

Debate on suicide flares

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

The heated debate over physician-assisted suicides will likely continue this week — as indicated by sharp accusations exchanged Friday by lawyers on both sides of the issue.

Lawyers for Dr. Jack Kevorkian accused the Oakland County prosecutor and a state senator of waging an unethical "persecution" of their client, the so-called "Doctor of Death."

The prosecutor's office responded by saying one of Kevorkian's lawyers — Geoffrey Fieger of West Bloomfield — of telling half truths and, in effect, clouding the investigation.

"You can't believe anything he says," said Oakland County Assistant Prosecutor Michael Modelski, referring to Fieger who along with Michael A. Schwartz represents Kevorkian.

The angry allegations were exchanged less than 48 hours after Kevorkian called the Oakland County Sheriff's office to report that two women had committed suicide in a cabin rented in the Bald Mountain recreation area in Oakland Township.

Marjorie Wantz, 58, of Sodus, MI, and Sherry Miller, 44, of Roseville, were dead committed suicide in a rented cabin in the Bald Mountain recreation area. Both were hooked to "some kind of contraption," Capt. Glenn Watson of the sheriff's department.

Fieger and the Oakland prosecutor's office have exchanged heated words before. That was last year after first degree murder charges were filed against Kevorkian after he helped Janet Adkins of Portland, Or., take her own life.

A district judge in Clarkston dismissed those charges, saying there is no law in Michigan against physicians, or anybody else, assisting someone commit suicide.

The death of Adkins, who suffered from advanced Alzheimer's disease, kicked off a national debate over assisted suicides — a controversy that is being rekindled by the deaths of Wantz and Miller.

Fieger and Schwartz called a press conference Friday in their Southfield office to publicly complain about what happened to their client — as well as relatives and

'They think it (assisted suicide) is a sin, when in fact there is no law against it.'

— Geoffrey Fieger,
lawyer for 'Doctor Death'

friends of the suicide victims — since then.

The husband of Mrs. Wantz attended the conference, but on the advice of Fieger refused to answer questions.

The lawyers were particularly angry at comments Modelski made to reporters about an alleged "lack of cooperation" on the part of Kevorkian and others at the remote cabin when sheriff's deputies arrived.

Modelski told reporters the investigation into the deaths of Wantz and Miller would take as long as six weeks.

"We really don't know what when on in that cabin," Modelski told reporters Thursday. "Kevorkian (and others) will not give any statements and that will complicate and prolong the investigation."

Fieger and Schwartz denied that Kevorkian or others were "uncooperative." Indeed, said Schwartz, they were far more helpful to investigators than was necessary since none were under arrest and the absence of criminal charges.

"We waited around for three hours (well past midnight)," said Schwartz. "And they (Kevorkian and others) voluntarily gave up keys to their cars."

Their clients did not make statements directly to investigators, the lawyers said, choosing instead — on the attorneys' advice — to speak through their lawyers.

"That is a customary practice," insisted Fieger. "People have a right to speak through their attorneys, but that's not being uncooperative."

Furthermore, said the lawyer, Modelski further portrayed their clients in a bad light by saying the investigation would take up to six weeks because of their lack of cooperation. "That investigation will take that long because of the tests involved," Fieger said, referring to the autopsy reports and testimony reports.

Fieger also took a shot at State Sen. Fred Dillingham, R-Fowlerville, for comments about Kevorkian.

Dillingham, who has introduced legislation that would make assisting a suicide a felony, was quoted on television and in newspapers as saying he wanted "to punch his (Kevorkian's) lights out" for his role in deaths of the two women.

Dillingham also asked state authorities to consider revoking Kevorkian's medical license. Kevorkian, 62, is a retired pathologist who resides in Royal Oak.

Fieger characterized both Thompson and Dillingham as "representatives of a fringe group (right-of-life advocates) who substitute their personal moral views in the absence of appropriate laws."

"They think it (assisted suicide) is a sin," said Fieger. "When in fact there is no law against it."

Modelski did not comment about the motives Fieger ascribed to Thompson and Dillingham. He said, however, that Fieger and Schwartz had not complied with normal procedures when they spoke on behalf of their clients.

It would have been one thing if Fieger said he was giving an account of what happened based on statements from his client, Modelski said. "But he didn't."

"Fieger (and Schwartz) simply gave us an account of what they believe happened," he said. "But they weren't even present when it happened."

When Kevorkian and others declined to talk with investigators, Modelski said, police had no choice but to seize every bit of evidence at the scene.

"You can never tell what will be important," he said. "So police confiscated everything. It's like a jigsaw puzzle, and you can never tell what piece is important."

Fieger had complained that deputies went too far in confiscating items found in the cars and in the cabin where the two women died. Deputies took check books, a personal journal and items belonging either to the two women or their friends or relatives, he said. "They even confiscated a wrist watch."

"At a time friends and relatives should have been left along to grieve, deputies and the prosecutor's office are harassing them."

LAUREL

SPRING/SUMMER

COLLECTION

SHOW

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Designer Salon
Thursday, October 31
Birmingham
Friday, November 1
Livonia

Dynamic designs
Bold splashes of graphic
art and geometrics.
Sophisticated separates,
suits, blouses,
jackets, a wardrobe of
fashion-blazed pieces
for the creative, innovative
women. Sizes 4-14



Jacobson's
NOW OPEN SUNDAYS

We welcome Jacobson's Charge, MasterCard, VISA, and American Express.
Shop until 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. Until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday.
Shop Sunday 10am to 5 p.m.

YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE
WHAT'S ON SALE
THE NEXT FOUR DAYS.

October 30, 31, November 1 & 2



BEAUTIFULY TANGLED LARKS \$32.99
DENISE SAKONYI

HUMBERT HEAVY CABLE \$28.99
LARKS

ELITE SAVINGS \$25.99
LARKS

MULTI LEVEL TANGLED LARKS \$24.99
INQUIRY LARKS

WAGGON TANGLED LARKS \$29.99
WAGGON TANGLED LARKS

EXHIBIT TANGLED LARKS \$32.99
EXHIBIT TANGLED LARKS

DON'T MISS THIS EXTRAORDINARY BUY!!
(EXHIBIT TANGLED LARKS)

Karastan

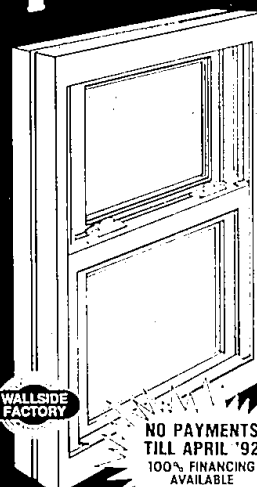
DONALD E. MCNABB CO.

31250 S. Milford Rd. (313)437-8146

15 min. West of the 12 Oaks Mall
Open Mon. - Sat. 9 am - 7 pm



W allside W indow F actory
Don't let our low
prices fool you!



ENERGY EFFICIENT
VINYL REPLACEMENT
WINDOWS
AS LOW AS

\$199 PER
WINDOW
INSTALLED
(5 Window
Minimum Order)

✓ QUALITY: Wallside's vinyl replacement windows with Ford glass insulate like wood, retain their beauty like coated aluminum and perform smoothly in any weather. You won't scratch, pit, rot, corrode or mildew.

✓ SERVICE: For over 47 years, we have manufactured and installed our quality replacement windows and backed them with the strongest guarantee in the industry.

✓ SAVINGS: In order to manufacture and install thousands of windows every year we purchase large quantities of materials at volume discounts and pass these savings on to you enabling us to sell windows for less.

NO PAYMENTS
TILL APRIL '92
100% FINANCING
AVAILABLE



Martin Blum, President

For A Free No Obligation
In-Home Estimate
WE WILL NOT BE UNDERSOLD!

LET US
PROVE IT... 272-4400

15630 Schaefer
Detroit, MI 48227

W allside W indow F actory
Factory & Showroom, FREE No Obligation In-Home Estimates

TOLL FREE
1-800-521-7800