



PRESS RELEASE

VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA

National Day of Shame - 26 March 2007

FREEDOM RIDE TO CANBERRA

The 10th anniversary of the over-turning of the world's first Voluntary Euthanasia law – the Northern Territory's Rights of the Terminally Ill Act - will be marked with a day of activities attended by over 180 delegates in Canberra on Monday 26 March 2007.

According to Dr Philip Nitschke, Director of the pro-VE choice organization Exit International and a convenor of the National Day of Shame, a Freedom Ride from Sydney to Canberra with over 100 elderly and seriously ill people is the perfect way to take our message to the politicians.

“When the Australian Parliament chose to overturn the Northern Territory's ground-breaking law 10 years ago, they didn't just trample on the democratic process represented in the NT Parliament, they ignored the wishes of 80% of the Australian community.”

“Just like 10 years ago, 4 out of 5 Australians believe a seriously ill person should be able to ask for assistance to die – just who do our politicians think they are representing in ignoring an issue which attracts such widespread humane and compassionate support in the community?”

While over 100 people will make the bus trip from Sydney to Canberra, many more have sent their messages to the politicians of Canberra through entries in Condolence Books that have been circulating throughout Australia over the past 8 months. These books containing thousands of messages will be presented to representatives of the major political parties.



National Day of Shame Program - Monday 26 March 2007

- **Freedom Bus Ride** from Central Station Sydney (Departs 12 noon, bay 15/16) to Canberra (Arrive 5pm) on branded 'Support VE Now' coaches (Sunday 25 March).
- **'Special Event'** - 8.30am (Monday 26 March) Lawns Old Parliament House
- **Presentation of Thousands of Messages of Condolence** to Senator Lyn Allison (Australian Democrats), Senator Bob Brown (Australian Greens), the Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence (ALP) - 10am Main foyer, Parliament House
- **Media Conference** - Senate Committee Room 1S2 at - 10.15am
- **'Special Event'** at Parliament House Canberra - 11am
- **Street march** through Canberra Civic - 11.30am
(Assembling at Legislative Assembly, Civic Square, London Circuit)
- **Picnic Lunch and Speeches** at Glebe Park, Civic – 12.30pm
- **Silent protest** attendance at House of Representatives Question Time – 2pm
- **Memorial Dinner** – National Museum of Australia – guest speaker Philip Adams – 7pm

For further details call:

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The National Day of Shame is a joint initiative of Exit International and the Voluntary Euthanasia Society of New South Wales.

Why a Freedom Ride? In 1965, 30 Sydney University students took their message of equality through outback NSW. Their actions led to a wholly new focus on indigenous rights. 41 years later more than 100 elderly Australians are taking their own freedom ride to Canberra to convince their elected representatives of their rights at the end of life.