End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill

Anonymous

I am writing to express my total opposition to the Euthanasia / Assisted suicide/End of Life Assistance(Scotland) Bill.

My opposition is based on two pieces of evidence.

1. The Application of the Abortion Law in the UK. After over 40 years of this law we have a situation which is quite different to the one which was intended and anticipated by many including some important proponents of the need for the Abortion. At the time advocates of the Abortion bill stated that there would be safeguards so that we would not have “easy abortion” or ‘abortion on demand’. Further, they stated that there would be safeguards so that abortion would not be used as a late form of birth control. Where are we today? It is quite easy for a female to be granted an abortion. Also, even some advocates of the original Abortion Act admit that they are disappointed by the apparent use of abortion as a form of birth control. In brief, the law as applied is much different from the way that people, even those who advocated the law, had anticipated. The consequences of this are that there are many more abortions than almost anyone had anticipated. Also abortions are performed on the basis of some grounds that many people, even advocates of the abortion law, would find objectionable. Note- I am not anti-abortion and believe that abortion is appropriate in many different, but serious, situations.

2. Personal experience. Recently I had to give support to a family. The mother of the family began to suffer from Vascular Dementia. She had falls and periods of depression, that both led to hospital admittances. These periods in hospital led to further confusion and unhappiness for this dementia sufferer. Members of the family were under incredible pressure and regularly spoke of being “at their wits end”. They also commented on her “poor quality of life”. She herself often commented about not wanting to be “a burden on anyone”. I wonder what their views, wishes and possible actions would have been had the proposed law on assisted suicide been in place?

What is the situation now, only a few months later? The old lady is happy and settled in a care home. Of course the difficulties with dementia remain but she is happy caring and content. Her family are no longer ‘at their wits end” and agree that she has a very good ‘quality of life’. I wonder what their views on the proposed law be now? Would they be the same as only 2-3 months before? They might have supported the bill before, but not now. If the law had been in place, they might have felt a need to use its provisions 2-3 months ago. They would feel no need to use its provisions now.

Note - Could this piece of evidence be treated as personal and as confidential, only to be used by the committee members.
Could I conclude by asking you to reject this proposed bill as I feel that it may mean that life and death decisions may be made by people in vulnerable situations (spouses, parents and relatives) about people who are also in vulnerable situations. Also, it would probably mean more poorer vulnerable people being assisted in suicide than wealthy ones. This is because richer people, by dint of their wealth, are more likely to be financially secure, and able to afford to pay for care/help, and so are less likely to be a ‘burden on their family members.

Anonymous
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