

The District Court of Meiningen: Decision about the Termination of a Pregnancy Following a Rape (January 9, 1946)

Abstract

Beginning in August 1945, abortion after a rape was permitted in the Soviet occupation zone. However, in any given case it was hardly possible to determine whether a pregnancy was in fact the result of a rape or whether rape was merely the pretext for an abortion desired for other reasons. In the present case, the District Court of Meiningen in Thuringia authorized an abortion even though the pregnancy was detected after a lengthy delay.

Source

On the evening of August 9 of last year, on the way from Bad Salzungen to Leimbach, where we were still living at the time, I and my husband, who was accompanying me, were stopped by six Russian soldiers. They came towards us in a passenger car and were obviously slightly drunk. They separated me from my husband; three men took me along into a nearby cornfield; three others kept my husband back. They threatened us with a pistol, so that we were unable to defend ourselves. All three Russians who had me in their power took turns raping me. Only after that was I let go again and allowed to return to my husband. Immediately after the incident I had myself examined here by Dr. Keitel, after I had already seen Dr. Schirmer in Salzungen, as I was afraid I might have been infected with something. However, at the time the doctors were unable to find anything, and no pregnancy, either. My period has always been very irregular, so that I myself was unable to infer anything when it did not appear. Only now, after another examination, has Dr. Keitel diagnosed a pregnancy. I have submitted the certificate to the health office.

I request the termination of my pregnancy and reinstatement into the previous position because of failure to adhere to the time limit.

I hereby affirm the truthfulness of my statements on oath.

Decided and pronounced:

that the applicant's petition, despite missing the deadline, is accepted, and, furthermore, the attached decision is issued.

signed Dr. Lang, Barth

Source: Gisela Staupe and Lisa Vieth, eds., *Unter anderen Umständen. Zur Geschichte der Abtreibung*. Catalogue. A Publication of the German Hygiene Museum. Dresden, 1993, p. 77.

Translation: Thomas Dunlap

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