

Sunday, 17 June 2007

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Stem cell comments misrepresented: Pell

Australia's Catholic leader Cardinal George Pell says comments he made on the debate on stem cell research in NSW were misrepresented.

A NSW parliamentary committee will investigate whether Cardinal Pell, the Archbishop of Sydney, was in contempt of parliament in warning MPs not to support a bill that would open the way for therapeutic cloning.

Cardinal Pell earlier this month warned there would be "consequences" for Catholic members of the NSW parliament who voted for the bill.

But in an interview to be aired on ABC Radio on Sunday night, Cardinal Pell said he set out the classic Catholic position that a violation of moral principles had consequences in relation to God and the church.

Cardinal Pell said his warning that Catholic MPs who voted for the bill could be refused Holy Communion was hypothetical.

"No no, I never outlined that except as a hypothetical possibility," he told Sunday Profile, which airs at 9.05pm (AEST).

"What I did say was, human actions and public actions have public consequences and that we would cross those bridges if and when we come to them."

The stem cell bill is currently before the Upper House.

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