

regard to both parents. That speaks for the inadequacy of the maintenance provisions of the Bill, and the need for compulsory mediation. We as a society, notwithstanding the fact that we consist of 10 jurisdictions, can get together on everything but we cannot seem to get together on an adequate enforcement of maintenance, orders. I do not think that there is one Member in the House who has not experienced a family who has been abandoned by the male partner. It has left the woman as a single parent, with no income and no means of providing the children with the kind of environment that is necessary for the healthy upbringing of the children. Not only that, we create problems which that woman will face in the future because she has no retirement benefits and will not qualify for the Canada Pension Plan. She will end up as one of the statistics in Canada—the poorest of the poor, who are usually women.

● (1620)

**Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) that I agree with his proposal that the Bill should go into the country under the auspices of a parliamentary committee to be examined and to allow for a good deal of public input. The Bill deals with the basic unit of society—the family.

I would remind the Hon. Member that he did not address the first part of my two-pronged question. I wonder if he sees any reasonable time frame which might be applied to the kind of public hearings about which he is talking?

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. gentleman could repeat the first part of his question. I now recall that I did not deal with it adequately.

**Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** Mr. Speaker, the question referred to the role that the provincial Attorneys General and the hospital abortion committees play in the granting of the right to an abortion.

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Speaker, I did address that by referring to our inability to standardize procedures in the country, given the fact that there are ten jurisdictions dealing with maintenance and the enforcement of maintenance orders. We failed miserably in that regard when the abortion Bill was passed in 1969.

I understand exactly what the hon. gentleman means. The abortion provisions of the Bill, which was passed in 1969, mean different things to different people. In the Province of Quebec they are wide open; in other provinces they are interpreted differently, and, indeed, they are interpreted differently from hospital to hospital. That is a problem which we can no longer ignore. It is a problem which we will have to deal with sooner or later in Parliament.

### *Divorce Act*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert):** This is the conclusion of the ten minutes which is allowed for questions and comments.

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## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*Translation*]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 45, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: The Hon. Member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro)—Fisheries (a) Possible impact of United States Oil Lease Program on West Coast Fisheries. (b) Environmental Hearings in Alaska; the Hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. Domm)—Crown Corporations—de Havilland Dash-8 Aircraft—Financing of Sales; the Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Mrs. Mitchell)—Public Service Commission (a) Office of Equal Opportunities for Women. (b) Equal Pay for Equal Work.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### DIVORCE ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. MacGuigan that Bill C-10, an Act to amend the Divorce Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

**Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on debate the principle of Bill C-10, which is an Act to amend the divorce legislation. I do so with some trepidation because it is one of the difficult areas of social legislation which we see so often in Parliament. It turns out, in actual fact, to be different from what Parliament had basically intended.

We need only go back to the Divorce Act of 1968 and review the speeches which were given in the House at that time. It was clear that the intention of the Government was to make it easier, for those couples for whom divorce was inevitable and the marriage had truly failed in a commonsense understanding of those terms, to obtain a divorce. Yet, once that piece of legislation was passed, the divorce rate in the country absolutely sky-rocketed and is still going up. The very fabric of the family has been affected adversely by that piece of legislation. It is so much easier for people today to back out of a marriage and start up with someone new, rather than to