

giving the midwife a good view of the baby's head as it emerges. The perineum is massaged with oil, and stretches as the baby is born. The midwife's skill and the mother's control both enable the baby to be born without cutting or harmful tearing of the perineum.

Homebirth is recognised by many parents and professionals as being a valuable option enabling safe, family-orientated, natural birth.

P. A. PROUD
Auckland Homebirth Association

Station J-1000
Homebirths 13/8/82

I WISH to correct any impression that homebirths and underwater births, such as the recent Castor Bay birth, are in any way associated.

The Homebirth Association promotes planned birth at home, which involves careful preparation. The midwife attends during labour and delivery and the doctor who has given antenatal care is present for the birth to assist if necessary.

Bathing is used only as a source of comfort in strong labour. During the delivery, the mother is in a position affording her comfort and