



The Rev. The Hon. Fred Nile MLC ED.,
L.Th.,

Member of the Legislative Council
Deputy Chair, Privileges Committee
Parliamentary Leader, Christian Democratic Party
NSW Parliament House, SYDNEY NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 9230 2478
Email: f.nile@parliament.nsw.gov.au



MEDIA RELEASE

RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS & CORONA VACCINE

STATEMENTS MADE TO PARLIAMENT

For immediate circulation

The tireless work of defending religious liberties and freedoms in New South Wales continued apace this week, with Rev Hon Fred Nile MLC of the Christian Democratic Party delivering two statements to the Upper House concerning this important civil rights issue, and specifically how it relates to the manufacture and use of the potential corona virus vaccine. The two statements, extracted from *Hansard*, are reproduced below:

Private Member's Statement

COVID-19 VACCINE

26 August 2020

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (15:01:14): I wish to address some questions surrounding the manufacture and use of the proposed vaccine for the treatment of coronavirus 19. It is important to bear in mind that no such vaccine yet exists. We remember coronavirus 2, which is commonly known as the severe acute respiratory syndrome [SARS]. Researchers have been trying to find a vaccine for that strand of corona for almost two decades, without any success. I note that Dr Anthony Fauci, the head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, warned the public that it is unlikely that a one-hit vaccine will be manufactured for coronavirus 19 for similar reasons. Likewise, Harvard University epidemiologist Professor Marc Lipsitch is quoted in *The Atlantic* as saying that "... the likely outcome is that it will ultimately not be containable" in the way the public expects.

The virus has a tendency to evolve and mutate, making any vaccine, if and when it is created in a laboratory, only temporary in its effect. This brings me to the key point I wish to make. Many of my constituents have raised a number of concerns in relation to vaccines that are available for other ailments. Some of these have been manufactured using elements that are problematic—such as aluminium and mercury—which, if taken repeatedly or in large quantities have negative effects, especially for newborns.

Other concerns have been raised in relation to the use of human genetic material in the manufacture of certain vaccines.

The Catholic Weekly reports that Australia is moving to secure a University of Oxford trial vaccine with a company called AstraZeneca. The vaccine is controversial because it was developed using a cell line from an electively aborted human baby. Naturally, this poses a significant ethical question if the vaccine is either made compulsory outright or by severely restricting the quality of public life should a person opt not to be vaccinated. The Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Anthony Fisher, has pointed out that there are currently 167 other candidate vaccines and 29 of them are currently in trials. Why is Australia opting for the one manufactured by AstraZeneca? Neos Kosmos, a Orthodox Greek news agency, reports that this issue has galvanised Christian leaders across different denominations, including Greek Orthodox Archbishop Makarios and Anglican Archbishop Glenn Davies. [Time expired.]

Adjournment Debate

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

27 August 2020

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (18:21:20): I wish to speak about the ongoing civil rights and human rights issue of religious freedom. By now we are all familiar with what has happened to famous Australians such as Israel Folau and his wife as well as what has happened to Margaret Court. At the moment there is a campaign to remove Margaret Court's name from the Margaret Court Arena. Why the criticism? Because she and Israel Folau have expressed their support for traditional marriage and their opposition to same-sex marriage between two men or two women. Ordinary Australians of faith have felt similar pressures placed on them by ideological agitators who wish to persecute others simply for their religious views. It is a strange chapter in the history of Western civilisation. Members could remember, going back some time, when Christian denominations themselves had differences of opinion, but thankfully those times have now passed and we have cooperation with, and unity between, different Christian denominations and religious groups.

We are now witnessing a new kind of conflict in which anyone of religious conviction is mocked, ridiculed and discriminated against, even taken to court or sacked from their position. It is a travesty that there are no laws, as far as we can understand, to defend religious convictions in the same way that other identity groups are protected under the law, such as the laws that prohibit discrimination against homosexuals, for example. They are protected by law and for that reason a few years ago I introduced my religious freedom bill, copies of which are still available from my office. I am also co-sponsoring the Hon. Mark Latham's Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020, which is currently before the House.

Without any such laws, the rights of such people will be further disregarded in the public sphere as well as in government policy. Yesterday I made a brief comment about the unfortunate fact that Australia will likely be using the Oxford University-trialled vaccine manufactured by AstraZeneca, which uses genetic material taken from the kidney of an electively aborted baby girl.

The use of this vaccine therefore poses an insurmountable issue of conscience for people of faith. The Orthodox news agency Neos Kosmos reports that the issue has galvanised Christian leaders across different denominations, including Orthodox Archbishop Makarios, Anglican Archbishop Glenn Davies and Catholic Archbishop Anthony Fisher. They have all expressed significant reservations about the use of vaccines derived from human genetic material, because their use effectively would make the vaccinated party complicit in an act that is contrary to their faith. This is yet another issue that touches upon the need for religious liberties to be protected in legislation. The Prime Minister made some comments during a radio interview on 19 August, in which he was quoted as saying the vaccine, once it was ready, should be made "as mandatory as possible". Whilst he has recently stated his comments were misinterpreted, understandably his words have only amplified community concerns.

The community has reason to be concerned. If the vaccine is on the horizon and needs to be taken regularly due to the virus's capacity to mutate, then what will be the impact on basic civil liberties in New South Wales? It is not enough to say that the controversial vaccine is voluntary while, for example, making public facilities or the ability to travel contingent on having had the vaccine injection. If exercising one's freedom—in this case, opting out of getting a vaccine that violates one's conscience—means that your ability to engage with society is severely restricted, then you do not have freedom. I have recently written to the Prime Minister, Mr Morrison, asking him to consider holding a nationwide inquiry into these and related issues. I believe this requires a national approach because it is a national issue. [Time expired.]

Rev Hon Fred Nile and the Christian Democratic Party looks forward to continuing the hard work of promoting religious freedoms and liberties in the NSW Legislative Council in coming months and years.

Media inquiries:

Rev. Hon. Fred Nile MLC

(02) 9230 2478