

*Private Members' Business*

I could even argue that aging is incurable. What about arthritis? As far as I know many forms of that are incurable. Is that also grounds for the use of this bill?

Then I read the briefing note our colleague provided, and I thank him for this. I must say it does not make me want to support the bill more. It does the opposite but it does assist us in understanding what he is trying to do in spite of the fact that I disagree with it. It says that individuals of less than 18 years of age can only make such an application with the written consent of a parent. What are we saying? That an adult can give the consent for a child to be killed?

Is this what we are saying as a society? Were we debating this bill in the British House of Commons a few years after the Magna Carta in 1215 maybe that would be possible. Some years from now when someone dusts off the old pages of *Hansard* they will wonder in what century we were living when we considered ourselves modern, compassionate people, yet this is what we were saying. I cannot agree with that.

It has been said today by the proponent of the bill and I know I am paraphrasing, that the Hippocratic oath is perhaps outmoded.

Here is what it said. The Hippocratic oath said in part: "I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest such counsel."

The modern day Hippocratic oath was adopted in 1947. It is called the Declaration of Geneva. The Declaration of Geneva says: "I will give no deadly medicine to anyone, even upon request, nor suggest any such counsel." That was said in 1947, not 400 B.C. like the Hippocratic oath. It is equally true today.

One of our colleagues, a medical doctor, a specialist in paediatrics and child health, a professor of medicine and a member of Parliament for Winnipeg North, said earlier today and I asked him to write it down for me so that I could quote him in the House: "This bill violates the inherent and paramount principle of medical ethics, not to will or intend the death of a patient even when they wish it for themselves. I believe as well that life becomes even more precious when there is little left to live."

I share those views but I also am very concerned about what this bill could mean, or any other bill like it, for people who have reached a certain age in life.

I was party to a conference in British Columbia a number of years ago at which a physician by the name of Dr. Will Johnson spoke. Dr. Johnson said the following about what happens now in Holland. I quote from his speech: "What has this practice done to the concept of trust? Rumours abound. One psychiatrist muses that he has a choice of two nursing homes for his elderly patient. One of the homes he feels is involved in fairly aggressive euthanasia of the demented elderly, and he says 'my patient would not last half as long if I sent her there.' It has become common knowledge that some physicians take the initiative 'you really ought to go to hospital now or I could just give you an injection.' Given widespread fear of hospitals and ignorance of the effective palliation that is available, this ominous scenario is now complete."

Let me quote the following before I end. Again, from Dr. Johnson's speech: "In one published case, the Dutch general practitioner was called to a patient's home and meeting her for the first time, immediately asked her to choose between hospitalization and euthanasia. When the stunned patient could not reply, he gave her one hour to think it over."

We are debating this bill for one hour today. Let us think it over. If there is only one mercy killing I want to do right now, it is to kill this bill immediately and put it out of its misery. Let us forget about this kind of nonsense. There is Bill C-203 on the Order Paper and I do not think I can agree with it either. It is with respect to the living will. We are not talking about the matter of the living will in any case today. What we are talking about is state legislated murder.

I cannot agree with those who say that we preserve human life by killing human beings and that we accept death as part of life. Death is not part of life, it is the end of life.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Bourgault:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** The parliamentary secretary, on a point of order.

**Mrs. Bourgault:** Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate it if you would answer a question in connection with this bill. Since it is 6.40 p.m., and considering that during Private Members' Business the bill must be debated for an hour, if I am not mistaken—unless the Standing Orders have changed—will there be a vote?