



THE BLACK SASH

5 LONG STREET · MOWBRAY · 7700 · TEL 685-3513 · 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. MONDAY - FRIDAY

Fax: 021-685 7510

TO: The Secretary
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Fax: 011-397 2211

FROM: Black Sash National Headquarters
Barbara Molteno

Date: 19 July 1993

We submit for your consideration the resolution on abortion that was adopted at our national conference in April 1993.

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Pietermaritzburg, 4 April 1993

BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTION ON ABORTION

The Black Sash, believing that abortion is a moral and ethical issue of a most serious nature;

Therefore that those who are opposed to abortion should remain free to persuade women not to abort;

and be encouraged to work with others to get rid of the socio-economic deprivation which leads so many women to choose abortion at the present time;

Nevertheless noting the crisis proportions of the problem of illegal abortion and resultant suffering and death;

And supporting the principle of women's right to moral and physical autonomy;

Therefore the Black Sash calls for the introduction of

1) a clause in a Bill of Rights as follows: "The right to life should not derogate from a woman's right to choose an abortion should she wish to do so"

2) a Freedom of Choice Bill, as follows:

i) The State shall not restrict the right of a woman to choose to terminate a pregnancy

- a) during the first trimester; or
- b) at any time, if such termination is necessary to protect the life or health of the woman

ii) the decision for termination of pregnancy shall be made by the woman. The State shall provide or facilitate the provision of adequate information and non-directive counselling for women considering termination.

iii) The State shall protect the freedom of conscience of any medical practitioner or health worker who declines to perform or assist in such termination, provided that such practitioner or health worker shall refer the woman to the relevant statutory service.

iv) The passage of the above Bill shall repeal conflicting clauses of the Abortion and Sterilisation Act, No. 2 of 1975