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## Bush's 'Gag Rule' on Abortion Opposed

By JORDANA SARDO RADICAL WOMEN

On his first official work day, Jan. 22, President George W. Bush sent a clear and threatening message to the world. This U.S. administration will do everything in its power to deny women control over their own bodies. Women and their male allies will fight back with equal

By executive order, Bush reimposed the Reagan-era ban on U.S. funding to foreign groups that provide counseling or otherwise facilitates abortions. President Clinton had rescinded that order in 1992.

But since 1973, with the passage of the Helms amendment to the Foreign Operations appropriation bill, renewed annually, the U.S. hasn't actually funded any overseas abortions. Now, any organization that talks about or pays for abortions with its own funds will



Jordana Sardo

not get U.S. aid for any of its services. The effect of the Bush mandate will be to impose a "gag rule" on any program concerned with women's health. Along with counseling and access to abortion, people will lose access to contraception, prenatal care, and other basic reproductive services. Hundreds of thousands of women will suffer, and many

Bush advisors probably realize that the murderous ban is actually counter-productive - under the Reagan ban, the incidence of abortion increased. These people don't really care about women's well-being or human life either. They are asserting their power over half the world's population.

What this U.S. government really wants is to build a climate of intimidation and repression and to send the clear message that women's lives are not our own. They are asserting declared war on a whole gender.

Radical Women calls on feminists to fight back and continue to demonstrate full support for reproductive freedom at every opportunity. We are committed to working with others to demand the repeal of the Helms amendment, and

the equally oppressive Hyde amendment, which denies use of federal funds for abortions to impoverished U.S. residents. And we call on the elected politicians to publicly oppose the reactionary campaign of terror that manifests in women's clinics being bombed and the murder of abortion providers.

Racial Women believe that the power of women around the globe can be asserted to overrule the despotic president who wasn't even the American people's choice.

Radical Women was founded in 1967 and is one of the oldest socialist feminist organizations in the U.S. Radical Women has been in the forefront of the abortion rights fights and was instrumental in getting abortion legalized in Washington State through a voter referendum in 1970.



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