

Divorce Acts

have argued in the House on a number of occasions, and I am very glad to see it being recognized in the legislation today.

I have a couple of points on a few other matters in the legislation. With respect to variation orders, here we see some better recognition of the reality of Canadian mobility patterns. It is a reasonable compromise. This will allow for greater flexibility in varying orders for maintenance and also for custody. Also, there are some better safeguards than in the Liberal legislation of last year to prevent one's spouse from moving to another province just to get a variation order that the dependent spouse could not fight. The reform, which is a very sensible one, requires that the new order be confirmed in the court of the province where the concerned spouse actually lives so there cannot be this evasive action which we know occurs. This was a recommendation of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women of Canada. It shows Common sense has prevailed and that a good recommendation has been incorporated into the legislation.

There is a similar provision for custody where a child is in one province with one parent and the other parent applies for custody. The parent who has the child can apply to have the case heard in their province so that the information on the child's welfare can be brought to the court and the decision will not have to be made in a distant place where the other parent is. In other words, the needs of the child concerned will be treated seriously by the court. It will be possible to get the information on those needs to the court.

Finally, there will be greater flexibility in allowing the provinces to determine the nature of the court procedures for divorce. This will permit provinces, although it will not require them, to avoid trials on uncontested matters. This is a proper procedure, allowing these decisions to be made by the provinces. Some will probably choose to insist on having court appearances, and some will dispense with that procedure.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of satisfaction in seeing the many improvements in the legislation before us. I think it goes to show that democracy is indeed alive, that common sense can prevail, that Ministers of Justice can listen

to constituents, organizations, and what Opposition Parties are saying. The Bills before us today still need some work. The NDP will support passage of them. We want these Bills to go to committee for some modest amendments. They are a considerable improvement over previous legislation. It goes to show that an Opposition Party, by raising vigorous objections and making them in a very constructive way, can have a position impact in seeing real reform brought into legislation when a matter comes to Parliament.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Are there any questions or comments?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Mr. Crosbie, seconded by Mr. La Salle, moves that Bill C-46, an Act to amend the Divorce Act; that Bill C-47, an Act respecting divorce and corollary relief; and that Bill C-48, an Act to provide for the release of information that may assist in locating defaulting spouses and other persons and to permit, for the enforcement of support orders and support provisions, the garnishment and the attachment of certain moneys payable by Her Majesty in right of Canada, be now read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motions agreed to, Bill C-46, Bill C-47 and Bill C-48 read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I believe there is disposition to call it six o'clock?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being six o'clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at eleven o'clock a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 2(1).

The House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.