

# California Divorce Laws in Spotlight

By VINCENT THOMAS  
 Assemblyman, 68th District  
 A perennial legislative puzzle is whether changes should be made in our California divorce law. Almost every session in recent years has seen several bills proposing various amendments introduced. Many of these were technical in nature, and caused no controversy. Proposals to change the Interlocutory period from the present one year between preliminary and final decrees have so far met with no success, however.

A bill to reduce the period to three months was not passed in 1961, but was referred to interim study. The Assembly committee on judiciary recently held a hearing on the subject, and received some valuable testimony.  
 A PROMINENT sociologist told the committee that present law in effect puts the cart before the horse by providing that the waiting period come after the preliminary decree is granted. He expressed doubt that the one-year interlocutory

period actually does prevent hasty remarriage, because persons seeking divorce in this state tend to be cautious about plunging into new marriages, anyway.  
 He advanced the novel recommendation that the law be amended to provide a six-month waiting period between the filing of a divorce suit by either party, and the first hearing period which sets the terms of the divorce. He advised that during this period, skilled investigation of family circumstances and marriage

counseling should be made mandatory. If a couple separates during this period, he pointed out, the court could issue a temporary order for support of the wife and children.  
 HE ARGUED that this procedure would serve better than the present one to encourage reconciliation between marital partners. However, even if no reunion were achieved during the waiting period, the system would provide a "training period" for

final cutting of the marriage ties. Disputes over property and support settlements which arise before and during the preliminary court hearings under the present system do not promote reconciliations, he declared.  
 "The trauma of the litigation has removed any possibility of reconciliation. Adversary procedures perpetuate the hostile attitudes," he asserted. In less expensive language, the scars of legal battle kill any hope for reunion.  
 A RESPECTED superior court judge with long experience in domestic relations affairs took at least partial issue with the professor. He

said his years on the bench have brought him to the conclusion that the one-year interlocutory period does serve its intended purposes. It both fosters reconciliation and discourages hasty remarriages, he believes. As supporting evidence, he cited the statement of a famous actor, whose marriage recently broke up but who was reunited with his wife during the year before the final decree, thanking Heaven that the one-year waiting period is still on the statute books.  
 Judge and professor were agreed that California's one-year waiting period is not much of an influence on the number of "quickie" divorce

obtained in other states which require no such periods.  
 Successful and happy marriages are the foundation of our whole society. If we legislators can enact improved laws to better protect and preserve them, we will be carrying out an important part of our responsibility to the general public.  
**Stauffer Boosts Man**  
 A Preston Young, former assistant regional sales manager in Southern California, has been promoted to regional sales manager for the area, it was announced by the Industrial Chemicals Division of the Stauffer Chemical Co.

**Members Of Church at Baptist Rally**  
 Fifty members of the Western Avenue Baptist Church attended the Baptist Jubilee Advance Rally at the Long Beach Municipal Auditorium Tuesday evening. Five Baptist Conventions joined in the mass rally of people from all over Southern California.  
 Dr. Warner Cole, president of the American Baptist Convention, shared speaking honors with Dr. Herschel Hobbs, president of the Southern Baptist Convention. A choir of 500 voices sang musical selections.



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