

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: Die with dignity

From: Paul Clune

Sent: Friday, 29 September 2017 4:38 PM

To: Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices <eolcc@parliament.wa.gov.au>

Subject: Fwd: Die with dignity

Perhaps the following might alter the thinking of those intending to legalize the killing of people to end their pain.

Regards

Paul Clune

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: Die with dignity

Date: Tue, 05 Aug 2014 11:27:29 +0800

From: Paul Clune

To: euthanasia.sen@aph.gov.au, minister.Hames@dpc.wa.gov.au, Randall, Don (MP)
<Don.Randall.MP@aph.gov.au>

As to: 'kill people' let us all please address the principle of double effect.

We all know we all pollute the air every time we deliberately decide to drive somewhere, then go out and do it, and yet we all know that is not why we drive - even though we all know our polluting of the air from the exhaust emissions blowing out of our engines is as real as is the passing traffic.

With that identical principle of double, effect I ask you to please address the decision to either deliberately kill someone to stop their agony, or the decision to deliberately administer enough analgesic to lessen their agony with the full knowledge that the quantum of analgesic may have the secondary effect of ending the life of the person in agony.

Just as the decision to drive is not a decision to pollute, neither is the decision to administer enough analgesic to stop the pain of the person in agony a decision to kill that person, whereas a decision to deliver a fatal substance, be it a bullet or a pill, for the sole reason to kill a person, is a diametrically different decision.

I therefore earnestly suggest we in Australia, never ever allow the deliberate act of deciding to kill people (with their prior full knowledge and full consent approval to kill them), then kill them, be legalised by law here (other than for soldiers at war or the circumstance of life threatening self defence).

My direct and personal experience of this took place in 1990 when my father James Benedict (1907-1990) was lying on his back in a Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital bed moaning and grinding his teeth in agony.

He had terminal cancer which had wracked his whole body through to his bones. He was a farmer of extraordinary physical strength - such that during his earlier life when pestered to the limit of his patience by strangers who did not know him other than the local knowledge of his massive power,

he'd walk over to a full wheat bag, (which weigh 180lbs) stoop over it, grip it with his teeth then lift it off the shed floor causing the strangers to leave in mild shock as he lowered it back onto the floor.

It was this man who was in agony but who was neither whining not complaining. He came in and out of consciousness as I sat beside him. It was strange to hear him asking me why we were in Geraldton as he looked out of the hospital windows. He spoke clearly as he hallucinated, with zero loss of diction or meaning with not the slightest hint of slurring his words, and then would close his eyes as he seemed to fall asleep - but then the grinding and quiet moaning began again.

After an hour, I left his bedside and approached the staff at the desk in the hallway near his room (he was an a room alone). My recollection is not clear as to whether or not one of the white clad staff was a doctor, but from memory there were at least three of them. My instruction to them was direct and unequivocal.

(After 24 years I paraphrase)

"Stop his agony. Administer enough medicine to stop his agony. It has got to be totally wrong for people in medicine to stand by letting this man grind his teeth and moan in agony. You've got to deal with his agony and stop letting him just lie there. I understand he's on morphine so please just increase the dose so he doesn't have to keep lying there in absolute agony. Thank you."

That was about 5pm when I left and drove home to Ardross.

At about 7pm I got a phone call from the hospital telling me to 'come quickly' because my father was at the point of passing away.

When I got to his ward his door was shut, but I ignored people trying to talk to me, opened it and wiped aside the curtain surrounding his bed. There were at least four men in white standing around my father looking at him. I walked up to his head and whispered words I'd never said: "Dad I love you."

His head was warm but his chest was cold. I took hold of his left wrist and raised his massive left arm as I turned and spoke to the men standing around the bed: "These are the arms of the men that made this country - with an axe and a water bag. You'll never see men like this again." I saw three of the men in white with tears on their cheeks.

I placed his arm back on the bed and left the hospital.

Dad was buried next to Mum (Mary Monica Lynch 1904-1989) who'd died the year before of a heart attack.

Please do not, under any circumstance, make the full compos mentis decision to kill people lawfully by any Act of any Australian parliament.

Mr. Paul P. Clune