

activist Dr. Anatoli Koryagin proposed formation of a Committee for the Rights of Prisoners-Defenders of the Russian Parliament, with three goals: 1) establishing the names and number of the dead, wounded, and arrested in Russia in October 1993; 2) compiling a list of missing persons and discovering their fate; 3) ensuring the civil and human rights of persons arrested in connection with the events.

### Deputies threatened

Burgalin's group, according to *Le Monde*, also called upon the government to make public the names of all persons detained since Oct. 3.

Some members of the Russian Parliament are still unaccounted for, among them Col. Vitali Urazhtsev (ret.). The leader of the anti-communist reform group Shield—he was expelled from the Soviet Army in 1989 for founding the organization—Urazhtsev was active in opposing Yeltsin's coup from Sept. 21 through Oct. 4. During its first week, he was arrested and beaten once, but returned to the White House. He was seen to exit after the shelling on Oct. 4, and then disappeared.

In mid-October, relatives of Urazhtsev received a letter from him, saying he had gone underground. Urazhtsev warned that if he were found dead with a weapon in his hands, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, Yeltsin's ally, would be to blame.

Unconfirmed reports received by acquaintances of Urazhtsev in Moscow, are that security forces had orders to shoot him on sight, if he were discovered.

There is also an abiding threat from national security forces and the Moscow city administration, under Yeltsin loyalist Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, to re-arrest members of the Moscow City Council who opposed the coup. Five deputies were held for two days without being charged, and released Oct. 5.

With special stridence, in interviews with the publications *Argumenty i Fakty*, No. 41, October 1993 and *Tverskaya*, 13, No. 40, Oct. 8-14, 1993, Luzhkov aides have called for the arrest of Moscow City Council Deputy Chairman Yuri P. Sedykh-Bondarenko. A jurist who worked in the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs in the late 1980s, Sedykh-Bondarenko was fired after speaking out against its practices. He left the Communist Party and was elected to the Moscow City Council in 1990, where he specialized in questions of legality.

In early October, Sedykh-Bondarenko publicly refuted the insinuations from the Moscow Mayoralty, that he had provoked violence during the crisis. In a precise statement, he accounted for his whereabouts and actions during the days in question and demanded legal action against the Mayoralty for slander. During the first week of November, however, Sedykh-Bondarenko was twice summoned for interrogation at the Russian Federation Ministry of Security, indicating a continuing interest in framing him up.

## Dutch Senate to vote on euthanasia rules

by Linda Everett

Long before U.S. newspapers sported front-page headlines featuring President Clinton's Nov. 7 suggestion that "living wills are a way to cut health care costs," Americans closely watched the euthanasia policies of the liberal government of the Netherlands. In fact, every facet of the "Who lives? Who dies?" debate that First Lady Hillary Clinton hopes to launch soon, will be shaped directly by several upcoming euthanasia decisions in the Dutch Parliament and Supreme Court.

After two decades of promoting the practice of so-called voluntary euthanasia, the Dutch government is now considering demands that handicapped newborns, the mentally ill, patients in coma, and others who cannot express a wish to be killed, should be killed anyway. As a recent American visitor to Amsterdam commented, "It sounded a lot like Nazi Germany in the '30s." What bitter gall for those Dutch who remember that their country's doctors once faced concentration camps and death rather than practice the euthanasia that the invading Nazis demanded. Some feel that nothing less than an international economic boycott of the Netherlands will bring Dutch leaders to their senses.

In a statement on Sept. 30 on the Canadian Supreme Court's ruling against the request of a 42-year-old woman to obtain physician-assisted suicide, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops commented that "to accept killing as a private matter of individual choice is to diminish respect for human life, to dull our consciences and to dehumanize society." Accepting this ever-expanding Dutch policy of euthanasia connotes not so much a "dulling of our consciences," as a deadening of them.

On Nov. 23, the Dutch Senate will vote on new rules for reporting the practice of euthanasia. The rules, which already passed the Second Chamber of the Parliament last February, allow physicians to kill outright just about anyone for any reason—whether the patient asked to die or not. Doctors are guaranteed virtual immunity from prosecution if they follow new governmental guidelines, which are full of loopholes. Any doctor who administers a lethal injection must inform the coroner and report that he or she has paid strict attention to all requirements. Not only is the coroner not allowed to do an autopsy to confirm the cause of death, but the public prosecutor is not allowed to carry out an independent investigation,

beyond a review of the doctor's own report of the death.

Any investigation should begin with the government's own Justice Minister Ernst Hirsch-Ballin and State Secretary for Welfare, Health, and Cultural Affairs Hans J. Simons, who say that the new law is needed to regulate "mercy killings." These ministers are responsible for a massive coverup of the involuntary killing of tens of thousands of patients. The 1990 study of the government's Rummelink Commission on the practice of euthanasia found that one in every six deaths is caused by the intentional killing of patients, most of whom *never asked to be killed*. Of the 20,000 deaths reviewed, 1,000 patients killed by lethal injections never asked to die; 8,000 patients who never asked to be murdered, were intentionally killed by doctors who ended their treatment, food, and water; 8,000 others who never asked to die, were intentionally killed by drug overdoses. The government's experts did not consider these intentional killings "euthanasia," since patients were killed *involuntarily*. They called them "normal medical practice."

### Lies and coverup

On the basis of their study, the same ministers asked for judicial guidance in the use of medical murder for mentally ill or comatose patients. One of the Big Lies circulated internationally about the Dutch euthanasia policy, is that euthanasia is allowed only for those mentally competent, terminally ill patients who are in intractable pain and who repeatedly ask for it. This lie is repeated every time Dutch experts speak before U.S. medical conferences.

But a case now before the Dutch Supreme Court involves a psychiatrist who was acquitted last April for setting up the "suicide" of his patient, Hillie Hasscher, who was *not* terminally ill. She was depressed over a bitter divorce and the death of two sons. It is not known whether the doctor attempted to treat her for depression after she attempted suicide. But, two years ago, in front of several witnesses, the psychiatrist gave her the barbiturates that ended her life. The lower court acquitted the psychiatrist on the grounds that he put an end to her misery. It is doubtful that the Supreme Court will reverse that ruling, given that at least one former Dutch Supreme Court Judge, Huib Drion, has publicly called for a "death pill" to be given to old and sick people who "want" to die.

Reuters notes that Prince Claus of the Netherlands, husband of Queen Beatrix, recently admitted his own relapse of the severe depression that plagued him in the early 1980s. Prince Claus was hospitalized in July 1991 and released in November of that year, after he responded positively to treatment. It appears that the Dutch courts do not think all Dutch citizens merit the same opportunity.

### TV game show decides who lives, who dies

It was said that 50-year-old psychiatric patient Hillie Hasscher had "lost her will to live." Now, it appears that the

Dutch Health Ministry is determined to induce other patients perceived to be a burden to themselves, their family, or the state, to surrender their "will to live." In a ruthless effort to stimulate a national debate on how to control health care costs, the Health Ministry has partially financed a television game show called "A Matter of Life and Death." During each show, two patients describe their life-threatening illnesses, their prognosis, and what medical treatment is needed to save their lives. Then, in what can only be called a modern-day reenactment of the barbaric Roman circus, where martyrs were thrown to the lions while the bloodthirsty crowd cheered, the studio audience votes electronically to decide which of two patients is to be sacrificed, and which is allowed life-saving treatment.

It hardly matters that viewers are reminded that doctors make the medical decisions about the patients' care. The aim of the show is to get the viewers to accept killing patients as part of health care rationing. The same Secretary Simons whose ministry financed the TV game show, also launched the "Choices in Health Care" campaign committee, which called for sweeping budget cuts and rationing in the nation's health care system.

It's likely such rationing propaganda will expand, given what economists call the "Achilles' heel of the Dutch economy"—its shrinking work force. The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics recently revealed that Holland's active work force is only 6.5 million out of a population of 15 million. While enormous numbers of workers are reportedly "disabled" due to stress, the government's policy of drug legalization, which destroys tens of thousands of lives, is also a factor. Of the 1.4 million Dutchmen between 55 and 64 years of age, only 400,000 still have paying jobs. The shrinking tax base led to a government-revamped hospital budgeting policy, cuts in rates of hospital occupancy and hospital beds, and to the euthanasia-murder of the Dutch people.

Letters urging the Dutch Senate to vote "no" on Nov. 23 should be addressed to the Senate Chairman. They can be sent by fax to the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington, D.C., (202) 362-1859, % Attaché for Health and Environment.

Letters can also be sent directly to:  
Mrs. M.J.C.A. Ermen, Chairman  
Senate Committee on Welfare and Health  
P.O. Box 20017  
2500 EA The Hague, Netherlands

Newspapers:  
*Dagblad*  
P.O. Box 111  
NL-3770 AC Barneveld, Netherlands

*Katholiek Nieuwsblad*  
P.O. Box 1270  
NL-5200 BH Den Bosch, Netherlands