End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill

Jim Barbour

I write in respect of the above proposed bill to which I oppose because of my life’s experience and Christian beliefs.

Over the 70 years of my life I have been involved in family situations where loved ones or friends were very ill and dying – some over a short period and others longer – these have included my wife, my father, my mother, brother and 2 grand fathers. In all cases except one, these relatives knew they were dying but all had good hospital care and a firm Christian faith which assured them of a better life in heaven. They were not afraid to die and in some cases where required they were given good pain relief. These experiences gave the family circle a bonding and helped the grieving process.

If the above bill became law I fear it would not be long until the decision to end a life could be taken by a doctor. In an over burdened Health Service it could become more economic – but this is a supposedly civilised society in the UK – not a Nazi Death Camp!

The Scottish and Westminster Parliaments have been opposed to this proposal in recent years and the professional medical bodies do not support it. The bill does not allow doctors who may be faced with the responsibility to have a conscience clause opt out. I fear it is a dangerous slippery slope. When abortions on demand became possible it was initially to be only in extreme cases – look where we are now. Medical colleagues who on conscience grounds refuse to carry out or assist have told me they have been passed over for promotion. This would seem to be further persecution of the Christian faith in our country as headlined in the Sunday Telegraph today.

I do hope the views of the very large percentage of faith groups will be seriously considered and that Parliament will not be persuaded by Margo Macdonald whom I respect but in this case she is seriously mistaken in her outlook.

Jim Barbour
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