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Abortion and Women's Solidarity (1971)

Inspired by a campaign in France, 374 women signed an appeal to abolish Paragraph 218, publicly admitting that they themselves had had abortions (legal proceedings were instituted against the signers but later dropped). The appeal generated great public attention when it first appeared in *Stern* on June 6, 1971.

Appeal: I Had an Abortion

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 [of the Basic Law] onto the kitchen tables of quack doctors. It labels them criminals and threatens 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.

We women do not want alms from the 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 pregnancy termination that is covered by health insurance!

Source: "Appell: Ich habe abgetrieben" ["Appeal: I Had an Abortion"] (1971), *Stern*, June 6, 1971; reprinted in Alice Schwarzer, *So fing es an! Die neue Frauenbewegung [So it Started! The New Women's Movement]*. Munich, 1981, p. 124.

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