

The Committee has therefore attempted to make this wider survey and to bring before you as complete a picture as possible.

The Committee has been guided by the Order of Reference, which was as follows:—

- I. To inquire into and report upon the incidence of abortion in New Zealand, including—
  - (a) The incidence among married and single women :
  - (b) Whether the rate of incidence has increased during recent years :
  - (c) How New Zealand compares with other countries in this respect.
- II. To inquire into and report upon the underlying causes for the occurrence of abortion in New Zealand, including medical, economic, social, and any other factors.
- III. To advise as to the best means of combating and preventing the occurrence of abortion in New Zealand.
- IV. Generally to make any other observations or recommendations that appear appropriate to the Committee on the subject.

The preliminary meeting of the Committee was held on the 18th August, and in all sixteen meetings have been held, of which thirteen meetings were held in Wellington, one in Dunedin, one in Auckland, and one in Christchurch.

Evidence was heard from—

British Medical Association.  
 Church of England.  
 Crown Solicitor.  
 Dominion Federation of Women's Institutes.  
 Dominion Federation of Women's Institutes (Auckland Branch).  
 Government Statistician.  
 Lecturer in Medical Jurisprudence, Otago Medical School.  
 Maternity Protection Society.  
 Mothers Union.  
 National Council of Women.  
 National Council of Women (Canterbury Branch).  
 New Zealand Labour Party (Auckland Women's Branch).  
 New Zealand Registered Nurses Association.  
 New Zealand Registered Nurses Association (Auckland Branch).  
 New Zealand Registered Nurses Association (Christchurch Branch).  
 Obstetrical and Gynæcological Society.  
 Obstetricians and Gynæcologists attached to the Public Hospitals in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin.  
 Pharmaceutical Society.  
 Police Department.  
 Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.  
 Roman Catholic Church.  
 Royal Society for the Health of Women and Children.  
 St. John Ambulance Association Nursing Guild.  
 Women's Division of the Farmers Union.  
 Women's Division of the Farmers Union (Otago Branch).  
 Women's Division of the Farmers Union (South Auckland Branch).  
 Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.  
 Women's Service Guild.  
 Working Women's Movement (Auckland Branch).

In addition to these, evidence was heard from twelve other persons.

The Committee would like to express its thanks to the witnesses, many of whom have gone to considerable trouble to collect information and prepare their evidence.

### PART I.—INCIDENCE OF ABORTION IN NEW ZEALAND.

All the evidence brought before the Committee indicates that abortion is exceedingly frequent in New Zealand.

It is quite impossible to assess the incidence with complete accuracy, for the reason that a very considerable number of these cases do not come under medical or