

# e-Deliverance

*A Peaceful Death is Everybody's Right*

July

Exit International

2007

## Exit Director Announces Menzies Election Campaign

With the forthcoming Federal election due to be held later this year, Exit Director Dr Philip Nitschke has announced his intention to stand as an Independent candidate against the sitting Liberal Party Member Kevin Andrews in the Victorian seat of Menzies. It was the Kevin Andrews' Private Member's Bill - supported by many on both sides of parliament - that led to the overturning of the world's first VE law, the Northern Territory's Rights of the Terminally Ill Act in 1997.

Philip has twice challenged Kevin Andrews for the seat of Menzies. In the first campaign as an Independent in 1998, Dr Nitschke attracted nearly 10% of the primary vote and forced Kevin Andrews to preferences for the first time. Donations to the campaign from VE supporters across Australia were in the order of \$120,000, more than any other independent candidate in the election. Even though the Howard government was re-elected that year, the 'Menzies Campaign' of 1998 gave the Liberal Party and Kevin Andrews something of a headache.

In 2001, Philip again challenged Kevin Andrews. This time the campaign was titled 'Put Kevin Andrews Last' and set out to remind voters of Andrews' profoundly undemocratic Private Member's Bill and his strong opposition to Voluntary Euthanasia. In this campaign Philip did not stand as a candidate, and this was later seen as a tactical mistake.



Hon Kevin Andrews, with his leader John Howard

of end-of-life choices. On this note, Exit welcomes Lindy Boyd, with her experience from both previous campaigns, as 2007 campaign manager.

As in previous campaigns, Dr Nitschke will again leave preferences undirected. Exit is not a party-political organisation. Besides, in the cold light of day, there is very little chance of the Labor Party addressing VE law reform, even if it wins office. The presence of senior ALP politicians like Tony Burke (who, with Andrews orchestrated the 'Euthanasia No' campaign in 1996-7), Peter Garrett, and of course the ALP leader Kevin Rudd - all of whom are hostile to VE - ensures that even with a Federal Labor government a VE law is unlikely. Nevertheless, a third Menzies campaign is an excellent way to send a message from the electorate to our elected representatives that VE - as a social issue of our times - is here to stay.

Exit looks forward to working with Dying With Dignity Victoria to produce a successful and effective campaign. If you can help in any way please complete the form attached to this newsletter. By working together, Voluntary Euthanasia supporters from across Australia will be able to make a clear point - politicians who refuse to take note of the wishes of the electorate will have an electoral price to pay.



In 2007, this 10th anniversary year of the overturning of the world's first VE law, there is a ground-swell of dissatisfaction with the Howard government and Exit considers it timely for Philip to stand against this staunch opponent

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# New Zealand Bans PP Handbook

In a disappointing decision for authors Drs Philip Nitschke and Fiona Stewart, the New Zealand Chief Censor, Mr Bill Hastings, has awarded *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* an 'objectionable' rating, leading to the book's total ban in New Zealand. Despite New Zealand's Bill of Rights - which enshrines the right to freedom of expression - Mr Hastings argued that the book instructs in matters of crime and cannot therefore be allowed even restricted distribution in NZ.



NZ Censor Bill Hastings examines the Handbook

The provision of information about how to purchase Nembutal in Mexico and the first-hand accounts of people returning home with the drug is - apparently - an example of 'instruction in matters of crime.' Despite the myriad crimes depicted in popular culture, it would appear *The Handbook* touched some raw political nerves in New Zealand. Those lobbying the Chief Censor to ban the book included: Peter Brown MP (NZ First Deputy Leader), Simon Robb (Registrar, Medical Council of New Zealand), Maria Cotter (NZ Ministry of Health), Inspector Alistair Murray (Senior Legal Advisor NZ Police) and Ken Orr (NZ Right to Life).

The only organisation to support the book was the Voluntary Euthanasia Society of New Zealand whose President Jack Jones said *The Handbook* would be a valuable reference tool

## Voluntary Euthanasia Debated on 'Mornings with Kerri-Anne'

In early June Dr Nitschke made his second appearance in a month on the 'Mornings with Kerri-Anne' show on Channel 9, this time to debate NSW Right to Life representative Katrina George. No friend of Exit's (George wrote a vitriolic opinion piece in *The Australian* on *Killing Me Softly* back in 2005), George reiterated many of RTL's old arguments of why a VE law represents a threat to civil society. Her position is summed up in a letter to *The Australian* back in 2002 where she claimed, "The risk of legalised euthanasia is that what is one day a right to die, is another day a duty to die, which the most vulnerable among us are ill-equipped to resist."

and give comfort and reassurance to people who were seriously ill or elderly by knowing that information was at their finger tips if needed.

One of the more perplexing reactions to the book's banning came from NZ VE advocate Lesley Martin who was reported in the media as saying that the book's ban was 'excellent' news. She added that in her view, 'Dr Nitschke advocates [end-of-life] methods that are 'backyard and amateurish.'

On a brighter note, the Chief Censor was much more constructive in his detailed decision saying that the book was 'well intentioned' and that Dr Nitschke had acted responsibly in presenting the book for screening in the first place. Mr Bill Hastings added that the book was banned because of the way it encouraged criminal acts, not because it calls for euthanasia law reform.

Following comments by the Chief Censor, Exit is re-editing the book, blacking out contentious sections and re-submitting it for classification. Meanwhile *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* is consistently ranked in the top 5000 sellers (of more than 2 million titles listed) at the online bookstore, Amazon.com. Depleted stocks have now prompted a new edition in the US, this time with the much sought-after details of Mexican Nembutal printed in colour.



Dr Philip Nitschke with Right to Life NSW representative lawyer Katrina George on MKA on 8 June 2007

# Dr Nitschke Addresses Bioethics Forum at UTAS Hobart

June was a busy month for Exit speaking engagements. Firstly, Dr Nitschke addressed the Academy of Forensic Sciences in Sydney on the ethical and moral issues of Voluntary Euthanasia. With a few minor exceptions, his address was received extremely well by the eminent audience of barristers, solicitors, scientists, professors of medicine and ethicists. The anti-choice view was presented by Professor Norelle Lickiss of Palliative Care at University of Sydney.

In the following week, Dr Nitschke travelled to Hobart to participate in a debate on VE hosted by the Tasmania University Students' Bioethics Society. Chaired by Professor Don Chalmers (Dean of Law, UTAS), the panel included Professor Michael Ashby (Head of Palliative Care, Royal Hobart Hospital) and pro-life Associate Professor Christopher Newell (Department of Medicine, UTAS). Needless to say Dr Nitschke was the only person to present a pro-choice VE position.

## Voluntary Euthanasia & Life Prisoners

In mid-June, Exit found itself the subject of intensive media scrutiny after an innocent question by an AAP journalist about Port Arthur mass murderer, Martin Bryant, became national news.

Interviewed in the course of the UTAS Bioethics forum Dr Nitschke was asked about Martin Bryant's repeated suicide attempts at Risdon Prison. Philip reiterated the general view he expressed in *Killing Me Softly* in 2005 that VE should be allowed for prisoners for whom there is no hope of release. He argued that permanent incarceration with no hope of release is tantamount to torture, something the state should be prepared to acknowledge. In *KMS*, Dr Nitschke quoted Jonathan Horrocks who is incarcerated in Victoria's Barwon prison (for murder) with whom he has had some correspondence on the subject.

The media reaction to the AAP interview was extensive given the comment was made in the context of the Bioethics forum. This was also surprising, especially given that *The Bulletin* and *Who Magazine* had both published articles on the issue in recent months, and quoted Dr Nitschke, but with no public outcry.

While older members of the audience were vocal in their support for VE, some of the younger students expressed concern about the slippery slope if VE were to be legalised. Exit thanks Olivia Smibert and her organising committee for the invitation and their hospitality.



Professor Chalmers, Olivia Smibert, Rhea Psereckis Dr Philip Nitschke, Assoc Professor Chris Newell (seated), Professor Michael Ashby & Clare Frawley

## Tassie Chapter, New faces

With the resignation in April of Hobart Chapter Co-ordinator Mike Harris (after 2 years in the position), Exit is pleased to announce that Keith Anderson has offered to take over the reigns in conjunction with several other volunteers to ensure that Exit Tassie stays vibrant. Keith expects to hold a Chapter meeting in the coming months. If you are interested in assisting with or participating in the Hobart Chapter please call Keith on 6229 2447.



Mike Harris, Professor Don Chalmers & Keith Anderson at the recent UTAS Bioethics Forum in Hobart

## Contact Us

### *Exit International*

PO Box 37781 Darwin NT 0821 Australia  
ph 1300 10 EXIT (3948) fax 02-8905-9249  
[contact@exitinternational.net](mailto:contact@exitinternational.net)

## Donate to Exit

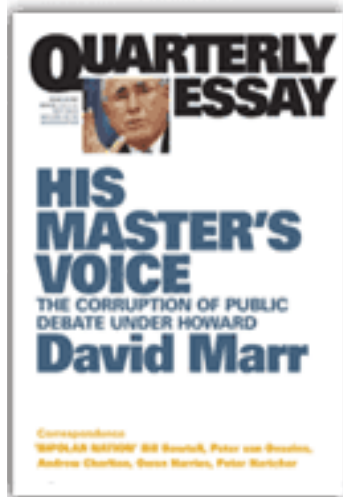
Exit relies on donations to fund its workshop,  
private visits and R&D programs  
Bequest forms can be obtained from Exit.

# 'His Master's Voice' by David Marr (extract)

The overturning of the Northern Territory's euthanasia laws was among Howard's first dramatic acts and a marker for much that lay ahead under the new government. The move was profoundly undemocratic: Australians endorse euthanasia overwhelmingly. But it was driven by Christian conservatives, backed by the Murdoch press, attended by fierce scare campaigns and made possible by drawing on deep support from within the Labor Party. That 1997 victory casts a long shadow still. The political demands of anti-euthanasia forces are considered almost irresistible. What they want banned is banned.

The barbiturate sleeping pill Nembutal was banned in 1998. "In countries where voluntary euthanasia is legal and any drug can be used, Nembutal remains the drug of choice," writes the euthanasia campaigner Philip Nitschke ... With legislative reform impossible in Australia, Nitschke began to search for what he called a "peaceful pill" that might be homemade from legally available ingredients and "replicate the painless, easeful death provided by a drug like Nembutal."

The years ticked by. Nitschke worked on various "deliverance" machines while anti-euthanasia vigilantes continued to circle. In 2002 Canberra banned both the import and export of the machines and any documents that counselled, instructed or incited people to use them. In 2005, parliament debated one of the most thuggish little pieces of legislation of the last decade: the Criminal Code Amendment (Suicide Related Material Offences) Bill which would make it a crime to use the telephone, fax, radio, television, email, mobile phone or Internet "for the purposes of counselling or inciting suicide or promoting or providing instruction on a particular method of suicide." Labor supported the Bill. Opposing it were law groups, civil libertarians and Electronic Frontiers Australia. Christian groups called for even tougher penalties ... In the Senate, only the Greens and the Democrats attacked the Bill. The Democrats Brian Greig gave it both barrels ... When the law came into operation in January 2006, Australia became the only country on earth to have such prohibitions.



Countries such as China, seriously determined to control access to the internet, aren't concerned about suicide. And anything like the Australian prohibitions would fail in North America and Europe by breaching free speech protections. So, alone in the world, two Australians discussing suicide methods on the telephone can be bugged and fined up to \$110,000.

... *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* was launched ten days later in Canada at the sixteenth biennial meeting of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies. Nitschke and campaigner Dr Fiona Stewart had deliberately drafted the handbook so as not to fall foul of Australian censorship laws that forbid giving "instruction" in matters of crime ...

Forty-five copies of the book were seized by Customs at Brisbane airport from one of Exit's volunteers when she flew home from the Toronto conference. Though, Customs authorities considered the book fell foul of the 2002 import-export regulations governing suicide materials, *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* could still be printed and sold in Australia. This was hurriedly arranged after the airport seizure, and Exit International approached the Office of Film and Literature Classification for a clearance. The OFLC decided in mid-December that the handbook could be sold but only to adults. It was in the shops for Christmas.

**Moral campaigns in this country advance by plugging every hole. Once the fundamental decision is accepted - in this case, overturning the Northern Territory law - every act of censorship that follows is represented as merely tidying up and blocking loopholes.** Euthanasia remains a crime in all jurisdictions; the borders are sealed; the internet is cleansed; the phones are silenced and Hansard is censored. When the OFLC allowed adults to buy and read *The Peaceful Pill Handbook*, pressure was immediately brought to bear on the Attorney-General Philip Ruddock, to plug a gaping hole. He needed little persuasion ... *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* was doomed.



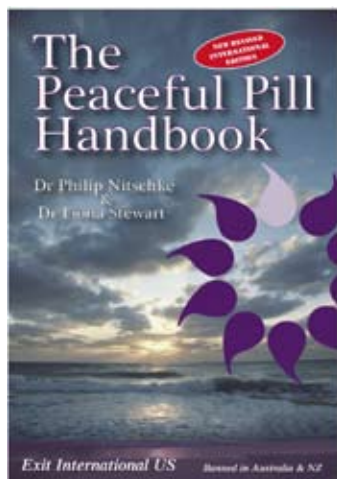
David Marr

*David Marr is an award-winning writer and one of Australia's most respected and well-known journalists. This extract of Issue 26 of the Quarterly Essay has been reproduced with the kind permission of Black Inc Books. The Quarterly Essay is available by calling 1800 077 514 or online at: [www.quarterlyessay.com](http://www.quarterlyessay.com)*

## New Revised International Edition of *The Peaceful Pill Handbook*

- Now Available -

In good news this month, Exit International US President, Neal Nicol, has reported that stocks of *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* have been exhausted prompting the authors to publish a new edition of what is fast-becoming a reliable best-seller at Amazon.com.



The new edition, which will be available from mid-July, will contain colour photographs in the Mexican Nembutal section. This useful addition will make it much easier for readers to use the photographs in the book to acquire veterinary Nembutal, should they be visiting Mexico for the purpose of obtaining their own 'peaceful pill.'

This edition also has many corrections and a much higher standard of images throughout, enabling readers to better understand the concepts and strategies being put forward by the authors. The backcover carries some of the more memorable comments made about the book by the likes of the Australian Christian Lobby, the Australian Government Classification Review Board and Palliative Care Australia.

### Caren Jennings Update

Caren Jennings says she feels humbled and very grateful for the well wishes and donations she has received this month. Her 28 June court hearing has again been postponed, this time until 16 August. A further update will be included in the August edition of *Deliverance*.

### Exit Laboratory Equipment Update

With preliminary research almost complete, Exit is looking forward to placing an order for GC/MS equipment in the coming month. Full details of the acquisition (including photos) will be published in the August edition of *Deliverance*.

### July Melbourne Chapter Meeting

The next Melbourne Chapter Meeting will be held on Wednesday 25 July at 10am. For details call Pat Scrivenor on 03-5974-1580 or Rob Cane on 0423-305-788.

## Editorial

Life at Exit is rarely focused upon one single undertaking. Such is the nature of what we do that the Exit secretariat is always occupied with any number of tasks, and this month has been no different.

We made the decision this month that we should make one last attempt to challenge Kevin Andrews' incumbency in the Seat of Menzies in Victoria. What better year than the 10th anniversary of the Kevin Andrews' Private Member's Bill and the overturning of the Marshall Perron's NT legislation to try and remove from office this most destructive and undemocratic of Federal politicians?

At the current time, pundits are betting on a November election. I will need to relocate to Melbourne for the lead-up to the election and Exit will have a campaign office within the Menzies electorate. I encourage all members across Australia to become active in this most timely political campaign.

I have continued to meet and talk with experts about the forthcoming purchase of the GC/MS equipment. I was thoroughly heartened that Exit members saw fit to give so generously to this fund and the responsibility now is to ensure the purchase suits Exit's needs both today and into the future. One first priority is the development of a mail-order kit that will enable members to check the efficacy of old Nembutal stock. Please stand by for a further announcement on this project in the next edition of *Deliverance*.

In between these activities, I was also on the road much of June, visiting Hobart and Sydney. It is important to accept speaking engagements when they come along, as it's only by speaking about VE publicly that we are able to most influence political and public opinion. Of note is the considerable support I received from some of the senior members of the legal profession who attended the Academy of Forensic Sciences forum in Sydney.

Finally, the decision by the New Zealand Chief Censor to rule *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* as 'objectionable' and, as such, unsuitable for sale in New Zealand was upsetting. It is ironic that Mr Bill Hastings came to his decision just as sales of the *Handbook* at Amazon.com began to rise, generating press as far away as Russia and forcing the publication of a new international edition. Perhaps the banning of our book does have a positive side, although I'd rather have a book that could be used in Exit workshops and meetings here in Australia and New Zealand.

*Philip Nitschke*



# Donate to Exit

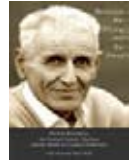
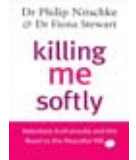
WBC	R	
WBC-G	KMS	
B	DVD	
C	OTHER	

Office Use Only

I want to donate (join/rejoin) to Exit  (A\$100-150 is the average annual donation)

## Exit Shop

- \* **Killing Me Softly VE and the Road to the Peaceful Pill**  A\$37  
(by Drs Philip Nitschke & Fiona Stewart) (includes postage within Australia)
- \* **The Peaceful Pill Handbook** (New Revised International Edition)  
(Due to the banning of the PPH, the book is now only available at the on-line bookstore [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (price US\$35 & ships same day))
- \* **Between the Dying & the Dead - Dr Jack Kevorkian, the Assisted Suicide Machine & the Battle to Legalise Euthanasia**  A\$37  
(by Neal Nicol & Harry Wylie) (includes postage within Australia)
- \* **I Bequeath the Python**  A\$15  
(by Elaine Arch-Rowe & Gordon Bell) (includes postage within Australia)



For all books' availability outside Australia, please contact the Exit office

### Contact Details

First Name(s).....  
 Last Name.....  
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### Payment Options

I am giving \$ .....  
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 Australia  
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 Outside Australia +64 4-293-6965 (NZ)  
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 Email: [contact@exitinternational.net](mailto:contact@exitinternational.net)

# Philip Nitschke 2007 Menzies VE Campaign Supporter/ Volunteer Form

Exit International Director, Dr Philip Nitschke, will be standing as an Independent candidate in the Victorian Federal seat of Menzies (Doncaster/Templestowe area) in the forthcoming 2007 Federal election. A campaign team headed by Lindy Boyd, and based in Melbourne, has now been formed.

The sitting Liberal member, The Hon Kevin Andrews MP, was the politician whose Private Member's Bill overturned the world's first Voluntary Euthanasia law - the Northern Territory's Rights of the Terminally Ill Act in 1997.



Hon Kevin Andrews, MHR

Dr Nitschke stood against Kevin Andrews in the 1998 Federal Election and drew nearly 10% of the primary vote - forcing Mr Andrews to rely on preferences for the first time.

Ten years have now passed and *still* we live in the shadow of the actions of this politician who is responsible for the removal of Australia's end of life legislation. It's time to remind the voters of Doncaster, and the nation, of Andrews' role. It's time to place VE back on the political agenda.

To do this, we need your help

If you are able to assist in any way we ask you to complete the form below.

## YOUR COMMITMENT WILL ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THIS CAMPAIGN

I/We would like to help with (please tick):

- Letterboxing
- Administration assistance in the Campaign Office
- Campaign promotion in Shopping Centres in the Menzies Electorate
- Campaign promotion in the Menzies Electorate – e.g. Freeway vigil, garden sign etc.
- Handing out "How to Vote" Cards (pre-poll – 2 weeks prior to Election)
- Handing out "How to Vote" Cards (Election Day)
- Booth Captain – Election Day (Instructions and training given)
- Campaign Driver

**I want to donate to the Menzies VE campaign**

### Contact Details

First Name.....

Last Name.....

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.....Postcode.....

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### Donation Options

I am donating \$ .....

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Signature.....

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