

Issue 1, 2010

# Right To Choose



The Newsletter of  
**WOMEN'S ABORTION  
ACTION CAMPAIGN**

Since 1972

**FEBRUARY 2010**

## Next meeting of **W A A C**



The 2010 Abortion & Pro-Choice Activists' National Conference saw delegates from Victoria, NSW and Queensland meet for the first time in many years.

The Conference heard in detail of the struggle for abortion law reform in Queensland, especially as it applies to the situation a young couple in Cairns facing criminal charges in relation to abortion.

Following calls for solidarity and support made during the Conference and at a Public Meeting held on 6th February, 2010, Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC) will meet from 6.00 pm on Tuesday, 16th February, 2010, to discuss future activities around solidarity with Queensland's Pro Choice Activist Coalition; working towards the repeal of anti-abortion laws across Australia and other issues of importance to all Australian women.

The meeting will be held at the offices of:

**SUPRA (Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association)**  
**Raglan Street Building (G10)**  
**Darlington Campus, The University of Sydney**

*See you there!*

# **PUBLIC MEETING**

**Did you know a young Queensland couple face prison for an abortion?**

**Let's show solidarity**



**Sat 6th Feb  
2010  
2.30pm**

**NSW Teachers Fed  
22-33 Mary St  
SURRY HILLS**

(a short walk from Eddy Ave exit of  
Central Station)

**Demand these charges be dropped!**

**Speakers:**

**Kathy Newnam**

ProChoice Action Collective Qld

**Kate Gleeson**

Lecturer, School of Politics and International  
Relations, Macquarie University

**Honora Ryan (tbc)** Women's Abortion Action Campaign

**Authorised by Women's Abortion Action Campaign, Sydney**

**For further info contact 0407 665 857 (Margaret) or**

**email: [contact\\_waac@yahoo.com.au](mailto:contact_waac@yahoo.com.au)**

### **Did you know a young Queensland couple face prison for an abortion?**

Tegan Leach and her partner, Sergei Brennan, realized in late 2008 that they had an unplanned pregnancy. They discussed their options and resolved on termination of pregnancy given their age, financial situation and so on. Ms Leach was also concerned by what her friends told her about how an abortion was performed and resolved that she preferred the chemical method of abortion and wanted to obtain the abortifacient drug known as RU486.

They were not able to find a doctor willing to prescribe the drug in their city, Cairns. Relatives of Sergei Brennan informed the couple that abortifacient drugs were well known and prescribed by many doctors in their country of origin, the Ukraine.

A relative in the Ukraine got a prescription for the drugs filled and posted the packet from overseas, with written instructions from a doctor, to the couple at their home. The drugs came through customs and did not attract any attention. Tegan Leach took the drugs as directed by the doctor and, according to media reports, her pregnancy was successfully terminated in late December 2008.

### **Fast forward to February/March 2009**

In Feb 2009 a specialized squad within the Qld police force had been investigating an unrelated murder matter. That squad received a 'tip off' that the couple had used the abortifacient drugs. The premises of the young couple were searched on March 1st. By March 30<sup>th</sup> 2009 charges for a committal matter had been laid against the couple. A number of committal hearings were held across 2009 and by late last year the committal proceedings had been referred for a criminal trial against the couple. At the time of writing (Jan 2010) the date for the hearing has not yet been set.

### **What are the charges against the couple?**

Tegan Leach is being charged under Section 225 of the *Qld Criminal Code 1899* which is:

*Any woman who, with intent to procure her own miscarriage, whether she is or is not with child, unlawfully administers to herself any poison or other noxious thing, or uses any force of any kind, or uses any other means whatever, or permits any such thing or means to be administered or used to her, is guilty of a crime, and is liable to imprisonment for 7 years.*

Sergei Brennan is being charged under Section 226 of the *Qld Criminal Code 1899* which is:

*Any person who unlawfully supplies to or procures for any person anything whatever, knowing that it is intended to be unlawfully used to procure the miscarriage of a woman, whether she is or is not with child, is guilty of a misdemeanour, and is liable to imprisonment for 3 years.*

## WAAC: Objectives & demands

In 1972, Women's Abortion Action Campaign set out five objectives and demands ...

Although nearly forty years have passed, these remain as relevant today as they ever were:

- That abortion is a woman's right to choose
- Free safe abortion on demand
- Free safe contraception on demand
- The repeal of all abortion laws
- No forced sterilisation

Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC) continues to work toward the achievement of these objectives.

**Want to get involved?**

**Contact WAAC today!**

WAAC contact details, see below

## Support women's rights

WAAC is an activist organisation which receives no funding except occasional 'one off' financial support from various organisations.

WAAC relies on donations from supporters to purchase basic supplies such as stationery, and greatly appreciates donations in cash which can be used as need demands. Other donations are also welcome, including unused postage stamps (for mailouts), good condition 'pre-loved' furniture and electrical equipment, stationery, banner poles

And ...

### **YOUR time and energy!**

- Become **ACTIVE** by attending meetings;
- **SHARE** computer, web, administrative, research and creative ideas;
- Write, network and organise events to **RAISE AWARENESS** of WAAC's aims and generate membership and funds for WAAC's work

Women's Abortion Action Campaign : ABN 31 248 204 614

**Join Women's Abortion Action Campaign today. You will receive the historic *Right To Choose* newsletter and first hand information about WAAC activities.**

**You will also be able to contribute to WAAC's planning, policies and actions.**

Yes, I would like to join WAAC:

*(Please print details clearly, thank you!)*

Name: .....

Address: .....

Email Address: .....

Contact Phone No: .....

I would like to donate to WAAC. Please find enclosed a cheque/money order for \$ ..... (a receipt will be forwarded to you). You can also donate via direct deposit /electronic transfer to: Women's Abortion Action Campaign, Commonwealth Bank, BSB 062 003, Account Number 903087. If you would like a receipt, please advise by email when you make your deposit.

I would like to become active in WAAC's campaigns. Please let me know about future actions by post/email to the address above

**Send to: WAAC, PO Box 547, Summer Hill NSW 2130 \* Mobile: 0407 665 857**

Women's Abortion Action Campaign : ABN 31 248 204 614



# Graphic designers and artists

# Journalists, writers, thinkers

# Women of ideas!!!

Call for members for the *Right To Choose* E-Newsletter Production Collective

*Right To Choose* is the newsletter of the Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC).

Beginning as a newspaper in 1972, *Right To Choose* moved to magazine format in the 1980s and has been published as an E-Newsletter and mail-out during recent years.

WAAC would now like to extend an invitation to interested people to form a production collective for the purposes of publishing *Right To Choose* as an E-Newsletter and mail out.

Members of the Production Collective would be asked to work within an editorial policy and brief developed by WAAC (but open to discussion), and to participate in meetings of the WAAC Collective to report progress with each issue of *Right To Choose*.

If you are interested, please let us know at a meeting, or via email:

[contact\\_waac@yahoo.com.au](mailto:contact_waac@yahoo.com.au)

