

he implies by his remarks that on certain occasions we have not been able to get the services of our reporting staff to record the proceedings of any committee, let me say that in all the years I have been in the Senate I have never known of an instance when the proceedings of a committee were not reported if we wanted them to be reported. We have a staff, they are ready to work, and we can have them whenever we want them.

Hon. W. D. Euler: Honourable senators, I would like to suggest that our friend from De la Durantaye (Hon. Mr. Pouliot) support a resolution to relieve this house of the necessity of dealing with divorce cases entirely by establishing divorce courts in those provinces that do not have them now and whose citizens have to petition for divorce to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. F. W. Gershaw: Honourable senators, may I say a word on this subject?

It has been suggested that there is considerable expense involved in the reporting of the work of the Divorce Committee. That may be true, but it should be pointed out that the petitioner in each case pays a basic fee of \$210. Occasionally in the case of a petitioner who is in poor circumstances—for instance, a servant girl—the amount of the fee is reduced to perhaps \$50; on one or two occasions I have known the entire fee to be remitted. A calculation of the cost of handling these cases indicates that the printing, translating and stenographic work amounts to about \$125. I am advised that if a petitioner withdraws his petition, he still pays \$25 to cover the cost of printing and translation. It is apparent that the work of the Divorce Committee does not result in any monetary loss to the Treasury; on the contrary, the Consolidated Revenue Fund receives revenue from this source.

However, honourable senators, this does not detract from the unfortunate fact that these cases have to be dealt with here. Every case is a domestic tragedy, and the members of the committee are most particular to inquire whether there is any hope of a reconciliation between the parties or a chance of saving the marriage; the committee also inquires about the arrangements being made for the maintenance and education of the children.

The honourable senator from De la Durantaye (Hon. Mr. Pouliot) has suggested a procedure by which if the members of the Divorce Committee were satisfied with a case they would pass it and that should be the end of the matter. It is hardly as simple as that. The reports of the committee in each case come before this chamber and are sent

to the other chamber where, on some occasions, there has been a good deal of comment and criticism. Because of this, the honourable chairman of the committee (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) has briefed us all on the necessity of having, before a case is recommended, strong and convincing evidence and such as will satisfy the committee in the other house and the members generally.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: May I add a word? I am glad that others beside myself have spoken on this question. But with regard to interference by the Divorce Committee with the operation of other committees, may I point out that as a rule the other committees meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, whereas the Divorce Committee holds its regular meetings on Mondays and Fridays. This arrangement is rather important in two respects. For one thing, members of the Divorce Committee are hearing cases on days—Mondays and Fridays—when quite frequently—not always, but sometimes—other honourable senators are elsewhere, perhaps at home.

Hon. Mr. Haig: Only those from Ontario and Quebec.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: That is true, and I suggest that is why the majority of the members of the Divorce Committee are from provinces other than Ontario and Quebec. I happen to come from Ontario, and quite frequently could spend some time at home were I not engaged on the Divorce Committee on Mondays and Fridays.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: I believe other honourable senators from Ontario are in the same position.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Yes, that is so.

The other point I should like to make, and which has been referred to, relates to the financing of the work of the committee. This session the committee has tried more than 300 cases, representing in terms of payments received, at say \$200 a case, something of the order of \$60,000, while the estimate of cost, as has been said, is \$125 a case, so that there may be said to be in actual profit somewhere around \$25,000 or \$30,000. The committee, of course, uses the reporting staff to a certain extent; and certainly the divorce work interferes with the freedom of members of the committee, many of whom would like to attend other committees. But I do not like to see the situation exaggerated and the idea spread that the Divorce Committee is preventing the Senate from functioning in the most efficient manner. That is not so.

One word more, and that is with regard to this "ditto, ditto" suggestion of my friend