

Easy way out?

Whether or not abortion should be legalised in our country, that is the question.

According to views expressed on *Talking Point* on NBC TV (1 Sept 92) we should not even think about legalising abortion. Of the thirteen people who called in, nine (almost 70 %) were against legal abortions.

Three brave men agreed on one of the most well known arguments for abortion, being that we as women should have the right to decide what happens to our bodies.

The often repeated argument against abortion is the belief that "life" starts with conception. Terminating that life is "murder".

At the basis of all arguments, whether pro or con, seems to be

an undisputed and never discussed assumption: if a woman finds herself pregnant with an unwanted child, and she has the right to a legal abortion, she will use this "Easy Way Out".

Women of Namibia, we are used to being stereotyped, and we all have our own ways of dealing with that.

This stereotype, however, is one I will not accept. What the anti-abortionists are saying is: All women are potential "child murderers". Give us the chance to "murder" our unwanted children, and we will do so. None of us will think twice about having an abortion, if only we can have it legally.

I welcome discussions on abortion. We need to talk a lot about the reasons for making such a

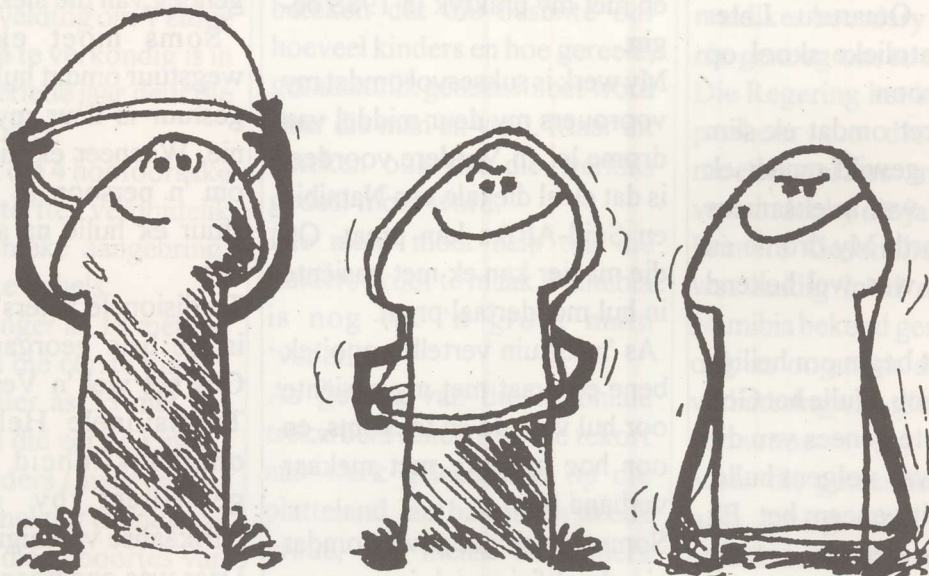
decision; the financial implications thereof, etc. But the focus of these discussions should change.

We are not discussing whether abortions should take place at all, because they do.

Desperate women all over the world have abortions. What we are talking about is whether women in this country will be treated as responsible human beings and - once we have made the not so easy decision to terminate a pregnancy - will get all the medical care and psychological support we need, or whether we will continue to resort to backstreet abortions, and thus put our health at stake.

Legalising abortions in Namibia is not a moral issue, it is a health issue. Because in the end, every woman will have to decide for herself whether having an abortion is "morally" right or wrong.

Pro-choice, Windhoek.



Be brave, comrades do it with condoms. Remember, it is not only the responsibility of women to insist on the use of condoms.