

# Campaign Life Coalition

## National Public Affairs Office

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### MPs Update

#### McLellan's Memo, Admits Failure of Bill C-13

Dear Member of Parliament,

March 18, 2003

In a Memo released to MPs March 17, Health Minister Anne McLellan creates more confusion. Contrary to her suggestions, Bill C-13 would not prohibit the creation of human embryos for research purposes, the cloning of human embryos and the formation of chimeras (a. - a human embryo or fetus into which a cell of any non-human life form has been introduced: or b. - a non-human embryo or fetus into which a cell of a human embryo or fetus, or of a human being already born, has been introduced).

Liberal MP, John Bryden said, "...there is a universal feeling that embryos should not be created for the purpose of being killed..." but that the bill went on to explicitly allow the practice. Minister McLellan readily admits that **any intention to prohibit this practice is bogus**.

This admission negates her recent statement that C-13 represents a "balanced approach," and indeed it makes the Canadian legislation match the United Kingdom's as the most permissive in the world.

She claims that without the bill, cloning and other offensive techniques "would remain legal." This is untrue. This research is currently halted in Canada with a voluntary moratorium. The bill would in fact specifically make it possible to proceed with cloning.

It has been demonstrated that the wording of the definition in clause #3 **specifically allows** the creation of cloned human beings using the following techniques:

**Pronuclei Transfer, Mitochondria Transfer, DNA-Recombinant Germ Line Gene Transfer.**

Also, it is by using the first of these allowed techniques, **Pronuclei Transfer**, that researchers create **chimeras**. **The bill, as it is currently worded would indeed allow the creation of cloned animal/human chimeras**, a practice abhorrent to most Canadians for any purpose.

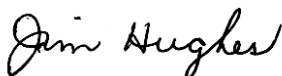
Moreover, we now find the researchers themselves understand that currently unwritten regulations render meaningless any so-called prohibitions in the bill.

In the Winter 2003 issue of Lab Business online magazine, an article quotes Drew Lyall, executive director of Stem Cell Network, a part of the federal National Centres for Excellence program, as saying that the **prohibitions in the bill are merely stepping stones to cloning research eventually being fully sanctioned by regulations**.

In the words of Lyall,

"What we are suggesting (regarding therapeutic cloning) is, do not criminalize this," says Lyall. "Make it a **prohibited activity that can be changed by regulation** into a controlled activity, which requires a licence. We are saying please do not shut the door on this until such time as you revise the criminal code." (emphasis added).  
(see the full article at: [http://www.labbusinessmag.com/labbusiness\\_winter/coverstory.html](http://www.labbusinessmag.com/labbusiness_winter/coverstory.html) )

Yours for Life,



Jim Hughes  
National President  
Campaign Life Coalition