



Parliament Of Canada hears Bobby Schindler oppose euthanasia

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CLEARWATER---**Bobby Schindler**, brother of Terri Schindler Schiavo, the brain damaged woman who died last year after a court ordered the removal of her feeding tube at the behest of her husband, joined palliative care expert Dr. Margaret Cottle last week in Ottawa, in a presentation before the Parliament of Canada urging members of Parliament to support programs that offer quality assistance of the disabled and their families and to oppose legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia.

"We, as a society, are standing on a cliff with two clear and utterly polarized choices that we can make: Either we value each other - in spite of disability, or we despise each other based on those limitations", Schindler said.

Dr. Cottle told members of Parliament that the euthanasia and assisted suicide movement in Canada threatens the foundations of the county, saying that genuine compassion is being replaced with a reliance on "rights".

Cottle said that medical killing is based on the assumption that death is better but she said that no evidence exists that any person is better off dead and that their quality of life is going to improve.

Schindler's presentation before Parliament follows:

"On March 31, 2005, my sister, Terri Schindler Schiavo, lost her fight and died from the effects of dehydration. My sister tenaciously fought for her life for more than 13 days of being deprived of the most basic, natural and constant need we all share - food and water.

"Terri was deprived of those basic things for one reason - to cause her unnatural and untimely death.

"Terri lived in a neurologically compromised state for reasons that are still unknown, and my family wanted nothing more than care for Terri the rest of her natural life. My sister was not brain dead, not terminally ill, and not dying or succumbing to any killer disease. She was disabled. She was dependent on others. In fact, the only difference between my sister and all of us here tonight is that she was fed once a day by a feeding tube.

"Contrary to how Terri was portrayed by Michael Schiavo, and many in the popular media, she did not have to be confined to a bed, my sister only needed a wheelchair and could have been taken anywhere. If she were still alive, she could be with us here tonight.

"However, after a weeklong trial, Judge George Greer of the 6th circuit court of Pinellas County, Florida ordered that my beloved sister wanted to die this unnatural and gruesome death by taking away her feeding tube without her consent.

"For almost two weeks, my family was forced to watch my sister suffer through the very real and very grisly effects of terminal dehydration. With each passing day, Terri appeared more weakened, thinner, and so very frightened. I listened to the proponents for the so-called right to die movement, defiantly deceive news audiences that what my sister endured was a gentle, peaceful and euphoric demise. I sat on the corner of her bed trying so hard to understand that what I was witnessing was actually real.

"In the early morning of Feb. 25, 1990, while home alone with Michael, Terri collapsed. "She was 26 years old. Teri was deprived oxygen for several minutes and because of this suffered a severe brain injury. As I already stated, my family still does not know what caused Terri's collapsed", Schindler says.

"Michael Schiavo was subsequently appointed Terri's guardian and had 100% control regarding Terri's well being. My parents had none.

"Medical documents would verify that Terri was initially responding to therapy and rehabilitation, beginning to speak by forming words such as MOMMY and STOP.

"In 1993 Michael Schiavo filed and won a medical malpractice lawsuit on behalf of Terri. The jury awarded 1.5 million dollars to be placed in a medical trust fund for Terri's lifelong therapy and rehabilitation.

"The jury based this award in large part on the testimony of Michael Schiavo promising to honor is wedding vows and provide Terri with lifelong therapy and rehabilitation with Michael making no mention of Terri having any type of verbal death wish.

"Medical documents will also verify that all forms of therapy were ordered stopped by Michael Schiavo sometime in 1992. This was in spite of Terri's improvement and in spite of dozens of doctors that over the years recommend that Terri could be helped with proper rehabilitation and therapy.

"Sometime in mid 1993, Michael admitted that he tried to Terri killed be refusing to treat a UTI that would have resulted in Terri's death if the nursing had not intervened. He also admitted to having at least two intimate relationships while still being married to Terri. Coincidentally, Michael Schiavo was the inheritor of Terri's trust, which at that time was around one million dollars.

"In 1994, Michael asked the woman he was dating, Jodi Centzone, to marry him, and shortly thereafter they began living together and eventually had two children during the time that he was seeking to remove Terri's feeding tube.

"In 1998, Michael abruptly petitioned the court to remove my sister's feeding tube, based on hearsay evidence that my sister allegedly made in her early 20's that she would not want to live disabled.

"In January of 2000, Judge George Greer held a weeklong trial based on this hearsay evidence. Just prior to the beginning of the trial, and almost ten years after Terri's collapse, Michael's brother and sister in law suddenly surfaced also claiming that they heard Terri made casual comments that she wouldn't want to live disabled. My entire family, including some of Terri's closets friends testified that Terri never spoke about wanting to die.

"Nevertheless, on Feb. 11, 2000, Judge George Greer ruled that there was clear and convincing evidence that Terri would have wanted to be starved and dehydrate to death in stead of having her family care for her for the duration of her natural life.

Throughout the entire history of mankind, never was it held that food and water constituted "medical care". Our nation now claims food and water to be "medical treatment" instead of ordinary care, to facilitate their removal from persons deemed by the medical industry or the courts as "unworthy of life" primarily for economic reasons. Persons like Terri, with injuries and disabilities, are seen as not being worthy of life, not worth the investment.

"After the seeing the cruelties and crimes committed in the 20th Century, the classification of certain groups of people as "not being worthy of life" by government leaders, particularly in Nazi Germany, who were subsequently prosecuted at the Nuremberg trials for crimes against humanity, it is beyond comprehension that we again are seeing the same culture of death impose its will upon society's weakest and most vulnerable members. Every human being is endowed by his or her Creator with inestimable worth. Therefore no human being or agency has the authority to pronounce an innocent person such as my sister as "unworthy of life."

"I urge those in leadership to afford the protections to all weak and vulnerable people which were denied to my sister Terri.