

[Home](#) » [Specials](#) » [Science](#) » Article

Journal linked to cardinal's campaign

Mark Metherell
June 7, 2007

A CATHOLIC journal which named and blamed Catholic federal MPs who supported the cloning laws has been linked to the stepped-up campaign by the Archbishop of Sydney, George Pell, against the NSW legislation.

The journal, *AD 2000*, lambasted the Environment Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, and 10 other Catholic MPs as "anti-life politicians" who had professed adherence to the Catholic faith.

Mr Turnbull, whose website had "proudly beamed" his association with next year's World Youth Day to be attended by the Pope, had in Parliament questioned whether an embryo could be regarded as a human person, the journal said.

It identified other Catholics, including the Defence Minister, Brendan Nelson, the Workplace Relations Minister, Joe Hockey, and Labor's defence spokesman, Joel Fitzgibbon, and education spokesman, Stephen Smith, demanding they be "made to answer for their public dissent".

"Such individuals should not be invited to cut the ribbon at Catholic school fetes," the *AD 2000* article declared.

Catholic sources say *AD 2000*, an organ established by the late arch-conservative, B. A. Santamaria, represents an influential power base for Cardinal Pell. They suggest the article in March could have spurred the prelate to take a sterner view on cloning after the federal legislation passed through the Senate by just two votes last November.

The article called on church leaders to address "this public scandal with a degree of urgency".

Mr Turnbull has left the World Youth Day committee. His spokesman said he had held the position when parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister and his departure "had absolutely nothing to do with anything else".

Yesterday Cardinal Pell's intervention met a mixed response from federal ministers.

Mr Hockey, who supported the federal cloning legislation after soul searching, rejected his warning. "I don't object to him expressing that opinion, but I do object to any suggestion that there are consequences," Mr Hockey said.

But the Treasurer, Peter Costello, a Baptist who voted against the cloning bill, defended Cardinal Pell's warning of consequences against MPs, saying "the church is entitled to propagate its doctrine".

"He is entitled to put his views. Simultaneously the MPs are entitled to their view and they will have to vote according to their consciences," Mr Costello said.

The Liberal MP who campaigned for the legislation, Mal Washer, an atheist, said Cardinal Pell was "right out of touch" with the majority of Catholics. Dr Washer said they supported the legislation.

The Labor senator Claire Moore, a Catholic who backed the cloning law, said: "I think it is concerning that individual politicians are not given the respect to follow their own religious practices and beliefs without being attacked in the media."

When news happens: send photos, videos & tip-offs to 0424 SMS SMH (+61 424 767 764), or [email us](#).

[SAVE 31% on home delivery of the Herald - subscribe today](#)

Copyright © 2007. The Sydney Morning Herald.