

Suicide: a Crisis, Not a Right

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A state of emergency was recently called in a First Nations community in Northern Manitoba.

Rampant suicide has devastated this community, and they are calling out for help to stop this tragic trend.

They've asked for¹ "at least six mental-health workers immediately, as well as...a child psychologist and family therapist," Will the government officials and bureaucrats who respond to this situation send in help as requested? Or will they send in a few doctors with lethal injections in anticipation of Liberal approval of doctor-assisted suicide? The second option is clearly wrong and should be unthinkable, but is it impossible? After all, the Liberal-dominated committee has proposed broadly expanding on the Supreme Court's ruling. If they have their way, people suffering from depression would merely have to ask for a needle and they would receive an injection from a doctor to end their lives. Is this how we help people suffering mental anguish?

Cross Lake has lost six of its members to suicide in the last two months, a terrible trauma to the entire community, but even more appalling is the 140 suicide attempts that have been reported **in the last two weeks**...in a community of 8300 people!

While suicide epidemics are not new, they are very disturbing, especially among young people, and it has been mostly² young people who have committed or attempted suicide. Some may think of it as a crisis of poverty, others as a lack of attention. Most of us would identify a lack of hope. Deep down, we know that there must be a spiritual crisis, and that ultimately those who are tempted to end their life need to see that their life, each life, has meaning.

Would any sane person ever suggest that, if a community has a suicide problem, they just be given the means to go ahead with the help of a doctor? I hope not! But, by making something legal, we make it permissible and possible.

It is a cruel irony that our Parliament is considering a law to allow doctors to "help" people commit suicide. The report that was tabled in Parliament was characterized by MP Brad Trost as "the most extreme in the world" and the Conservative MPs on the committee offered this³ dissenting opinion. The report itself considers extending the "right" to assisted suicide to mature minors; will this help young people in communities like Cross Lake?

If our Parliament is willing to say that suicide is an acceptable practice in Vancouver, can they say that it is not acceptable for people in Cross Lake? Why? Why should Parliament even consider sending mental health workers, a child psychologist, and a family therapist? What's the difference? With what moral authority can they offer or withhold help?

Our Members of Parliament must acknowledge that it is wrong to offer suicide as a treatment for hopelessness—in Cross Lake, in Toronto, in Vancouver—everywhere.

There is no doubt that Cross Lake needs help. They deserve our prayers, as well as our help. They need care (as requested), not killing. That should be obvious, but legalization of assisted suicide blurs the moral lines of what is caring and what is hurting.

Suicide prevention week is September 5th-11th this year. It's too bad it's not in the spring because maybe then the irony of making something legal and easy on the one hand, and seeking to prevent it on the other hand would be too much, even for politicians.

Let us hope and pray that the state of emergency that has been declared in Cross Lake will cause our Parliamentarians to re-consider their support for physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. We know it is wrong in Cross Lake: now we must, as a society, stand up and say that it is wrong all the time because human life—all human life—is sacred because it is given by God.

CHP Canada recognizes that all humans are created in the image of God and have intrinsic value. Hopelessness must be replaced by hope. Our medical tax dollars must be used to provide the help requested by this First Nations community.

We offer Canadians a voice against this scourge of suicide, assisted and otherwise. Join your voice with ours by joining CHP Canada today⁴.

Our sympathies go out to the grieving families and friends of those whom they have lost. May God give them comfort. May each of us be reminded of the need to care and give hope to those who are in need, both physically and spiritually.

Further Reading

Andrew Coyne: Canada is making suicide a public service. Have we lost our way as a society?⁵

Footnotes

¹ www.ctvnews.ca/canada/manitoba-first-nation-declares-state-of-emergency-over-suicide-epidemic-1.2810573

² www.ctvnews.ca/canada/more-help-on-the-way-for-manitoba-first-nation-reeling-from-suicides-philpott-1.2812192

³ www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=8120006&Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=42&Ses=1&File=126

⁴ www.chp.ca/get-involved

⁵ news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/andrew-coyne-canada-is-making-suicide-a-public-service-have-we-lost-our-way-as-a-society