

zations, of whom we would have a right to expect more clear-sightedness, to introduce divorce in provinces who still reject it or to render it more frequent and easier than in others. We particularly invite the Catholic associations to voice their protests against these enterprises of de-Christianization of marriage and family and to claim that the legislative and judiciary authorities treat this double institution in line with Christian teaching and the best traditions of our country. It is also our hope to see as soon as possible the family, broken up and disjointed by the sad necessities of the war, find once more its integrity and equilibrium wanted by God, and to see the prompt return of wives and mothers to the home of which they are the guardians. We sincerely hope for a true family policy, a policy of protection and of assistance to the family, living cell of all social corps.

It seems to me that what is most needed is not only modified divorce laws, but an opening of the whole question of family relationship and responsibilities, with a view to creating fitting institutions, both legal and social-advisory, to deal with them in a more inclusive manner, with the object of decreasing hasty and ill-considered marriages, and hasty and ill-considered divorces, with the welfare of the children as the central social concern.

Divorce is a primary Canadian problem if only for the close relation it bears to another leading problem, juvenile delinquency. The experience of the juvenile courts shows that a large majority of young delinquents come from homes broken by divorce or otherwise.

The only normal life for a child is in the family, and the minimum description of a family is a father, a mother and a child. When the father goes, the chief element of security goes with him, whether actual or psychological. If he goes by death the child at least retains the image of the father as a memory and an example. If he goes by an act of his own will, or the will of the mother, the child feels bereft and cheated, and this feeling awakens in him unnatural and unsocial instincts. Therefore, for the sake of the child, for the sake of the society, for the sake of morality, let us save the family by all means, and for that purpose, let us endeavour to raise the strongest possible barriers against the flood of divorces which is, for a country, worse than any other means of destruction.

I had occasion to read many reports of the senate committee on divorce, and I was amazed to notice the lack of real evidence that is produced in every case. Truly, Mr. Speaker, one cannot conceive that such important decisions be taken on so meagre evidence.

As I said at the outset of my remarks, I am opposed to the granting of any divorce. I submit also that there still is another duty

[Mr. Dorion.]

for any member; it is not to accept for presentation before this house any bill that does not comply with the following elementary principle: "The most insignificant contract cannot be broken by either one of the parties to it, when there is not the faintest shade of evidence that this can be done."

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview): This matter has been up every session and illustrates the fact that the House of Commons should have a legal committee to consider these legal bills and matters. All provinces but Quebec have a divorce court. After the last war we were faced with the same state of affairs. The situation is not local. Every country on earth is confronted with this problem. It has today become a canker in almost every state in the world.

The government of the day is responsible for the law. The enforcement of the law lies with the provincial attorneys general. Nobody wants to force a divorce court on Quebec; it is largely to be left, as formerly, a matter of their own selection. After every war there has been a great dislocation. Pitt was faced with it. The Addington administration was faced with it. They had the same thing in 1815 and after the first great war. The same thing happens after every war. Since the recent war there have been many applications for divorce. There has been talk of widening the grounds of divorce; at the present time the only grounds for divorce in Canada is substantially adultery. A few years ago we had a learned discussion about the matter. After the last war it was decided to establish divorce courts in Canada. The high court judges are getting sick and tired of it. I do not see why the high courts in the provinces should be saddled with this work. In my opinion, the state must have some responsibility because, as you know, Mr. Speaker, a husband deserts his wife and children, leaving them to charity, and goes abroad. It is an outrage. Nobody knows where he is. In many cases that has grown out of the war. The husband has come home and a divorce has been obtained, or he leaves his wife and children. Sometimes there are faults on both sides.

The government of the day should lay down the divorce policy of this country. The system which is now in force is costing a great deal of money at every assizes. There are thousands of cases in the county of York. The list now requires, at certain times of the year, non-jury sittings of three or four high court judges. Three or four judges were sitting a few weeks ago at the court house in Toronto dealing with divorce. The applicants