

7/23/85

A Private Memorandum Regarding My Thoughts

000163

For along time I have been very much in disagreement with the widespread attitude that the most most important thing in the world is to keep a person breathing just as long as possible. To help to bring a child to successful birth and to ~~establish~~ get it established in life in this world is considered a most praiseworthy occupation. To help anyone to make his way with more comfort and less misery from this stage of existence to the next stage is considered as something reprehensible. If it is permissible to help individuals come into the world I do not see why it should be considered reprehensible to help one ⁽³⁾ when

⁽⁴⁾ his time on ~~this earth~~ of usefulness on this earth is ended ⁽¹⁾ to go into the

⁽²⁾ next one X

⁽⁵⁾ Recently I have read that most individuals ~~now~~ spend as much money on medical care in the last year of their lives as in the whole previous part of it. In other words, a great deal of money is spent in order to try to enable one to breathe just a little bit longer. It s-ems to me that this is a tremendous waste of resources, to say nothing of the additional misery that people are compelled by it to go through.

Last week Mrs. Davidson wrote me a brief letter enclosing a page from an article saying how terrible it was that in Germany euthanasia had been practiced and that individuals who were completely out of their minds and who had very little left in life had been enabled to leave this life with no misery. While I am not advocating such procedures I have never been able to see why it is considered so terribly reprehensible.

The bad thing about it of course would be if doctors and other human beings were given the right to decide what lives were worth while and what lives were not. That of course is definitely wrong. For one to take another's life against his will is a very serious crime and should be seriously punished.

Although I am at present in excellent health, with practically no aches or pains or difficulties of any kind physically, except that I do not have as much energy as I had when I was younger, and consequently these thoughts are of no