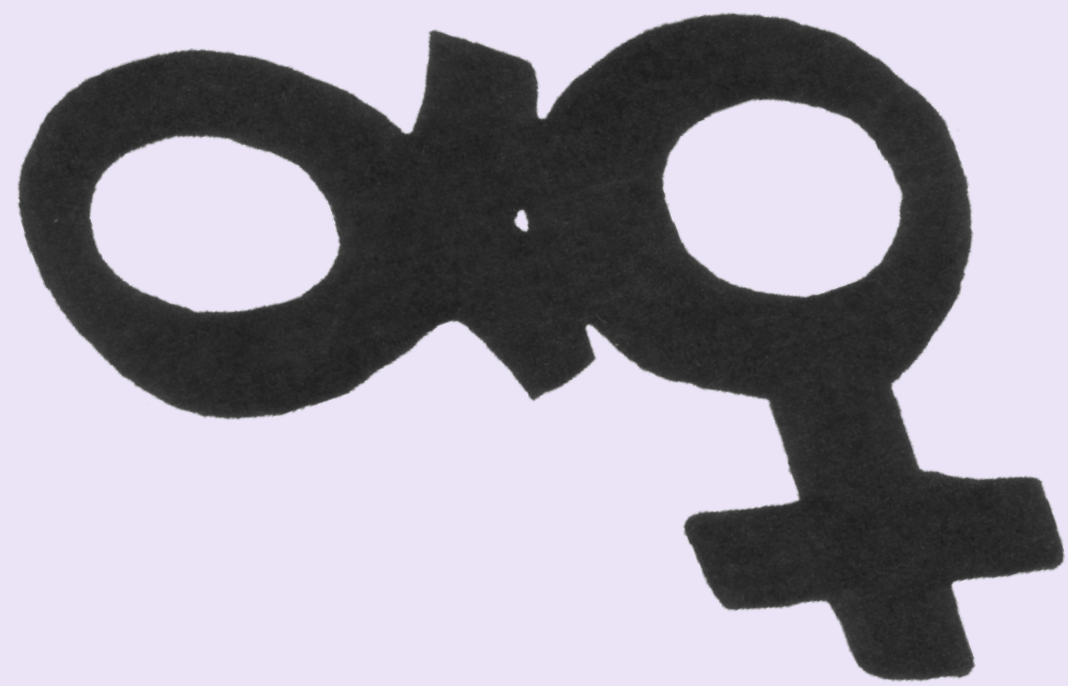


We wish to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which we meet – the Wangal clan of the Dharug peoples.



We acknowledge the impact colonialism has had on Aboriginal peoples and Country, and that this impact continues today.

We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging,
and to Aboriginal people joining us here today.



50 Years of

WAAC

1972 - 2022

1980s





1980s

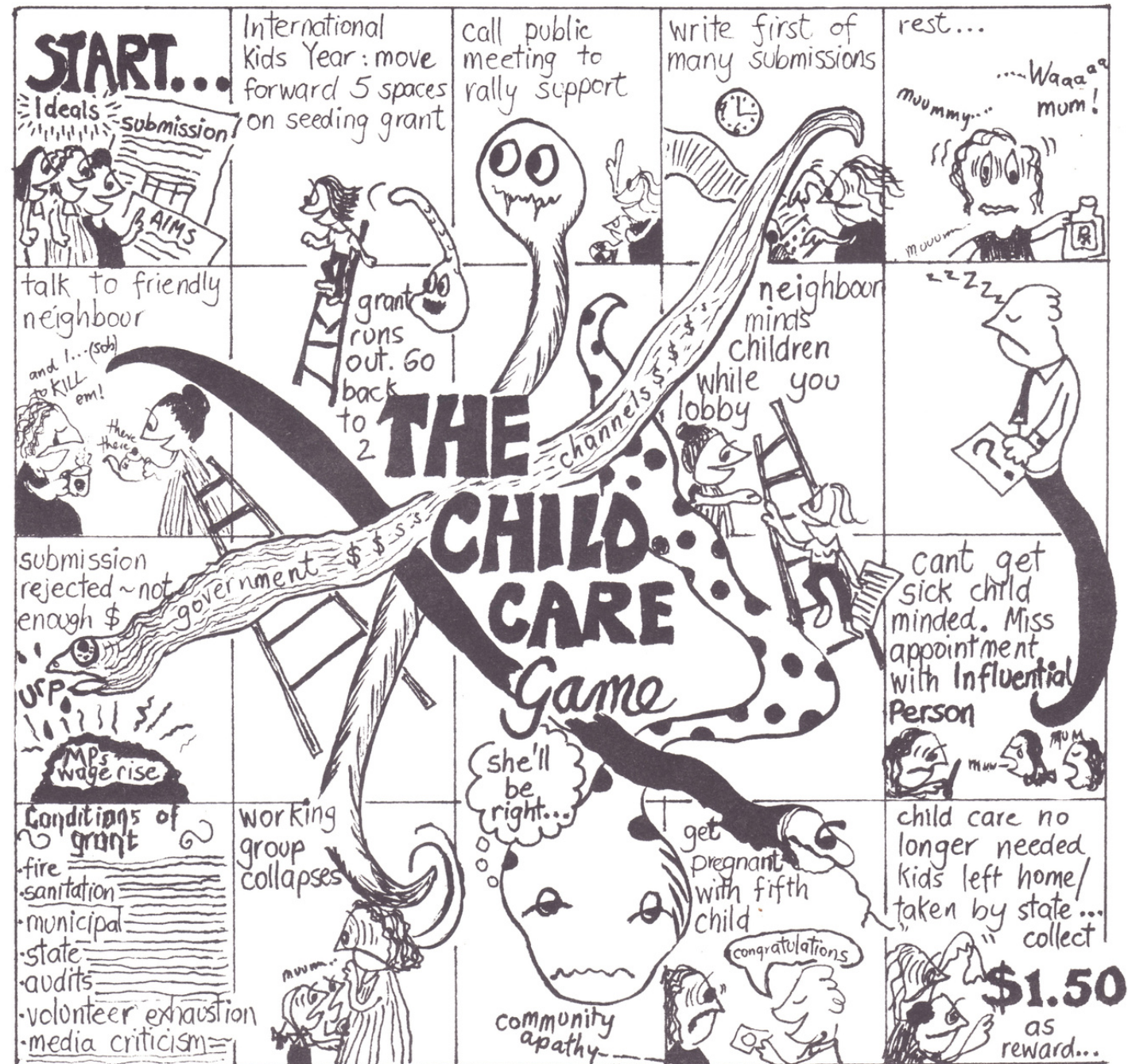


Photos on this page courtesy:
Jeanne Rudd, feminist, WAAC activist

Issue no. 23 Winter '81

Right to Choose ♀

a women's health action magazine



INTERNATIONAL Spain

In Spain, despite some democratisations in the government, abortion remains illegal. Recently the police raided a health clinic in Seville, arresting several doctors and charging the 432 women who had had abortions. If convicted these women face between 20 to 30 years in prison according to Spanish law.

The International Co-ordination Committee for Contraception and Abortion have set June 27 and 28 to begin an international mobilisation to demand amnesty for the accused. To prevent heavy penalties for the women and medical personnel, the Committee is asking for as many people as possible to send telegrams to the Spanish Minister of Justice. In 1979, a similar telegram campaign influenced the authorities not to proceed with the trial of 11 women in Bilbao charged with having had abortions. The European campaign is sending telegrams with the following text:

Abortion is not a crime.
Amnesty for the women of Seville and all women in prison for abortion.
They are sending the telegrams to: The Minister of Justice, San Bernardo, 45 MADRID 9 SPAIN

Philippines

A report in the New York Times (30/11/80) states that a government sponsored population control program is proving so successful that a Cabinet minister predicts the nation will achieve zero population growth within 20 years. According to population planners, the government will soon begin a \$247 million program to accelerate the campaign in the next five years. Financing assistance is coming from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) which has committed \$57 million in grants and loans. The International



Bank for Reconstruction and Development, also known as the World Bank, is supporting the program with \$16 million and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) has committed \$20 million. Despite assurances in this report that the population control strategy is "non coercive", feminists may be alarmed at the following: "Experts at the University of the Philippines Population Institute have expressed concern that less effective methods of contraception are gaining ground over more effective birth control pills or intra-uterine devices." The drug companies are undoubtedly also "concerned".

Mexico

Leslie Serna, a Mexican university student attending the UN Decade for Women Conference last year in Denmark, observed that scores of thousands of Mexican women die annually as the result of abortions performed with coat hangers, needles and other dangerous instruments and ingredients. "Two million abortions are performed annually in Mexico," she claimed.

"ninety five percent of these women are married and have more than three children." She said the majority of women who have abortions in her country are Catholic and that in September legislation will be introduced in Mexico calling for legalised abortions. "We want free abortion and we don't want to have our women die."

Brazil

"Feminists are cautious not to mention abortion in my country," says Carmen Barroso, a Brazilian social psychologist. "Thousands of women have illegal abortions and the thousands of women suffer. The Catholic Church which prohibits abortions, supports labour unions and students in Brazil, and has been a viable force in achieving progressive goals. In order not to offend this important ally in so many other battles, feminists have been low keyed about abortion rights."

However, Ms. Barroso pointed out that the issue has emerged openly through the trial of two women who were arrested for performing abortions. Several hundred women rallied around them and are now actively campaigning for liberalised abortion laws. (UN Decade for Women Conf, Workshop 1980)

Bangladesh

Mufweza Khan of Bangladesh asserted that tradition, culture and the Muslim religion are formidable forces against abortion in her country. "Abortion on request has to be legalised," she said. "There are many social pressures on unmarried pregnant women in my country and there are many suicides that could be prevented by abortion." She said that in Bangladesh an abortion can be performed within 120 days after conception "but we cannot accept them (married women) until they are near death and that is often too late." (UN Decade for Women Conf, Workshop, 1980)

DO NOT BUY ANY PRODUCTS CARRYING THESE NAMES:

NESTLES: Nescafe Instant Coffee
Nestea
Quik
Nestle Evaporated Milk
Nestle Condensed Milk
Nestle Reduced Cream Milk
Nestle Malted Milk
Milo
Caro
Sunshine
Nan infant formula
Lactogen infant formula
Nestle Baby Foods in jars
Nestle Chocolates
Ricory, coffee

Gingare cheese;
Maggi - soups, stock cubes, baked beans, spaghetti, instant noodles, etc.;
Kavli Crispbread;
International Roast instant coffee;
Cahill's restaurants and confectionaries
Tongala evaporated milk, condensed milk, reduced cream;
Bear Brand evaporated milk;
Ideal evaporated milk, reduced cream milk;
Dairy Frost ice cream;
Crosse and Blackwell products;
Lancome cosmetics;
L'oreal cosmetics;
Findus frozen fish;
McVities biscuits;
Burton Parsons & Co. (Aust) Pty. Ltd;
Alcon Laboratories (Aust) Pty. Ltd.



In NSW there is one licensed child care centre for every 10.5 children under 5 years of age. The majority of licensed places are provided by preschool centres whose hours of opening do not correspond to a full working day.

When the number of licensed places in long day care centres (the service most appropriate for working parents) is considered, the situation changes dramatically:

- there is one licensed place for every 674 children under 2!
- there is one licensed place for every 50 children under 5!

Reference: Women's Trade Union Commission.

Give Your Friend a Gift Subscription

We will mail 4 copies of Right to Choose for \$5.00

I would like you to send a gift sub to:

Name.....

Address.....

I enclose \$..... for a gift subscription to Right to Choose

Post to : WAAC, 62 Regent Street, Chippendale, N.S.W. 2008



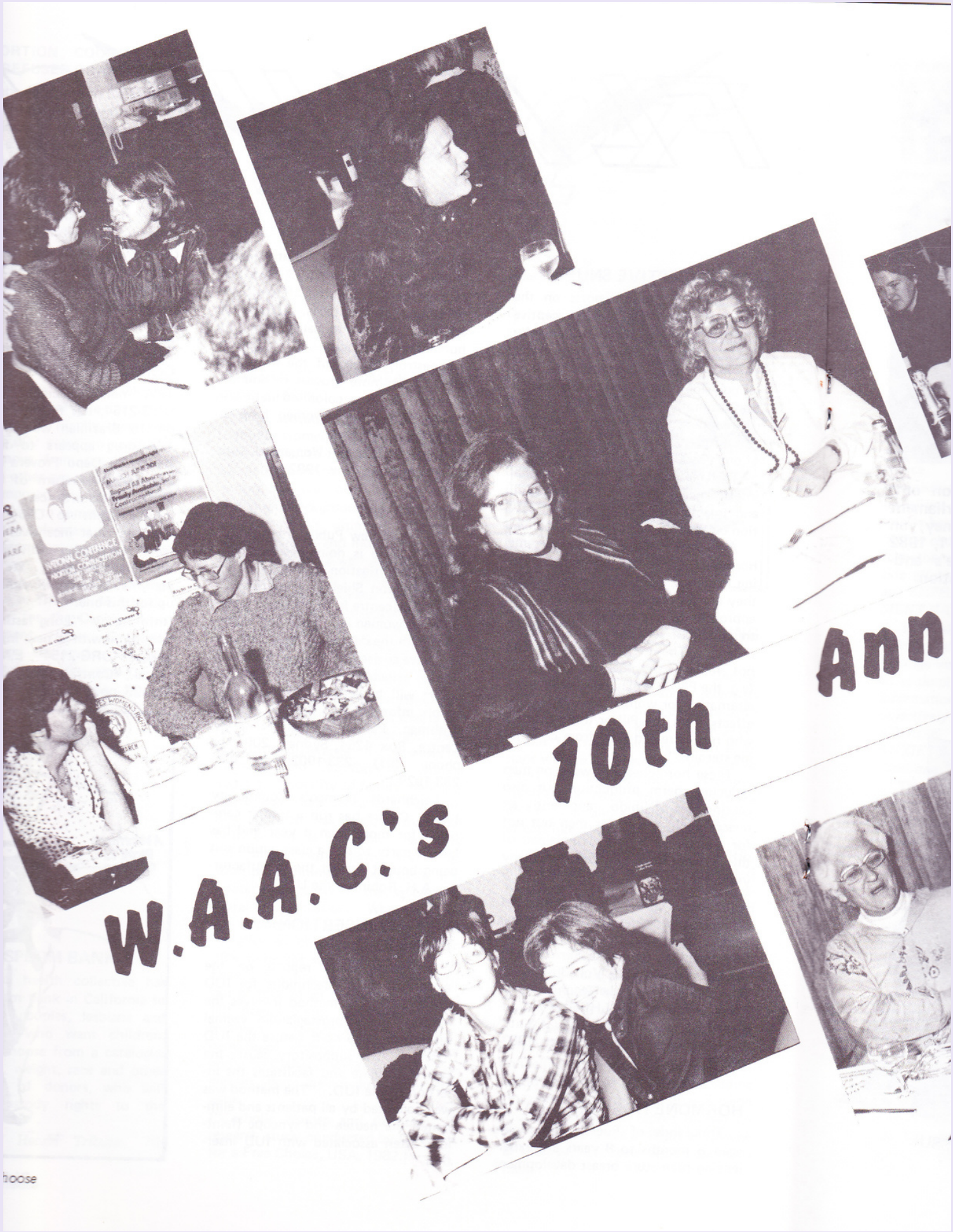
**Protest against US anti-choice extremist,
Jerry Falwell, Ryde Civic Centre 1982**





Protest
against
Jery
Falwell,
Ryde
Civic
Centre
1982





Nile Confounded cont'd from page 1.
the challenge is successful it would greatly reduce women's access to abortion as well as make abortion much more expensive. Of course, the bible belt people don't need to worry, they can afford their abortions whatever the price.

It seems ridiculous that we are still fighting for the basic right to control our own bodies, a right supported by the overwhelming majority of people in this country. A survey done by the *Australian Women's Weekly* in May 1980 showed that 94% of women surveyed were in favour of abortion being available in some form and only 6% were in favour of abortion not being available at all.

However, sometimes the obvious is just not enough, only intense lobbying of politicians and vocal protest will enable women to exercise the freedom of choice upon which this society is nominally based, and to gain the eventual repeal of all abortion laws.

Karin Vesik

GREECE

The Greek parliament has passed a law authorising the Minister of Justice to form a committee to revise the Civil Code in a manner consistent with the constitutional right of male and female equality. The committee will consist of 15 members. Women's organisations have already presented a list of women candidates and are awaiting the official announcement of appointments to the committee. The Ministry of Justice has announced that there will be a majority of women members.

(From *Choirs*, Sept/Oct. 1982, pp21-22.)



Demonstration outside Parliament House, Sydney, on November 11, 1982 against Nile's anti-abortion motion.



RIGHT TO LIFERS - OBSCURING THE ISSUE!

Women's Abortion Action Campaign

2 Regent St. Chippendale 2008 Ph. 699-5281

January 1982



Dear friends,

We are writing to you as a potential and/or past supporter of our campaign to ensure the reproductive rights of all women. In these times of recession and conservative repression, as Alice said, we must run very fast to stay in the same place and even faster if we wish to get anywhere. Gains made in the last ten years such as the Levine Ruling and the establishment of abortion clinics are now under threat.

Over the last year the Right to Life and a number of new more extreme groups such as Aid Life have been carrying out a ghoulish campaign of intimidation against women seeking abortions and clinic workers. They have-

- picketed clinics, subjecting women and workers to verbal abuse.
- threatened violence - eg "To those who make a living chopping up babies.....the People of Peace have Guardian Angels who are not afraid to use the sword in defence." (from a letter sent to a Sydney abortion clinic, June '81)
- made abusive phone calls to the homes of clinic workers.
- sent to the neighbours of clinic doctors, bogus letters inviting them to a barbeque at the doctor's homes and stating that the doctors will "be showing slides of some recent abortions, and also trying to arrange an actual termination (killing) for the afternoon". (Neighbours have in fact responded very sympathetically and have offered their support to the doctors).
- set a fire in the foyer of one clinic and sprayed the building with red paint.

Abortion is a woman's right to choose!

One of the most worrying aspects of this campaign is that it is intensifying and following the pattern of the U.S. group, the Moral Majority, which has condoned the firebombing of clinics there. A leader of this group, Jerry Falwell will be visiting Australia early this year to discuss tactics with Australian anti-choice groups. (for more information on the Moral Majority see Right to Choose No 24)

Women have responded to these attacks with renewed enthusiasm for our campaign. Large meetings of women late last year discussed the future directions of the campaign. There is a strong commitment to going beyond merely defending existing services.

- WE MUST -
- expose the reactionary nature of those groups attempting to enforce pregnancy.
 - counter their lies about the dangers of abortion.
 - provide accurate information about all aspects of sexuality and fertility control.
 - publicise the results of opinion polls showing majority support for abortion rights.
 - continue to campaign for safer methods of contraception and expose the dangerous methods.
 - fight forced sterilisation.
 - support other campaigns fighting to increase the options for women, eg the homebirth and childcare movements.



The Right to Life and their cronies are a minority, but a minority with MONEY. If we are to make a greater impact we must be able to finance the production of literature, the organisation of speakers and meetings, the buying of media time and space etc.....so..... if you can help, please send your donations, large or small, to W.A.A.C., 62 Regent St., Chippendale, 2008.

The next meeting of the campaign will be Wed. 3rd Feb. 8pm at the above address and fortnightly thereafter. All women welcome. For ongoing news about the campaign, subscribe to our magazine, Right to Choose, \$5 for 4 issues.

Hoping to hear from you,

Jeanne Rudd for W.A.A.C.

Abortion is a woman's right to choose!



Poster donated to
Women's Liberation House
Sydney by Jozefa Sobski





Dear.....

I call upon you to oppose the introduction of a private member's bill by Reverend Fred Nile forbidding abortion.

I also object to any amendments to this bill which would limit women's access to abortion.

Abortion is a woman's right to choose.

Yours sincerely,

Name

Address.....

..... Pcde.....

Parliament House,
Macquarie St.,
Sydney. 2000.

Produced by the Women's Abortion Action Campaign. For further information contact WAAC, 62 Regent St., Chippendale. 2008. Ph. 699 5281.
Photo: Chris Jones/International Women's Day, Sydney, 1982.





**Vicky
Potempa**



Vicki Potempa



Margaret Kirkby, working on WAAC's newsletter, 'Right To Choose', at Sydney Women's Liberation House

1983-1993

1983

Autumn 1983: Right to Choose Issue No. 26

Late 1983: WAAC organizes solidarity actions with Japanese women over anti-abortion legislation introduced by the Japanese Government.

1984

Summer/Autumn: Right to Choose Issue No. 27

July: WAAC activist attends and presents paper to the International Women's Health Meeting in Amsterdam, convened by the International Contraception, Abortion and Sterilisation Campaign (ICASC).

Late 1984: WAAC receives Federal Government funding for a one-year Community Development and Employment Program (CDEP).

Summer 1984/85: Right to Choose Issue No. 28

1985

February 23: WAAC participates in the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) Conference, Contraception and Consumer Protection.

May: Bjelke-Petersen Government authorizes Police raids on abortion clinics in Brisbane and Townsville. 47,000 medical files were seized. Media outlets were tipped off by the Police and national television that night screened of footage of women running from the clinics with coats over their heads to protect their identity.

June: WAAC rally in Martin Place to protest the Queensland raids. Activist Tracey Greenberg composes her famous abortion rights song called A Woman's Right To Choose.

1986

Summer/Autumn 1986: Right to Choose Issue No. 29

February: A Brisbane jury acquitted two Brisbane doctors charged after the Queensland raids. An historic common law ruling by Judge McGuire confirms that the precedent in the 1969 Victorian Menhennit ruling also applies to interpreting Queensland abortion laws (See Abortion and the Law display board for further information).

September: Abortion activists workshop was held at the second Women's Health in a Changing Society Conference in Adelaide.

November 30 - December 1: National Abortion Activists Conference held at the Preterm Foundation, Sydney as a follow-up from Adelaide Conference.

October 1986: An anti-abortion motion recognizing life as beginning at the moment of conception was placed on notice in the NSW Parliament by Marie Bignold MLC of the Call to Australia Party as a Private Member's Motion. The then Unsworth Government used parliamentary procedure to prevent debate on the motion being concluded.

1988: The Abortion Rights Coalition is formed in NSW. The Abortion Rights Coalition was a broad coalition of abortion rights activist groups such as WAAC, abortion providers and representatives from a variety of women's and social organisations, such as women's health centres, the Women's Electoral Lobby and the Humanist Society. It created a broad movement to oppose attacks on abortion rights that came together as the need arose in NSW.

Marie Bignold MLC puts her motion forward for debate in the NSW Parliament again, this time in the first session of the Greiner Liberal Government. The motion was adopted in the NSW Upper House. The motion was only passed because the speaker of the house Johnno Johnson (an anti-abortionist) went against parliamentary practice to cast his vote in the affirmative, breaking the equalised vote at 19 for and 19 against.

Fred Nile MLC issues press release outlining his intention to introduce the Unborn Child Protection Bill into the NSW lower house. The Bill sought to identify the 'unborn child' in all respects as a person, allowed for abortion only when the mother's life was in 'current danger' and granted the father of the foetus the ability to claim compensation from a doctor if the abortion was carried out without his consent.

WAAC and the Abortion Rights Coalition launch a defence campaign. A number of pro-choice groups are established in the southern and western suburbs of Sydney.

Over the next few weeks politicians are overwhelmed by the postcard and letter writing campaign of the pro-choice lobby.

WAAC holds public meeting in response to Fred Nile Bill in Sydney.

Fred Nile withdraws Bill from NSW Parliament.

After an extended delay, Right to Choose Issue No. 30 published. The edition provides an extensive update on abortion rights in Australia and across the world.

Queensland Family Court Judge, Justice Lindenmayer, makes a significant ruling in the case F v F. In the case, a husband had taken his wife to court over her decision to terminate a pregnancy. Judge Lindenmayer's decision maintained that a married woman was free to make her own decision about having an abortion, irrespective of her husband's wishes.

A result of the undermining of abortion laws in the United States, the



Melbourne, Hobart and Adelaide.

August 17: Alastair Webster, Liberal MP in the Federal Parliament introduces a Bill originally developed by Brian Harradine MP in the Senate. The Abortion Funding Abolition Bill, aimed to restrict access to the Medicare rebate on abortion. The Bill was debated a number of times throughout the year.

As a result of the threat to abortion rights at the Federal level, many women were mobilized across Australia. WAAC activists organized public meetings in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Wollongong and Adelaide. A huge petition drive was undertaken nationally as well as letter writing and lobbying of local Members of Parliament.

November 13: Guy Yeoman a Liberal MP, introduces the Procurement of Miscarriage Limitation Bill into NSW Parliament. Yeoman's Bill aimed to restrict abortions to being performed in public hospitals only and to fine doctors \$5000 if abortions were performed in private clinics or private hospitals.

The abortion rights lobby, led by WAAC, was quick to respond with letters of protest sent to all members of the NSW Legislative Assembly.

Due to procedural mistakes made by Yeoman in his introduction of the Bill to Parliament, the Bill was never put forward for debate.

November: WAAC organises second rally in Sydney in support of U.S. women facing further undermining of abortion laws.

1990

Summer 1989/90: Right to Choose Issue No. 31

January - February: Two Sydney WAAC activists undertake tour of the United States. The tour was financed by donations and sales of publications and campaign materials. The activists attended a conference organized by the International Women's Rights Watch. After the conference they undertook a tour of feminist health services and abortion rights organisations in Boston, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Washington D.C. and San Francisco.

Marchers take on Nile



Autumn: Right to Choose Issue No. 32

1991

Early 1991: Fred Nile MLC re-introduces the Procurement of Miscarriage Limitation Bill into NSW Parliament. The Bill is the same as that originally put forward by Yeoman in 1989. The Bill was defeated by a vote of 29 against, 7 for and a small number of abstentions.

Throughout 1991: WAAC joins with other forces to establish a campaign to fight the privatization of public hospitals. In relation to abortion, privatization was of concern because many privatized hospitals were taken over by Catholic Health organisations which refused to perform abortions, sterilisations or to make contraception available.

June - July: WAAC prepares submission for funds to The Global Fund for Women in the U.S. A submission was made after fellow abortion rights activists in Tasmania informed WAAC that they had been successful in obtaining a small grant from the Fund to establish the Women's Health Foundation Clinic in Hobart.

1992

Women's Abortion Action Campaign celebrates twenty years of activism.

Spring: Right to Choose Issue No. 33

May: WAAC receives cheque for funding from The Global Fund for Women - it equates to approximately \$8,000 to support campaign activities and to compile a booklet of women stories of their experience of abortion.

September 25: WAAC 20th anniversary dinner.

December: WAAC organises a national meeting of abortion activists in Sydney. At this meeting the Abortion Rights Network of Australia (ARNA) was established. ARNA brought together an autonomous network of groups and individuals in each state and territory who were working for, and who supported, women's right to choose abortion. ARNA was the peak body for state-based abortion rights groups.

ARNA was established to ensure that there was formal networking, information sharing and liaison between state-based and international abortion rights groups, to ensure Australia's adherence to international covenants that promoted women's abortion rights, and to coordinate a national response to abortion rights.

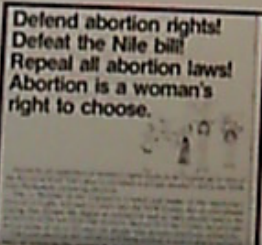
WAAC activists were extremely active participants in ARNA. This in part explains why Right to Choose was not published from 1992 - 1998. During this time WAAC activists focused on production of ARNA national newsletters and participating in quarterly national teleconferences.

1993

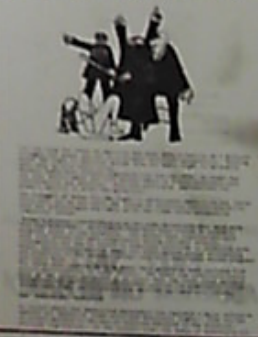
May 28: WAAC Public Forum, Abortion: Silent No More! to mark the International Day of Action on Women's Health coordinated by the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR). WAAC sent solidarity greetings to similar events held in Brisbane and Melbourne.

September: ARNA National Meeting in Brisbane and first ARNA National Conference on Abortion Rights. Conference proceedings were published by Queensland ARNA.

October: Call to Australia Party politician, Fred Nile MLC, introduces into NSW Parliament a different version of his 'conscientious objection' legislation, this time it is called The Public Hospitals (Conscientious Objection) Bill 1993 (No. 2). The bill sought to allow medical practitioners or nurses to decline to provide or take part in the provision of medical or nursing treatment or services at a public hospital if he or she has a 'conscientious objection' on the grounds of moral or religious belief. This bill was specifically aimed at the abortion operation in the public hospital system.



ABORTION AN INDUSTRIAL ISSUE



Issue no 25 Spring 1982

Right to Choose ♀

a women's health action magazine

Foetus rights case fails

High Court
refuses appeal
by association

By MARSALI MARKHAM

LABOR PARTY

Abortion move expected to be defeated

SENIOR members of the Labor Party believe that they have the numbers to defeat a move at next month's national conference to end the party's conscience vote on abortion.

The abortion issue is seen as potentially the most divisive and damaging in the conference. Senior Labor MPs are expected to be split.

By GEOFF KITNEY

Nile to make fresh bid to outlaw abortions

By PAUL ELLERCAMP

Rev Fred Nile is planning to introduce a private bill in the Legislative Council in a fresh attempt to outlaw abortions in NSW.

Mr Nile will attempt initially to put into the Crimes Act an amendment covering the principle that human life begins at conception and should receive the normal protection of the law from that moment.

A second stage, which he hopes to introduce into Parliament later, would deal with ways of enforcing this protection.

A protracted controversy in Federal Parliament when opponents of abortion tried to include it in human rights legislation two years ago.

Mr Nile said it was also similar to an amendment proposed to the US Constitution.

Section 82 of the Crimes Act provides jail terms of 10 years for people who procure abortions unlawfully.

The definition of crime is that given in the Supreme Court in the Heatherbrae case.

In the ruling, of abortion claim that it is a crime to procure an abortion.

ABORTION GROUP GETS BIG BOOST

By MARTIN RIORDAN

A STATE government-sponsored group has thrown its support behind a new abortion bill.

The NSW Women's Advisory Council, which directly advises Premier Neville Wran, has associated with the new lobby this week.

It is called the Right to Choose Coalition, which will be formally established next week.



BY NICK GIBSON

WOMEN OPPOSE VISIT BY MORALS CRUSADER

By STEVE WARNOCK

An American morals crusader who

Mr. Frazer, has written a personal letter to Dr. Paley. He has also written a letter to the NSW Women's Advisory Council, which directly advises Premier Neville Wran, has associated with the new lobby this week.

On Friday, Dr. Paley will be in Sydney for a meeting with the NSW Women's Advisory Council, which directly advises Premier Neville Wran, has associated with the new lobby this week.

On Friday, Dr. Paley will be in Sydney for a meeting with the NSW Women's Advisory Council, which directly advises Premier Neville Wran, has associated with the new lobby this week.

On Friday, Dr. Paley will be in Sydney for a meeting with the NSW Women's Advisory Council, which directly advises Premier Neville Wran, has associated with the new lobby this week.

On Friday, Dr. Paley will be in Sydney for a meeting with the NSW Women's Advisory Council, which directly advises Premier Neville Wran, has associated with the new lobby this week.

On Friday, Dr. Paley will be in Sydney for a meeting with the NSW Women's Advisory Council, which directly advises Premier Neville Wran, has associated with the new lobby this week.

TOKEN WOMAN: TOKEN DEBATE



Jana Wendt

event guided by god and god would not allow a pregnancy to occur after a rape because it was an act of violence. This train of thought ignores basic biology whereby if an ovum and a sperm fertilise a pregnancy results, no matter whether the woman is consenting or not. With this idea there is the hint that the woman is lying about the rape because the act resulted in pregnancy. Compounding this Nile said that the woman should not have had an abortion because abortion is surgical rape. Nile has twisted feminist criticism of the way gynaecology can mistreat women. He uses a way of thinking about women's reproductive health that would give women more control over their bodies to deny women that control.

The second interview was with an eleven-year old incest victim. The girl and her mother talked of how she would have been unable to continue school if the pregnancy had continued. Nile, commenting on this young woman's plight, said that she will be psychologically scarred for life by the abortion and would have been better off if she had carried the pregnancy to term and presumably had the child adopted. Apart from the fact that it is not medically advisable for an eleven year old to carry a pregnancy to term it would have been a great psychological distress to carry a child that would be a constant reminder of the trauma the woman has already gone through.

The other woman interviewed had been pregnant with a child that would have been born with a terminal genetic disease. This woman who already had several children had decided that she could not cope with a handicapped child and had an abortion. Again Nile said that this woman should not have had an abortion.

George Negus went on to ask Nile if he would allow an abortion if the mother's life were in danger if the pregnancy continued. Nile replied that he would not necessarily save the

mother as it would depend on the circumstances. When asked if he had to choose between his wife dying and her having an abortion Nile replied that he would save his wife. This incidentally coincided with his wife's wishes who was heard in the background to say "I want to live". Apparently, whether a woman would live or die in childbirth would all depend on whether Nile considered her worthy enough. Unmarried, poor, black, and migrant women would most likely be counted out.

These two men discussing abortion is indicative of the way women's lives are dictated by men. Nile on the one hand telling women what they should do with their bodies and Negus and the 60 Minutes machine manipulating the issue for the controversy it generates.

As Nile stated on the programme he would deny any woman an abortion no matter what the circumstances. Women who had had abortions and were the victims of rape, incest and a woman who would have borne a severely handicapped child were told by Nile that they should have taken their pregnancies to term, no matter what these women said about the situation. The women presented in the programme were in what 60 Minutes considered dire enough circumstances for them to be allowed an abortion. The situation was set up whereby Nile would be shown as a "ratbag". All Fred Nile's comments may be brushed aside as the rantings of the lunatic fringe. But what remains is the mode of thinking where someone will pass judgement on whether a woman deserves an abortion.

There was apparently an unprecedented response to this programme with complaints that the sensational presentation of abortion left unconsidered the situation of women in ordinary circumstances. This

Book Reviews

Church, State and New Zealand Education consists of papers presented by Mr. Colin McGeorge, Senior Lecturer in Education in the University of Canterbury and Professor Iban Snook of Massey University, to a seminar organised by the Committee for the Defence of Secular Education, and held in September, 1981.

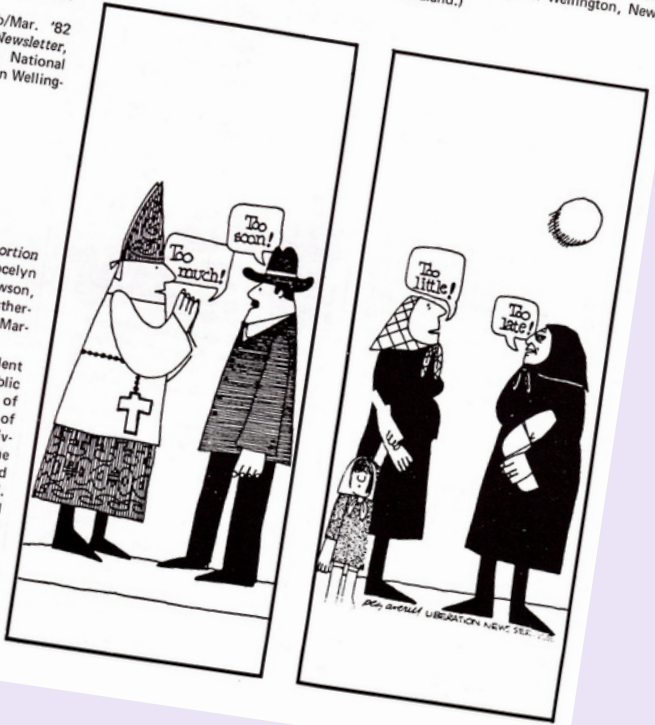
The papers cover a history of the church and state in New Zealand education, religion in state schools, and the Integration Act and its aftermath. Available at \$2.00 from WONAAC or from the Committee for the Defence of Secular Education, P.O. Box 17-081, Wellington.

(Reprinted from the Feb/Mar '82 issue of the WONAAC Newsletter, magazine of the Women's National Abortion Action Campaign in Wellington, New Zealand.)

a damning indictment of society's attitude to women. It shows how fertility control or the lack of it makes us vulnerable so that social pressures can force us to take actions against our own interests. Last century keeping an illegitimate child led to prostitution; today adoption and the domestic purposes benefit can have tragic results. Baby-farmer Minnie Dean murdered her charges. Today child abuse is linked with poverty and family stress from unwanted pregnancy. But politicians and the public enquiries they have set up, have simply

ignored women. We are still held in such low esteem that the right to make a decision about abortion is withheld and even the argument that women are the proper people to make that decision is held to be extreme.

Ill Conceived is available from bookshops and Kirlian Books, Box 5054, Dunedin at \$9.25 a copy and 90 cents for postage. (Reprinted from the Feb/Mar '82 issue of the WONAAC Newsletter, magazine of the Women's National Abortion Action Campaign in Wellington, New Zealand.)



DEFEND ABORTION! FIGHT
RIGHT WING ATTACKS

WOMEN'S ABORTION ACTION CAMPAIGN

Abortion rights:
A union issue!

WOMEN
ABORT
C
S
N

1980s





Margaret Kirkby



1980s

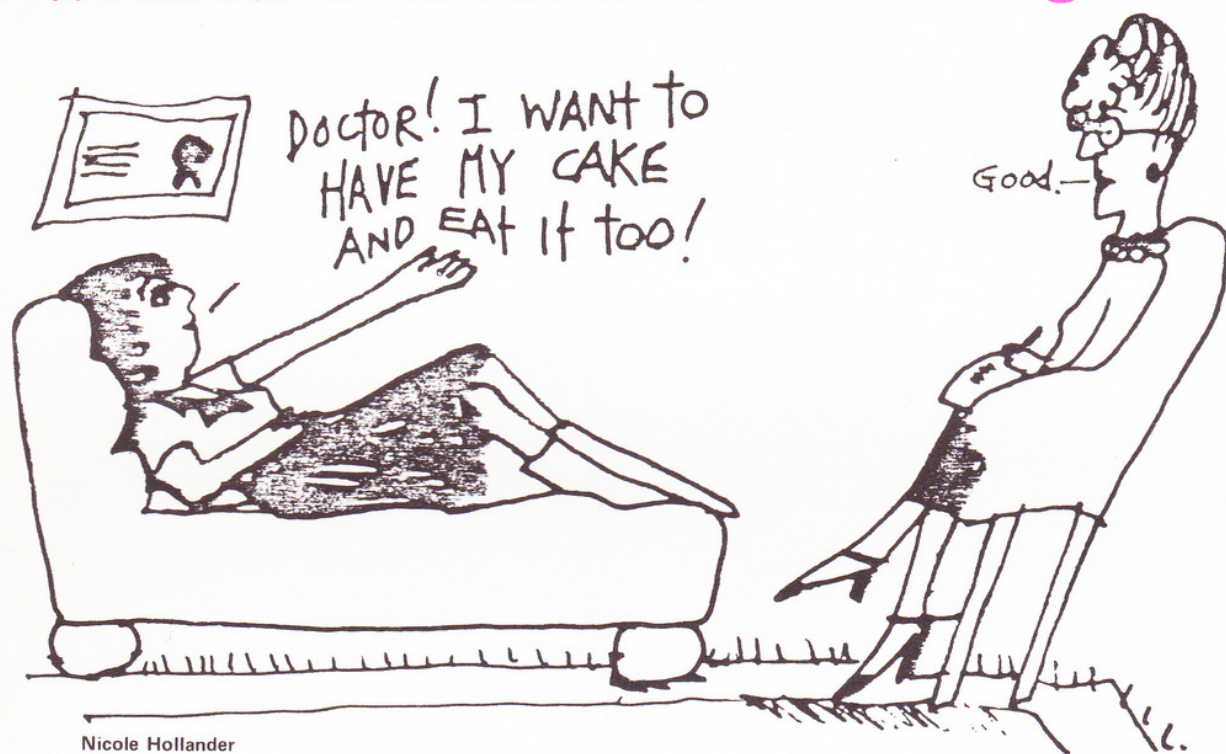




Issue no 26 Autumn 1983

Right to Choose ♀

a women's health action magazine



Nicole Hollander

In this issue:

Fred Nile Confounded p.1

The Morning After Pill p.4

Depo Provera & W.H.O. p.2

& Lots of International news

\$1.50

The MORNING-after-the-night-before PILL

WHY

You are physically capable of getting pregnant about 360 times during your life. It takes one sperm cell to fertilise one ovum, 72 hours for the ovum to travel to the uterus and 48 hours for the fertilised egg to become implanted in the uterus. 50% of fertilised eggs fail to implant but, sperm can survive for 5 days, your period was 13 days ago and the condom broke last night.....don't panic!

After sex birth control is not a new idea. Women have been waking up with that icy feeling of panic the next day since time began. The remedies they used ranged from jumping up and down to shake out the sperm, to sneezing or douching. Some methods worked, some didn't; with the uncertainty as to whether they were pregnant or not it would have been difficult to tell. Herbs such as pennyroyal and tansy have possible application for this purpose but have, of course, been ignored by the medical profession.

But this is the 1980's and who needs post coital contraception now?

At a recent symposium in London, reports were given from clinics in England, Holland, Germany and Ireland. The reasons for women needing the service varied slightly from place to place but roughly half were because of contraceptive failure, i.e. condom or diaphragm tearing, about 3% were women who had been raped and the others had unexpectedly had intercourse without using contraception. The majority of women came for help within 24 hours of having unprotected intercourse. (1)

HOW

The so called "morning after pill" is now available from NSW Family Planning Association clinics. This pill (in reality pills) is simply a heavier dose of certain currently available brands of the Pill - Eugynon, Neogynon, Nordiol or Ovral (not the low dose or progesterone-only ones). It is

only useful if a woman has sex at mid-cycle (ovulation). Two pills are taken, followed by another two twelve hours later and all within 72 hours of intercourse. The *British Medical Journal* says that there is a total oestrogen input equivalent to about six low dose pills. (2)

(These pills should not be confused with the earlier version of the morning after pill which used DES - diethylstilboestrol. DES has been shown to cause vaginal cancer in the daughters of women treated with it during pregnancy. Another reliable method of interception of the fertilised egg is to insert a copper IUD within five days of ovulation. Other methods using progesterones and prostaglandins are currently being researched.)

The morning after pills can only be used by women who have no contraindications for using the Pill. Side effects are common - 60% of women will experience nausea, 24% will vomit and some will have breast tenderness. 99% will bleed within two weeks expelling the fertilised egg if any. The failure rate is around 1%. If the method does fail, there is a 2.5% chance of congenital abnormality making this an unsuitable method for women who would not consider abortion.

The *Right to Choose* collective regards this method with caution. Our concerns about the safety of the Pill (see *Right to Choose* No. 22) also apply to this regimen. Though the period of exposure is relatively brief when compared to daily Pill taking, the dosage level is much higher. However, if a woman, after considering the risks and side effects, chooses to obtain her own packet of these pills, she then has a method of fertility control which is entirely in her own hands.

Unfortunately though, the effects of repeated use of this method are unknown. The repeated consumption of heavy doses of hormones does seem like "overkill" especially when "the risk of pregnancy occurring as a result of a single untreated unprotected intercourse at mid-cycle for women with regular cycles is estimated to be 20 - 30%. (Mid-cycle is defined as regular cycle length, i.e. 28 days, minus 14 plus or minus 3 days.) The risk of pregnancy from one intercourse at ANY time in any cycle may be as low as 2 - 4%." (3)

Another restriction with the morning after pills is that they can't be used if the woman has also had earlier unprotected sex prior to mid-cycle as a pregnancy conceived before mid-cycle would not be stopped by the pills and would be exposed to the hormones with the possible result of foetal abnormality.

INTERNATIONAL

NEW ZEALAND

WONAAC - Women's National Abortion Action Campaign - have been putting energy into sex education and distribution of information leaflets to school students about contraception. The Health Department is offering 11 year old girls rubella vaccinations in case they get pregnant, but pregnancy and sex education are not allowed to be discussed in primary schools. WONAAC are leafletting schools, and their leaflets are stimulating a lot of discussion and media interest. The reaction of pupils was mixed, but clearly some went for contraceptive advice after reading it.

PAKISTAN

A man is worth two women

The fundamentalist mullahs in the Islamic Ideology Council which is reviewing and rewriting Pakistan's laws are making serious incursions on women's rights. Already women have been banned from participating in spectator sports except in front of all-female audiences and no women will be allowed to take part in Pakistan's national games. It is said that the Council has decided to bring in the concept of qisas, or blood money, to be paid to the families of murder victims: the price of a dead woman is to be HALF that of a dead man. In criminal cases before the Islamic court two women are equal to one man's testimony because women are thought to be prone to look at a situation subjectively.

The Council has provoked urban women into an unprecedented battle to defend their rights. Formerly apolitical women's groups have joined together in a coalition called the Women's Action Forum and pledged themselves to resist the proposed new restrictions.

Other likely changes will mean that single sex schools will be established. Some schools have already anticipated a government order by sending their



female students home. One college has banned women from studying physics and mathematics and has channelled them instead into a course called "household accounts". Traditionalists are also trying to repeal an unKoranic the Family Law Ordinance which is Pakistan's only protective legislation for women. (*The Economist*, 14 - 20 August and 18 - 24 Sept. 1982.)

CANADA

The Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada is concerned by the higher birth rate of young native women compared to the total population in this age group. The influence of the Catholic Church and the lack of sex education are given as reasons for this. Also mentioned is the higher priority for housing on the reserves and higher welfare payments made to young women if they have a child. ("Family Planning Needs of Native People in Canada", *Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada*, August, 1982.)

PHILIPPINES

COMMITTEE TO STUDY DEPO PROVERA

The Philippines Population Commission is studying the use of Depo Provera in the country. This follows a series of articles and news items appearing in the Philippines press criticising the use of this method and unfavourable attitudes toward it in certain government sectors. Members of the committee have been drawn from a number of hospitals and institutes in the Philippines and include a representative of USAID and the Executive Director of the Family Planning Association of the Philippines (FPAP). The committee first met on July 22 and was provided with relevant research papers on Depo Provera by FPAP, including IPPF material. The Committee unanimously endorsed the use of Depo Provera. A formal resolution containing this recommendation was forwarded to the Population Commission, the body responsible for government policy. The Commission's reaction is still awaited.

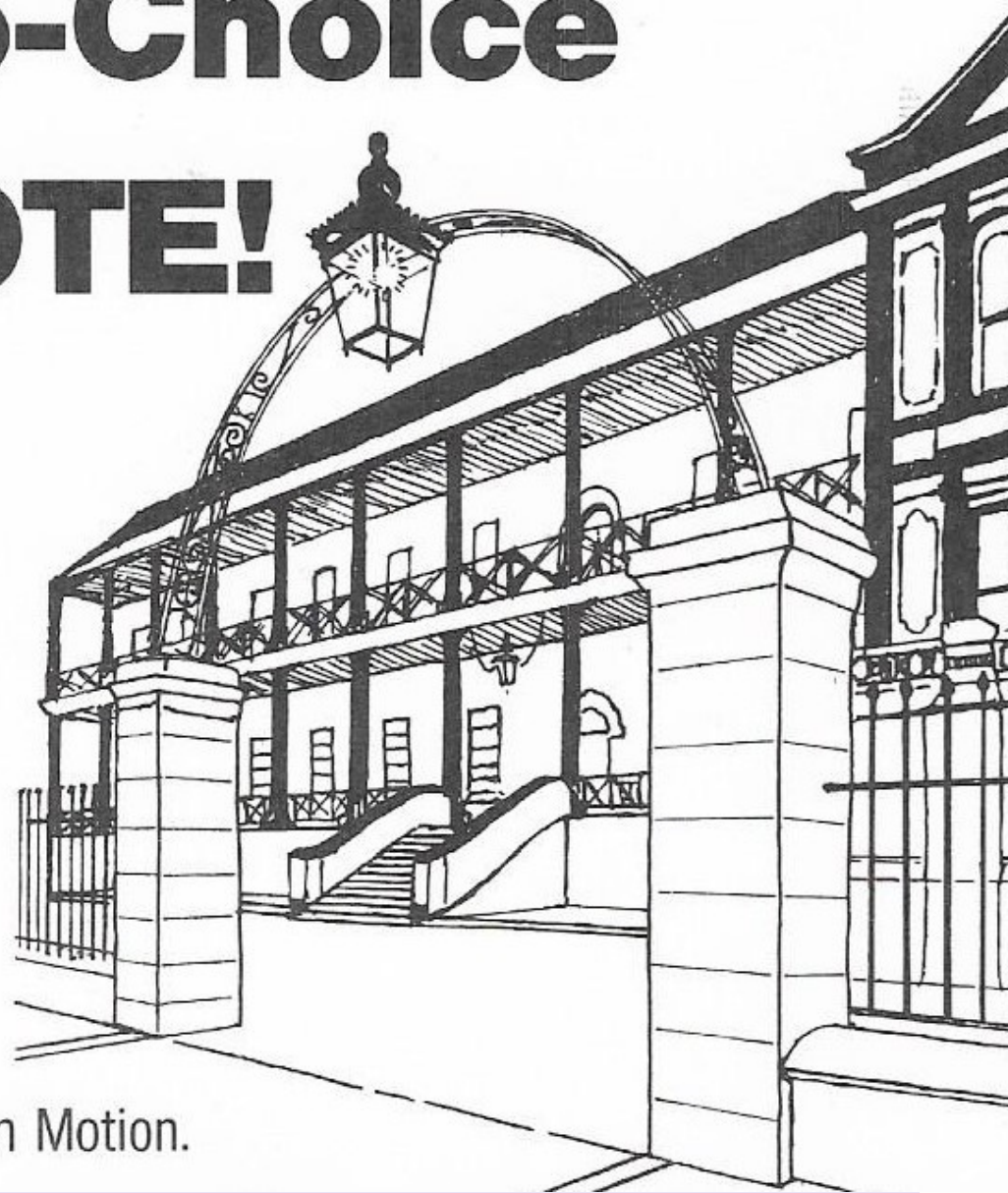
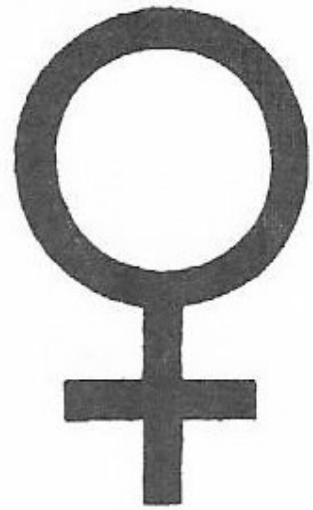
(Information from IPPF Open File 10-9-82, page 24.)

PORTUGAL

The abortion bill proposed by the Communist Party and supported by Portuguese women's groups and campaigns, many trade unions and entertainers, came to a vote in the parliament on November 11, 1982. It was defeated by 127 votes to 105. Only the Socialist Party voted with the Communists, along with 4 members of the governing parties. During the week before the vote, women organised a week of action. They sold badges, distributed leaflets, held a demonstration in front of the parliament and received a lot of attention from the media. Hopefully, they will succeed next time!

(Info from: Co-ordination Report, Dec. '82 of the International Contraception, Abortion and Sterilisation Campaign, U.K.)

**I'm Pro-Choice
...and I VOTE!**



I object to Mrs Bignold's Anti-Abortion Motion.





A black and white illustration of a woman's profile, facing right. Her hair is long and wavy. Around her head are various symbols, including a cross, a circle, and a plus sign. The background is black with some pink and white speckles.

Abortion is my
right

Created by a Year 9 Art Student from Burwood High

Young Women's Right to Abortion in NSW

The Law

- Abortion is legal in NSW if the doctor performing the abortion agrees it is necessary for health, social and financial reasons
- You don't need a referral from a doctor to attend an abortion clinic
- If you are under 14 years old, you need the consent of your parents/guardians
- If you are 14 years or above, you have the right to medical care without your parents/guardians consent

Remember

- You have the right to CONFIDENTIAL health care.
- If you are not sure, talk to someone.
- No one has the right to judge you.
- It's your body, it's your choice

Who To Talk To:

Abortion Hotline (02) 9233 3780
Abortion Information Services (02) 9399 3900
FPNSW Telephone Info Service
(Voice) (02) 9716 6099
(TTY for Deaf) (02) 9916 8360

or contact the social worker at your local hospital
or your local Youth Health Centre.

Produced by the New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties
& Family Planning NSW. Funded by the Law Foundation of NSW.

AVANTAGE • Australia • 1800 833 378 • www.civil liberties.org.au • Free Postcard • All Rights Reserved • 1997 • # 1443

Issue no. 27
Summer/Autumn '84

Right to Choose ♀

a women's health action magazine



\$1.50

ENDOMETRIOSIS - A MONTHLY CYCLE OF PROBLEMS

Cont'd from previous page

immediately diagnosed endometriosis. The more I went back to doctors and hospitals insisting that something was wrong (and convinced that whatever it was threatened my fertility), the more I was put into the category 'hysterical with psychosomatic symptoms'.

'The doctor made me feel I ought to be able to control things.'

'I believe I suffered for at least four years before diagnosis, as for years I was going to the doctor with pains and depression, painful sex and bad discharge. Every time I came away with treatment for thrush or cystitis. After several years of this I decided to change my doctor and he soon realised something else was wrong.'

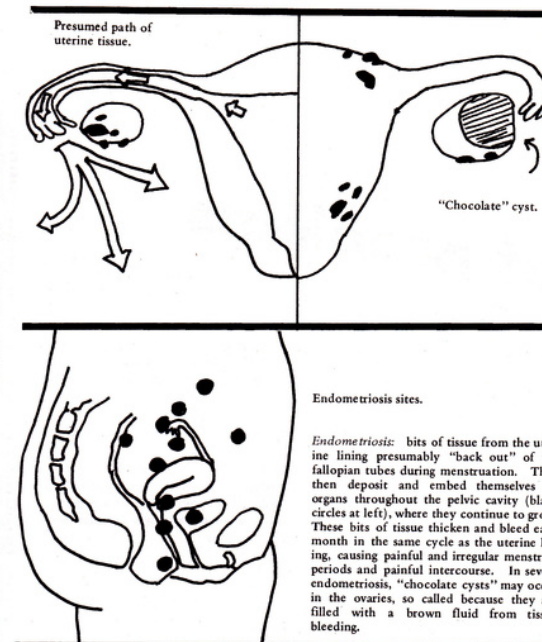
What is the Treatment?

Treatment for endometriosis has varied over the years, but no permanent cure other than radical surgery has yet been found within orthodox western medicine. Treatment with hormones, or pregnancy and breastfeeding (if pregnancy is desired and can be achieved) aims to stop ovulation for as long as possible and can give a remission of symptoms during the time of treatment or pregnancy which can continue for months or years afterwards.

Hormonal treatment such as birth control pills or progesterone preparations such as Norethisterone (Primot N) or Duphaston might be given. Danazol (Danol) is now more often prescribed and is thought to be achieving a better success rate. It prevents periods by impairing production of the two hormones produced by the pituitary gland, which normally control the ovaries. Without ovulation and menstruation the endometrial areas shrivel up.

Side effects can be a big problem - weight gain, fluid retention, voice changes, oily skin, nausea, headaches, dizziness, rash, depression, muscle spasms, abnormal hair growth. However, the lesions usually regress and pregnancy may become possible.

These treatments are also used after conservative surgery to remove cysts



or cauterise (burn away) endometriosis, to help prevent a recurrence. Sometimes more radical surgery, involving hysterectomy with removal of the ovaries, is considered necessary. While there is any ovarian function endometriosis can recur.

The general attitude of doctors has been that it is rather an unfortunate thing to have, but there is nothing they can do about it, as in my case everything has failed. I haven't been much encouraged by remarks like, 'It will go away at menopause, meanwhile you have to grin and bear it and rely on pain killers'.

Some women have moved outside orthodox medicine and are looking at homeopathy, acupuncture and herbalism as real alternatives to surgery or hormonal therapy.

Age 41

I have been under three gynaecologists since 1978. One in the hospital where I had my first laparoscopy when no sympathy was shown and where I was given cortisone injections because they didn't seem to believe that the pain was due to endometriosis.

Effects on Our Everyday Lives

The effects of the disease on a woman's life can be serious and far-reaching. Loneliness and isolation are common, with no one to talk to who knows what endometriosis is, let alone what it's like to live with. Perhaps because of hormonal disturbance, a sufferer is often subject to depression and mood swings, which can have a damaging effect on personal relation-

HOT FLASHES - CONT'D

of all deaths occurring to adult women in the developing world are due to pregnancy and childbirth. Contraception and sterilisation are seen by Potts et al as more cost efficient than improvements in ante-natal care, abortion and maternity facilities. (Source re grant - IPPF Open File, 28-4-83.)

THE CONTRACEPTIVE FUTURE

Researchers at Northwestern University, USA, say they have developed a birth control vaccine that could prevent conception for up to six months at a time. It is a synthetic version of an enzyme produced naturally in mature male animals. When injected into females, the vaccine stimulates the production of anti-bodies which react against sperm. (Japan Times, 28-4-83.)

MANY MORE CONCEPTIONS THAN BABIES

In 8% of menstrual cycles in women having unprotected intercourse, conception takes place without progressing to full pregnancy, according to the findings of a study carried out in England at the Medical Research Council Human Reproduction Group at Newcastle and reported in *The Lancet*.

A sensitive and specific radioimmunoassay was used to determine human chorionic gonadotrophin (hCG) in serum samples obtained from 91 normal healthy women during 226 ovulatory cycles in which contraception was not being used. Known conceptions occurred in 85 of these cycles; 74 ended in the births of live normal babies and 11 aborted spontaneously. Vaginal bleeding occurred at the expected time on the remaining 141 occasions and was accepted as normal menstruation by the patients, but the concentrations of hCG consistent with pregnancy were detected in the serum of 7 individuals. None of the women had any idea that conception had taken place.

This rate of 8% of unsuspected pregnancy is considerably lower than previous estimates that put the figure between 21 and 33 per cent. Early pregnancy failure was not a recurrent event in any of the patients studied 14 Right to Choose

nor did it appear to have an adverse effect upon their subsequent reproductive efficiency since each had a normal pregnancy afterwards.

(P.G. Whittaker, et al, "Unsuspected Pregnancy Loss in Healthy Women", *The Lancet*, May 21, 1983, Vol. 1, pp. 1126-1127 and reprinted in IPPF Open File, for the fortnight ending 24-6-83.)

("Testing for Male Contraceptive Sought", *Washington Post*, August 20, 1983.)

THE PROSPECTS FOR A MALE PILL

The possibility of the successful development of a male contraceptive Pill are more promising than before, says an article in *Medical News*. It looks at research on gossypol and luteinising hormone-releasing hormone (LHRH). Gossypol and LHRH analogues were confirmed as the only two viable options for male contraception at the Ninth World Congress on Fertility and Sterility in Dublin at the end of June. At the meeting, the progress made by the specialist committee of the World Health Organisation (WHO) researching into gossypol was reviewed.

That study has emphasised the drug's two important hazards: the development of hypokalaemia - a finding not apparently confirmed by further WHO studies in El Salvador - and the irreversibility of the reduction in spermatogenesis noted in 40% of recipients of the drug after three years. The WHO programme has managed to obtain sufficient quantities of gossypol of almost 100% purity to start further animal toxicology studies.

And in Beijing, Dr. Lei Hai Ping has managed to separate out a dextro and a levo rotary form of the drug, the latter of which it is hoped will retain the antifertility properties of the parent compound but without its long-term hazards.

Professor E. Nieschlag from West Germany has almost completed the first trial of the alternative approach to the suppression of spermatogenesis with LHRH analogues. The anti-androgenic properties of such analogues - which cause flushing and loss of libido - can be overcome by supple-



TESTING FOR MALE CONTRACEPTIVE SALVE

After twelve years of studies in male rabbits, rats and rhesus monkeys, approval is now being sought from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for human trials of a male contraceptive cream that is rubbed on the abdomen and chest. Dr. Larry Ewing said that the proposed contraceptive has sterilised its subjects temporarily in all its trials. The cream combines testosterone, the male sex hormone, with oestradiol or oestrogen, the main female sex hormones. Rubbing them directly into the skin is expected to be a highly efficient way of getting effective doses directly into the blood stream. In combination, testosterone and oestradiol powerfully suppress the production of pituitary gland hormone that ordinarily stimulates the testes to produce the body's own testosterone. Ewing's formula has not turned off sperm production completely but there have been no successful matings by males given the compound. Ewing said he hopes for FDA approval within six months or a year for human trials.

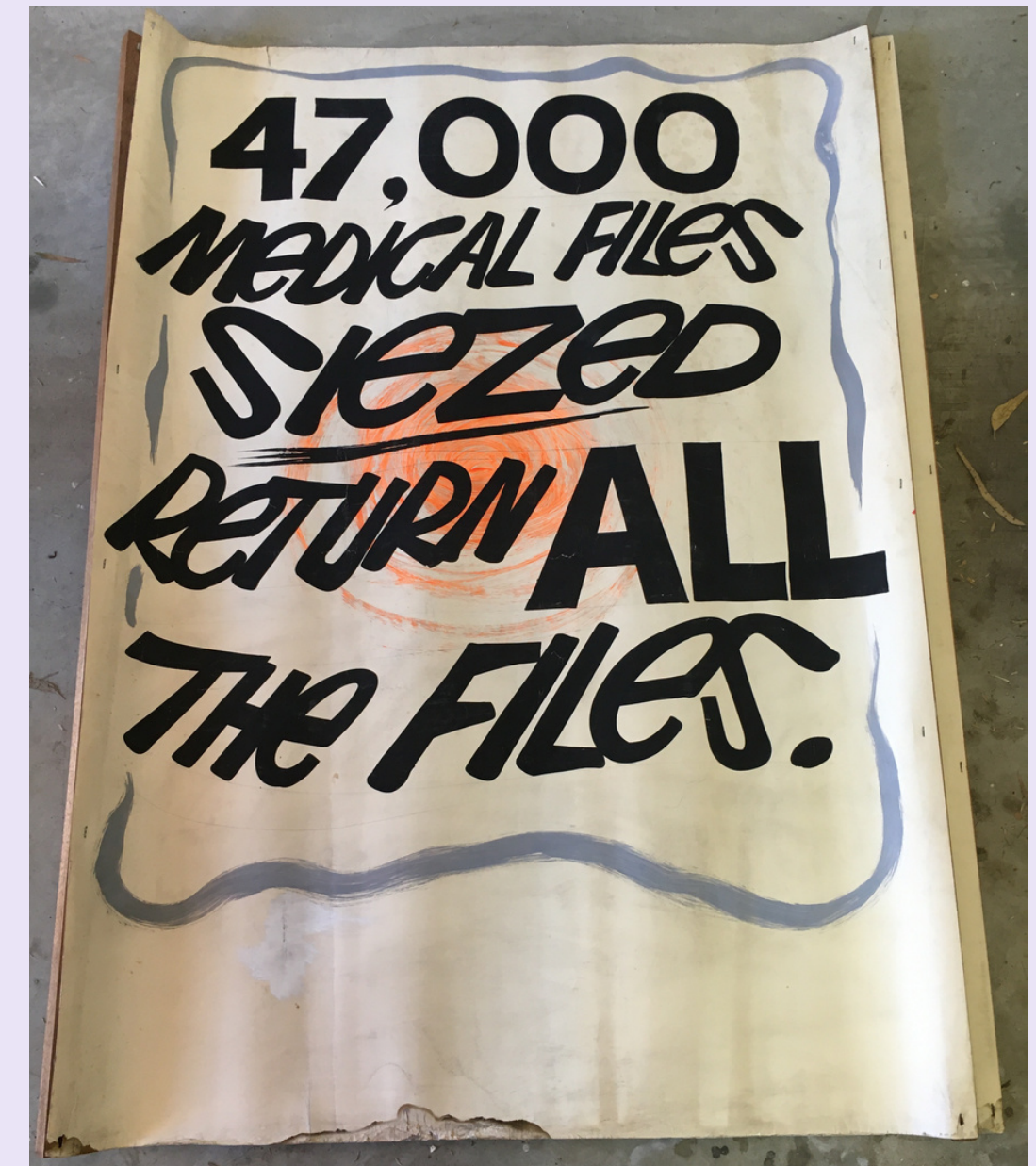




In 1985 Queensland Police launched "Operation Lost Cause", which used police to raid two abortion clinics and seize thousands of confidential patient files. The impact on Queensland women was chilling. Women who had used either clinic for an abortion lived in fear of arrest and criminalisation.

The situation became even more terrifying when an abortion provider was prosecuted for breaching the Criminal Code.

WAAC joined feminist organisations including the Women's Legal Service to protest the police actions, let the people of NSW know what was happening in Queensland, and offer solidarity with Queensland women.



Sydney women rallied to oppose the
Queensland police force's actions



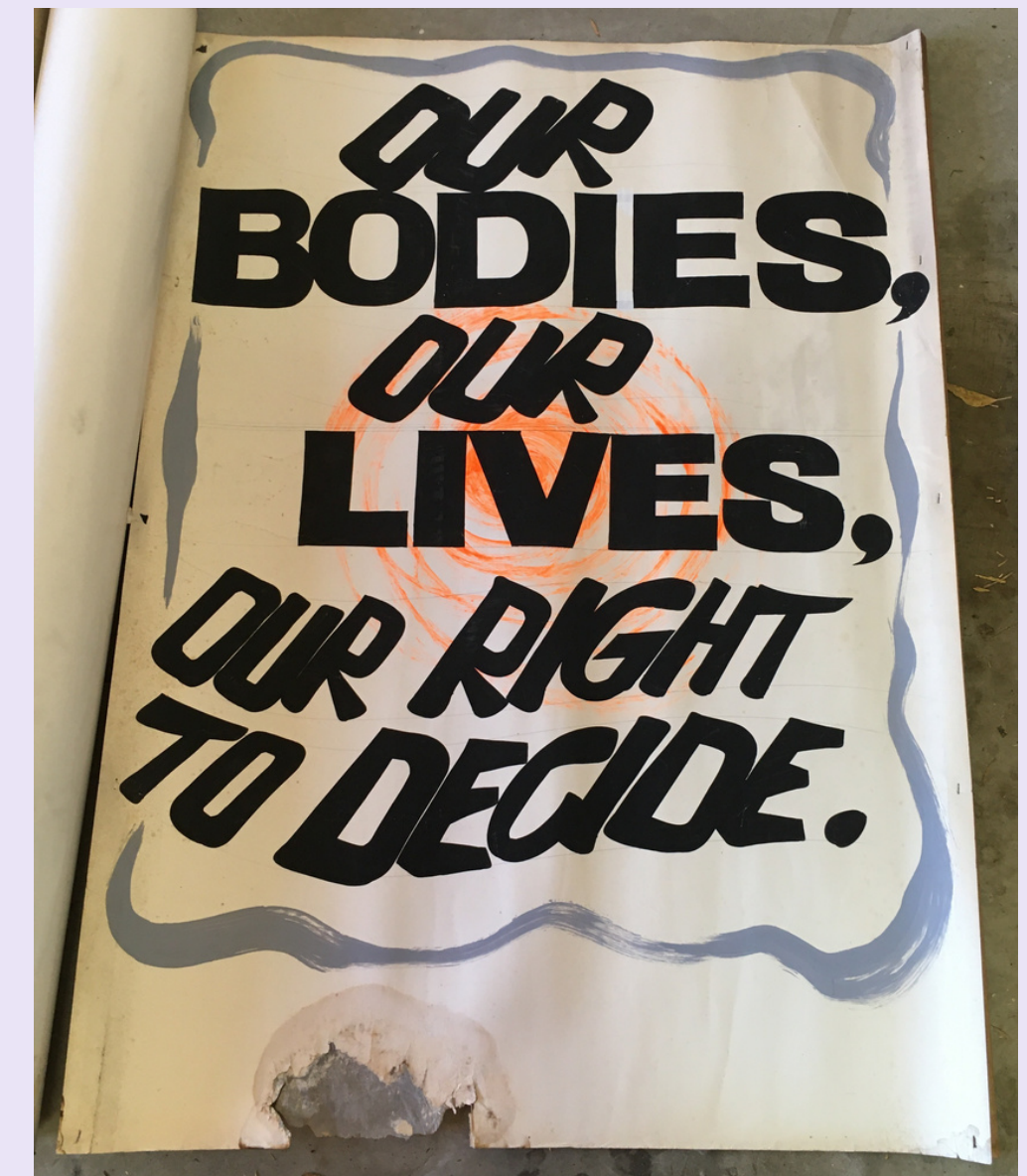
1980s

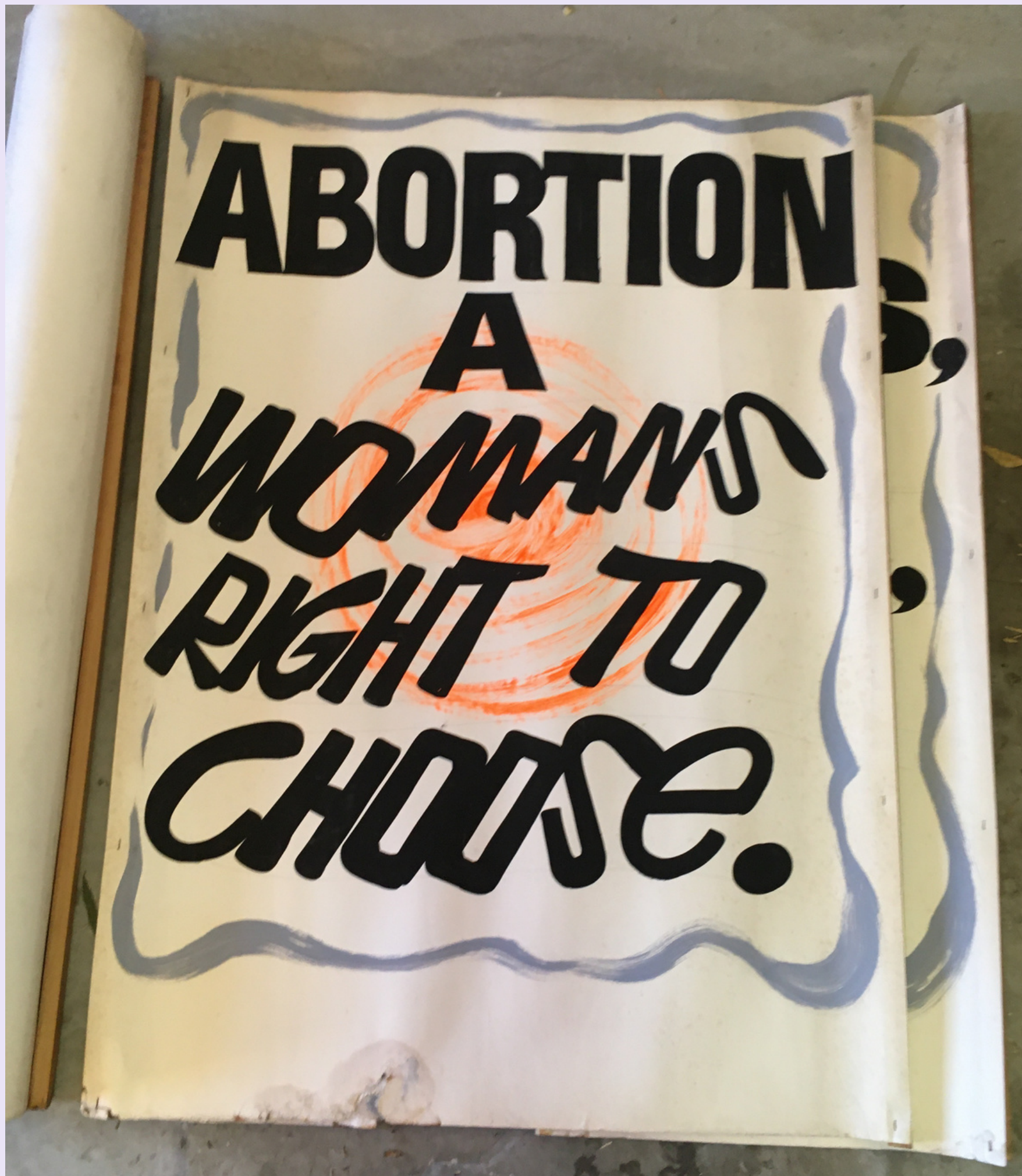
**QUEENSLAND
STATE OF
SIEGE,
STATE OF
TERROR**



Margaret Kirkby

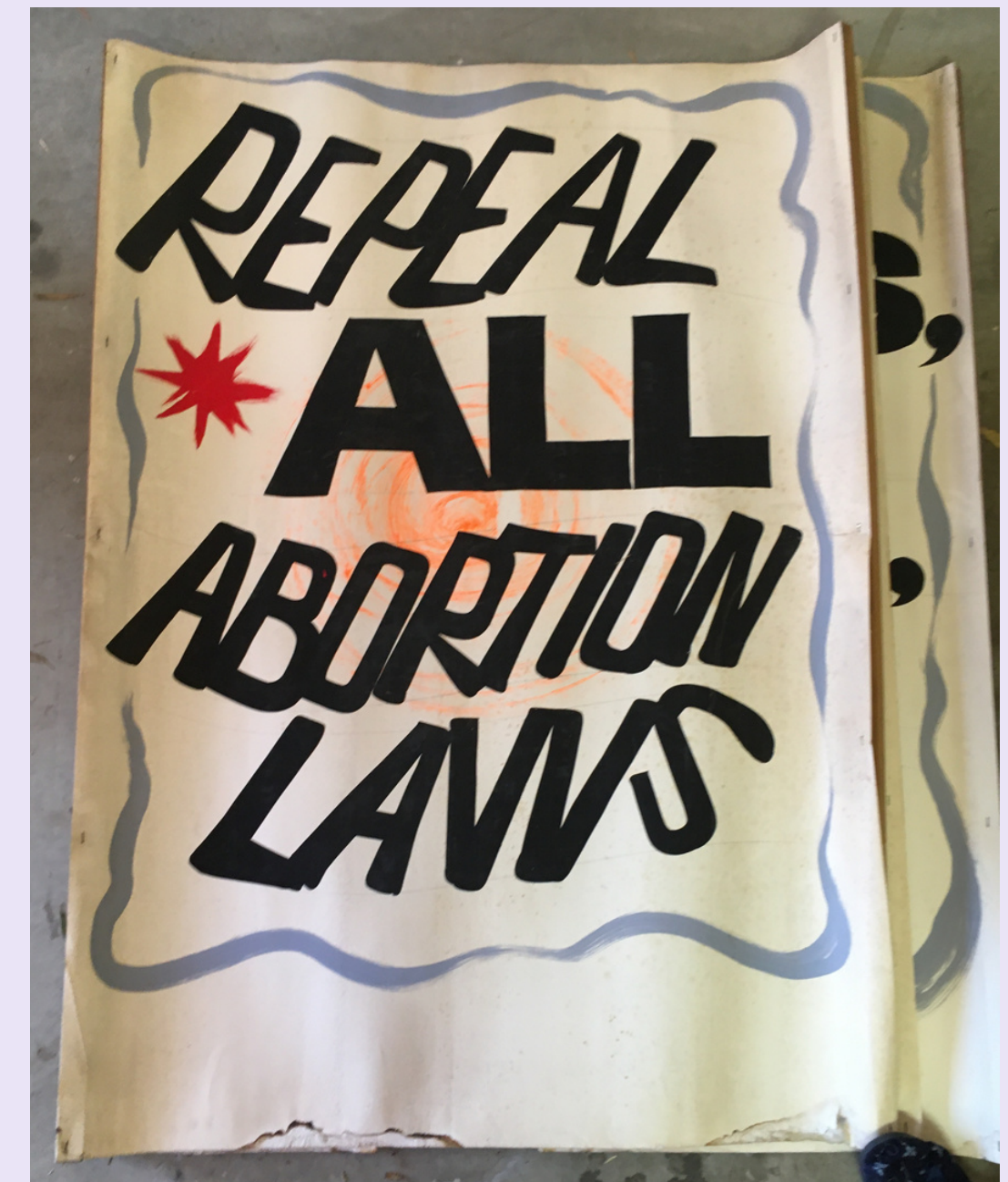
Margaret Kirkby of WAAC was one of the speakers at the Sydney rally opposing Queensland police actions. The amazing banners on this and previous pages - double the size of an A3 with wooden 'carry poles' page were created just for the event and remain part of WAAC's archives.





Beautiful and creative hand designed and made banners such as these were a feature of all pre-computer protest movements. These also remind those in the protest crowd of WAAC's five demands:

- *Abortion is a woman's right to choose*
- *Repeal all abortion laws*
- *Free safe abortion on demand*
- *Free safe contraception on demand*
- *No forced sterilisation*





Right to Choose

Registered by Australia Post, publication number NBH 2721

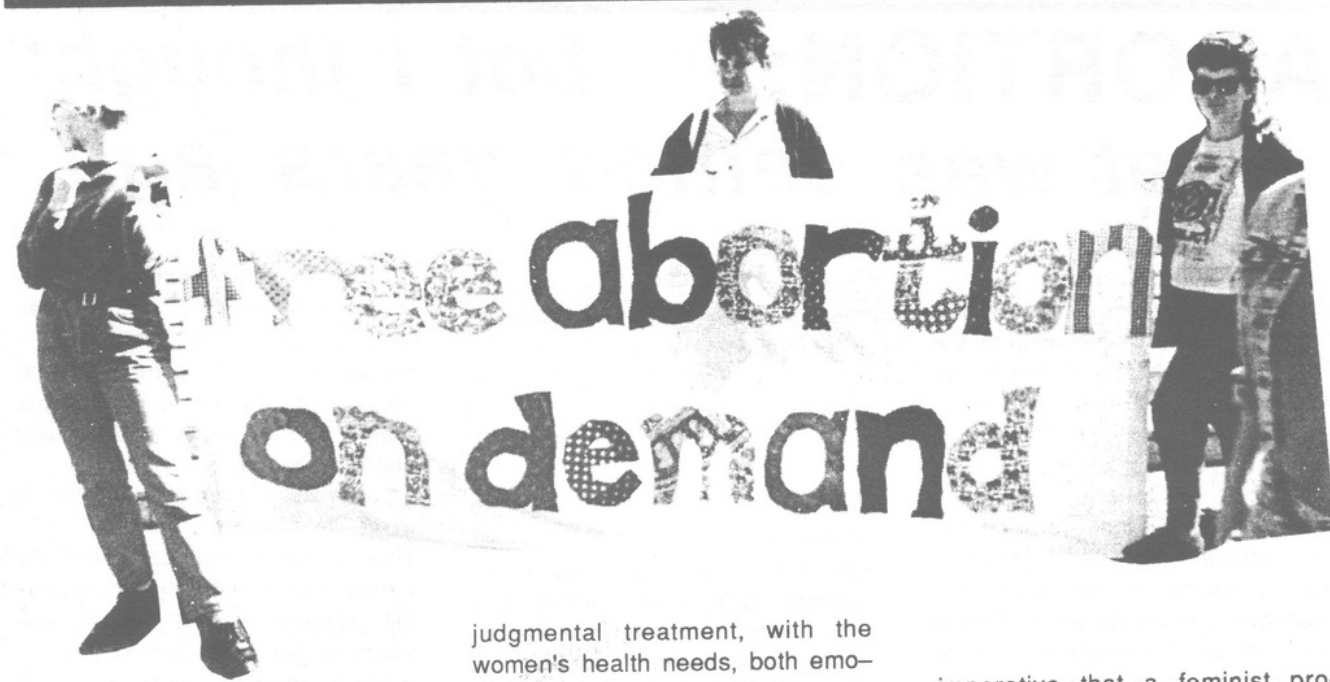
THE DECEPTIVE CONTRACEPTIVE

Given what is known - or rather what is NOT known - about this experimental drug, we, the Anti-Depo Campaign, cannot recommend its use and we call for the removal of it from the market.

DEPO-PROVERA

AVAILABLE FROM :
ANTI-DEPO CAMPAIGN
P.O. BOX E233
ST JAMES NSW 2000

Published by Angela Rome, c/o 63 Palace Street, Petersham, NSW 2049



that alliances will not be formed at a later stage and a trade-off negotiated.

Another threat: Yeomans' Bill

The 'Termination of Pregnancy Restriction' Bill proposed by Guy Yeomans, Liberal Member for Hurstville, provides another major threat to abortion rights. The aim of Yeomans' Bill is to severely restrict the availability of abortion in NSW. Abortions could, if the Bill were passed, be performed in hospitals only, and hospitals would be able to apply for exemptions from performing termination of pregnancy. It would be possible for anti-abortion medical staff and management to further restrict women's access to abortions.

Already facilities in hospitals are stretched to the limit. Women waiting for a termination of pregnancy would join the already long queues of people waiting for surgery.

This would mean an increase in second trimester abortions and the delays could result in more women being forced to continue with an unwanted pregnancy. To force women to have abortions in hospitals would result in a return to the days of unsympathetic and

judgmental treatment, with the women's health needs, both emotional and physical, not being met. In the hospital system, of course, there would be no time allowed for counselling, thus Yeomans' Bill would mean a complete reversal of the advances women have made in NSW since 1971 with regard to abortion services. At the moment, abortion clinics in NSW offer women care and support at a vulnerable time in their lives. Aftercare advice and on-going support is available. If the NSW Parliament adopts Yeomans' Bill then all of these services would go.

The political danger of the proposed Yeomans' legislation is that in comparison to Nile's 'Unborn Child Protection' Bill, it may appear more reasonable and could, therefore, on a compromise deal between the political groupings be passed.

Why there is a need for an ongoing feminist abortion campaign.

The spontaneous response of women and also many men in NSW highlights the fact that women realise that control of their fertility and bodies is central to their lives. Given the tenuous nature of the legislative and judicial law regarding the availability of abortion in NSW, it is

imperative that a feminist pro-choice campaign be maintained if the Levine ruling of 1971 which liberalised the interpretation of the law regarding abortion in NSW is overturned, women of NSW will again face the days of backyard abortions.

The Levine ruling came down in the District court, therefore it is possible for a higher court, for example the Supreme Court, to overturn that ruling.

As well as the tenuous legal situation, there are also the continuous attacks against the availability of abortion by the Right to Life Association and other anti-abortion groups such as Foundation Genesis and the Call to Australia Party. A vigilant and active feminist campaign around this and other reproductive issues is vital. Women do not want a return to the days of limited access to abortion. The women's movement has gone too far, with the establishment of two feminist abortion clinics in Sydney in the late 70's, to allow this basic right to be taken from us.

Margaret Kirkby

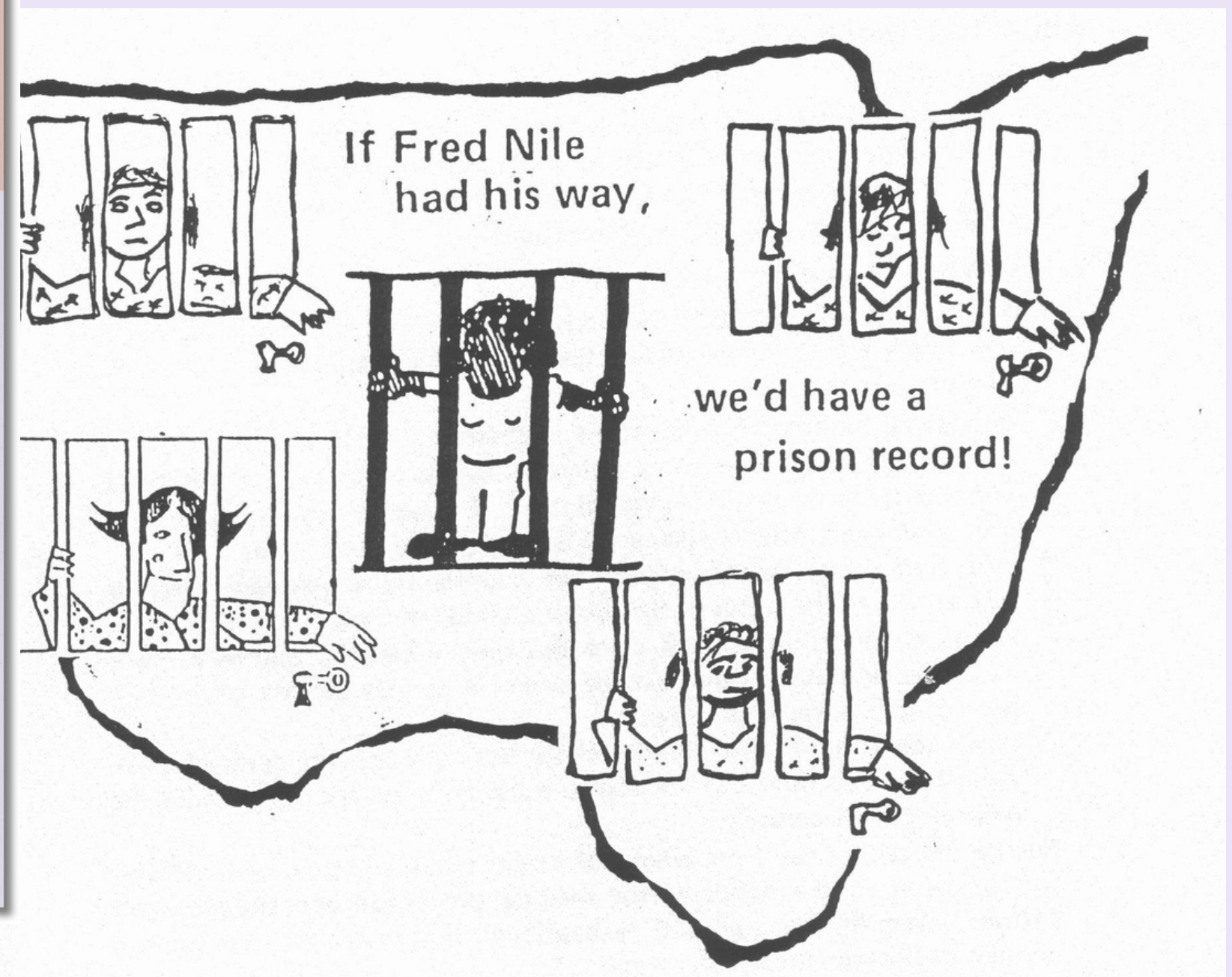
Reprinted from *Scarlet Woman* Issue 25, Summer '88-'89.

1980s





July 1988



Marchers take on Nile



MORE than 1,000 people marched in Sydney yesterday to support NSW's pro-abortion laws. They chanted slogans as they walked from Belmore Park, near Central Station, to Hyde Park, where they heard speeches and watched entertainment. The march was organised following anti-abortion moves by the Rev Fred Nile, who has a Bill before the Legislative Council. "We are here to defend the right to control our own bodies," said Ruth Fitzgerald, of the Women's Abortion Action Campaign.

Picture: PHILIP LOCA

SUN = HERALD 21/8/88

1980s



25-7-88

Women's Abortion Action Campaign



Suite 3, Level 3,
156 Castlereagh Street,
SYDNEY, NSW 2000

PRESS RELEASE

"Anxiety levels amongst NSW women have unnecessarily risen in recent months due to anti-abortion attacks in NSW Parliament and misleading advertising by the Right to Life Association (NSW) on television and radio", said Margaret Kirkby of Women's Abortion Action Campaign.

The fact that the following attacks against access to abortion have arisen in the first few months of this new government offers no assurance to women of NSW that safe and affordable abortion services will be maintained:

- * 2nd June: anti-abortion motion proposed by Marie Bignold, MLC carried in the Upper House - the motion had been on the books since October 1986 - why was it able to come up in the first session of a new government?
- * The proposed 'Unborn Child Protection Bill' to be tabled by Fred Nile, MLC most probably in the August session of Parliament.
- * The proposed 'Termination of Pregnancy Restriction' Bill by Guy Yeomans, Liberal Member for Hurstville.

WAAC is organising a public meeting to discuss these issues and community action to defeat these retrograde steps in regard to women's health in NSW. "Women are anxious about possible changes to the laws but, also, women are angry that this government is implicitly sanctioning such backward steps", said Ms. Kirkby. "WAAC is providing a forum, through the public meeting, for this anger to be directed

ABORTION IS A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE!

7th Call to Action for May 28th International Day of Action for Women's Health
Denied an abortion and forced into parenthood...
According to Judge Newman this isn't
medical negligence

Show our outrage at this decision!

RALLY

Saturday May 28th, 12 noon
Sydney Town Hall Square

There will also be REGIONAL ACTIVITIES
- check with local women's health centres.



**KEEP ABORTION SAFE AND
ACCESSIBLE**

Repeal Sections 82-84 of the NSW Crimes Act now!

Organised by Women's Abortion Action Campaign, PO Box E233, St James 2000 • The May 28th International Day of Action for Women's Health is co-ordinated by the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights, The Netherlands.

1980s

WOMEN'S ABORTION ACTION CAMPAIGN WORKSHOP SAT. 18th MARCH, 1989

ABORTION LAW REFORM ASSOCIATION (VIC.) POLICY

The Abortion Law Reform Association (Vic) believes that abortion should be lawful under the following conditions:-

- (i) When performed by a qualified doctor, acting in consultation with another doctor and with the consent of the pregnant woman, and
- (ii) When the doctor believes in good faith that the termination of pregnancy is necessary:
 - (a) to protect the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman or any children she might have already,
 - (b) to prevent the birth of a child substantially likely to suffer serious physical or mental abnormalities.
- (iii) In assessing danger to the mental health of the pregnant woman or her children, the doctor should be able to take account of their actual or foreseeable environment.
- (iv) No doctor should be required to perform an abortion if he has any conscientious objection to doing so.

Secretary,
Miss Jo Richardson,
225 Walsh Street,
SOUTH YARRA

FROM A PAMPHLET CALLED "Parliament and Abortion" 1969

PUBLIC MEETING:

IF HARRADINE HAS HIS WAY...



**A "PREGNANT PERSON" COULD
NO LONGER USE THEIR MEDICARE
CARD FOR AN ABORTION!**

HANDS OFF MEDICARE ABORTIONS!

MONDAY 24TH JULY, 1989

Childcare provided. 7.00 p.m. Wheelchair access.

**TEACHER'S FEDERATION AUDITORIUM
300 SUSSEX STREET, CITY**

Sponsored by Women's Abortion Action Campaign.



HANDS OFF MEDICARE ABORTIONS!

In early June, Senator Brian Harradine (Independent, Tasmania) issued a press release stating that he will move, in August, a Private Member's Bill - the *Abortion Funding Abolition Act* - to restrict women's access to the Medicare rebate on abortion.

The Bill proposes that there will be two grounds for getting a Medicare rebate for abortion. The first is if the doctor had not performed the abortion the "pregnant person, in (the doctor's) judgement would have died". The second is if, in order to treat another ailment of the "pregnant person" (we didn't know men could get pregnant?! - yet!), the doctor was unaware that "the undertaking of the medical service would end the life of an unborn human being" (exact quotes).

Obviously very few doctors would be willing to sign a certificate verifying either of the above conditions. The Bill will not prevent abortions being performed but it will restrict women's access to the Medicare rebate for abortion. If successful, this proposal would mean that the cost of having an abortion would increase dramatically (from approx. \$80 to \$200-\$300 for a first trimester abortion). This will mean that many women will be forced to have second trimester abortions (which cost more anyway) whilst they raise the money.

MEDICARE AND ABORTION

Medicare is meant to be a universal health care system, yet Harradine and his supporters in Federal Parliament are seeking to restrict access to the rebate for a legitimate medical procedure. Limitation of access to Medicare abortions would severely restrict a woman's right to choose. Medicare cannot pretend to offer medical cover for women without providing a rebate for ALL abortions. If the universality of Medicare is successfully undermined by this Bill we wonder what will be the next item judged 'unacceptable' for a rebate.....

THE CONSCIENCE VOTE

Both the ALP and the Liberal Party have a 'conscience' vote on the issue of abortion. That is, politicians vote according to their own moral judgements rather than representing their constituents view on this issue.

No other issue is determined by conscience vote in the two parties. Why is abortion arbitrarily singled out in this way? The conscience of a politician is no more precious than yours or mine. Yet, on this issue, they see fit to ignore their representative role.

Opinion polls consistently reveal that the overwhelming majority support the continued availability of abortion. One positive development recently has been the initiative by ALP Senators Pat Giles (W.A.), Robert Ray (Vic.) and Chris Schacht (S.A.) to form a pro-choice group of politicians. This is to be commended and, we hope, extended to the party level. At least the members of the pro-choice group recognise that to be pro-choice is to be part of the real moral majority!

Restricting access to Medicare abortions would not decrease the demand for abortion services but it would result in increased hardship for women seeking abortion, a possible decline in medical standards and ultimately will take many women back to the days of desperation and/or enforced motherhood.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

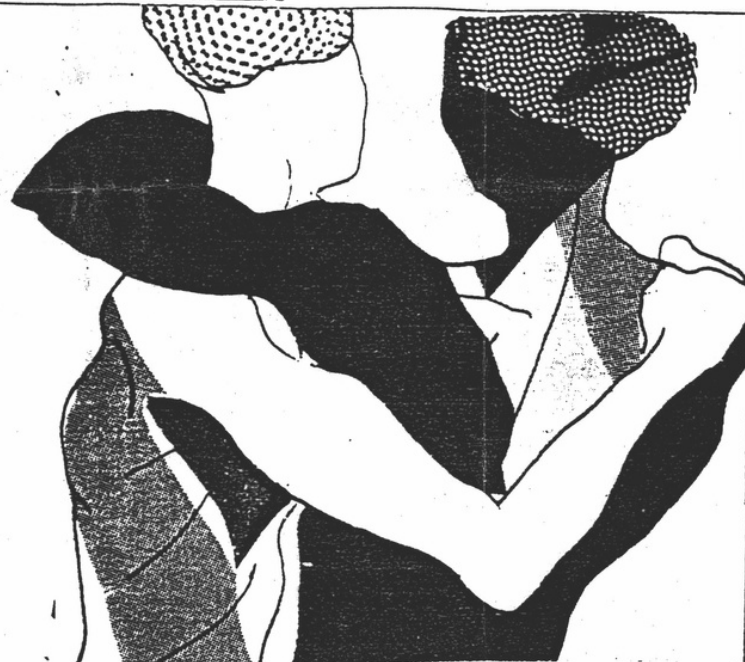
- Write letters expressing your support for all abortions being covered by the Medicare scheme to:
The Rt. Hon. R.J.L. Hawke, Prime Minister, AND
The Rt. Hon. Andrew Peacock, Leader of the Opposition, all c/o Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600
The Rt. Hon. Neal Blewett, Min. of Health and Comm. Services, AND
The Hon. Peter Shack, Shadow Min. for Health
- Write letters of support to Sen. Pat Giles, Parliament House, Canberra 2600, expressing your commendation for the initiative in establishing a pro-choice group of politicians in Federal Parliament;
- sign our petitions and write to us for copies to circulate among friends and at your workplace;
- ATTEND OUR PUBLIC MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 24TH JULY, 1989**

* get involved in our campaign - we meet on Wednesday nights at Women's Liberation House, 63 Palace Street, Petersham, ph: 569-8819 (day hours and to leave messages only). All women welcome!

I would like more information about WAAC: YES NO	
Name: _____	
Address: _____	
I would like to donate to WAAC: \$ _____	
Post to: Women's Abortion Action Campaign, P.O. Box E233, St. James, 2000	

Why we are still fighting for a woman's right to choose abortion

1988
Uni of Tech
Sydney
(formerly
NSWIT)



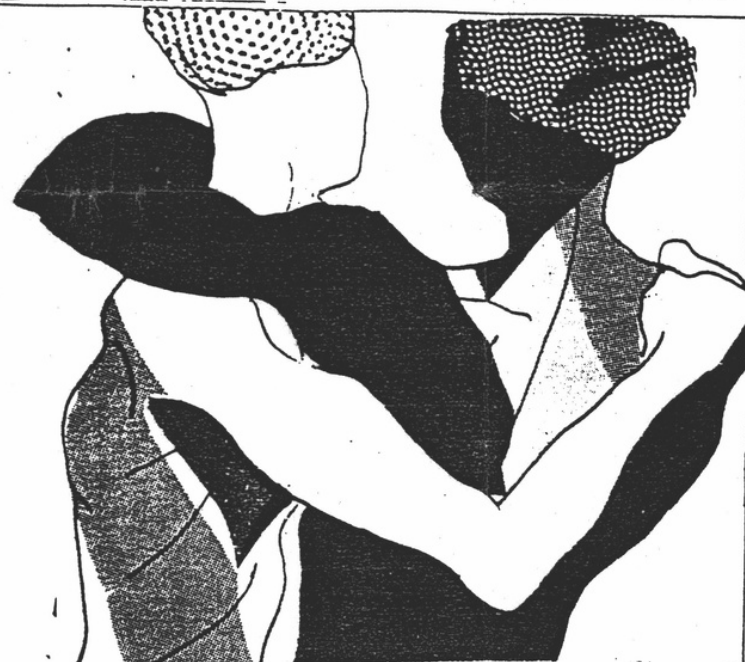
MEETING
MON 22
AUGUST

1-2

Functions
area (by
the bar)
Level 3 Tower
Bld. Broadway,
UTS

Why we are still fighting for a woman's right to choose abortion

1988
Uni of Tech
Sydney
(formerly
NSWIT)



MEETING
MON 22
AUGUST

1-2

Functions
area (by
the bar)
Level 3 Tower
Bld. Broadway,
UTS

1980s

THIS
NOT
IS A SURGICAL
INSTRUMENT

ABORTION RIGHTS COALITION NSW



MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MINISTER ASSISTING THE PRIME MINISTER
FOR THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Senator The Hon Margaret Reynolds

24 July 1989

Ms Margaret Kirby
Women's Abortion Action Campaign
P. O. Box E233
ST JAMES NSW 2000

Dear Ms Kirby,

Thank you for the invitation to attend your rally tonight.
I regret that I have had to withdraw as a speaker.

However, I would like to place on record my total support
for Australian women retaining their entitlements to
Medicare benefits for legitimate medical services as
determined by their doctors under State government laws.

While there are strongly held views in the community about
termination of pregnancy, it is important to remember that
removal of certain gynaecological procedures from the
Medicare Benefits Schedule would not stop abortion. Such
exclusion will discriminate against the poor and the young
who cannot afford to pay privately.

I trust that tonight's meeting will help focus attention on
the serious implications for all Australians if access to
medical treatment is dictated by non-professionals.

Yours sincerely,

MARGARET REYNOLDS



24 July 1989

Rt Hon RJ Hawke
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Please record my objection to proposals by any Federal
Parliamentarian to eliminate Medicare entitlements for
abortion services.

I object because abortion is a medical procedure like
any other and therefore should not be removed from the
Medicare Benefits Schedule.

I object because any such proposal runs counter to
concern for health and equity.

The full range of reproductive health services (which
includes abortion services) must be available,
accessible and affordable if women are to exercise
their right to participate fully in the educational,
economic, social and political spheres of our
community.

Yours sincerely

PROGRAMME
OPEN NIGHT 16/11/89

ABORTION

Speakers: Marie WENGL from the Right To Life Association of NSW
Margaret KIRBY from the Students Representatives Council

TIME	EVENT	ACTION
8.00pm	WELCOME	DAVID ROSE
8.02pm	MUSIC & PRAYER TIME	GEOFF & KAREN
8.28pm	SEAT AUDIENCE INTO 2 GROUPS	DAVID ROSE
8.30pm	1st Discussion presentation	Both Speakers and chair people.
8.45pm	1st Question Time	" "
8.55pm	2nd Discussion presentation	" "
9.05pm	2nd Question Time	" "
9.15pm	CYTA Announcements	John Crowther
9.25pm	END OF YEAR OPEN NIGHT CONCLUSION	David Rose
9.30pm	SUPPER	SSS

ChairPeople for discussion groups need to control the timing and presentation of the presentation and Question Time.
Timing is critical if the above programme is to function.

Margaret



RIGHT TO CHOOSE COALITION

SENATOR HARRADINE'S ANTI-CHOICE BILL - ACTION NEEDED

Senator Harradine's proposed Bill in the federal parliament aims to stop Medicare funding for abortions.

He has formed a cross-party 'Pro-Life' group in support of this.

In response, Senator Robert Ray announced the formation of a Pro-Choice group.

All federal politicians are being inundated with messages from the anti-choice people.

THEY MUST HEAR FROM US.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. If you can take part in a small delegation to your local federal member, please telephone Ruth (699 7696).

2. Telephone your local member (the Electoral Office (604 4300) for his/her name) AND the Victorian Senators -

Richard Alston (62 2521)	John Button (650 9873)
Barney Cooney (347 9533)	Gareth Evans (650 4071)
David Hamer (62 2521)	Austin Lewis (055 62 5672)
Julian McGauran (62 2521)	Kay Patterson (62 2521)
Janet Powell (614 3064)	James Short (387 4177)
Olive Zakharov (523 8844)	

and phone congratulations to Senator Ray (650 4479).

ASK THEM

- Is he/she a member of Sen. Ray's Pro-Choice group?

- Does he/she intend to vote for or against the Harradine Bill?

Ask your friends to phone their members too, and ask them to ask their friends to do the same. The polities must hear from us.

Please fill in and return the following -

NAME PHONE

ADDRESS MEMBER

ELECTORATE MEMBER

Is/is not a member of Sen. Ray's Pro-Choice Group

Will vote for/against the Harradine Bill.

I can/cannot join delegation to politicians.

Right to Choose Coalition
PO Box 46
ALBERT PARK 3206

A CHALLENGE TO MALE PARLIAMENTARIANS
IN NEW SOUTH WALES

BEFORE YOU VOTE WITH GUY YEOMANS TO PUNISH WOMEN
WHO WANT TO TERMINATE AN UNWANTED PREGNANCY

THINK FOR A MOMENT!

THINK ABOUT THE CAUSE OF PREGNANCY -- WOMEN DO NOT JUST 'FALL PREGNANT'! PREGNANCY IS THE RESULT OF SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH A MAN. IT IS TIME FOR MALE PARLIAMENTARIANS TO TAKE POSITIVE ACTION AGAINST THE CAUSE OF UNWANTED PREGNANCY. A POWERFUL CAMPAIGN URGING MALE ABSINENCE, RELIABLE CONDOM USE OR NON-PENETRATIVE SEX WOULD DO MUCH TO PREVENT UNWANTED PREGNANCY. THERE WOULD BE NO NEED TO ALTER ACCESS TO ABORTION AND INCREASE THE BURDENS ON THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM.

A SERIES OF TELEVISION, RADIO AND NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS COULD FEATURE MALE POLITICIANS EXPLAINING HOW THEY AVOID IMPREGNATING THEIR FEMALE PARTNERS. A BIPARTISAN EFFORT WOULD SEE 'PAIRED' MEMBERS REMINISCING ABOUT HOW THEY AVOIDED TEMPTATION AS YOUNG MEN BY HARD WORK, COLD SHOWERS AND MENTAL ALGEBRA! THE JOYS OF CELIBACY COULD BE CELEBRATED WITH BADGES AND BALLOONS. FEMALE PARTNERS PAST AND PRESENT COULD TESTIFY TO MEN'S SELF-RESTRAINT.

MEN!

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED AS HAPPY CELIBATES, AS CONTENTED CONDOM USERS, AS INNOVATIVE SEXUAL PARTNERS!

THE MEN OF N.S.W. WILL FOLLOW YOUR EXAMPLE!
WOMEN OF N.S.W. WOULD INDEED BE THE BENEFICIARIES OF SUCH A CAMPAIGN!

**Women's
Abortion
Action
Campaign**

