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Home births

MANY people believe hospitals are not the best or safest place for babies to be born. Among these are increasing numbers of men and women who choose to become parents and for whom the welfare of their babies is of utmost importance. They have a far higher stake in the birth process than the professionals because they have to live with the result. A decision to have a home birth is not taken lightly.

I feel shocked that in a "free" country a small, officially selected group of professionals can develop

restrictive guidelines and use the power of the state to impose them on unwilling citizens. It makes a mockery of medicine as a helping profession. It frightens me that I, my friends, sisters and daughters, may have to choose between breaking the law and risking the physical and emotional trauma of a high technology birth. If implemented, the guidelines may well do more for family planning than maternal and child health.

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