

do not all live in our city. They come from all parts of the country. Our judges are sick and tired of it. The cost of parliamentary divorces in Ottawa is out of all proportion to the services rendered. Lawyers have to be engaged; railway fares paid; hotel bills; witnesses are brought down and all that kind of thing. This is not the only place that is confronted with this problem. We know nothing about the subject matter of all these cases now before us. There is not one hon. member who knows very much about any of these cases. I do not know anything about them. It is time that parliament laid down a new policy. It is also the duty of the state to look after the children and the wife who are not guilty in these cases. The state must have some duty to these unfortunate children, because the first duty of a government is to look after the health, wealth, peace, happiness and prosperity of its citizens.

The province of Quebec seems to want to have parliament saddled with this burden. Prince Edward Island has, I believe, got at last, or has now applied for a court. Nearly all the cases that come before parliament claim domicile in Quebec. We have now received some 132 applications from the other place, but that is only a partial solution. It is the duty of the government to lay down a policy on this matter. Second, there should be a legal committee; third, these cases in the various provinces should be transferred from the high court of justice to the county court. The county courts are local, whereas our high courts are not. The judges of the high courts go out on circuit. These divorce cases prevent the proper administration of justice, particularly when the lists are crowded with these cases. The high courts are held once or twice a year in some counties. Some of the counties are now united in high court work and the judge appears only one or two times a year, when there is a murder trial. Sometimes the lists are all congested with divorce cases. You know from your experience of the law, Mr. Speaker, that the lists are congested in every county in Ontario. It is the same all over the world. In the United States it has become a canker on the state, and that is going to take place in this country unless the government takes hold of it and lays down some kind of policy. Certainly it is a burden on municipalities when you consider the costs of relief for the individual family, and deserted wives and children who are a charge on others of the same family and left to charity with a lot of misery and suffering.

This is the forty-fourth day of the session and, while we have dealt with all sorts of material things, we have not seen fit to spend five minutes of our time considering more important matters affecting the welfare of individuals in relation to this most important question in which all humanity is concerned. The human side of our work has been forgotten while we have dealt with material things. We have forgotten, it seems, that we are living in a civilized country. As I listened to the proceedings the other day in a committee which was considering the affairs of Indians, Eskimos and people in the northlands, and after hearing the evidence given there, I began to doubt whether we were really living in a Christian country. I think the time has come for action.

So far as the cost of divorce is concerned, it is simply fabulous. People have to come all the way to Ottawa and appear before another part of parliament meeting in another place. There are lawyers and witnesses, hotel bills, railway fares and all that sort of thing, and the cost is far more under the parliamentary system than it is in the law courts. Remember, the local courts are closer to the people and I am sure the fees would be limited to \$50 at the outside, whereas under the present system it runs into hundreds of dollars. I think we can compare the costs of parliamentary fees with those in the high court of justice. In the county courts, on the other hand, the cost would not be so high.

I submit that it is the duty of the government to solve this national problem. A large number of medical men take the view that the grounds for divorce should be widened. As opposed to that, certain churches do not believe in divorce. The bishops of the church of which I am a very humble member are opposed to divorce, as was the Lambeth conference, on the ground set forth in the text, "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." But a large body of respectable public opinion has asked and is asking for some better solution.

There is no doubt that in England a large body of public opinion is departing from that principle, but when we see the suffering of women and particularly the suffering of children; when we consider the broken homes and all the tragedy involved, I think it is the duty of parliament, instead of devoting its time exclusively to the consideration of material questions, morning, noon and night, to set aside at least a part of its time for the consideration of human rights and privileges, and the health and welfare of the population.