

Q: What do you think about the situation in the Netherlands, where euthanasia is so widespread that even sick children can “decide” whether they want to get the “mercy-killing” treatment, and more and more old and sick people refuse to go to an old age home because they fear being murdered against their will.

Wynen: What is happening now in the Netherlands was foreseeable for several years. If we accept “opening the door” to active euthanasia, we cannot prevent its general implementation, leading to situations like the one you mention, just like during the time of the Nazis. The first step is the request of the patient, the second one is the request of the family, and the last one is the request of the society—that means the State!

Q: We know that the Netherlands is not a member of the WMA. Despite this fact, what do you think can and must be done to intervene in the Netherlands?

Wynen: We have no other means to influence our Dutch colleagues than a strong moral commitment by the whole world medical community. We hope that a permanent and

heavy criticism of their attitude will force them to reconsider it.

Q: What do you think about the situation in West Germany, where the euthanasia lobby is using doctors like Hackethal to implement euthanasia?

Wynen: In Germany we have to meet the same situation and to face the same danger. But there is a big difference between the situation in the Netherlands [and that in Germany] because neither the German government, nor the German medical profession as such is in favor of euthanasia, as in the Netherlands. In Germany, euthanasia is supported by a minority of politicians, a minority of the population, and fortunately, a very small minority of [medical] colleagues. In spite of his “support” by the media, Hackethal does not have the support of society and, of course, even less of the medical association.

Q: Assistance to suicide is not forbidden by West German law—a fact which is used in an impudent way by Hackethal. What do you think? Should assistance to suicide be forbidden

French protest plans to kill handicapped children

The proposal by a French pro-euthanasia group to give the parents of handicapped children the right to kill them at birth has drawn outraged accusations in France, with numerous organizations and individuals drawing parallels with the practices of the Nazis. The culprit group is the Association pour la prévention de l'enfance handicapée (APEH), (“Association for the Prevention of Handicapped Childhood”). Its honorary president, “independent left” ex-Senator Henri Caillavet, is also president of the French Association for the Right to Die with Dignity, whose activities have recently drawn protests from French citizens and medical professionals.

Paris Archbishop Jean-Marie Lustiger has attacked the APEH proposal as a “case of legal barbarism . . . unworthy of our country and our civilization.” French psychiatrist Jean-François Corbin, author of the book *Soft Extermination*, says the proposal raises the specter of Nazism, and is “reminiscent of Hitler or the manuals for eugenics distributed in France during the period of Vichy. . . . Formerly, in Germany, the mentally ill were sterilized.” Numerous associations directly concerned with the handicapped in France—including the National Union of Parents of Handicapped Children, the Association of Paraly-

tics in France, and the Association SOS-Future Mothers—have declared that the APEH text evokes “the plea for the destruction of useless lives” made by the Nazis. French Secretary of State for Human Rights Claude Malhuret expressed his “indignation” Nov. 5 over the Caillavet-APEH proposal, saying he was very concerned about “the recent multiplication of proposals with the aim of legalizing euthanasia and eugenics, and which assert a claim to the right to die.”

The APEH text was distributed recently to several French parliamentarians. It says, in part, that there should be legislation that would “permit parents, in certain circumstances, to not sustain life in (*de ne pas entretenir en vie*) young children who are abnormal.” It goes on to say that the legislation would uphold that “a doctor will not be committing either a crime or a misdemeanor in abstaining from administering to a child of less than three years of age, the care necessary to his life, when this child shows an incurable infirmity, such that it can be foreseen that the child will never have a life worthy of being lived.”

APEH head Henri Caillavet told French TV, “If I had had a handicapped child, I would not have let it live. . . . I gave life, I have the right to take it away. . . . You have the right to be shocked, and so am I when I hear some of the Pope’s comments. . . . We have got to take away the guilt so that such parents do not feel like criminals for demanding euthanasia for their abnormal children.” APEH’s self-described aim is stop the number of mentally defective children from increasing, one of the declared aims of the “eugenics” movement that supported Hitler.