

"This was a very exciting moment in history and I was very well aware it would not come again."

POLITICAL PRESSURES GROW



He does not want to "be a judge" and acknowledges there are some tough cases. The WMA does not demand treatments that unduly extend life when this is not desirable, he says. The will of the patient is important.

He says euthanasia is an issue in rich countries. The WMA's members from poorer states have no interest in it.

Asked about the trend towards liberalisation in many jurisdictions, he says "trends and zeitgeist are not what makes medical ethics".

To deal with the dissension in its ranks, the WMA organised regional conferences to air the matter. As expected there was almost no interest from Asia, Africa, or South America. Ironically, the European conference was hosted at the Vatican, and it of the four was the one where some delegates were in favour of the practice.

"This was kind of interesting," he says. "We asked the world if they'd like to see it. We..."

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