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Morals in a pill

FdCA statement on the abortion pill in Italy

Federazione dei Comunisti Anarchici

13 April 2010

With the Regional elections now over, the political coalitions continue to court the Vatican, offering the Catholic Church a breather from the tragic situation it finds itself in thanks to the scandal of paedophile priests. And given the fact that current policies are geared towards criminalizing foreigners or, in less extreme cases, reducing the numbers of foreigners in the various holding centres – which translates into big business for Catholic bodies – the only ace left up Italian politicians' collective sleeve in their attempt to curry favour with the Pope is to take it out on women.

Thus we see the Northern League threatening to block the use of the abortion pill mifepristone in the North's public hospitals and in other Regions, those governed by the Democratic Party with or without the christian-democratic Union of the Centre, embarrassment rules the day.

And yet the history of Italy's abortion legislation, which many ignore, has shown time and time again that the best way to prevent abortions is to promote the widespread use of contraceptives, and not persuading women to keep a child they do not want, with

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threats or the promise of financial support. But many Regions already go towards financing private Catholic anti-abortion clinics, in open violation of the law on abortion.

Now, with the crusade against mifepristone, anti-abortionists are even going so far as to support the absurd notion that surgical abortions — when an embryo exists — are better than medical abortions — when the embryo still does not exist! As everyone knows by now, mifepristone allows for abortions within the first 7 weeks of gestation, that is to say at the very earliest stages of the cellular division of the fertilized oocyte.

And we are talking here about a validated pharmaceutical, approved by the Italian Medicines Agency, currently on the market. The Regions only have to buy it in order to be able to stock hospital pharmacies with it.

Considering that a medical abortion is less invasive than a surgical abortion and that the expense to the public is lower, given that fewer operators are required, there is no need for anaesthesia or risk of infection or post-surgical repercussions, it is clear that the sad figures who are opposing its use are really only interested in continuing to make the act of abortion itself as painful, humiliating and dangerous as possible, ensuring it remains under control as part of a surgical procedure instead of allowing women to freely and responsibly decide, and lighten the load to some degree on the increasingly fewer healthcare workers in the country's public hospitals.

The FdCA believes that the self-determination of all women is one of the bases of a solid, happy society. We therefore support every free, responsible decision, beyond any moral bigotry. We support the use and distribution of mifepristone, against the fundamentalist interference and hypocrisy of those who, as usual, try to use the freedom of women and men as a bargaining tool between the political powers and religious powers.