

# World resistance to euthanasia grows

by Jutta Dinkermann

The international euthanasia lobby learned in 1988 that their cynical campaign had met substantial organized resistance worldwide. In the last 12 months, more than 100 prominent church leaders, doctors, and citizens from all over the world signed the Club of Life's urgent appeal, "Euthanasia Never Again," as a response to ravaging malthusian policies and frank Nazi campaigns of triage, euthanasia, and genocide.

In the past year, Western Europe and America saw traditional medical protocols replaced by cost-containment policies that balanced the budget by cutting medical services and human lives. Outright patient starvation is now daily "treatment." In the spring of 1988, American "ethicists" and France's death lobby demanded that hospitals be forced to stop (costly) care of severely handicapped children. Parents, they say, must have the legal right to kill these children.

The AIDS plague became the battering ram to make euthanasia "acceptable." Dutch doctors comply promptly with death requests from AIDS patients. Social workers design programs to assure a patient's "right" to an early death. Hospice volunteers boast an underground movement that "humanely" kills AIDS victims. Last June, the U.S.-based Hemlock Society launched its campaign in three states to legalize physicians' aid in killing patients.

West German courts dismissed the case of Dr. Julius Hackethal, who brazenly flaunted his role in the cyanide deaths of several handicapped patients and admitted to killing his mother. The rationale, that the murderers were "merely helping someone already committed to dying by suicide," also appeared in U.S. court dismissals.

## International conferences

While the Club of Life appeal was already a blow to the euthanasia lobby, the June 11-12 international conference of the Club of Life in Munich, West Germany was even more so. Three hundred delegates from all areas of public life gathered to condemn every kind of euthanasia policy, be it hidden under the pretense of humanitarianism or the result of drastic austerity measures, which urges doctors to make a selection among their patients. Prominent guest speakers included Don Dario Composta from the Pontifical University Urbaniana in Rome, Father Angel Riba from the Bishops' Conference of Venezuela, U.S. presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Club of Life, and Manfred Pohl, President of the Federal Union of

Medical Rescue Personnel in West Germany.

Although many of the anti-euthanasia resistance fighters could not attend personally, the messages of their greetings and support underlined their powerful commitment. Among those messages, which could easily have filled another conference day, were those from Dr. André Wynen, General Secretary of the World Medical Association; Cardinal José Freire Falçao, Bishop of Brasilia; Father Guillermo León Zuleta, Archdiocese of Medellín; Rita Calderini, National Committee for the Defense of the Italian Schools; Bishop Dr. Alois Wagner, Vice President Cor Unum, Vatican; Fred Borgmann, Member of Parliament, Netherlands; Monsignor Alfredo Noriega, Auxiliary Bishop of Lima; Monsignor Tullio Chirbella, Archbishop of Barquisimeto, Venezuela; Chief Rabbi Mordechai Piron, Zurich; John Weber, Board of Overseers, Hebrew Union College, California; Dr. Peter Gauweiler, Undersecretary in the Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior; and Botho Prinz zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, President of the German Red Cross.

The resolutions of the conference called upon the Western world leaders to:

- Finally end their deadly policy of wait and see toward Africa and implement emergency measures. "It is a scandal that the West is making satellite photographs of Africa, which show vast areas depopulated by AIDS as well as food shortages and locust infection, and that Western governments are doing little or nothing."

- "Defend human life from conception to death against all attacks such as euthanasia, abortion, or the abuses of reproductive medicine."

- Forbid organizations like the West German Society for a Humane Death from "pushing propaganda for suicide, or killing on request, from disseminating instruction books on suicide, from recruiting paying members for this purpose, and thus making a cynical profit from the suffering of other human beings."

- Refuse to implement austerity measures for the public health services, as "ordered by the international financial institutions and the private insurance companies which will necessarily lead to the destruction of public health services—as, for example, has already been demonstrated in the United States," where the reduction of the health budget through triage and euthanasia has "led to a considerable increase in the death rate and to immeasurable human suffering."

- "Decide rather on an effective strategy against the economic crisis for a New World Economic Order."

A follow-up conference in Medellín, Colombia on July 7, gathered leading Ibero-American anti-euthanasia resistance fighters, who are not only confronted with the fight against hunger and poverty, but also another special form of euthanasia politics: the various sterilization programs. The resolutions passed at the Munich conference and the appeal laid the ground for all kinds of activities to stop euthanasia in whatever form or country it shows its ugly face.

## *Euthanasia never again!*

It should not go unpunished that today, 43 years after the defeat of the Nazi regime, people once again dare to advocate and implement euthanasia, making themselves judges over other people's lives, allegedly unworthy of being lived. This is murder pure and simple, and incitement to murder.

On Dec. 23, 1987 a paraplegic young woman from Karlsruhe, West Germany by the name of "Daniela" was killed by a woman who is a sympathizer of the German Society for Humane Death, by means of cyanide. The Society and Dr. Hackethal are currently carrying out a massive propaganda campaign with the hypocritical argument that one must respect the decision of the patient if such a patient wants to end a life "not worth living." Similar euthanasia campaigns are emerging elsewhere.

Lurking behind the euthanasia campaign is not a shred of "respect" for the desires of afflicted persons—it is merely brutal cost accounting. The Society for Humane Death is nothing but a propaganda front-organization for the political circles and financial institutions, which, in the face of the new world economic crisis, want to kill off the old and the ill as "useless eaters," just as they did the last time.

It is estimated that in Holland, as many as 10% of all deaths can already be attributed to euthanasia, and ever more elderly and ill people are refusing to be admitted to hospitals and care homes, because they fear being killed as a cost-saving measure. Emergency cases in the United States over 50 years of age are no longer given medical care if they are not able to prove that they have the financial means to pay, and it is an open secret that active euthanasia is common practice in most hospitals and hospices.

Furthermore, there is a degree of panic among all governments of the industrial nations that the AIDS epidemic will produce a cost explosion in health care which will shatter all cost-reduction efforts in their health systems. Treatment of a single AIDS patient costs about \$1 million or 2-3 million German marks, and the costs will soon be astronomical. Is it any surprise that these neo-Nazi ideologues have already proposed that AIDS victims should be eliminated by euthanasia?

Once the threshold of the inviolability and sacredness of human life is broken, when political powers turn themselves into judges over the lives of the weak and the poor, then a repetition of the barbarity of the Nazis, in far greater dimensions, will unfortunately become reality. The very existence of the African continent is threatened by the AIDS epidemic, 450 million people are threatened with death—and the governments of the North know it, without granting the help necessary.

Every human life on this planet must be protected, because every person carries within himself or herself a part of the divine. It is the respect for this absolute dignity of the individual and his right to life which differentiates us from all dictatorships. And it was the denial of this right which made the euthanasia and extermination programs of the Nazis possible.

We, the undersigned, appeal to Western governments and politicians to implement clear measures to prohibit and punish euthanasia in any form, be it active or passive. We make this appeal on the basis of the same principles established in the Nuremberg trials.

If we, who are in full possession of our mental and bodily strength, do not care for the weak and the poor, this sin of omission will be the cause of our own demise. Help us to defend the human dignity of all individuals.

Among the signers (affiliations for identification purposes only):

**Israel:** Dr. Ram Ishai, Israeli Medical Association. **Austria:** Dr. Simon Wiesenthal, Jewish Documentation Center. **France:** Marie-Madeleine Fourcade, President, Association of Friends of the Alliance, the Action Committee of the Resistance. **Italy:** Don Dario Composta, former Dean, Pontifical Urbaniana University. **England:** Dr. Adrian Rogers, Councillor, City of Exeter, County of Devon. **Sweden:** Lennart Hane, lawyer, author. **Spain:** Nicholas Castellanos, Bishop of Palencia. **Thailand:** Dr. Mana Bookhanphol, Director, St. Louis Hospital. **West Germany:** Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder, Club of Life; Dr. Franz-Josef Grosse Ruyken, State Physicians Board, Baden-Württemberg. **Brazil:** Congressmen Oswaldo Filho and Dr. Euclides Scalco. **Colombia:** Gustavo Patiño Duque, economist; Silva Sanchez, former president, Colombian Society of Economists of Bogota. **Mexico:** Demetrio Sodi Pallares, former president, Mexican Academy of Medicine. **Peru:** Dr. Ricardo Martín Mora, former Deputy Attorney General. **U.S.:** Erma Craven, Executive Board, National Right to Life, former chairman, Minnesota Commission on Human Rights; Rabbi David Feldman, New Jersey; Dr. Nancy Mullan, President, California Pro-Life Medical Council; Amelia Boynton Robinson, Civil Rights leader, Alabama; Rev. Wade Watts, Executive Director, Oklahoma NAACP; John Weber, Board of Overseers, Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion, California; Prof. Frederick Wills, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and former Justice Minister of Guyana.