

Divorce Bills

four individuals who are concerned? There are the rights of four other individuals to be concerned and three of them are innocent. They have nothing whatsoever to do with this, even though they are going to be very fundamentally affected. With regard to what the Prime Minister said about this matter—

Mr. Drysdale: Will the hon. member answer my question?

Mr. Peters: It is six o'clock.

The Chairman: Order.

Mr. Peters: The bill of rights, in my opinion, should apply to all people and should be given to all people.

Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert): Then apply it to all, yourself.

The Chairman: Order. We are not discussing the bill of rights. We are dealing with Bill SD-2.

Mr. Drysdale: On the point of order, the hon. member has indicated, I think, that the bill of rights is relative at this particular time.

Mr. Howard: Six o'clock.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Chairman, you gave an opportunity some time ago to the hon. member for Skeena to make some introductory remarks before he dealt with the bill under discussion. I should similarly like to take this opportunity to make some remarks with regard to what is proceeding here this afternoon, which is a shocking affront to parliament and to the people of Canada.

I think the hon. member for Skeena and the hon. member for Timiskaming will stand condemned before the people of Canada for their action this afternoon and their part in it—

Mr. Regier: On a question of privilege, Mr. Chairman. I believe that a question of privilege takes priority over a point of order. As I understood the arrangement we called it five o'clock at 5.36 p.m. by my time. It is now 5.41 by my time and I believe we are entitled to call it six o'clock.

Mr. Churchill: I see no point of privilege there at all, Mr. Chairman. To complete my sentence—

Mr. Regier: I should like to appeal to you, Mr. Chairman, to deal with my question of privilege and not permit a minister to brush it away arbitrarily.

The Chairman: So far as the chairman of the committee is concerned it has been brought to his attention that there should not be any deviation from the rules and,
[Mr. Peters.]

under the rules, private members' business must take up from five to six o'clock, and it is not yet six o'clock.

Mr. Regier: If I may rise on the question of privilege I, appeal to you, Mr. Chairman, to explain how we can call a time five o'clock and then, one hour later, refuse to call it six o'clock.

The Chairman: Well, to enlighten the hon. member that particular agreement took place while the Speaker was in the chair. The committee has no knowledge of it and it has no direction to deviate from the normal rules. Therefore I must continue to apply normal rules unless there is unanimous consent to proceed otherwise, and I do not see that unanimous consent.

Mr. Churchill: I would like to complete my sentence, that the New Democratic party will stand condemned by the people of Canada for the action of these hon. members today, who are acting with the consent of their entire party.

It is a serious reflection on that party that it will use the power given to it here under the free rules of this house to prevent justice being done under the law to 586 Canadians who, under the law, have made applications in good faith for divorces.

Time and again we have discussed the nature of the procedure with regard to divorces. As I said last night, we have made every possible effort in conjunction with the New Democratic party, with the Liberal party and the other place to reach agreement and consent concerning the method of dealing with this type of procedure in the house.

Not having obtained consent, it surely is not fair to these people, who in good faith and under the law submitted their applications to parliament, to deny them their rights under the law. Whether or not people approve of divorce does not enter into the question at the moment. By this action two members of this house are denying to at least 600 people the right that is due them and is assured to them under the law of this country.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Churchill: This is not going to go unnoticed throughout Canada. I regret that the New Democratic party as reorganized has gone so far away from the principles established in the past by men who were great leaders of the C.C.F. party, Mr. Woodsworth, Mr. Coldwell and others—

Mr. Regier: And you.

Mr. Churchill:—and now Mr. Douglas who is leading the New Democratic party. These men, I am sure, would not deny to Canadian