

DIE NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK

Pretoria

30 May 1996

CONSTITUTION

We respectfully submit the following:

1. Freedom and security of the person

1.1 Delete art 12(2)(a) which reads: 'to make decisions concerning reproduction'.

1.2 On behalf of 1,288,837 members, the Dutch Reformed Church pleads for the life of the unborn baby, the fetus. Apart from the Interim Constitution, art. 11 of the New Constitution protects human life. As it is accepted that life begins at the moment of conception, this life deserves rightful protection by the authorities.

Although it is not mentioned in the Interim Constitution, it appears that, in cases of adoption, the father's rights are increasingly taken into account. This should also apply when a woman unilaterally considers an abortion without consulting the father of the child.

In our view, art. 12(2)(a) inter alia deprives the unborn child the right to life. It should be omitted to validate the human right aspect of the Constitution.

2. Marriage and family rights:

2.1 The Interim Constitution makes provision for universally accepted human rights for everybody>

We fear that Individual rights are over-emphasized at the expense of group rights e.g. the individual can act immorally and is protected, irrespective of possible harm he/she causes to won family or society. The rights of a group (e.g. family or society) should be protected. In fact, more attention should be given to the protection of home and family life in this constitution. The situation in South Africa calls for a separate article on home and family life.

We propose that the following article be added.

2.2 Marriage and Family Rights

Marriage and family are institutions possessing rights which in a reasonable interpretation of the Bill of Rights override purely individualistic interpretations.

DR. W J BOTHA