
From: David J Hawke
Sent: Monday, 31 March 2008 5:11 PM
To: Legal and Constitutional, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Inquiry into the Rights of the Terminally Ill (Euthanasia Laws Repeal) Bill 2008

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Secretary,

Re Inquiry into the Rights of the Terminally Ill (Euthanasia Laws Repeal) Bill 2008

I believe the Terminally Ill are at grave risk if Euthanasia is allowed in this country. As a minister of religion I deal with many elderly people and observe that many are unable to balance the wish for a better life with the option of no life at all. I also believe relatives get fatigued as they care for their elders and decisions could be made when nerves are frazzled and minds and bodies are weary.

Death is a natural result of long life or illness. Any intervention in the natural process exposes us all to great risks. The Dutch experience has been studied closely and this should frighten any reasonably minded person. These studies were published in the *Lancet* and the *New England Journal of Medicine* between 1991 and 2003 and are the strongest evidence we have of the detrimental effects of legalised euthanasia.

It was shown that once legalised, euthanasia could not be adequately controlled and resulted in the murder of patients who had not requested to die. MURDER was the word used. Why should we condone anything that increases the probability and occurrence of MURDER? Three surveys over a ten-year period by Dutch researchers showed that around 1,000 patients were killed every year against their wishes, or without consent, by their doctors.

No politician has the right to promote such an evil. I wish to register my abhorrence of euthanasia and my disgust with any promotion of the concept.

Life is precious and must be protected at all costs. Let us focus on research and medical advances that allow our terminally ill to finish life in dignity. Let us uphold them mentally, physically and most importantly, spiritually.

Yours faithfully,

Rev David J Hawke BSc, MA, Dip Miss, CMin