.30am Keynote

Dr Deb Campbell (Australia)

Author: *Doing Us Slowly: What's happened to the Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Debate?*

10.30 - 11am Morning Tea

11am - 12.30pm Keynote

Professor Susan Stefan (USA)

Is Suicide a civil right or a medical treatment?

12.30 - 1.30pm Lunch

1.30 - 3pm - Panel

Ms Anny Shaw, Ms Cath Ringwood & Professor Tony Van Loon

Telling the Kids: The Politics & Practice of Talking Suicide

3- 3.30pm - Afternoon Tea

3.30 - 4.30pm Sign/ Banner writing workshop

In preparation for Friday's Street March & Protest

6.30pm for 7pm Conference Dinner with Phillip Adams at Old Melbourne Gaol

DAY 2 - FRIDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

7.30 - 9.30am Street Protest & March

9.30 - 10am Morning Tea

10 - 11.30am Keynote

Dr Lieve Thienpont (Belgium)

Responding to requests to die from the non-terminally ill elderly in Belgium

EXIT CONFERENCE - FINAL PROGRAM CONT

11.45am - 12.30pm Panel

**Professor Emeritus Malcolm Parker (chair),
Professor Susan Stefan & Dr Lieve Thienpont**

12.30 - 1.30pm Lunch

1.30 - 3pm - Panel

**Professor Dennis Altman, Dr Philip Nitschke & Dr
Anne Summers & Professor Brian Martin (chair)**

*Lessons for the Right to Die Movement from 50 Years of
Feminist & Gay Rights Activism*

3 - 3.15pm - Afternoon Tea

**3.15 - 3.45pm Closing Address
Dr Philip Nitschke**

Further details about the conference are listed in the official conference brochure.

Registration places are limited to 200 with conference dinner places limited to 120. Bookings can be made on a first come, first served basis.

Special Exit Member discounts apply to the conference registration rates. A limited number of student and media places are also available on request.

Please email conference@exitinternational.net

Conference inquiries: please call Chelsey on 1300 10 3948.

TOM CURRAN OZ/NEW ZEALAND TOUR WRAP

In April, Exit's European Coordinator, Mr Tom Curran made the trip downunder, not only to cameo in Philip's 'Dicing with Dr Death' show at MICEF, but to conduct his own speaking tour. Tom visited Hobart, Ballarat and Canberra and Wellington and Nelson in New Zealand. His tour was highlighted in a range of media with extensive coverage devoted to his meetings in New Zealand where he was billed as one of Europe's leading 'euthanasia strategists'.

And so he should be. With his late partner Marie Fleming, Tom Curran put voluntary euthanasia and assisted dying on the map in Ireland. He was responsible for both High Court and Supreme Court challenges to the law. As a former 'Carer of the Year', Tom has much to say about the benefits and short-comings of law reform and Exit's unique self-help model of empowerment.

In particular, Tom was keen to point out that even though Marie had been accepted for an assisted death at Dignitas, she wanted to die at home and at a time that suited her. She

did not want that time and place pre-arranged and locked-in by Dignitas. Following this, Marie acquired her own Nembutal. According to Tom, just knowing the drug was in the cupboard at home gave her great comfort and helped her live longer. Indeed, Tom says that having the Nembutal gave them a further five years together. Tom's take-home message was that having Nembutal in the cupboard makes you live a longer and happier life.



*Tom Curran speaking at Parliament House Hobart
31 March 2016*

AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SEIZURE - BOOKS

When *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* was first published at the end of 2006, the Australian Office of Film and Literature Classification gave the book a R18+ rating. This meant that it had to be sold in a plain brown wrapper and stored under the counter at a book shop. Along with the really heavy porn. And it could not be on the shelves in open view. As archaic as this may sound, I accepted the Office's decision and distribution started.

As soon as shipping was underway, the then Attorney General Philip Ruddock (he who is now 'Australia's first special envoy for human rights' - what a joke that title is) appealed this decision. And surprise, surprise, the Classification Review Board said 'oh no we got the decision wrong. This book is way too dangerous for Australian adults to read. They must be protected. The book is now banned absolutely'!

Despite this decision, the book has shipped freely into Australia from the US for the past decade in both print and online forms. That is until now. Until some lackey in ABF (Australian Customs) came up with the wacky idea of seizing copies of the print book on entry to Australia. In total around 12 copies have been seized out of hundreds that are mailed in each month. Seizure Notices state that the books will be held for a period of 30 days and then destroyed! That will teach you naughty Exit members to think you can read what you want!

The current round of seizures is based on Regulation 3AA of the *Australian (Prohibited Imports) Customs Act*. This regulation came about after right-wing Australian media created a furore over the import of plastic bags from a supplier in Canada back in 2001. *The Australian* newspaper, led by journalist Denis Shanahan, went into meltdown. The Howard Government then acted. (Although how a Government would ban a plastic bag beggars belief and no action on this front was ever carried out). What did come to pass was the confiscation of the CoGen Mark 1 (a would-be, carbon monoxide generator) from my suitcase at Melbourne Airport when I was en route to a Hemlock Society Conference in San Diego in 2002.

Now it seems this same, paternalistic relic of a law is being used on hapless, adult Australians to protect them from themselves. Tell this to the Americans and any other nationality protected by

human rights legislation - such as a Bill of Rights - and they laugh at Australia. We should all be ashamed.

EXIT 20TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

The clock is ticking. Bob Dent Day 2016 on 22 September will be here before we know it. And this means its 'conference time' for Exit at the State Library of Victoria. Exit staff has been working hard to assemble a cutting-edge lineup of speakers - perhaps the most challenging group of clever people ever to come together in Australia (and possibly anywhere in the world) to talk in theoretical and practical terms about the end of life choices debate.

I strongly encourage Exit members (and your friends) from all over Australia to join us in Melbourne for this stellar conference that will shift the paradigm in how we think and talk about death and dying. The conference asks a number of critical questions:

- Is an ability to die well, and with individual autonomy, the fundamental human right of every rational adult?
- Should control over when and how one dies be allowed only if you are terminally ill (where an assisted dying law permits a patient to ask for help)?
- Who else, if anyone, should be involved in your decision?
- Should you need permission from anyone to die? If so, from whom?
- Why is it that the medical profession (and some media) seem so unable or unwilling to be participants in a debate that is about more than sickness and a panel of professionals sitting in judgement over the life and death decisions of ordinary, rational Australians?
- In short, do you or should you require permission to die?

VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA PARTY

This newsletter goes to press on the eve of the Australian Federal election. I would like to thank all Exit and VEP supporters who gave so generously to young Jay Franklin so that he could mount a challenge against Kevin Andrews in the Victorian seat of Menzies. Jay called his campaign 'Dump Kevin' - a title seemingly appropriate in this 20th anniversary year. Jay was able to raise over \$25,000 in a little over a week. The VEP is also again running Senate candidates in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. I wish all candidates the best of luck.

Philip Nitschke

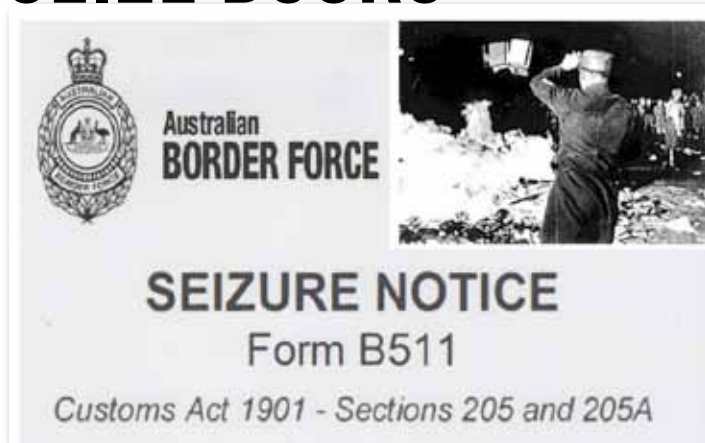
AUST BORDER FORCE SEIZE BOOKS

Think you're an adult who can do adult things? If you live in Australia, think again.

The Government not you knows what is best for you. And they have enlisted Australian Border Force aka the Black Shirts in Customs to prove it. In March 2016, Australian Customs began seizing copies of the print Peaceful Pill Handbook on entry to Australia. A small group of elderly folk have reported that they have received 'seizure notices' from Customs instead of the books they were expecting.

The Australian Government is using an obscure section of the *Customs Act* to seize the books, arguing that the act of reading the book amounts to incitement to suicide! See Philip's page 5 editorial for more.

Seventy-seven year old Exit Member Zola Ortenburg was so irked that she has written to the Attorney Gen-



eral George Brandis and the Minister for Immigration (responsible for ABF) Peter Dutton. Zola's full letter can be read at: <http://bit.ly/28MOMB2>

The Guardian covered the seizure of the books at: <http://bit.ly/28NrW5H>

Luckily, the vast majority books make it through!

LONDON & MANCHESTER MEETINGS - AUGUST

In August, Exit will be holding its 2016 meetings in the UK. Exit is pleased to announce that a Coffee & Chat program will be starting up in Manchester, to enable members from the north to come together in an informal, social setting with the view of providing support and friendship to others of like mind.

Given the abject failure of legislation in the UK and the reluctance of groups such as the British Medical Association to adopt even a neutral stance on the issue of voluntary euthanasia and assisted dying, it seems more important than ever for Exit to offer an environment where topics such as when and how one dies (when the time comes) can be discussed.

The London meeting shall be presented by Dr Philip Nitschke. Mr Tom Curran is coordinating and will be leading the discussion at the Manchester meeting.

Bookings are essential and can be made by email: contact@exitinternational.net or by calling UK 07883 509 765 or leaving a message on the Exit voicemail.

Both meetings are free to Exit members. The Manchester meeting is Exit members only.

The London meeting will have two parts. The first part is a public meeting which can be attended by non-members. After the break there will be a workshop which is for Exit members only. The workshop is restricted to those aged 50 years and over, of sound mind and to all folk who are seriously ill.

London Exit Meeting & Workshop

2 - 5pm, Tuesday 30 August

Dragon Hall

17 Stukeley St, London WC2B 5LT

Public is welcome to attend the first 30 minute public meeting. Members only for workshop. Afternoon tea will be served. Inquiries, please call Tom: 07478 111 272

Manchester Coffee & Chat Meeting

1 - 3pm, Thursday 25 August

St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North
Manchester, M12 6FZ

'DICING WITH DR DEATH' COMES TO DARWIN

Fresh from his success at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Dr Philip Nitschke aka 'Dr Death' is bringing his one man comedy show to **Darwin** on Friday 5 August 2016. Details for this one-night-only performance are:

Where: Gallery Two Six, 6 Catterthun St, Darwin City

When: 7 for 7.30pm Friday 5 August 2016

Cost: \$20 adult, \$10 concession, free to over 80s

Tickets: Bookings 1300 10 3948, payment at the door

Inquiries: please call Chelsey on 1300 10 3948

Email: chelsey@exitinternational.net

Gallery contact: David Hancock 0419 884 388

Beer, wine & nibbles will be served.



Philip outside the Melbourne Town Hall in costume as 'Dr Death'



Scenes from 'Dicing with Dr Death' @ Melbourne International Comedy Festival, 3 April 2016

PEACEFULPILLSTORE.COM



The Peaceful Pill Handbook (2016)

Black White

Within US: US\$73 (includes shipping)

Rest of World : US\$95 (includes shipping)

Color

Within US: US\$80 (includes shipping)

Rest of World : US\$105 (includes shipping)



The Peaceful Pill eHandbook

(Updated: 1 May 2016 online)

24 month subscription: US\$85

- Updated 6x year



Killing Me Softly: VE & the Road to the Peaceful Pill by Dr Philip Nitschke

Within US: US\$33 (includes shipping)

Rest of World : US\$48 (includes shipping)

EXITINTERNATIONALSTORE.COM



Exit He Gas Flow Controls (with Plumbers Tape + Tube)

Price: AUD \$200

(ships DHL express courier/ express mail)



Exit Drug Test Kit (Qualitative)

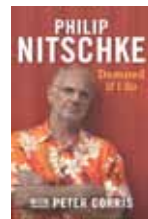
Price: AUD\$35 (incl shipping globally)



Max Bromson Quantitative Barbiturate Test Kit

Price: AUD \$275

(ships DHL express courier/ express mail)



Damned If I Do (autobiography) by

Dr Philip Nitschke & Peter Corris

AUD \$45 (incl shipping globally)

Join Exit International

I wish to join/ rejoin/ donate to Exit International
(12 Months: Aust - AUD\$110 inc GST \$10; (couples \$165 inc GST \$15); US/Canada US\$100; UK/ Irel £62/ €73)
Life membership - \$1100 (inc GST \$100)

Please send me the paperwork to consider Exit International in my Will

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I am paying \$ _____ for _____

Payment Options: Visa /Mastercard _____

Credit Card No _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Expiry Date _____ / _____



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