WASHINGTON -- President Bush said Monday he believes schools should discuss "intelligent design" alongside evolution when teaching students about the creation of life.

During a round-table interview with reporters from five Texas newspapers, Bush declined to go into detail on his personal views of the origin of life. But he said students should learn about both theories, Knight Ridder Newspapers reported.

"I think that part of education is to expose people to different schools of thought," Bush said. "You're asking me whether or not people ought to be exposed to different ideas, the answer is yes."

The theory of intelligent design says life on earth is too complex to have developed through evolution, implying that a higher power must have had a hand in creation.

Christian conservatives _a substantial part of Bush's voting base_ have been pushing for the teaching of intelligent design in public schools. Scientists have rejected the theory as an attempt to force religion into science education.

On other topics during the group interview, the president:

_Refused to discuss the investigation into whether political aide Karl Rove or any other White House official leaked a CIA officer's identity, but he stood behind Rove. "Karl's got my complete confidence. He's a valuable member of my team," Bush said._

_Said he did not ask Supreme Court nominee John Roberts about his views on Roe v. Wade, the 1973 decision that legalized abortion._

_Said he hopes to work with Congress to pass an immigration reform bill this fall, including provisions for guest workers and enhanced security along the U.S.-Mexico border._

Bush spoke with reporters from the San Antonio Express-News, the Houston Chronicle, The Dallas Morning News, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram and The Austin American-Statesman.

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