

There is a large amount of money invested in all these divorce bills, and summarily to turn down these applicants after they have all presented their cases to the Senate would seem to me to be harsh. There would be no opportunity for redress for the many innocent people who have spent their money in moving thus far in the direction of obtaining a divorce, and I would regret greatly to see that happen to this large number of people.

But I think we ought to let future applicants know that this business has come to an end; that, so far as this manner of getting divorces is concerned, the honeymoon is over, to use an expression that is fairly common nowadays to indicate that a great change in conditions has occurred, a phrase that the Minister of Reconstruction used effectively once or twice in dealing with matters which came under his jurisdiction. It may not, of course, be appropriate to talk about a honeymoon in connection with this sort of thing; but the honeymoon is over, that is clear, and we should let the public of one province, because only one province is involved, know that this method of obtaining a divorce cannot be followed any longer.

I submit that the rule of the house should be changed which permits this kind of private bill to come in. One simple change would be that, instead of private bills of this sort coming in with a payment of whatever fee there is, the fee should hereafter be \$25,000 or \$50,000, or any other ridiculous sum of money to make it clear that they are not to come here at all. If they happen to pay nothing to the House of Commons but \$200 to the Senate we could easily say that it will be \$50,000, \$60,000, \$70,000, \$80,000 or \$90,000 for each petition. I have no friends who could get a divorce if they had to pay \$90,000. I do not want a divorce, and if I did I could not get it at such a price. That is only one way to amend the rule.

We could amend the rule to say that whenever an application for divorce came in it had to come in within the first thirteen minutes of parliament meeting, or something like that, or we could simply pass a resolution that in the opinion of this house it is not desirable to continue the practice of granting divorces in this way.

Some of my friends from Quebec have said to me, "It is an odd thing, but down our way a great many people are asking how it comes about that you are always introducing these divorce bills. You have a sort of reputation down there for being strongly in favour of divorce, and more of it, and easier divorce. We try to tell them that that is not quite right but still the idea persists." I hope

that after tonight every person will understand that I am engaged in this practice because up to now it had been the desire of the House of Commons—

Mr. MACKENZIE: Because it is a public duty.

Mr. MAYBANK: Yes, I have taken it in that way, that it is a public duty, and I hope that hereafter no person will think I am in favour of this method of granting divorces. I do not wish it to be understood that I am against divorce. On the contrary, I am in favour of divorce. I think there are marital difficulties which arise for which there is no other suitable solution than divorce. So far as I am concerned I would liberalize divorce. Divorce solely on the ground of adultery or some sexual perversion is demanding too much. It would be better if we went more, probably not wholly, in the direction of the English practice and liberalized our divorce laws. But my whole point is that, whatever the law is, it should be a general law administered by the courts, and not a specific law for every outraged spouse who wants to come around.

Mr. EUGENE MARQUIS (Kamouraska): I wish to take exception to some of the statements made by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Maybank) on the ground, first, that I am not in favour of divorce; second, that the amount of money involved is not so important that we should do away with principles far greater than divorce bills, and, third, that our divorce law is voted by a large majority of members from the other provinces which give laws to the province of Quebec. That is abnormal and should be abolished. I agree with the hon. member on that point. I will go farther and say I think divorce should be abolished in the whole dominion. Every minister of the church, every priest has preached that divorce is a very bad thing; that it is a calamity, and that it should disappear. For half a century divorce has brought bad results in countries like the United States, Canada and Great Britain, and everybody agrees that it would be better to have no divorce, but nobody can say that we should abolish divorce. So, if we have to face the situation we have only to abolish the law by which divorces are granted and in that way we shall have peace.

(Translation):

As I glanced through the order paper this afternoon, I was pained to see the long list of divorce bills it contained. I counted 123 such bills which we are asked to pass tonight.