

Good as the intention of these provisions is in the interests of the babies, the assertion has been made that in certain cases the knowledge of this lack of secrecy has deterred women from allowing their pregnancies to continue, and has constrained them to seek abortion.

The Committee is not prepared to comment on this complaint, but would suggest that it be investigated, and that, if there is any justification in it, the regulations be amended so that, while fully protecting the child, full secrecy is maintained.

(4) TO MEET CHANGES IN SOCIAL OUTLOOK.

The Committee has concluded that, beyond the economic and domestic considerations already discussed, there are many changes in modern social outlook which are operating in the direction of family limitation, and which, in many cases, lead to the practice of abortion.

Can anything be done to prevent the occurrence of abortion resulting from these tendencies in modern life?

Concerning birth-control the realities of the position must be faced. There can be no doubt that there is a widespread uncontrolled and ill-instructed use of contraceptives.

As one witness put it, "New Zealand is saturated with birth-control."

Owing to this extensive half-knowledge there is in many cases an entirely unwarranted dependence on their reliability to the exclusion of any measure of self-discipline whatever.

The Committee is under no illusion in this matter.

With this attitude prevailing in the community and provided with such a weapon—even though it is likely to explode in their own hands—women will continue to limit their families. No social legislation, however generous, will prevent it, nor, as far as the Committee can see, will legal prohibitions do much to restrict it.

Two lines of action are suggested:—

- (1) To direct the knowledge of birth-control through more responsible channels, where, while the methods advised would be more reliable, the responsibilities and privileges of motherhood, the advisability of self-discipline in certain directions, and other aspects of the question could be discussed.

It is this view which has led the Committee to the recommendations it has made in the discussion of birth-control.

- (2) To appeal to the womanhood of New Zealand in so far as selfish and unworthy motives have entered into our family life, to consider the grave physical and moral dangers, not to speak of the dangers of race suicide which are involved.

We can but urge all those who have to do with the education of our youth and the moulding of women's opinion to give these matters earnest consideration, and the Committee is of the opinion that it is necessary to develop the education of young people in biology and physiology in our primary and secondary schools as a foundation for a more rational and wholesome outlook on sex matters.

(5) CONTRACEPTION.

The practice of contraception is a debatable question, and one on which the most varied evidence has been given.

Witnesses opposed this practice, some on moral grounds, some with the plea for a greater natural increase in the population of New Zealand.

Others again, particularly the representatives of women's organizations, advocated the establishment of clinics for the general instruction of married women in the practice of reliable methods of contraception. They expressed the opinion, and some of them supported their opinions with sound argument and overseas experience, that the instruction of the mothers of New Zealand in the practice of child-spacing rather than resulting in a diminution of the birth-rate might well