

B.C. SUPREME COURT STRIKES DOWN PROHIBITIONS ON ASSISTED SUICIDE

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The decision by Madam Justice Lynn Smith of the B.C. Supreme Court to strike down the prohibitions on assisted suicide was not surprising.

She formerly held the position of President of the legal arm of the feminist organization, The Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF). Entirely consistent with her liberal ideology, she struck down the restraints placed on the protection of the lives of vulnerable patients.

Judge Smith's decision is a stark example of the prevailing trend in the judicial process, whereby Parliament has become a lumbering, dancing bear attached by a leash that is firmly grasped by the organ-grinders – the appointed, unaccountable judges who determine the tune and the steps to which the embattled bear must dance.

The greatest tragedy, however, is that the Canadian public has become the voiceless victim of the system because citizens no longer have input into the laws that affect their lives. When it comes to making the really decisive social determinations, Canada is no longer a democracy.

Blinded by her ideological beliefs, Judge Smith has obviously either been unwilling or unable to grasp the long-range ramifications of her decision.

Patients who desire assisted suicide have several overwhelming fears: fear of loneliness and abandonment; fear of pain; fear for the emotions and expenses of their families, and oddly, fear of death itself, which they want to control.

These fears have been proven over and over again to be remedied by palliative care. It is far more sensitive and compassionate to eliminate these terrors, rather than the patient.

With the legalization of assisted suicide, patients will be made extremely vulnerable if they guiltily try to hold onto their lives despite concerns about their family. Our aging population, coupled with our

already failing health care system, will only exacerbate the problems of gravely ill individuals.

The judiciary must be stopped. We can no longer live with their tyranny. The federal government must invoke the very legitimate and reasonable provision of Section 33 (the Notwithstanding clause) in the *Charter* to put a stop to the games being played on the public by the machinations of the judiciary.

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