

France is trying to persuade women to have more babies. In November a bill was introduced on family policy, improving state aid to families and to have less time between births. A monthly allowance is being introduced during parental leave for the third child on, with a guaranteed right to their job afterwards.

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A French ethics committee has been considering surrogacy and come out against it, following a case in Marseille. Only the child's natural mother had a right to the baby and any doctor or other intermediary could be guilty of aiding the abandonment of a child.

Belgium A Belgian court acquitted a doctor for carrying out an abortion on a minor, because of the girl's social and psychological 'state of need'. Previously, the law only permitted abortion when the mother's health was in danger and abortions had to be carried out by specialists in hospitals, unlike this operation, carried out by a young woman doctor in a medical centre for young people.

Spain still has no abortion law, following the referral to the courts of the bill passed last year. A right-wing party sent the bill to the court, alleging that it was against Spain's constitution which guarantees a 'right to life' for Spanish citizens.

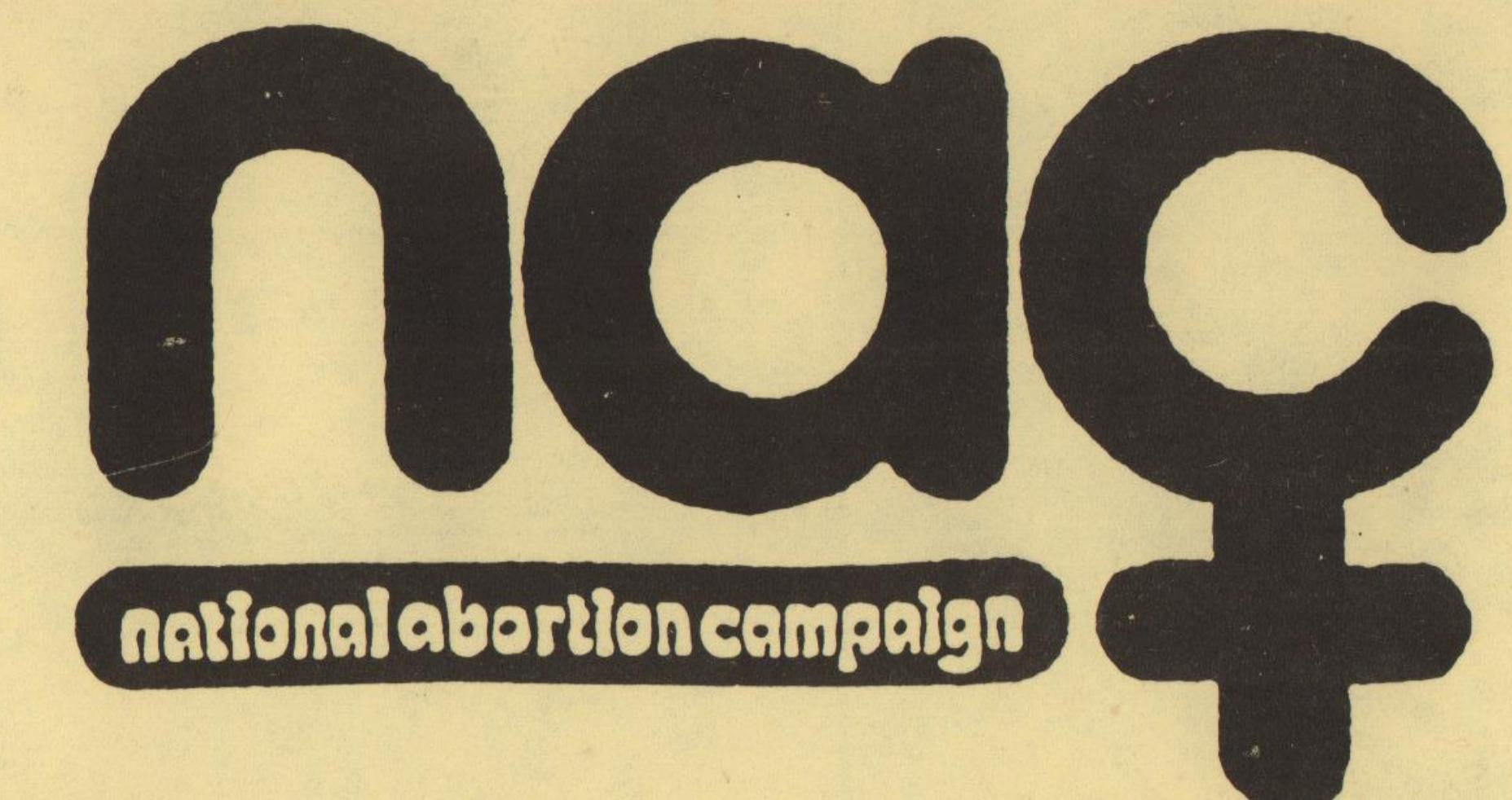
America celebrated 12 years of the abortion law being reformed with a rally organised by right-to-lifers addressed by newly-re-installed President Reagan, who praised them for the great work they were doing, but tut-tutted them for bombing abortion clinics.

America is seeing an increasing wave of violent anti-abortion activity. The 'Army of God' is claiming to be behind a number of fire-bombings of clinics which are being taken increasingly seriously. In the past year, there have been more than 30 bombings. The Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms is conducting investigations and warns that there could be a renewed outbreak during the period of President Reagan's inauguration, January 20 to 22, which co-incides with the twelfth anniversary of the Supreme Court's historic majority decision to legalise abortion.

So far, no-one has been injured during the bombings, which have taken place when the clinics have been empty, but it is a real danger. Anti-abortionists have also stood outside clinics harassing those going in. Even President Reagan, an avowed anti-abortionist, has spoken out against the use of terror tactics.

Nuns in America came out during the election against their Church's position on abortion. Now they have been threatened with expulsion from their order, but have refused to retract. They had issued a statement saying that Catholics differ on the morality of abortion, and now say: 'How can we retract the truth?' They have called for a debate within the church. Indications are that they have strong support within their communities.

NOTTINGHAM

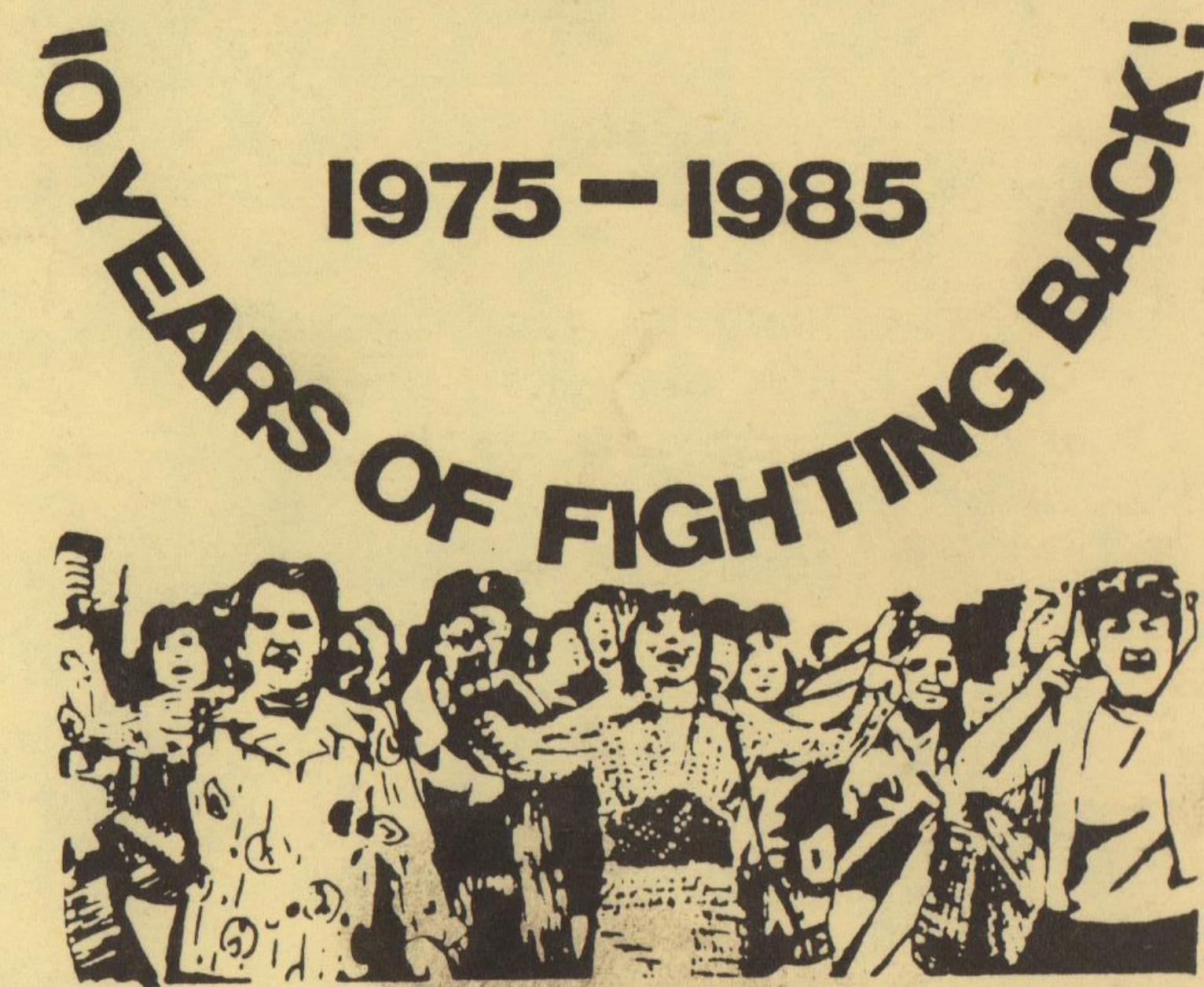


NEWSLETTER *Spring*



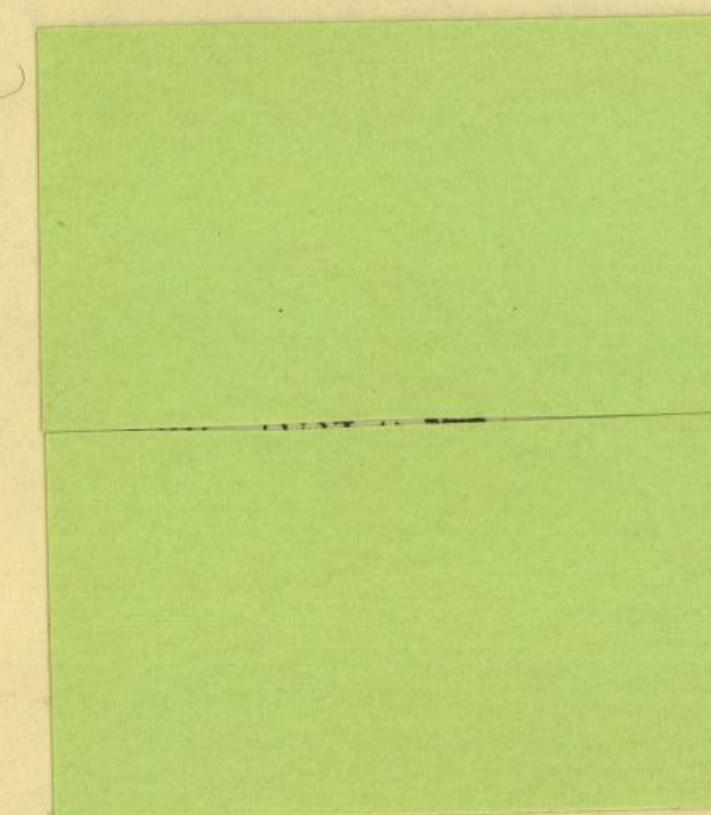
1975 - 1985
NAC's Tenth
Anniversary

10 YEARS OF NAC



ALL WOMEN'S
RIGHT TO CHOOSE
AFFILIATE TO
NOTTINGHAM N.A.C.

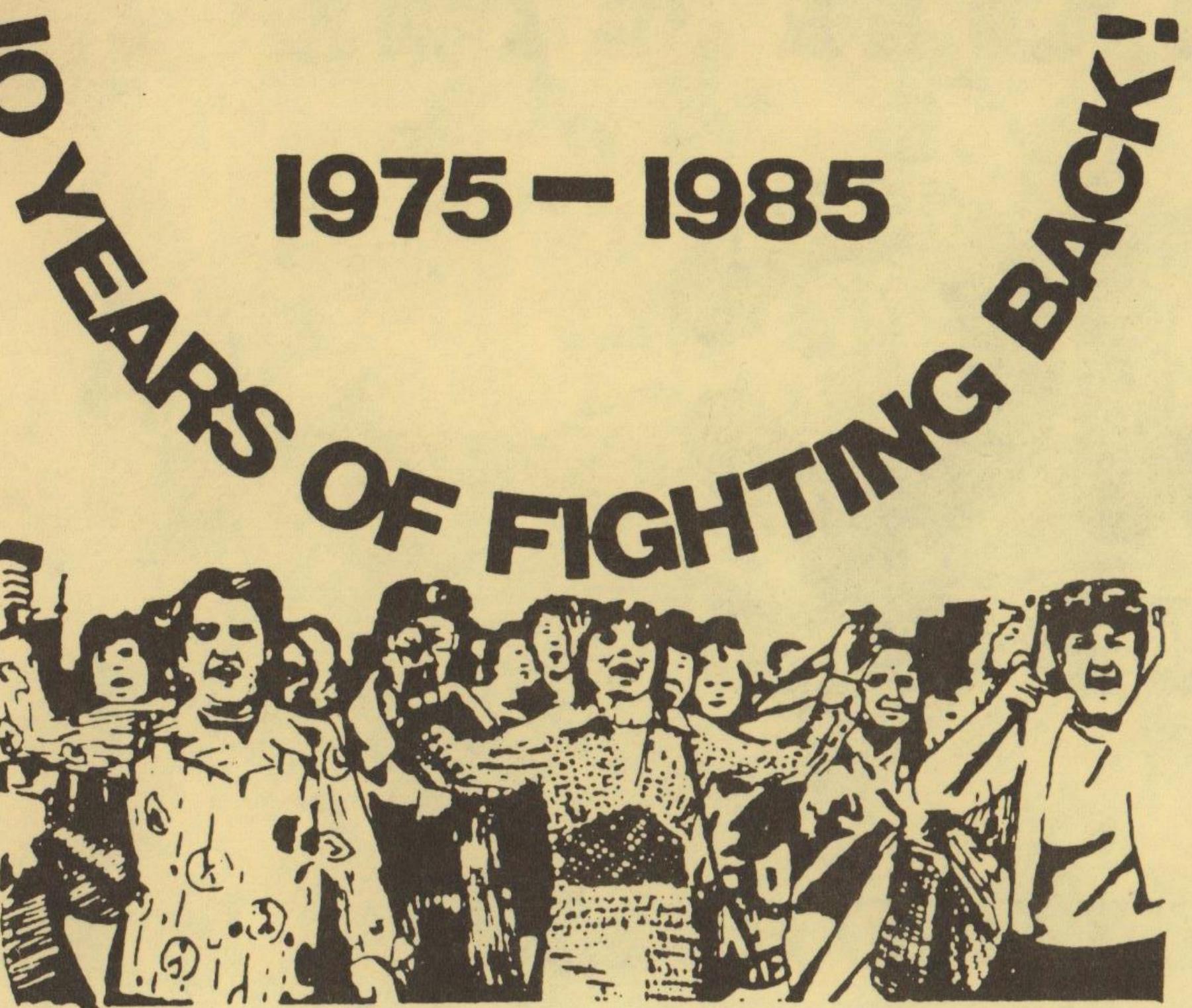
CONTACT:



NOTTINGHAM NAC

10 YEARS OF NAC

1975 - 1985



"A Woman's Right to Choose" is the watchword of NAC - the right to choose whether or not to continue with a pregnancy. This has meant defending the restricted rights available under the 1967 Abortion Act, but also pressing for improved facilities on the NHS and changes in the law to allow the right to choose.

The last ten years read rather like a war journal - with most of our fights being defensive. The anti-abortionists first sought to defeat the 1967 Abortion Act in a grand way through successive Bills in Parliament. After the resounding defeat of John Corrie's Bill in 1979 they have now changed tack and are whittling away wherever possible at:

- contraceptives for under 16s
- time limits for abortion
- sex-education in schools
- in vitro fertilisation
- NHS facilities

Every little attack must be taken up and challenged - or "give them an inch and they will take a mile".

Affiliate to Nottingham NAC and keep in touch with what's happening locally and nationally in our newsletter. Annual affiliation fee - £5.00 group, £2.00 individual, £1.00 unwaged.

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Ten years of battling

February 1975 Labour MP from Glasgow, James White's restrictive Abortion (Amendment) Bill was passed on its second reading in Parliament. Every MP had been given a horrific and now discredited book "Babies for Burning".

March 1975 800 people met at Westminster to oppose the White Bill and to set up the National Abortion Campaign.

June 1975 NAC's first demonstration. 20,000 marched against the White Bill. Petition of 150,000 signatures presented to Parliament.

October 1975 The Select Committee set up to consider the White Bill reported and proposed many restrictions which were largely accepted. White Bill fell.

December 1976 Tory MP William Benyon announced another restrictive Private Member's Bill, based on Select Committee report.

January 1977 Tribunal on Abortion Rights organised by NAC and attended by over 2,000 women.

February 1977 Second reading of Benyon Bill.

May 1977 National demonstration of over 10,000.

July 1977 Women occupied Westminster Cathedral in protest at Benyon Bill and held torchlight procession through Fleet Street.

1977 TUC "Aims for Women at Work" rewritten to include 'Free abortion to be readily available'. Labour Party called for legislation to ensure women's choice in law. Benyon Bill fell.

1978 Yet another attempt to restrict the 1967 Abortion Act, this time with a ten minute Bill from Tory MP, Bernard Braine.

April 1978 Tenth anniversary of Abortion Act. NAC conference decided to focus on abortion facilities and oppose NHS cuts.

May 1978 Case of Joan Paton - Mrs Paton wanted an abortion, but her husband, who had walked out on her, did not want 'his baby' aborted, and took out an injunction to stop her. Protests by women nationwide. He failed.

June 1978 International Campaign for Abortion Rights formed.

May 1979 John Corrie, Tory MP, put forward Private Member's Bill to restrict abortion. NAC helped to set up wide-based "Campaign against Corrie", which organised lobbying of TUC and protest against the Bill.

October 1979 TUC called massive 50,000 demo against Corrie - first time in the world that a national Trade Union organisation had called a demonstration on such an issue. Further protests, both in Parliament led by Jo Richardson, Labour MP, and outside, showed widespread opposition to the Corrie Bill, which eventually fell.

Over the next period NAC organised day schools and debated such subjects as "The Right to Choose" in law.

June 1980 Jo Richardson, Labour MP, tabled a ten minute Facilities Bill, calling for improved NHS facilities, which was lost.

NOTTINGHAM

'A Mecca for Abortions'

Less than half of all abortions are done on the NHS. A combination of hostile doctors and poor facilities mean that the service varies according to where you live. In Nottingham in 1981 94% of abortions were performed in NHS hospitals. This compares favourably with Sheffield (37%) and Leicestershire (28%).

Health District of Residence	Rate per 1000 Total Births and Abortions	Percentage of all Abortions carried out in NHS Hospitals
England	168	48
Nottingham	157	94
Sheffield	185	37
Leicestershire	135	28

December 1980 Minister of Health Gerard Vaughn announced changes in the "Buff Form" doctors had to fill in - giving a medical reason for the operation rather than social reasons. Dr Peter Huntingford considered for public prosecution for not completing form according to new guidelines - but after protest charges were dropped.

October 1983 Internal divisions within NAC led to a split and "Women's Reproductive Rights Campaign" set up to work on wider reproductive issues.

NAC was weakened by split, but now growing again. In last year NAC has produced a school kit and new pamphlets.

1985 Now we are fighting the 'Victoria Gillick' ruling by the Law Lords which prevents contraceptive advice or treatment for under 16s without parental consent.

The Private Member's Bill presented by Enoch Powell has wide-reaching implications for many aspects of fertility control and is the next battle to be fought.

In Nottingham, if your own GP will not refer you you can contact the Family Planning Services at Huntingdon House and they will usually offer you an appointment quickly.

Is Nottingham then a 'Mecca' for abortions as has been claimed? Do Nottingham women throw their pills and all precautions to the wind? No! In fact, the abortion rate here is lower than the national average, as the following table shows.

FURTHER ATTACKS ON ABORTION RIGHTS

-FIGHT THE POWELL BILL

The Powell Bill represents the biggest threat to abortion since the 1967 Act was passed. For the first time in our law, it gives legal status to the foetus. Rights for embryos means rights taken away from women.

There are only three other instances where the foetus has been given such a legal right: in Ireland, following the constitutional amendment in 1983, and in Spain and Italy when the fascists were in power.

The supporters of Powell's Unborn Children (Protection) Bill made it clear during the debate on the second reading that the title is the most important thing about the Bill. For them it was but a prelude to banning abortion and post-coital forms of contraception.

The Bill sets out to prevent an ovum fertilised in vitro from being used for anything other than being placed in the body of a named woman - a requirement that has been described as "licensed motherhood".

If the Bill is passed the immediate consequences will be that all research using fertilised ova will cease. This includes research into contraception, causes of infertility and the prevention of handicap.

Unfortunately it was not just right wing Tories who voted for Powell. Forty four Labour MPs did too - and only 41 were there to vote against. One hundred and twenty two did not bother - or dare - to attend.

We must fight Powell tooth and nail, and without delay. We have only a few weeks to mount a massive national campaign.

Stop Press: Bill - Third Reading, 3 May.

Mass lobby of Parliament, 24 April.

National Demo, London, 27 April.

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GILLICK

Under 16's and contraception

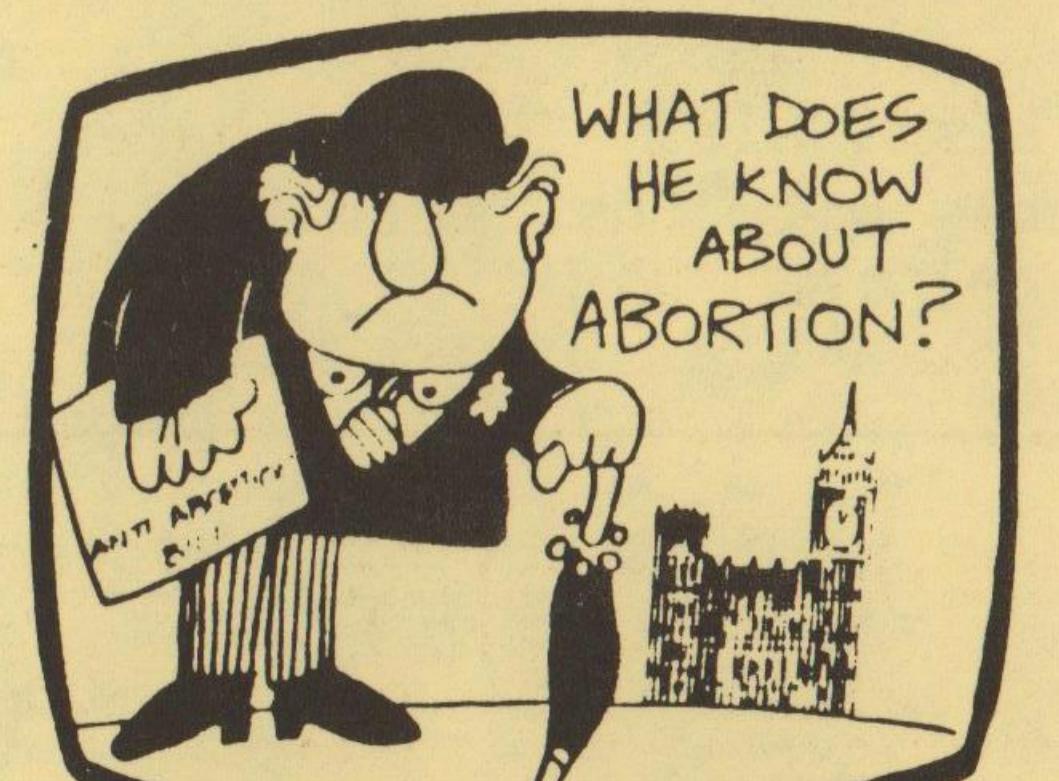
MODEL RESOLUTION

This (organisation) believes that the Enoch Powell Unborn Children (Protection) Bill is an attack on women's rights and must be opposed, because:

- 1 It requires that the names of individual women undergoing treatment for infertility are sent to the secretary of state - an invasion of privacy and doctor-patient confidentiality.
- 2 It will restrict research into the causes and treatment of infertility, foetal abnormality and miscarriage, and into the development of contraception.
- 3 Because it restricts the number of fertilised ova that can be implanted into a woman to one, it will reduce the effectiveness of in-vitro fertilisation and will not allow abnormal embryos to be rejected.
- 4 It gives, for the first time in our law, a legal protection to the embryo, thus opening the door to legislation outlawing certain forms of contraception, post-coital contraception and abortion.

We therefore determine:

- 1 To write to our MPs outlining our opposition to the Bill
- 2 Affiliate/donate to/support NAC
- 3 To organise a local meeting to explain the implications of the Bill.



AND NOW POWELL...

Other ideas:

1 Write to the DHSS supporting their decision to go to the House of Lords.

If you have teenage children or work with young people, mention this in your letter.

2 Write to your MP* and Kenneth Clarke, Rushcliffe MP and Health Minister, supporting a change in the law to allow doctors to treat young people as set out in the DHSS circular.

3 Write to the British Medical Association (BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1) supporting their views.

*Your local MPs are:

Ashfield	Frank Haynes Labour
Bassetlaw	Joe Ashton Labour
Mansfield	Don Concannon Labour
Broxtowe	James Lester Conservative
Gedling	Philip Holland Conservative
Newark	Richard Alexander Conservative
Nottingham East	Michael Knowles Conservative
Nottingham North	Richard Ottaway Conservative
Nottingham South	Martin Brandon-Bravo Conservative
Rushcliffe	Kenneth Clarke Conservative
Sherwood	Andrew Stewart Conservative

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Abortion at 15 for girl refused Pill

by OLIVIA TIMBS

Observer 17.2.85

FAMILY planning advisers are arranging an abortion for a girl aged 15 who was refused the Pill by her local clinic shortly after the controversial Victoria Gillick ruling.

The Appeal Court ruling upheld Mrs Gillick's contention that girls under 16 should not be prescribed contraceptives without their parents' consent. Last week, the 15-year-old turned up at a youth advisory centre where her pregnancy was confirmed.

The case is one cited by welfare agencies to indicate the way that the new policy towards under-age contraception is operating.

Alison Frater, information officer for the Brook Advisory Centres, says fewer under-16s have turned up for appointments in the past few weeks.

The number of girls going to clinics as a result of incestuous relationships has dropped, as has the incidence of girls coming to London from other parts of the country for help.

Usually the centres see just over 2,000 under-16s each year: 3 per cent of clients. Latest attendance figures are not yet available.

Ms Frater said: 'Some of

these girls may be afraid to come. Others who have visited regularly are not keeping their appointments. We hope we have built up trust with our clients but the judgment may mean that they are now lying about their ages and saying they are 16 when they are not. There is a great deal of panic and confusion.'

Two other cases seen at a Brook Advisory Centre recently highlight the plight of girls who do not wish their parents to be involved. One 15-year-old who had an appointment in the last two weeks agreed for her mother to be informed about her request for contraceptives. Her mother refused permission although the girl has already had two abortions.

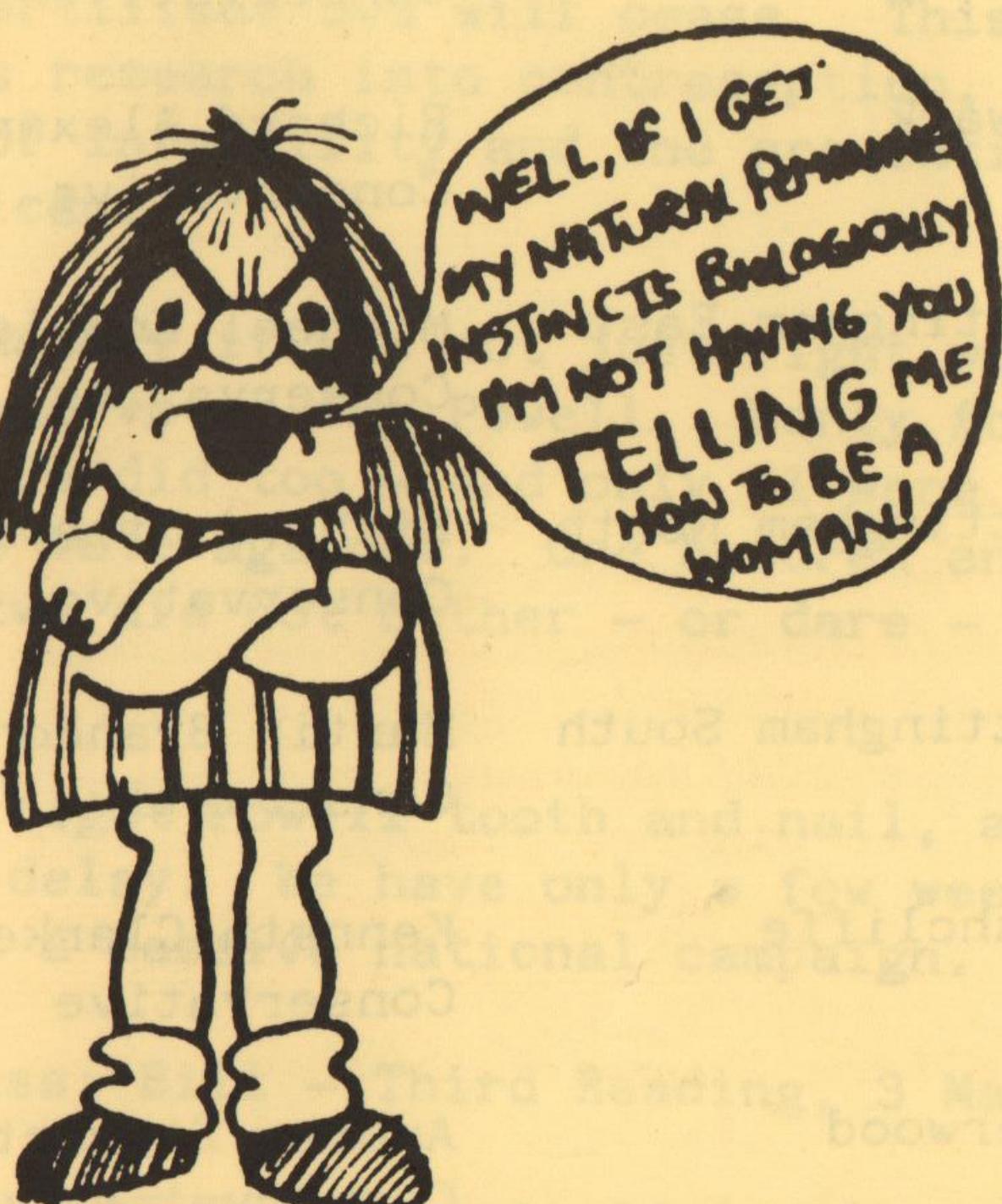
Another girl, who was 15 when she became pregnant, waited for her sixteenth birthday before daring to seek advice. As a result, she was more than 12 weeks pregnant before she had an abortion. 'There is considerable confusion in the minds of many girls about what the repercussions will be if they seek advice about contraception,' says Ms Frater.

The General Medical Council last week decided to issue interim advice to doctors on the ruling—pending a Department of Health appeal to the House of Lords later this year. Doctors are advised not to prescribe contraceptives or give individual advice without parents' consent except in an emergency or with a court's permission.

Most importantly, however, the advice emphasises 'in any event he should observe the rules of professional secrecy.' This means that if an under-16 girl makes an initial approach to a doctor who refuses to advise her without the parents' consent, that initial approach must be kept in confidence.

Further reassurance for girls under the age of 16 comes from a survey of GPs carried out by the magazine *Rational Prescriber*. Nearly 3,500 doctors were questioned. Of these, 94 per cent said they would be willing to prescribe contraceptives to girls under 16; 75 per cent said they would never break confidentiality without the young person's permission and a further 20 per cent would make a decision about confidentiality in light of the young person's maturity.

Confusion is not restricted to patients. Many doctors and lawyers are unsure how to define an emergency and what constitutes advice—points that they hope will be clarified by the House of Lords.



A VIDEO NASTY— “THE SILENT SCREAM”

Anti-abortionists in this country have brought into this country a film called "The Silent Scream". It uses ultrasound to show the fetus during an abortion. It was made by an American doctor, Dr Nathanson, who has done over 100,000 abortions in America. He was also a founder member of a national pro-abortion campaign in America and helped get the anti-abortion laws reformed. In 1978 Dr Nathanson was converted to a belief in the 'sanctity of fetal life' and is now a fervent anti-abortionist.

The film is believed by SPUC to be their most powerful weapon yet, and following their tradition, is presented in a highly emotive way. The commentary talks about the fetus opening its mouth to "scream in fear and agony" — hence the film's title. All the fetal movements in the film are normal — a fetus will open its mouth, move its limbs, and even suck its thumb under normal circumstances.

Apart from the highly emotive narrative the film is dubious in other respects too. The ultra-sound pictures are very fuzzy and the fetus is thought to be older than the claimed 11 weeks. The doctor doing the abortion is thought, by specialists, who have seen the film, to be incompetent. An abortion of an 11 week old fetus would normally take about three minutes — this abortion takes about 11 minutes, involving breaking down the skull and dismembering the limbs — which would be unnecessary at 11 weeks gestation.

SPUC started its promotion of the film with a showing to MPs and press in the House of Commons. The film was also offered to ITV's 'TV Eye', who took it to a conference of obstetricians and gynaecologists. As a result of their comments, ITV decided not to show it, and BBC also declined the offer.

Catholic organisations throughout the country are now showing the film. If it is to be shown on publicly-owned property, you should complain to the council, explaining that it is a very dubious film.

Time Limits

ABORTION LAWS UNDER THREAT OF ATTACK/ TIME LIMITS

Women are at present facing an escalating attack on their independence. On the one hand, mass unemployment is hitting women disproportionately, leaving many of us with neither a job nor the right to claim benefit; while on the other hand, we are being forced back into the home to care for the old, the very young, and disabled for whom the state is refusing to take any responsibility.

In this reactionary climate women's abortion rights are, not surprisingly, yet again coming under attack. Following a recent report of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, a group of MPs have tabled a motion urging the full implementation of the 1929 Infant Life Preservation Act. If acted upon, this would further restrict the time limit within which abortions would be performed.

It is important to recognise that the present arguments over time limits is simply a 'back-door' method of depriving women of the rights we gained with the 1967 Abortion Act — an Act that anti-abortionists have consistently failed to reverse through challenging it directly. No woman chooses to have a late abortion. Late abortions are almost invariably the direct result of a lack of abortion services and facilities, or the late detection of seriously physically or mentally handicapped foetuses.

The solution to this problem is to improve and expand existing NHS facilities, so as to reduce the number of late abortions needed. Instead, we find a move to make late abortions illegal at a time when our family planning clinics and NHS abortion facilities are being severely cut, and thus, when increasing numbers of women are being forced to wait long periods before getting access to an abortion.

The National Abortion Campaign is expecting a legislative attack on abortion in the near future. We are writing to try to establish contacts

with individuals and groups/organisations, with whom we could get in touch, in the event of such an attack, to join with us in actively campaigning in the defence of our rights. Activities would involve petitioning, lobbying MPs, fundraising and mobilising for marches and rallies.

We will contact your organisation again with an URGENT call for action when the need arises.

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INTERNATIONAL

China is reported as having eased its rule of one couple: one child for some couples, including urban couples who are themselves both only children, only sons who have fathered a daughter (!) and rural couples where one parent is an only child. This is a recognition of the strength of the traditional family in China. Last July it was admitted that only 21% of mothers of child-bearing age had only one child. In 1979, China set a target of 700 million population to be achieved within 50 or 60 years — a reduction of 300 million on the present.

Egypt is debating the need for population control. At the present rate,

the population will double by 2010 to 94 million. Every village is within two miles of a family planning service and there has been a big campaign on the theme that small families are best. Despite this, the average Egyptian woman is still having between five and six babies, with the larger families in the countryside. Large families still make economic sense in the country.

At the same time as the birth control programme, other medical programmes have succeeded in reducing infant mortality rates. Birth control pills have been fed to chickens to increase their weight.

At the start of the programme, in the mid-sixties, only about 4-5% of Egypt's land was productive. Now a further 500,000 acres of desert have been reclaimed, but only 5% of output is attributable to the new land. Two million acres would feed half a million families.

PETITION

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Parliament assembled, The Humble Petition of UK Residents Sheweth That to prevent unwanted pregnancies amongst young women under sixteen years of age the DHSS Circular of December 1980 should be fully implemented, wherefore your Petitioners pray that your Honourable House do urge the Secretary of State for Social Services that:

If the House of Lords upon Appeal in the case of Gillick v West Norfolk & Wisbech AHA and Another do uphold the decision of the Court of Appeal this would leave many young women in danger of unwanted pregnancies and prevent doctors from giving treatment they felt necessary for the health of their patients and

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The law should be changed to allow doctors to give abortion and contraceptive advice and treatment as set out in the DHSS Circular on the organisation and development of a family planning service..

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, etc.

CONSTITUENCY