

When the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam mentioned those assisting terminally ill patients who did he have in mind? Is it any individual? Is it a friend or relative of the patient? Or is it a member of the medical profession?

Whether protection against criminal liability for helping terminally ill patients to die should be limited to physicians or to other health care professionals is a fundamental issue that would have to be looked at before the government moves on euthanasia.

I believe there are a number of important and serious questions that will have to be answered before the government is in a position to decide on the advisability of introducing legislation on euthanasia.

I have a definite fear that we are moving too fast on this issue. We have to consult and we have to look at the issue very well before we come to any decisions. I believe this is the responsibility of the Minister of Justice and we should not rush into this.

I would caution on the desire to react emotionally to provide a hasty response in situations that we all agree are very sad. But that should not lead us to act without the wisdom appropriate to the issue.

For these reasons I believe that at this time we should not be moving on this motion and I will vote against the motion. I think it will return to the House. I think some day we will debate it on a government bill. However, at this time I will be working and voting against the bill.

Hon. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Mr. Speaker, I do not participate in a lot of debates any more unless something comes along that I regard personally as extraordinarily important. I want to speak to this today.

I want to congratulate the mover of the motion and the committee on motions that chose to make this a votable motion. I think it is an extraordinarily important item.

My friend the chairman of the justice committee has just spoken and indicated he would be voting against this motion. Let me be clear. I will be voting for this motion, perhaps not for the reasons that my long-time colleague,

the hon. member for Parkdale—High Park, has given in the stirring and moving stories of experiences he has had. I suppose we all can.

My wife if she were here would tell the story of her father and his palliative care experiences and how that made the end of his life a much more extraordinarily happy experience than it might otherwise have been. She probably would not be for this for many other reasons that others have spoken on.

I will never forget my mother's pleading to kill her when she was dying of cancer. I do not for a minute think I could ever have done it. However, when I was reading through the clippings on all of this I found the most stirring quote in an article that talked about the pros and cons of the matter before us in terms of primarily the notion of whether a doctor should be able to assist somebody who chooses to die.

• (1545)

One of the questions that was raised precisely in *Euthanasia: The Doctors' Dilemma* and struck such a chord with me was what if the doctor prescribes higher doses of morphine to kill pain even though a hastened death through respiratory failure is known to be a side effect.

I do not know if the doctor who prescribed the morphine for my mother prescribed such a dosage that it led to her dying sooner. If he did, bless him, because there was nothing being achieved in what she was going through, nothing whatsoever.

For a mother to turn to her son and ask him to put pillows on her face so she would die is something that no son or mother should go through. I listened to the testimony of Sue Rodriguez. Members may say that some day the justice minister will act or that Parliament should wait until the justice minister acts.

I do not think that is ever going to be reasonable to expect. If there was a thing that Parliament should do on its own as members, it is this kind of thing that it must discuss. We must find a way among ourselves to take this completely out of the partisan arena. I welcome the motion for that reason if for no other.