The Eagleton Institute's New Jersey Poll shows that an overwhelming majority of N.J. citizens support the principle that "the decision to have an abortion is a private matter that should be left to the parents to decide without government intervention."

The statewide survey found that 78% supported the position, 19% were opposed and 3% undecided. The poll contacted 1226 persons 18 years of age and over by telephone between Jan. 30 and Feb. 5.

Support for this position is as broad as it is deep. Among Catholics, 69% agreed, 26% disagreed, and 2% had no opinion. Protestants agreed by 85% to 13% with 2% registering no opinion. Republicans, democrats, liberals, conservatives, independents and virtually all age and income groups expressed support for this view.

Sources at the Eagleton Institute's Center for the American Woman and Politics report that these findings of the N.J. Poll are consistent with a Gallup Poll conducted in 1972. The Gallup Poll showed 64% of the general population and 56% of the Catholic population favoring women's right of choice regarding abortion.

The Eagleton Poll found a similar pattern of responses to the question "Would you be in favor of a Constitutional amendment that would make abortions illegal?" The survey showed 68% of the sample opposing such an amendment, only 27% in favor while 5% registered no opinion.

Opinion on the abortion question is polarized, with intense minorities on both sides of the issue. Respondents were asked if they held their opinion strongly or mildly. Strongly opposed to the amendment were 44% of the sample while 20% were strongly in favor.
Opposition to the constitutional amendment is also broad. Among Catholics 54% opposed the amendment, 31% strongly, while 38% favor its adoption, 29% strongly. Among Protestants, 77% opposed the amendment, 49% strongly, and 19% were in favor, 13% strongly. Again, the same general pattern exists in virtually all partisan, ideological, age, education and income groups.

A slight difference in attitude about abortion exists between men and women, with men slightly more in agreement with the statement that abortion is a private matter but left to parents to decide. 80% of the men in the sample agreed compared to 76% of the women. The same slight difference emerges on the constitutional amendment question, with 71% of the men opposed compared to 65% of the women.

The Ninth New Jersey Poll was conducted by telephone from the Eagleton Institute of Politics in New Brunswick, N.J. A scientifically selected random sample of 1226 New Jerseyans 18 years of age or older were interviewed.

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TO:    POLITICAL REPORTERS  
FROM:  STEPHEN SALMORE  
SUBJECT: THE NINTH NEW JERSEY POLL, RELEASE #5, MONDAY MORNING, MARCH 4, 1974  

The questions on which this analysis is based are as follow:  

"Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The decision to have an abortion is a private matter that should be left to the parents to decide without government intervention."

"Would you be in favor of a Constitutional amendment that would make abortions illegal?"

"Are you strongly (in favor/opposed) to such an amendment or only mildly (in favor/opposed) ?