End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill

Martin Savage

As a private citizen, I write in response to your invitation for views on the above bill. My responses are as follows.

I do not agree that a person should be able to request end of life assistance from a registered medical practitioner because:-

It is a break from the legal protection of Scots to a right to life and protection from being intentionally killed.

It introduces further risks associated with temporary conditions such as depression and despair where fleeting, though intense, symptoms may tempt a person in their most vulnerable state to consider making a life-ending decision, which ordinarily they would never wish.

It ruptures the solidarity of the nation's people, whereby when one suffers, we all help to alleviate that suffering; when one is in need, we all strive to meet that need; when one is poor, we all work to provide for that poor.

We should not be saying, when one suffers, he can remove his suffering by dying; when one is in need, offer dying as an option; when one is poor, let him die.

It re-aligns our nation's hitherto value on life, creating an impression there is value in death.

It devalues or robs those professions like nursing of the merit and honour they deserve for the unselfish care and love they give others, especially our elderly and vulnerable loved-ones.

It presents a false impression that one does a service to the nation by ending their own life and, subsequently, will introduce a false pressure on some not to be a 'burden' on society and so end their life.

It will cut a divide in the nation's conscience from one of a singular belief that there is value in all life, into conflicting, even violently differing beliefs on the value of life.

I think it an illustration of the detachment from reality of those promoting this bill that they suggest children as young as 16 be given the right to choose death over life for themselves. Would they also have the right to make this decision for another?

By proposing only certain categories be permitted euthanasia, demonstrates the view that some people are worth less than others, viz. discrimination.
Though ‘staged consent’ has been offered as a safeguard to error, it is prudent to consider that any ‘process’ will be easily traversed or circumvented once commonly practised.

As an indication as to how poorly thought-out and lacking in consideration for others this bill has been, there is no ‘conscience clause’ for doctors, medical staff, social workers or clergy, among whom naturally many would wish to be excluded from taking part in someone’s death.

Mr Martin Savage
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