

Re: Embryonic Stem Cells

Dear Secretary,

There is no reason to change the existing prohibition on the cloning of human embryos as sensibly decided by Parliament in 2002. Cloning of human life and the use and destruction of embryonic human life is ethically wrong and scientifically fruitless.

Unethical scientists would have the general public and parliamentarians believe that their plans for cloning and using embryonic human life for research will provide cures for a number of diseases. This false hope is a smoke screen provided by unethical scientists and shrewd businessmen whose main objective is to profit financially from cloning and embryonic stem cell research.

Alternatively, adult stem cell research does not involve the use and ultimate destruction of selected human life at the embryonic stage and as such remains ethical. In addition, adult stem cell research has produced over 70 cures and treatments to date around the world. The sum total of treatments from embryonic stem cell research is NIL.

Taxpayer's money is being wasted by scientists with questionable ethical and moral practices. Fraudulent claims by Professor Alan Trousen, notable for his 'rat' episode claim, was forced to confess that the 'rat' did not get the stem cells he spoke about and he was subsequently forced to admit that the rat was indeed treated with 'germ' cells from aborted human babies. What a disgrace!

The South Korean scientific researcher Dr Hwang Wu-Suk fraudulently claimed to have cloned a human embryo, after having used 2061 human eggs in the process. Thirty five women's groups are now suing the Korean government on behalf of the women who have been harmed in the process of egg extraction, yet another disgrace! How similar this unethical 'scientific' research sounds to the Nazi experimentation on those less fortunate members of society during World War II.

In simple terms, the Lockhart proposals represent gross violations of human dignity and cry out to be voted down in Parliament. In 2005, a clear majority in the United Nations General Assembly, including Australia, supported a Resolution calling for the prohibition of all forms of human cloning, as being incompatible with human dignity and the

protection of human life (UN Press Release GA 10333, 8/3/05). It is the responsibility of an ethical government to protect human life from beginning to end and to define the ethical limits in the law of the nation.


Of great concern in this matter, is the fact that the Lockhart committee ignored the vast bulk of submissions opposed to any changes to the 2002 Act and was obviously 'conned' or 'taken in' by the appealing claims that cures are imminent if only they can use and destroy human life at its earliest form. There is evidence that their claims are spurious and are misrepresentations of scientific evidence, in fact, Professor Trounsen has openly admitted that his research is **highly unlikely to deliver therapies or cures to anyone** (The Age, June 5, 2005).

Therefore, any sensible, well informed government would freeze any further funding to Professor Trounsen or groups he represents. A wise government would direct all available funds to the successful and ethical research in the area of adult stem cells.

I urge you to give serious consideration to the ethical degradation our society faces if such research as recommended by the Lockhart committee is legalised. To legalise unethical practice when unethical scientists have forecasted cures is still unethical practice. To legalise such practice when there is nothing of value proven to be gained is an abomination.

We urge the committee to recommend against any changes to the present law.

Yours faithfully,

  
Colin Hilder Helen Hilder Catherine Hilder Colin Hilder Jr