

LEGA NAZIONALE CONTRO LA PREDAZIONE DI ORGANI E LA MORTE A CUORE BATTENTE

24121 BERGAMO Pass. Canonici Lateranensi, 22

Tel. 035-219255 - Telefax 035-235660

lega.nazionale@antipredazione.org

www.antipredazione.org

PRESS RELEASE
YEAR XXIV - n. 13
2nd July 2008

A NEW DECREE TO MAKE THE DECLARATION OF BRAIN DEATH AND THE HARVESTING OF ORGANS EASIER

Extensive, invasive, instrumental research looking for signs of death, not life

On 11th April 2008, Ex Minister Livia Turco, afraid of a debate, secretly issued a decree in conspiracy and in collusion with health institutions. «*An update to the decree of 22nd August 1994, n. 582 relative to: "Regulations regarding ways of assessing and certifying death" (brain death)*». This took place one day before voting for the new government on 13th April 2008. This is illegal and therefore contestable. The decree, which simplifies the prior despicable decree No. 582/94 for the declaration of so-called heart beating "brain death", was published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale N° 136 of 12/06/2008 and came into force on 28/06/2008.

The National Transplant Centre (CNT) -Nanni Costa and the institutional transplant lobbies- wanted this ruling and used technological and instrumental development as an excuse. The CNT planned "instrumental research of cerebral blood flow" with the full medical power and without the patient's or family's consent. In cases where diagnosis is difficult, this research (cerebral angiograph etc.), which in itself is damaging to patients, is used as a decisive test. Complications of this invasive, dangerous, and sometimes deadly method are inevitable as are the side effects of the contrast medium used to carry out the tests, all of which is fully documented in specific international literature. Carrying out such test on patients with cerebral lesions should be condemned.

Those doctors who carry out such tests find themselves to be in a conflict of interests situation; if they admit the presence of cerebral flow, they risk being reported by relatives for exposing the patient to an unnecessary risk, which is not in the patient's interest but in the interest of harvesting his or her organs. On this point Professor Dr Massimo Bondi, general pathologist and general surgeon, member of the medical-scientific Committee of the 'Lega Nazionale Contro la Predazione di Organi' declares: "*It is an insult to life, because to inject concentrated contrasting liquid into endocranial arteries, where there is already an oedema and a haematoma, causes the endocranial pressure to rise and the oedema to increase. This is the direct opposite of what revitalizing cerebral tissue therapy should be.....This law turns a doctor into an instrument of death instead of an instrument of life...On the contrary, in such cases trans-cranial tubular suction should be carried out on the haematoma as soon as possible in order to lower the endocranial hypertension which, unresolved, would result in "brain death" being declared.*

There is a race to declare "brain death". The number of checks has been reduced from three to two - one at the beginning and one at the end of the six-hour observation period. The observation period for children has also been reduced to 6 hours - under the previous regulations it was 12/24 hours. Encephalitic blood flow test is taking their place. In the case of "anoxic brain damage" the 24-hour delay before the period of observation begins is no longer compulsory if the invasive cerebral blood flow test is used. The bio-image technology business is taking over. Digital instruments are introduced for EEG but this doesn't protect from errors and falsifications. Livia Turco confirms the use of the "apnoea test" in her decree. This test has already been internationally denounced as being damaging to patients.

Livia Turco availed herself of law 578/93 art. 2 c.3 which **excludes parliament** and gives the Health Minister the power to modify the protocols for "brain death" declaration. We ask the present Minister On. Maurizio Sacconi to avail himself of the same law to issue a new decree to put the interests of patients in intensive care before the interests of organ harvesting. Associations like the 'Lega Nazionale Contro la Predazione di Organi', which has been involved in such issues this since 1985, should be listened to.

Board of Directors
President - Nerina Negrello