

Canadians should be ?outraged? over assisted suicide

The recent decision by Canada's Supreme Court to allow assisted suicide in certain cases, with Parliament to decide on the framework, should awaken a deep sense of outrage in Canadians.

Under the dubious and superficial guise of compassion we are about to sanction murder of the vulnerable. Let's consider a better option.

In 2011 an all-party member committee of the Canadian government called for a national strategy on palliative care. Among others it cited these facts:

- ? Only about one third of Canadians have access to such care
- ? There are only 86 palliative care hospices for 35 million people
- ? There remains poor overall training among physicians for end of life pain

Euthanasia is not the answer. It involves a serious contradiction for physicians and most palliative care physicians are against it. It is morally questionable no matter how we frame it.

We, as a society, have a deep responsibility to help the dying, not by killing them, not by this ?final solution?, but by end of life care that effectively manages pain, celebrates the sacredness of the lives of loved ones, and deals with dying in a more compassionate way. We need a national approach to palliative care. Other countries have one. Canada can take the lead.

Surely this is the choice most Canadians would support. The decision of the Supreme Court is a call to action to invest in a more humane, and human, alternative.

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