

same thing is happening to-day. At that time, as I recollect it—and I ask the hon. members to correct me if I am wrong—the leader of the C.C.F. party (Mr. Coldwell) in raising objections about the divorce bills that had been introduced, did not limit his remarks to the bills placed on the orders of the day, but he also discussed the procedure and all the circumstances which surround the introduction of such bills, as well as their passage in the senate, in the divorce bills committee and in the house of commons. That is why I have risen to speak on that point of order. My purpose is to remind my hon. friend that he should merely follow the course taken by his leader in this connection. To my mind, the hon. member who has the floor does not transgress the rules of the house in discussing the matter the way he does.

(Text):

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is perfectly in order in discussing the principle of divorce in connection with these bills. He is drawing the attention of the house to the fact that a number of divorce bills come from the province of Quebec, the only province in which there is not a divorce court, and he is discussing the question whether it would be wise to take steps to correct a situation which may need to be corrected. These remarks are relevant to the bills actually before the house.

Mr. MAYBANK: I have noted, Mr. Speaker, your remarks to the effect that nearly all these bills come from the province of Quebec. I think I should hasten to say that this large number of divorce cases that have been coming to parliament for the last two or three years do not come exactly from the province of Quebec in the sense of being scattered throughout that province. They come, almost all of them, from one part of Quebec, the large city of Montreal, and it would seem that the general level of virtue of other parts of the province of Quebec than the city of Montreal is very much higher.

Mr. ABBOTT: A wholly unjustified conclusion.

Mr. MAYBANK: The Minister of National Defence appears to take umbrage at what I have said. I am willing to tell him that a member from another part of Quebec to whom I made a similar statement, said, "Oh, no. I think your conclusion is unjustified. The fact of the matter is that, in the community in which I live, we just don't bother about that." They are more touchy in Montreal.

I was saying, at the time the point of order was raised, that there is so great a similarity in these cases that there would appear to me to

be collusion, and that, I submit, is due to the very nature of the system itself, the plan we are following. If you take the evidence from one case and insert it into the book giving the evidence of another you will not find any difference. It reminds me of what G. K. Chesterton said of the writings of Charles Dickens, that he had not written a series of novels but a mythology, because you could take any one of his characters from any one of his books and put him into another book and he would be perfectly at home. Those who are devotees of Dickens would agree, I believe, that Micawber could have been just as well in "Bleak House" as in "David Copperfield," and various other characters could be taken from their present settings and put somewhere else.

However that may be, that is something of the general nature of the cases as we have them before us under the system we are following. Therefore in moving bills for the relief of the persons concerned, I make a representation to the government that it should now give consideration to a different method of handling this particular problem. I suggest that we might have a court set up here, or something in the nature of a commission, to deal with these cases, and it could submit its report to parliament and that report be acted upon.

So far as the particular cases are concerned, I do not think it would be fair to rule them out, and for that reason, as chairman of the committee that handled these matters, I am moving the second reading of these bills. If we were to throw out particular cases by reason of the general objection to this way of handling divorce it would work a hardship, and I should not desire to see that. I desire, however, to see the government try to find a different way of handling the problem so that we might get away from what is, I suggest, becoming farcical—the method by which we have so far been handling the divorce problem.

Mr. W. G. CASE (Grey North): Personally, Mr. Speaker, I am not opposed to divorce, but I am opposed to the two bills we are considering for second reading, in common with all the bills of the same nature that come before this parliament. I find myself in agreement with the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Maybank) inasmuch as I believe that the method employed is wrong. I feel, if my hon. friend who is sponsoring the bills would cease interrupting me—

Mr. MAYBANK: I rise to a point of order. I have never at any time interrupted the hon. gentleman. I am the sponsor and I never interrupted him at all.