

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: Regarding End of Life Choices
Attachments: The Right to Die(Publ).docx; Detente, Dignity(Publ).docx; Hearing(Publ).docx

From: Joyce Parkes
Sent: Friday, 20 October 2017 4:34 PM
To: Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices
Subject: Regarding End of Life Choices

Dear Amber-Jade Sanderson, MLA

1) In October 1988 Overland, a literary magazine, published my poem entitled **The Right to Die**. I am now 87 and still write to make an End of Life Choice lawful in Western Australia too.

2) The slippery slope argument is a spurious one, since with such a metaphor in mind, no one would again climb the next mountain.

3) I had a friend, Eileen Gervas, who recently died in a nursing home at 96. She was blind and incontinent, relying on staff to feed her – and to change her nappies. Those who have experienced lying in their poo for hours on end, as can happen in our major hospitals as well, know the agony of a raw bottom. Eileen desperately wanted to die. Help me, she said to her friends and family. No one dared to. She unnecessarily suffered until the long-awaited and prayed for end.

4) To some people, ending one's life when life is too painful to continue, may be seen as cowardice. Under the circumstances, palliative care is available, legal, and there to help.

5) To some people ending one's life when life is too painful to continue, could be seen as heroism, since taking one's own life without the assistance of a health professional, is a shockingly cruel way to die – and there is no legal assistance available yet.

6) In September 2009 the Newsletter of the then WA Voluntary Euthanasia Society (WAVES) carried *Détente, Dignity*, attached herewith. WAVES is now the Dying With Dignity WA – DWDWA.

7) As a long-time member of the WA Labor Party I implore you to make lawful our **End of Life Choices**. (For a few years, in the seventies, I was a member of the Discrimination Committee, a committee unearthing the discrimination perpetrated on WA's inhabitants.)

8) In December 2009, Windmills@Deakin carried the poem **Hearing**. Since pain never neglects its subject.

Leaving me to thank you and the select committee for the time, understanding and effort to make into law **Voluntary** Euthanasia; a dying with dignity, an end of life choice. I remain, with regards,
Joyce Evelyne Parkes.

The Right to Die

Since I did not ask
to be born, may I
at least ask to die

Particularly if one
day I would be un-
able to make such

a request.

Joyce Parkes

~Published in Overland No. 112, p.88, last page, October **1988**.

Editor: Dr Stephen Murray-Smith; Poetry Editor: Barrett Reid.

~) Read by Sandy McCutcheon on ABC Radio National's Australia
Talks Back program, on 01 December **2000**.

Détente, Dignity

Being sentenced to die against one's will is as appalling as being sentenced to live against one's will. Governments may yet

have the nous to support those who need to live and die with equal sensitivity; access to a law recognising this long

overlooked aspect of equality. Assist those who feel comforted by palliative care as much as those who dare to work for

another way out of pain. Advocates for a life-regardless may yet acknowledge the altruism of a life, and a death, with regards.

Joyce Parkes

~) Published in WAVES Newsletter, September 2009, p. 2.

Editor: Tina Christensen.

Hearing

speeches on life, on death, has Swallow
splash that being sentenced to die against

her will is as azoic as being sentenced to
live against her will, knowing that pain

seldom neglects its subject — pleading
with the family of egrets to acquiesce

when a terminally body in distress
begs for a death sans slabs of sedge.

Joyce Parkes

~) Published in The Red Issue of Windmills@Deakin, a society
for lovers of literature and professional writing, Third Edition,
page 11, December 2009. Editors: Jamie King-Holden, Jo
Langdon, Alyson Miller and Sophie Mackenzie.