

possible of embarrassment and humiliation to them and their children. The law should do nothing to further embitter the relationship between them and their children.

Finally, the law must be capable of understanding and worthy of respect by the public at large. Unless the principles upon which it is based are generally understood and respected, the law will almost certainly fail in its wider aims of bringing stability to the institution of marriage while alleviating the suffering of those citizens whose marriages have failed.

A viable, practical system of divorce should not make the obtaining of a divorce more complicated or expensive to the parties or to the State. Any system that required a great expansion of courts or the appointment of investigators and large number of additional public servants, would probably be unacceptable to the public. The amount of public money available is limited and so are the numbers of trained social workers and welfare personnel.

Under modern conditions a husband and wife will part when life becomes intolerable and some will enter illicit relationships or common law unions after so doing. Once marriages have broken down and the spouses are in the divorce courts, the chances of reconciliation while not totally absent are remote. Marriage is not simply a matter concerning the two parties to it; the children are as vitally affected by a divorce as are the husband and wife. In every divorce proceeding where there are children their interests should be carefully protected.

RISING DIVORCE RATE

It is inevitable that when the grounds for divorce are widened, the divorce rate will increase to some degree. Initially, it can be expected to advance for a few years as the number of broken marriages that have been without relief heretofore are dissolved. Thereafter, the rate can be expected to fall somewhat. This has been the experience in other countries when the divorce laws have been reformed. The mere increase in the number of divorces granted, however, should not necessarily be a cause for alarm. The number means little if it merely reflects the regularization of what previously have been illicit unions. It is better for society that the divorce rate be higher, if the number of "common law" or bigamous unions be thereby reduced. It must be borne in mind, that there has been an increase in the number of marriages in the twentieth century. In England, for example, the number of married women in the population has doubled. This is not only because the population has increased, but because women now marry earlier and the ratio of married to unmarried women in society is altered.

Because people now marry earlier and live longer, marriages are almost doubled in their duration and also consequently are the risks they face. There is no evidence that marriages break down more readily now than in the past. Divorce is now an accepted solution to a broken marriage. In the past, this was less so, not only because of religious objections to divorce and the social scandal that it occasioned, but also because to a major portion of the population divorce was an expensive luxury beyond their financial means. In recent years, however, with great changes in the social structure and educational system of the country, divorce and the resultant possibility of remarriage, have become desired by many who were formerly content with illicit unions.