

Australia Dossier by Allen Douglas

Murder by 'suicide'

Philip "Dr. Death" Nitschke has opened a euthanasia clinic in Victoria, a state run by his soul-mate, Jeff Kennett.

What would you do, if a serial killer were running around loose in your neighborhood? Call the authorities, right? What if, however, as in some Grade-B horror movie, the authorities were in cahoots with the murderer?

Residents of the state of Victoria will soon experience this for themselves, in the wake of the move by Dr. Philip Nitschke, Australia's best-known serial killer, from the rural Northern Territory to Victoria, the nation's second-largest state. Although Nitschke allegedly moved to Melbourne, capital of Victoria, to run for Parliament in the Oct. 3 federal election against the sponsor of a successful bill against euthanasia, Liberal MP Kevin Andrews (Nitschke lost), one could surmise that "Dr. Death," as he is known, had at least two other motives: the higher population density, which will afford him a greater number of potential victims; and, the fact that Victorian Premier Jeff Kennett is an outspoken proponent of euthanasia.

If you're going to kill somebody, it were best to have some political backup. Perhaps Nitschke also thinks that, since Kennett has massively cut the state hospital budgets, cuts which have indisputably killed people, as documented by Lyndon LaRouche's Citizen Electoral Council associates in their mass pamphlet "Australia's Health Care 'Reforms': A Nuremberg Crime Against Humanity," that his own murders will just sort of blend in with the general mayhem. Nitschke claims his clinic will just dispense "advice."

Like his American colleague Jack Kevorkian, Nitschke is a homicidal

maniac, although he has helped kill four people, as opposed to Kevorkian's more than 100. After he described, in a May 1997 address in Adelaide, South Australia, what he did to kill Esther Wild, Paul Rofe, the state's Director of Public Prosecutions, said he had just heard "what I believe to be technically a confession to the murder."

Not content with knocking people off one by one, Nitschke is exploring ways to increase his kill rate, including the use of a "coma machine," which even he describes as a "slightly macabre device." This would monitor the victim's brain activity, and pump in more drugs if the patient showed any sign of waking, until he died. He is also working on a death machine involving a plastic bag and carbon monoxide. Furthermore, he delivered a paper on his pet idea of a "suicide pill" to a conference on "voluntary euthanasia" in Switzerland in mid-October, where he effused that it should be possible to invent a cheap pill based on easily obtainable ingredients from "the immense array of toxic products on our supermarket, hardware, or agricultural supply shelves." His efforts have been boosted by Rupert Murdoch's *Herald Sun*, which publishes his pro-suicide rants.

The debate on euthanasia intensified in late October, when Melbourne urologist Dr. Rodney Syme, the president of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society of Victoria, publicly admitted that he had administered increasing doses of morphine to a cancer patient, knowing that this would kill the patient, as the patient had allegedly requested. Although "assisting suicide" is illegal

in Australia, Syme's use of what is called "pharmacological oblivion" to kill people, falls into an ostensible gray area which the Australian Medical Association (AMA) distinguishes from "active euthanasia," on the grounds that the intention is to relieve pain and suffering, even if it is clear that the process will "hasten death."

Syme would clearly prefer to just kill his victims outright. As he told the *Age* of Nov. 2, "I find it a rather obnoxious, very unpleasant process of putting somebody to sleep, keeping them asleep, knowing they are going to die. . . . It's something that is not often discussed, it is swept under the carpet."

Syme's admission, together with his claim that many other doctors are doing the same thing, provoked enough outrage that even Kennett warned doctors that they "risked deregistration" by the AMA for doing what Syme had done. Furthermore, Kennett said, Syme should realize that although he, Kennett, was definitely pro-euthanasia, "that is not the government's position, nor will it be in the future."

Kennett, it would seem, prefers to eliminate people through his savage, Mont Pelerin Society-dictated cuts to Victoria's public health system, which have eliminated thousands of beds and fired thousands of health care professionals, as well as cleaning personnel, which has led to epidemics of golden staph and the highly lethal vancomycin-resistant enterococci in Victorian hospitals. Even his own Health Minister, Rob Knowles, has admitted that Victoria's health system will "collapse" in the near future. One of the many doctors who have quit that system, Australian Association of Surgeons Victorian chairman Dr. Graeme Brazenor, said recently that he did so, because the health system "had deteriorated to Third World standards in Victoria."