

Rate of Divorce in U.S. Said Stabilizing; Further Drop Seen

Editor's note: Ten years ago this week a United Press survey found that divorce judges were working overtime at settling problems of Americans who failed to reconvert to peacetime matrimony. What has been the story since then? A new survey indicates the nation's divorce rate has stabilized.

By UNITED PRESS

In 1946, 6,280 divorces were granted in Miami, Fla. Last year, 5,042 were granted there—1,238 less. In the 10 years between the two figures Miami's population nearly doubled.

The Miami situation is fairly typical of what's been happening in the nation's divorce courts during the last decade.

The months following World War II brought record traffic to most all divorce courts. But filings declined and, responses to a United Press survey indicated today, have stabilized since then.

"The divorce rate not only has stabilized, but to some extent is dropping off," said Justice Clarence W. Norris of the California Supreme Court.

Prof. John T. Greene, Boston University sociologist, agreed that the ratio between marriage and divorce had stabilized and said one reason is that Ameri-

cans are less romantic about marriage.

Rate May Go Down

Dr. Rex A. Skidmore dean of the University of Utah graduate school, said the rate appears to be stabilized but "there is a possibility it may go down further because of more family life education . . . and increased availability of counseling services."

While all points reported big declines since 1946, many showed increases in divorces from 1955 to 1956. For those years, divorces were down in New York, Kansas City, Washington, San Francisco, Reno, Oklahoma City, Detroit and in Oregon. They were up in Atlanta, Los Angeles, Des Moines, Chicago, Boston, Cheyenne, Buffalo, Milwaukee, Columbus, O., and in Utah and New Jersey.

Reno, long America's famed divorce capital, had 11,982 divorces in 1946. Five years later there were 4,713. In 1955, 4,458 were granted there and in 1956, 4,420. Despite the effect of Reno, where out-of-state divorce seekers outnumber those from

Nevada 20 to 1, John Sullivan, state director of vital statistics, believed there were more marriages than divorces in the state as a whole.

Sex, Money Cited

Judge Berlyn E. Moore, presiding judge of the Domestic Relations Court at Atlanta, said "Divorces are increasing but only in proportion to the population increase." Moore said the "most frequent reasons for divorce nowadays are sex and money. I believe I'd put money in first place. When I say sex, I mean other companionship, the old triangle known now as incompatibility. The lack of sex for congeniality leads to quarreling and fussing and that goes under the general heading of cruel treatment."

Lynwood W. Fix, King county divorce proctor, said at Seattle that the most frequent reason for divorce is "undoubtedly drunkenness. They call it cruelty in court but it's drunkenness."

Circuit Judge Robert L. Floyd of Miami said "Many couples simply do not put enough effort into getting along, but alcohol is a major factor. And I am not only referring to people who drink to excess or get stone drunk. There are many cases where people drink just enough to get irritable. This leads to arguments and finally the divorce court."

Floyd also said "One of the reasons our divorce rate is so high is that our laws make it comparatively easy. In so-called uncontested suits it is easy for the parties to agree to disagree in court. They make allegations that are probably exaggerated or at least certainly are not borne out by evidence."

Immaturity Blamed

Miss Agnes McCreery, director of the Des Moines Family Guidance Service, said "immaturity" is the prime reason for divorce and that alcoholism and financial difficulties are only symptoms of immaturity. The Rev. Don Sheridan, Oklahoma City, ministerial representative on the county marriage clinic, said "We discover in the long run that basic insecurity in the individual usually is to blame."

At Memphis, Mrs. M. V. Smith, divorce attorney, said the growing "independence" of woman is behind most divorces today. "Women used to have to take it," she said. "Divorce was frowned on so much. Not now. Things they could take they don't. Also they are independent financially. They can get just as good jobs as men, so why be unhappy at home?" But she added that many "independent" women who get divorces "often live to regret it."

They'll Do It Every Time By Jimmy Hatlo

Scientists Make Use Of Radioed Balloons

Los Angeles—(U.P.)—UCLA scientists are making use of the meanderings of huge radio-equipped balloons to learn new facts about jet streams, the swift-moving rivers of air high in the earth's atmosphere.

Meteorologists James Angell and Dr. Morris Neiburger have been charting movements of the balloons which carry powerful transmitters as they move with the jet stream around the globe.

The balloons are released from Japan by U. S. Navy personnel.

Special instruments controlling ballast keep the balloons at a constant height near 30,000 feet, the area of the jet stream.

Studies of balloon charts show that speeds of more than 300 miles an hour are reached by the raging river of air at times. But currents may suddenly slow down to less than five miles an hour. Two balloons floated from Tokyo to Europe in five days.

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Around Hollywood

Hollywood — (U.P.) — The bizarre kidnapping of actress Marie McDonald adds another chapter to the shocking real-life Hollywood dramas that pale the stories the stars enact on the screen.

The beautiful blonde's story that she was forced at gunpoint to endure 24 hours of terror is the biggest "crime" in filmtown since the 1951 shooting of agent Jennings Lang by producer Walter Wanger.

Hollywood shook with scandal when Wanger fired two slugs into the groin of the man he thought was stealing the love of his wife, Joan Bennett. Wanger and Miss Bennett reconciled following his release from prison. Lang's wife died of a heart attack and he later married singer Monica Lewis.

Bicycle Licenses Are Available in Phoenix

Phoenix — Bicycle licenses are available at the recorder's office in Phoenix, Police Chief Walter (Clay) John reminded community residents today. Bicycle licenses are required for bicycles operated in the city, he noted.

Residents also have been reminded that dog licenses are available at the recorder's office. Dog licenses will be on sale until March 1, John said.

of her cafe business partner, Roland West. Was it murder, accident, or suicide?

The shooting of director Thomas Ince in the '20s never has been solved.

Other tragedies include the death of Barbara Lamarr from narcotics in 1924 and the suicide of Lupe Velez in 1944.

The shooting of pianist Myrl Alerman by Martin Snyder over the love of singer Ruth Etting was a Hollywood scandal that made into a movie last year.

Italian Communists Seek To Curb Revolt

Rome — (U.P.) — The "brain trust" of the Italian Communist party met Tuesday to try to prevent a rank-and-file revolt from wrecking the biggest Red organization outside the Iron Curtain.

The 13-man directorate, headed by party boss Palmiro Togliatti, convened in secret session in the red-brick party headquarters in Rome guarded by Communist strong-arm squads.

There have been mass desertions from the party, and Togliatti said only 1,100,000 of the 2,400,000 members had renewed their cards for 1957.

Even before the Red leaders met, Togliatti sought to appease the "liberal" rebel wing by further downgrading of extreme Stalinist Pietro Secchia. Secchia is the former Communist boss of Milan who failed to hold party membership in line against the onslaughts of the anti-Red campaign led by Archbishop Giovanni Montini.

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Chou En-Lai Meets With Soviet Leaders

London—(U.P.)—Chinese Communist Premier Chou En-lai met Soviet leaders yesterday in Moscow for talks believed aimed at halting the discontent sweeping the Communist empire.

The strategy being mapped behind the Kremlin walls by leaders of the world's two largest Communist parties may determine the path of world Communism, observers said in London.

Chou arrived in Moscow Monday with a 26-man delegation and received an ecstatic welcome from the worried men in the Kremlin who have seen their destabilization policy lead to uprisings in Poland and revolution in Hungary.

Western observers said it was obvious Chou was called in as a fireman to help extinguish the discontent that has spread from East Germany and the other satellites to North Viet Nam in Southeast Asia.

Born, Germany — (U.P.) — Licking postage stamps is becoming a sweet task in West Germany. Peppermint-flavored stamps have been placed on sale and other flavors will be available soon, the West German postal ministry reported today.

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