

to their lawyers or to the trial judge, nor does it provide effective guidance for appellate review of trial court decisions. Critics of the "breakdown" standard are concerned that its vagueness might permit -- indeed, encourage -- judges with widely varying personal attitudes toward marriage and the family to impose their own personal standards on litigants. The impact of this risk would fall most heavily on three groups of married couples seeking divorce: (1) those many couples whose differences (their stated reason for terminating the marriage) seem "silly" or easily remedied, or whose marriages could be "saved" if both spouses would only behave with a little more "maturity" or "responsibility;" (2) those marriages in which the spouse primarily interested in a divorce has "caused" the marital problems-- because of behavior which, under former divorce standards, would clearly be labelled "faulty" (e.g., adultery); (3) couples who are poor -- because tax funds are being used or after the divorce will be used to support the wife and children.

Each of the divorce reform studies of recent vintage which have faced this difficulty with the "breakdown" standard -- with the single exception of the report of the Archbishop's Group -- have formulated more objective standards to accompany or in effect to replace "breakdown." The most common response