

What's happening in the World ?

UK

SURVEY CONFIRMS MANY DOCTORS ARE BREAKING THE LAW

www.dignityindying.org.uk - 17/1/2006

Recent academic research by professor Clive Seale of Brunel University, conducted anonymously with 857 doctors in the UK, has produced some perplexing truths about the way they were implicated in their patient's death during 2004. The study shows that 2,865 patients were helped to die - eight patients every day. Another 191,811 patients had their death accelerated by doctors using pain relief - one in every three deaths. While most doctors would be acting compassionately on their patient's wishes, no law currently protects them from legal prosecution or their patients from abuse.

42nd BRITON SEEKS DIGNITAS ASSISTANCE TO DIE

The Sunday Times - 29/1/2006

Retired GP Anne Turner (67) opted to die with the help of Dignitas before her degenerative illness (Progressive Supranuclear Palsy) put her into a position of being unable to make this choice. She enjoyed a last meal in the company of her three children before drinking a lethal dose of barbiturates in a flat in Zurich owned by Dignitas. She slipped into a coma and died peacefully 25 minutes later.

Switzerland is the only European nation that permits foreigners or "death tourists" to enter the country for assisted suicide. Dignitas director Ludwig Minelli admitted that: "Since May 17, 1998, three persons from Australia have come to Dignitas in order to have an assisted suicide . . . actually, about 30 persons with residence in Australia are among our members."

New Zealand

EXIT IN EXILE

www.ves.org.nz - 10/1/2006

In direct response to the new Suicide Related Material Offences Act, which came into force on 6th of January 2006, *EXIT International* has moved its website offshore. Now hosted by the Voluntary Euthanasia Society of New Zealand, it is pointed out that, if accessing this site from within Australia, one may still be in breach of the Australian Criminal Code.

Israel

MACHINE MAY TAKE CONTROL

The Maccabean - 27/1/2006

New Israeli legislation will, if various stringent conditions are met, allow a machine to turn off a terminally ill patient's respirator. This law, which was approved by a 58 member panel of medical, religious and philosophical experts, is meant to circumvent Jewish law, which forbids people taking human life. As a parliamentary spokesman explained: "A man would not be able to shorten human life, but a machine can".

The passing of the legislation was hailed as a historic moment and promises a change of attitude towards voluntary euthanasia.

Australia

OUTSPOKEN TYCOON HITS OUT AT POLITICIANS

The Bulletin - 4/1/2006

Les Carlyon

The late Kerry Packer, perhaps the richest and most successful tycoon in Australia, is reported to have been an advocate of VE:

"He felt that people who were hurting and doomed had the right to end their lives. He was furious that several politicians were campaigning against euthanasia and he let fly a string of expletives....

'I don't want to hang around when there's no hope' he said. 'Do you? I don't want to lose my dignity. Don't want people fussing about me and telling me when I want to take a leak and all that. Couldn't think of anything worse. Could you?' "

TWO NEW POLLS SHOW SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FOR VE

The West Australian - 10 & 24/1/2006

A one-day phone poll in the *West Australian* in December last year, asking the question: "Do you think euthanasia should be legalised in WA?", produced 1135 responses with **93%** in favour. More recently Westpoll (Patterson Market Research) asked the same question during 401 telephone interviews, which resulted in **72%** in favour.

