

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

- Make a financial contribution
- Circulate the OCAC petition
- Get your organization to endorse the legalization of free-standing abortion clinics
- Write (or send the attached coupon) to Larry Grossman, Minister of Health
- Write to your MPP urging the legalization of free-standing abortion clinics
- Write to Ontario Attorney-General Roy McMurtry urging him not to take action against doctors who open such clinics
- Join the Coalition or set up a support group in your town
- Sell the pro-choice button

I am enclosing \$15 , \$25 , \$50 , _____
to support the ongoing work of the **Ontario
Coalition for Abortion Clinics.**

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Send to **OCAC**, P.O. Box 753, Station P,
Toronto, Ont. M5S 2Z1 • (416) 532-8193.

To: **Larry Grossman, Minister of Health,**
Province of Ontario.

In order to ensure that women have ready
access to safe, medically-insured abortions,
I (we) strongly urge you to legalize free-
standing abortion clinics.

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

Send this coupon or write to: **Hon. Larry
Grossman, Minister of Health,** Queen's
Park, Toronto, Ontario M7A 2K5.

WE CAN WIN

The Ontario government can choose to allow free-standing clinics to operate. With the support of Dr. Henry Morgentaler, a group of women active in the women's health community will be opening an abortion clinic in Toronto. OCAC is organizing mass support for the legalization of free-standing abortion clinics so that this clinic and others like it can operate free from prosecution.

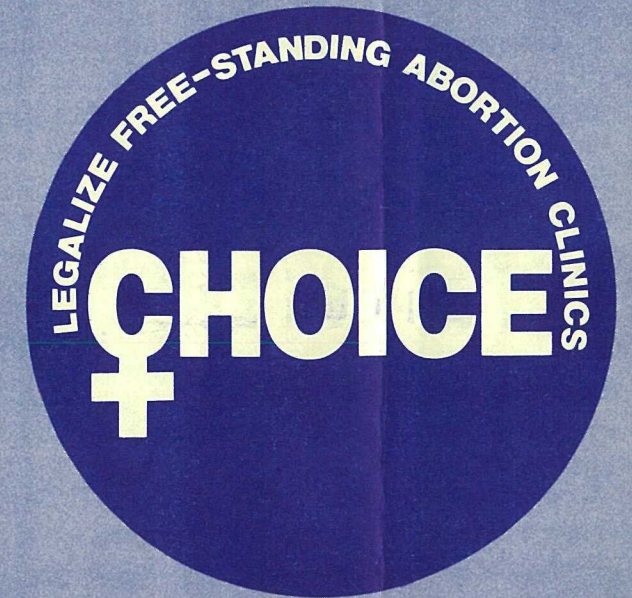
In October, OCAC began a public campaign. Support has been overwhelming. More than 500 people signed an ad in the Globe and Mail; almost 1,000 people attended a spirited rally in Toronto; and many groups, including the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Labour Council of Metro Toronto, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, Women Working with Immigrant Women, the International Women's Day Committee, the Medical Reform Group of Ontario and the Law Union of Ontario have endorsed the legalization of free-standing clinics providing medically-insured abortions.

Thousands of people are signing the OCAC petition and wearing the pro-choice button. We are the majority and the majority believes in the right to choose. We need your help to prove it!

O.C.A.C.

**P.O. Box 753, Station P
Toronto, Ont. M5S 2Z1
Tel.: (416) 532-8193**

— RIGHT TO CHOOSE —



The issue is **CHOICE**. Abortion is now legal in Canada, but only under extremely controlled conditions.

Access is limited and many women who choose to have abortions are unable to obtain them.

Why are women denied the right to choose?

♀CHOICE

The situations of Mary, Ruth and Louise are typical of those of hundreds of other women:

Mary is 37, has five children and is pregnant. She wants an abortion. When she called a Toronto hospital clinic, they told her she would have to call back. She called for weeks and couldn't get an appointment. Finally, desperate, she went to the U.S.

- **This hospital gets 75 calls like Mary's a day. They book only six.**

Ruth, a community college student who wants to continue her studies, also wants an abortion. Her gynecologist tells her his fee is \$350, cash before service.

- **Most doctors who perform abortions have opted out of OHIP and charge high fees.**

Louise lives in a small Northern Ontario town. She too is pregnant. Her husband has been laid off and they are in dire financial straits. Abortions are not done in her town. They tell her she must travel to Toronto to have one.

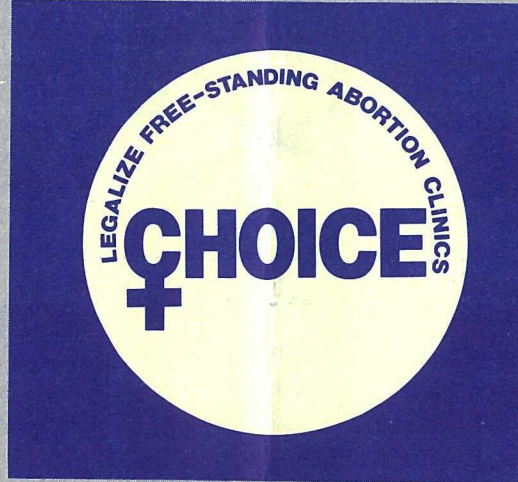
- **More than 30% of women in Ontario live in communities where hospitals do not provide abortions.**

- **More than 70% of hospitals in Canada do not perform abortions at all.**

A recent Gallup Poll showed that 72% of people in Canada believe that a woman has a basic right to an abortion. Yet women are consistently denied access to safe abortions.

THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

The Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics (OCAC) believes that the right to control our bodies is a basic human right. Yet women do not have this right. Controlling our bodies means the right to choose if and when to have children. It means the right to safe, free abortions.



In a society where women are sexually and economically exploited, where women make up the largest percentage of the poor, where women are often denied paid parental leave and access to daycare and individually carry the major responsibility for child-rearing, where women are raped and beaten, and where contraceptives often fail or have serious side effects, abortion must be an available option.

The issue is not pro- or anti-abortion. The issue is choice.

Women who are against abortion already have the right to follow their beliefs to continue an unplanned pregnancy to term. But anti-choice proponents should not be allowed to impose their own moral and religious views through legislation or intimidation on those who view abortion as a responsible moral choice.

ABORTIONS ONLY LEGAL UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS

In 1969, the federal Criminal Code was amended so that abortions remain illegal unless approved by a committee of three doctors in an approved hospital. But hospitals are not required to set up committees and even those that have committees are not required to perform abortions. Due to pressure from well-organized anti-choice groups, many hospitals have decided not to perform abortions at all. According to health centres and women's groups, the situation in Ontario is steadily worsening.

WE CAN CHANGE THIS SITUATION

In Quebec, government funded community clinics provide medically-insured abortions despite the federal law. They exist there because of broad public support for the right to choose.

Studies have shown that first trimester abortions provided in free-standing clinics are as safe as, and less expensive for government funders, than those provided in hospitals. A free-standing clinic is a clinic outside of a hospital where abortions are provided on an outpatient basis. This type of clinic also offers a supportive environment, counselling and more thorough birth control information.

Mark MacGuigan, the federal Minister of Justice, has recently stated that provincial ministers of health have the power to legalize such clinics. Larry Grossman, Minister of Health for Ontario has that power. So far, he has refused to use it. Ontario Attorney General Roy McMurtry has threatened to prosecute any doctor who opens a free-standing clinic.