

Abortion and Women's Solidarity (1971)

Abstract

Inspired by a campaign in France, 374 women signed an appeal to abolish Paragraph 218 of the Basic Law, publicly admitting that they themselves had had abortions. (Criminal proceedings against the signatories were initiated but later dropped.) The appeal generated tremendous public attention when it was reprinted in *Stern* magazine on June 6, 1971.

Source

Appeal

Every year about one million women in the Federal Republic have abortions. Hundreds die; tens of thousands are left sick and sterile because these operations are performed by laypeople.

When performed by medical specialists, pregnancy termination is a routine procedure.

Women with financial means can have safe abortions in Germany and abroad. Women without financial means are forced by Paragraph 218 onto the kitchen tables of quack doctors. It calls them criminals and threatens them with prison sentences of up to five years.

And still, millions of women have abortions—under humiliating and life-threatening circumstances.

I am one of them. — I had an abortion.

I am opposed to Paragraph 218 and in favor of wanted children [*Wunschkinde*].

We women do not want alms from legislators, nor do we want reform in installments!

We demand the unqualified repeal of Paragraph 218.

We demand comprehensive sex education for everyone and free access to contraceptives!

We demand the right to abortions covered by health insurance!

Source: Appeal: "Wir haben abgetrieben," form for collecting signatures. Archiv FrauenMediaTurm, Cologne. Signature: FT.02.034. Republished with permission from Archiv FrauenMediaTurm. The appeal was also reprinted in *Stern* as "Wir haben abgetrieben," June 6, 1971.

Translation: Allison Brown

Recommended Citation: Abortion and Women's Solidarity (1971), published in: German History in Documents and Images,
<<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/ghdi:document-1098>> [April 23, 2024].