



OTTAWA, July 6, 1983

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON ABORTION

The President of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Lucie Pépin, today issued the following statement regarding the availability of abortion in Canada:

"I am deeply disturbed that women are forced to obtain abortions in clinics because they are very often offered no recourse by Canadian hospitals. After ten years of struggle, it is appalling that women must suffer under such conditions because governments have not implemented the existing legislation. One cannot accept the fact that women do not have the choice to obtain an abortion, if they so desire it. If all hospitals provided abortions, women would not be obliged to seek recourse through private clinics."

"Since 1973, the federal and provincial governments have juggled back and forth the issue of performing abortions in Canadian hospitals. I thus strongly urge women in all the provinces to pressure both federal and provincial ministers and elected representatives to act on this question without delay. It is imperative in 1983 that women have the choice to either continue or end their pregnancy."

"Women are forced to take complete responsibility for birth control and yet the services available for them to do this are almost non-existent. Not only is accessibility to abortion limited, there are few education programs regarding contraception. Women cannot be penalized in this way because governments have failed to meet their responsibilities for either abortion or birth control."