

THE SENATE

SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF COMMONS ON DIVORCE

EVIDENCE

OTTAWA, Thursday, February 9, 1967.

The Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Divorce met this day at 3.30 p.m.

Senator Arthur A. Roebuck and Mr. A. J. P. Cameron (*High Park*), Co-Chairmen.

The CO-CHAIRMAN (*Senator Roebuck*): Honourable senators, members of the House of Commons: We have a quorum and I think we should get down to the business of the day without any delay.

I must explain that our program has been changed since we were last together. I told you that Mr. James P. Trotter, Q.C., was to appear before us today on behalf of the Liberal Caucus of the Legislature of the Province of Ontario, but just a few days ago there appeared in the Speech from the Throne in the Legislature some reference to the subject of divorce and I understand that the provincial Government, or perhaps the Legislature itself, has appointed a committee for the purpose of studying the subject. Therefore, Mr. Trotter felt that until this committee reported it would be a little out of place for him to come down here and assume some authority for the caucus. I thoroughly appreciated his reason, and so he will not be here. On the other hand, we have a delegation from the Presbyterian Church in Canada and we have also got a delegation from the Canadian Psychiatric Association, about whom I shall have more to say later on.

Our first witnesses are men of great experience in the matter we are discussing, since they represent one of the great churches of Canada. We are very fortunate indeed in having them with us. There are four witnesses. The first one I propose to introduce is the Rev. Wayne A. Smith, chairman of the delegation.

Mr. Smith obtained his B.D. degree in 1954. He has had congregations at Port Carling, Torrance, Hamilton and Paris, Ontario. Beginning March 1, 1967, he will be the Assistant Secretary of the Board of Evangelism and Social Action of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. In his role as pastor he has engaged in pastoral and marital counselling which has enabled him to see the need for the widening of the grounds for divorce. He has also been a member, and for the past two years the chairman, of our Committee on Family Life. This is the committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada that makes a study of questions pertaining to marriage, divorce, remarriage, etc., and recommends policy in these areas to the General Assembly, the highest court of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Mr. Smith shared in the writing of a commentary entitled, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage*. We have all had copies of that, and I assure you I read it through carefully.

Mr. Smith, the audience is yours.