

# Obama's Retreat: Small Victory In War Against T4 Euthanasia

by Edward Spannaus

Jan. 10—On Jan. 5, *EIR* received official confirmation that the Obama Administration is withdrawing the once-a-year death-counseling Medicare regulation, that it attempted to sneak in by fiat, after a similar provision known as Section 1233, had been rejected by Congress.

But the fight against President Obama's "useless eaters" policy is far from over, and will not be concluded until Obama himself is removed from office. The Obamacare bill and the regulations implementing it are permeated with the Hitlerian premise behind the Nazi T4 program, that there are "lives unworthy of living," which must be eliminated for cost reasons. The bill is replete with measures aimed at cutting off medical treatment for the sick and elderly, under the guise of "quality outcomes," "value-based purchasing," "comparative effectiveness research," and, of course, the biggest "death panel" of all: the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB). And doctors are still given incentives for getting seniors to sign advanced care directives (i.e., reject care).

## Europeans Mobilize Against T4

This limited but important victory in the U.S. against euthanasia counseling, comes as the worldwide fight against Hitler's T4 program and its modern revival is intensifying. In Europe, in addition to the anti-euthanasia mobilization by the LaRouche movement, there are

numerous other efforts by concerned citizens and groups who are insisting that the horrors of the Nazi T4 program not be forgotten by the present and future generations.

For example, today, a memorial for the victims of the T4 program will be inaugurated in Brandenburg/Havel, in a ceremony attended by local and state officials. The Brandenburg "clinic," the first of six large extermination sites established by the Nazis, killed 9,000 individuals by gas, during 1940 alone. Those who were not put to death there, were deported to concentration camps for killing by gas or poison.

In Austria, there is intense discussion on the T4 euthanasia program, in the wake of the two new discoveries in Tyrol (a mass grave in Hall, and an original T4 apparatus list with names of Austrian victims), which have stirred up the public. The Austrian website [unzensuriert.at](http://unzensuriert.at) stands out among the news media, as attacking Obama for his 1233 decree, saying that his policy is even worse than the legalized euthanasia in The Netherlands today, because 1233 would, unlike the Dutch practice, pay a premium to doctors for their active assistance in euthanasia.

There are also major battles over euthanasia in both the French and Italian parliaments. And some news outlets, such as the Italian daily *Avvenire*, are attacking Obama's policy for the Nazi revival it is (see below).

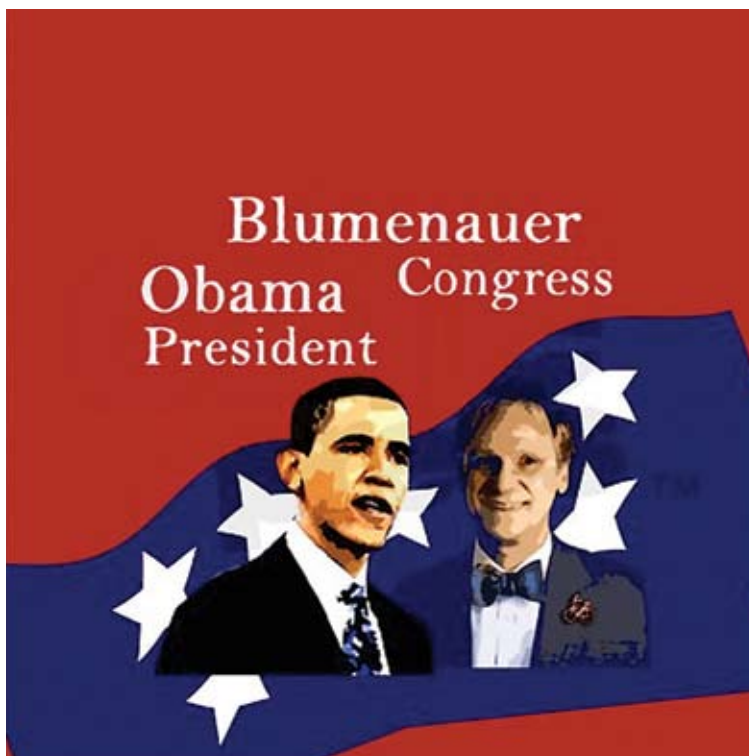
## Reviving Section 1233

Overnight, on Jan. 4-5, the *New York Times* carried a story leaked to it by the Obama Administration, reporting that the Administration was planning to rescind and revise the Medicare regulation issued in late November, which authorized annual end-of-life counseling for participants in the Medicare program—which covers most Americans over 65 years of age. Calling this an “abrupt shift,” the *Times* noted that while officials gave “procedural” reasons for changing the regulation, political concerns were also a factor. “The renewed debate over advance care planning threatened to become a distraction to Administration officials who were gearing up to defend the health law against attack by the new Republican majority in the House,” said the *Times*.

These “procedural” reasons undoubtedly centered on the fact that the Section 1233 provision was not in the draft regulations when they were published for public comment in July, but it was contained in the final regulations published on Nov. 29—a highly irregular procedure. Two Congressional euthanasia enthusiasts, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) and Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-V.W.), sent a letter to Obama’s man at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Sir Donald Berwick, in August, insisting that he insert the death-counseling provision into the new Medicare regulations. Blumenauer then surreptitiously reported to his cronies in early November that death counseling would be in the final regulation to be made public later in the month. What no one has explained, is *how Blumenauer knew this*.

A CMS spokesman told *EIR* on Jan. 5, that the *New York Times* report, about the regulation being amended to remove the end-of-life planning provision, is correct. However, other than that, CMS has stonewalled inquiries by *EIR* on Blumenauer’s communications with Berwick and CMS, and about the process by which the annual end-of-life counseling provision came to be included in the final regulation—even though Obama had promised total transparency in agency rule-making through his December 2009 “Open Government Directive.” Blumenauer’s office has refused to release the letter.

When Blumenauer and Rockefeller sent their joint



*President Obama has cited Rep. Earl Blumenauer (Nazi-Oregon), the chief promoter of euthanasia and assisted suicide in the U.S. Congress, as an authority on “health care.” The two are pictured here in a 2010 campaign poster.*

letter to Berwick, it was not the first time these two had collaborated on pushing euthanasia on unsuspecting seniors.

Already, in the Spring of 2009, they had each filed identical, 91-page bills, in both the House (H.R. 2911), and the Senate (S. 1150), euphemistically entitled, the “Advanced Planning and Compassionate Care Act of 2009.” Later in the year, after both bodies failed to advance their stand-alone bills, Blumenauer (and the Hemlock Society) succeeded in adding his infamous amendment, known as Section 1233, to the overall House health-care bill; 1233 was taken, word-for-word, from the longer Act of 2009. As did the Blumenauer-Rockefeller bills, Section 1233 called for end-of-life consultations every five years, and more frequently, if the patient developed a chronic, life-limiting disease, a life-threatening injury, or entered into a skilled nursing facility or a long-term care facility.

When the health-care bill (S. 1796), introduced by Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.), was marked up and reported to the full Senate in October 2009, Rockefeller filed his own dissenting views, expressing disappoint-

ment that death counseling was not included in the Senate bill. His comments, and his call for “advance care planning” to be included in the legislation, were conveniently republished by the Hemlock Society, a/k/a Compassion & Choices, the very next day.

Incredibly, the original Blumenauer-Rockefeller bills also would have applied death counseling to low-income children! They proposed to add “advance care planning consultations” to the services to be provided under the the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). The CHIP law defines “child” as one under 19 years of age.

### **Not Dead Yet**

Shortly after the Obama Administration’s announcement that it was withdrawing the death-counseling regulation, Blumenauer vowed to keep pushing it, and said that he was hopeful that Medicare can eventually get the regulation in place. *Politico* reported that Blumenauer also said he will reintroduce legislation to expand and protect the Medicare “benefit” for so-called “advance care planning.” Blumenauer also expressed his hope that the Administration’s statement, that this was simply a “process” issue, is true. “I would hope that the Administration would be candid about why they put it in; why it’s a good idea,” he said.

Blumenauer stated explicitly that the original provision for end-of-life counseling, in the House bill, was supported by the White House.

In the same *Politico* story, Barbara Coombs Lee, president of the ghoulish Hemlock Society, is quoted as saying, “We hope that what the White House has said is true and that this is some minor procedural clean-up and that advance planning will be back in the wellness visit.” Hemlock is also posting daily statements on its website, expressing its “profound disappointment” in the Administration’s decision to rescind the T4 regulation.

### **Implausible Denial**

Incredibly, the White House has put out the line that the euthanasia regulation somehow escaped its notice. “White House officials who work on health care apparently did not focus on that part of the rule that dealt with advance care planning,” reported the *New York Times*.

Oh, really? Let’s look at that claim. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB)—part of the Executive Office of the President and overseen by the White House Chief of Staff (Rahm Emanuel, until October

2010)—reviews *all* agency regulations before they are published. And the key White House officials who “work on health care” are actually assigned to OMB:

- Ezekiel “E-Z-Kill” Emanuel (Rahm’s brother), the Obama’s top health-care advisor, is a “bioethics” specialist, who has campaigned for years, for reducing end-of-life medical costs, through his “Complete Lives System” analytical tool for prioritizing medical costs by age. Emanuel’s actual position in the Obama Administration was Special Advisor for Health Policy to the Director of OMB. Since the passage of the health-care law in March 2010, Emanuel and the White House team have been focused on its implementation—which involves primarily the promulgation of implementing regulations by CMS.

- Cass Sunstein, Obama’s appointee to head the OMB’s Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), is a “behavioral economist” and an avowed euthanasia freak who, even before coming into the Obama Administration, wrote about the “senior death discount”—the statistical practice of taking into account life expectancy when evaluating a regulation. OIRA’s mandate is to review all draft agency regulations.

The section of the new Medicare regulations on “Annual Wellness Visits Providing Personalized Prevention Plan Services,” authorized under the Obamacare law, reads like a behavioral economist’s manual, stressing lifestyle and dietary factors, with weight and “waist circumference” being a primary measure. Did all this, plus the addition of “advance care planning” to this section, somehow escape Sunstein’s evil eye?

- Peter Orszag, Obama’s OMB Director until August, was the Administration’s leading advocate for the cost-cutting elements of the health-care “reform,” including reducing the costs of caring for the elderly. On July 22, 2009, Orszag lyingly told the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City, that “the biggest threat to our fiscal future is rising health care costs,” and he presented statistics on variations in costs among hospitals for treating Medicare patients, “during their last six months of life.” Within OMB, there are a number of staff specialists who focus exclusively on Medicare issues.

Still believe that the White House didn’t know? Or that it won’t try to somehow slip this T4 measure in again?

The only guarantee for ending Obama’s Hitler health policy is getting rid of Obama.