

Standing Committee on Private Bills

10:08 a.m.

[Acting Deputy Chairman: Mr. Evans]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to call the meeting to order. I will be chairing this morning's meeting in the absence of both the Chair and the deputy Chair.

We have three petitions on our agenda today, 2, 5, and 11, but before we get to that, I'd like to entertain a motion to go in camera so that we can deal with some preliminary items. Ty Lund. Thank you. Second, Ed Ewasiuk. All in favour? Anyone opposed?

[The committee met in camera from 10:09 a.m. to 10:14 a.m.]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: A motion with respect to the late petition for the Victory Bible College Act. That motion is Mr. Musgrove's. Seconder? Ms Laing. All in favour? Anyone opposed? That's carried unanimously. That is a motion to proceed with this late petition.

I believe, Mr. Musgrove, you also have a motion to waive the deadline for submission of documentation in support of that application.

MR. MUSGROVE: Right.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Seconder? Mrs. Hewes. All in favour? Thank you. Anyone opposed? That's carried as well.

Parliamentary Counsel, I believe then we are ready to go on to Bill Pr. 2, the First Canadian Casualty Insurance Corporation Act.

MR. RITTER: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I'll get the petitioners.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. GESELL: I assume we're out of in camera.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are back.

MR. GESELL: I would like the record to show, Mr. Chairman, that I left the Chamber during the in camera discussion.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

[Mr. Atkinson was sworn in]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good morning, Mr. Atkinson. On behalf of the Private Bills Committee I'm pleased to welcome you here today to refer to Bill Pr. 2. The process of this committee is that we would hear your application, give committee members an opportunity to ask you any questions that arise from the presentation, then give you an opportunity to make any comments in summary that you feel would be necessary to get your point across on the Bill. It's not the intention of the committee to come to a conclusion as to the merits of your application today. We will be giving the committee members an opportunity to review the application, and we will be deciding that matter and advising you at a date in the future. So again welcome, and please proceed.

MR. ATKINSON: Should I stand?

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It's not necessary to stand. If you feel more comfortable sitting, that's just fine.

MR. ATKINSON: Mr. Chairman, thank you for your time today. Don Wheaton and his wife Marion and their eight children are residents of the province of Alberta and have had some notable success in the automobile industry. They also have holdings in Brooker Wheaton Aviation, construction companies, oil and gas: substantial business people in the province. Most directly today, they operate First Canadian Insurance Corporation. It was passed by an earlier Legislature in a similar way that we're requesting you consider this morning. We are doing very well, thank you, selling life insurance, group creditor life, and disability insurance to people who have car loans typically.

The reason we're here today is that both the federal and provincial governments require that the assets and liabilities of life insurance companies not be melded with casualty insurance companies. In November of 1990 this provincial government quite correctly moved to improve the regulation of people selling automobile warranties, to require the direct involvement of an insurance company, so we require a second company separate from the one that we currently operate and thus the petition. I think it's fairly straightforward.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much, Mr. Atkinson. Just to clarify, the existing operational company is First Canadian Insurance Corporation, and what you are proposing is a second company, First Canadian Casualty Insurance Corporation.

Any questions arising from that presentation, ladies and gentlemen? Mr. Gesell, and then Mr. McEachern.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the Bill it indicates that it should not be licensed under the Insurance Act. Could you elaborate on that particular aspect?

MR. ATKINSON: That it should not be licensed?

MR. GESELL: Under 2(a): "The corporation shall not be licensed under the Alberta Insurance Act."

MR. ATKINSON: That's only if it fails to register in two years.

MR. GESELL: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm misreading it to some degree.

Really, we're concentrating on casualty insurance here. Could I get a sort of rough definition of that term, "insurance," in that sense?

MR. ATKINSON: Well, the general definition of casualty insurance is quite broad, but in our specific case we intend to operate in the area of automobile warranties, extended service agreements, which would be retailed through our client dealerships in western Canada. To be completely specific, what's happened is there's been a number of companies essentially operating under nothing else than the Business Corporations Act, and they have failed to persist. They've gone broke, and people have been disadvantaged as a result. So now the requirement is that you have a life insurance company that's required to keep adequate reserves and do its accounting properly and have enough money to pay its claims. The purpose of this insurance company would be to accept that risk, and it would be pursuant to automobile warranties.

MR. GESELL: Then further, Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if it's the intent of this corporation to offer what is known as title insurance.

MR. ATKINSON: I'm not even sure I know what that is, so I guess the answer is no. We'd be dealing exclusively in what are called prepaid service agreements or warranties.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Mr. Gesell.
Mr. McEachern, Mr. Chivers, and then Mr. Bruseker.

MR. McEACHERN: Yes. I'm interested in the division of these two insurances now. I guess it complies with federal and provincial legislation. That's why you're doing this. I can't help wondering: what's the point of separating them if the same people operate both insurances?

MR. ATKINSON: As you're no doubt aware, all insurance companies are closely regulated by the superintendent of insurance. Everyone feels -- we have no argument with this -- that the nature of the risk and the nature of the reserves that you have to hold are sufficiently different that it's best that you have two completely separate corporate entities. In fact, new legislation that's been proclaimed federally requires it. It's not an optional matter for us.

MR. McEACHERN: So now is the casualty insurance -- and I guess that's not the subject of this Bill, because I think this Bill is for the insurance company.

MR. ATKINSON: This is for a casualty insurance company as opposed to a life insurance company or any other form of insurance company.

MR. McEACHERN: The one you had previously was a life insurance company, and this one is the casualty insurance company. Are the provisions for a casualty insurance company then also tightened up to the point where it's expected there won't be too many defaults or problems?

MR. ATKINSON: Yes. We're very proud of the fact that no Canadian has ever been financially disadvantaged by the failure of an insurance company, and this company would participate in what's called CompCorp, which is the insurance equivalent of CDIC. The whole intent of the provincial regulation and the federal law is to be sure that people who buy warranties actually get their claims paid.

10:24

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you.

One other question, then, on a slightly different topic. Save me looking it up in the Act, I guess. In number 5 of the Bill you say:

The corporation shall not commence business until the amount of capital stock required by Section 34 of the *Alberta Insurance Act* has been fully subscribed and paid.

Is that amount the same as in number 3 above, or is it a new and different amount that you have to come up with?

MR. ATKINSON: As far as I know it's the same, although I think the superintendent is permitted to increase it.

MR. McEACHERN: I wondered if number 2, applying to the Insurance Act within two years, doesn't impose some new obligations over and above what's in number 3.

MR. ATKINSON: No, I don't believe it does.

MR. McEACHERN: Okay. Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Mr. McEachern.

Just for the purpose of clarification, I'm going to read into the record a letter from Mr. Rodrigues, the superintendent of insurance, which unfortunately has not been circulated. It will be circulated to all members of this committee. It's dated February 10, 1992, addressed to Mr. Don Wheaton.

I have reviewed the draft Bill for First Canadian Casualty Insurance Corporation and have no objections to the proposed Act being passed. However, section 31 of the Insurance Act states that "a licence shall not be granted to an insurer for the transaction of both fire and life insurance." As a result it is suggested that section 7 of the proposed Act be amended to limit the company from entering into contracts of life insurance.*

If you take a look at section 7, at least the one that I have in my binder, it does not make a provision as to the exclusion of life insurance, but that draft is being circulated to all members, and it's proposed that that's what we would be debating and voting on.

The wording as proposed by Parliamentary Counsel is that subsection 2 would read: the corporation is restricted from transacting business for life or fire insurance classes at risk. That's for clarification, ladies and gentlemen.

MR. CHIVERS: Mr. Atkinson, I wonder if you could explain to the committee why it's necessary to accomplish this incorporation through a private Bill rather than through the provisions of public law.

MR. ATKINSON: I don't believe there is a provision that we could use to create an insurance company in the province of Alberta except a private Bill.

MR. CHIVERS: So the provisions of the Business Corporations Act and the Companies Act would not permit you to incorporate as an insurance company, and that's the reason you're bringing us this private Bill.

MR. ATKINSON: That's correct.

MR. BRUSEKER: I just have a question on section 3. It refers to capital stocks. It says, "The capital stock of the corporation shall be \$1,000,000." Now, I'm not fully familiar with how insurance companies work, but I'm wondering what the term "capital stock" really means. It seems that there were a lot of settlements for substantially large claims, and a million dollars doesn't seem like a whole lot of money.

MR. ATKINSON: This Act is to incorporate the entity, and the regulation of insurance companies is conducted under the Insurance Act and by the superintendent of insurance. Yes, they will specify to us what amount of risk we can take on at any level of capital stock. So the million dollars is a minimum. It's to get us started.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Just as an aside to that, I believe this is really equity capital that we're talking about. Any other coverage that the company might have as required by the superintendent of insurance would be by funds in available form, however that was decided.

MR. ATKINSON: Just to clarify, we've been asked on the life insurance side to increase, and we have increased the capital funding in the company so that everyone is satisfied that the risk is acceptable.

*This quotation could not be verified at the time of publication.

MR. BRUSEKER: So it's not intended, then, that this \$1 million would be to cover claims against the insurance company?

MR. ATKINSON: Well, certainly, if it was necessary. But as has been discussed, it's in fact freeboard. The idea is that the premiums coming in will be more than enough to pay claims, but this is unencumbered equity capital that's there as a certainty. As I say again, the regulation of insurance companies proceeds through the Insurance Act, and we're quite satisfied that they're doing their job there. As I said, no person in Canada has ever lost money dealing with an insurance company.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Bruseker.

Mr. Musgrove.

MR. MUSGROVE: In that respect, do you go into reinsurance on your policies?

MR. ATKINSON: Sir, if it was necessary either because we thought it was prudent from a business point of view or because it was advised by the superintendent, yes, reinsurance exists in the industry. We are currently not required nor feel the need for any reinsurance. We're quite happy with the way things are going, on the life insurance side and on the warranty side similarly. We tend to be pretty conservative, pretty careful with the way we proceed.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any other questions from committee members? Mr. Gesell.

MR. GESELL: Mr. Chairman, I didn't quite get a response on the title insurance question, and there's maybe some indication that we're not clear about what is meant by title insurance. Could I ask for some information with respect to whether this First Canadian Casualty Insurance Corporation will provide title insurance or not? It could be provided at a later date. I don't want to waste the time to define what it is at this point.

MR. ATKINSON: I'm almost certain that we do not offer title insurance, but I'll certainly find out what it is and get back to you, sir.

MR. GESELL: Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think that may be a generic term just for land titles insurance on the transfer of property.

MR. GESELL: Mr. Chairman, it's a new type of insurance that is being offered in Alberta, and there is some question about whether it is suitable or not.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: More than likely, I think, by virtue of the description of the two companies that you've given to us, Mr. Atkinson, that title insurance would come under the original company, the First Canadian Insurance Corporation, rather than a casualty. It doesn't seem to me that it would likely fall under the category of casualty insurance.

MR. ATKINSON: Our intent at this time is to offer contracts -- you've probably all got one in your glove box -- and limit our policies to that. So if the transmission on your car fails, you have someone to help you pay for a new one. I can't speak for the

Wheatons, but I would doubt very much that they would consider being involved in anything that wasn't absolutely down the centre of any business practice. That's certainly been their style up until now.

MR. GESELL: I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I guess, Mr. Gesell, the point would be that if this title insurance were to be approved by the superintendent, then it would fit within one of the categories of the two companies that are being contemplated here today.

MR. CHIVERS: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure whether this should be a question to Mr. Atkinson or to our counsel, because I'm still concerned. I understand that Mr. Atkinson understands that it's not possible to incorporate this corporation under public law, to accomplish this corporation under the terms of public law. My concern, of course, is that private Bills should only deal with things that cannot be accomplished through the mechanisms of public law, and if this is so, I'd like to know why it is. What is it in public law that does not permit the incorporation of this corporation under the terms of public law? I don't know whether Mr. Atkinson could help us with that.

The second question. Another principle of private Bills is that we should consider whether or not or to what extent they might impact the existing public law. Therefore, my supplementary question is: what provisions, if any, of public law would not apply to this corporation as a result of this incorporation?

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Atkinson, do you care to make any comments on those points?

MR. ATKINSON: Only that this Act, as far as I know -- and I'm not a lawyer -- is the only method that we have open to us. Secondly, the actual regulation of the company as it operates is undertaken by the public Act, the Insurance Act, as well as other legislation that impacts on corporations. Rather than being regulated more freely, the intent of the Insurance Act is to regulate a corporation like this more closely. In fact, the reason that we're here today is that up until recently you didn't need the direct involvement of an insurance company, so people didn't have insurance companies involved in their warranty business, and several across western Canada have gone broke and left people in the lurch.

10:34

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am certain, Mr. Chivers, that the individuals who are proposing the company would have gone directly to corporations branch were it possible, because of course it's a much more simplistic process. I'm sure that again it's the requirements of the Insurance Act, but if you like, we can do some additional research on that and report back further. I believe Parliamentary Counsel has some comments as well.

MR. RITTER: Yes, Mr. Chairman. In answer to Mr. Chiver's question, there are several companies in Alberta which, if they're going to be incorporated in Alberta, must be done by private Act; that is, insurance companies, trust companies, and railway companies. Now, that tends to be in Alberta the same as every other jurisdiction in Canada. Those companies carrying on those three classes of business have since Confederation, really, been required to incorporate by private Act.

The reason for this, at least originally when the province just started out, was that because they were matters directly affecting what was called the national economy, with railways, trust companies, and insurance companies the province wanted control

over how many in fact were incorporated within our jurisdiction. In fact, the federal government was getting so many requests for railway corporations that they actually went over to the Railway Act and delegated it to some public legislation so it could be taken through the corporate registry, but in Alberta we still haven't done it. Those three classes of corporations must be incorporated by a private Act of the Legislature.

However, with regard to insurance companies, the Insurance Act very strictly controls a company once incorporated by the Legislature. In fact, even though the public legislation doesn't provide for the incorporation and only for the regulation, the Insurance Act of Alberta requires that any insurance corporation incorporated by private Act of the Legislature must be subject to all the public laws in the province.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Mr. Ritter. That clarifies things.

Mr. Chivers, any additional questions?

MR. CHIVERS: Well, it does clarify things, but one of the purposes of our committee, I think, should be to look at amendments to the public law, and I think this is a case in point. Generally speaking, the rule should be that matters should be handled by public law rather than private law, and I'm concerned whenever a matter that seems to me could be accomplished through a mechanism of public law is not being accomplished in that fashion.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much. I think those are very pertinent comments.

Mr. Bruseker, did you have any comments or questions? Any other questions from committee members?

All right then. Mr. Atkinson, anything in summation?

MR. ATKINSON: No, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We very much appreciate your attendance. Thank you.

We'll move along, then, ladies and gentlemen, to petition 5. Committee members, again for the record, we are now dealing with Bill Pr. 5, the Lee Justin Littlechild Adoption Act.

[Mr. Mandamin, Mr. Beebee, and Mr. Littlechild were sworn in]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good morning to the petitioners. This is the Private Bills Committee, and it is the intention of this committee to hear your petition, to give committee members an opportunity to ask questions that arise from your presentation, and then to give you an opportunity to sum up at the end of the presentation. It would not be our intention to come to a conclusion on the merits of your petition today; rather, we will give committee members an opportunity to consider your petition. We will then deal with it at a later date and inform you of the decision of the committee, which will be then recommended to the Legislative Assembly.

Perhaps whoever is going to present the petition could introduce himself or herself and then introduce the other members who are with you.

MR. MANDAMIN: Mr. Chairman and hon. members, I'm presenting the petition on behalf of Mr. Howard Beebee Jr., who is sitting immediately beside me. This is a petition for a Bill which would provide for the adoption of his son, who is now 20 years of age, Lee Justin Littlechild, and who is next over from Mr. Beebee. I can do a brief summary of the Bill, if you wish.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, sir. Could you repeat your question?

MR. MANDAMIN: I could do a brief summary for the benefit of the members, if you wish.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think that would be all right.

MR. MANDAMIN: Basically, the situation is this. Mr. Beebee and his wife have had three children. They were not legally married, and some time back Mr. Beebee made arrangements to adopt his children. He adopted the oldest son, Cory, and he was proceeding with the adoption of Justin here and another younger son, Jason, at the time when the Social Services strike occurred. Justin was 17 at the time, and by the time the strike was settled, he had turned 18 and hence couldn't be adopted under the existing legislation. The other son was adopted pursuant to that legislation.

He's here today with the petition because he wishes to complete that process. I can advise the members also that Mr. Beebee and his wife of many years were legally married on February 22 of this year. She is named in the draft Bill as Theresa Mary Jane Littlechild. It's now Theresa Mary Jane Beebee, although her documentation hasn't come in yet as a result of the marriage.

That's essentially the reason for the application. Mr. Beebee I believe is the best person to answer any questions, since it's his petition.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We can certainly make that change to the Bill to reflect the marriage. We'll do that before we bring the Bill back to session as a whole.

MR. MANDAMIN: Yes, just on a technical point here. Her name would be Theresa Mary Jane Beebee, without the reference to Jr.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Very good. Thank you.

Any questions from committee members?

We've had the benefit of having a number of adoption applications before, and I think if we have few questions, it will be a reflection on the fact that committee members have had an opportunity to reflect and debate on these issues before.

We do have a couple of questions. Mrs. Laing and then Mrs. Hewes.

MRS. B. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly don't want to pry into your private affairs, but I just wondered why, when the children were born, the father wouldn't have been registered on the birth certificate.

MR. BEEBEE: I was registered as the legal father as far as the hospital records were concerned, but later we found out through Vital Statistics that my name never appeared there as the father, although my name was on the hospital records.

10:44

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Mrs. Laing. Mrs. Hewes.

MRS. HEWES: Yes, thanks, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Beebee, these children have been raised with you as part of your family from the time they were born, so you've always been a family?

MR. BEEBEE: Yes, we have.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any further questions from committee members? Mr. Ewasiuk.

MR. EWASIUK: I have a question to Lee. Do you have any objections to this proposed adoption?

MR. LITTLECHILD: No, I don't.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Mr. Ewasiuk.
Parliamentary Counsel, Mr. Ritter.

MR. RITTER: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Just to let members know, the change of name we can implement. Because we're only going to do first reading on Friday, we don't need a motion in the committee to do it. We'll make sure that the copy for first reading is amended before it's introduced. As with the other change in the previous petition, we don't require a special motion from this committee. We'll make sure it's the final draft by the time it's given first reading.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Mr. Ritter.
Anything then, Mr. Mandamin, in conclusion?

MR. MANDAMIN: No, that was all.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Fine. Thank you very much.

MR. RITTER: Mr. Chairman, if I could just perhaps deal with the last item before the next petitioners come in. I think Heather has now distributed to the members the new agenda with those three switch-arounds. The reason I bring it up now is because petition 11 wasn't originally -- it's another adoption Act. It was replaced with an adoption Act that couldn't make it on this particular day. Perhaps we should have a motion in advance, before we hear the petition, on the new agenda.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good point. Ladies and gentlemen, a motion? Mr. Lund, and seconded by Dr. Elliott. All in favour of the new agenda as presented? Thank you. Anyone opposed? All right; that's carried.

Just for clarification, even though it's not on the agenda as circulated, we have discussed that May 13 would also deal with the Victory Bible College petition. I'm going to take the prerogative of the Chair to conclude that that particular addition to the agenda is incorporated, unless there's any indication by any of you that you have a problem with that. Thank you.

The last petition that we'll be dealing with today is Bill Pr. 11, the Frederick James Harris Adoption Act. If Parliamentary Counsel will bring the petitioners in and have them sworn.

[Mr. Jim Harris and Mrs. Jean Harris were sworn in]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good morning, Mr. and Mrs. Harris. Welcome to the Private Bills Committee. The intention today will be to hear your petition, to give members an opportunity to question you, and then to give you the opportunity to make any comments that you wish on summation. It would not be the intention of the committee to come to a conclusion on the merits of your application today; rather, we will postpone that to a later date. Once that decision has been made and a recommendation is presented by this committee to the Legislature, you will be advised.
So please proceed.

MR. HARRIS: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, hon. members. I'm here for an adult adoption. By being adopted, it will entitle me to apply for dual citizenship with United States.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Harris.

Committee members, any questions or comments? Mr. Tannas.

MR. TANNAS: Is the natural father alive?

MR. HARRIS: No, my natural father was killed on December 6, 1944, during air operations over eastern Germany.

MRS. B. LAING: If I could ask, Mrs. Harris, how long have you currently been married to your present husband?

MRS. HARRIS: Forty years on June 6.

MRS. B. LAING: The two of you raised your son as a family basically?

MRS. HARRIS: Yes.

MRS. B. LAING: How old was your son when his natural father was killed?

MRS. HARRIS: His natural father was killed on December 6, 1944, and Jim would have been about 18 months old.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Mrs. Harris.
Mr. Clegg.

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just didn't hear the remark by the petitioner on the reason for this adoption. It's something about the United States. Could he just repeat it, please?

MR. HARRIS: Well, it would entitle me to apply for dual citizenship with United States.

MR. CLEGG: For what reason, if I might ask? What is the benefit for you?

MR. HARRIS: No exact reason right now. Just thinking of the future. Maybe I'll want to retire in Sun City, that sort of thing.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think, Mr. Harris, the question that the committee members have is: what is the process that would allow you to apply for dual citizenship as a result of this adoption? I trust it's the citizenship of your adoptive father.

MR. HARRIS: Okay. My adoptive father was born in Calgary. His father was born in Missouri. So it's a matter of my adoptive father getting his U.S. citizenship, and then I can follow along in his footsteps.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any further questions?
Mrs. Laing.

MRS. B. LAING: I'm kind of curious, since your natural father was dead and you were such a young child, why this adoption wasn't done when you were still a minor. Were there any circumstances that prevented that? I'm kind of curious about it.

MR. HARRIS: It just wasn't done. I don't know why.

MRS. HARRIS: You always used the name.

MR. HARRIS: I've always used the name Harris, since 1952, and I had it legally changed in 1967.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Hewes and then Mr. Tannas.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Chairman, I'm still not clear. Mr. Rufus Harris, your husband, Mrs. Harris, is not an American citizen at present. Is that correct?

MR. HARRIS: That's correct.

MRS. HEWES: He is a Canadian citizen?

MR. HARRIS: He was born in Calgary. His father was born in the United States.

MRS. HEWES: But he doesn't hold dual citizenship?

MR. HARRIS: No, but he's eligible to apply for it.

MRS. HEWES: He's eligible to apply, the assumption being that if he does apply and achieves it, this adoption would make it easier for you also to achieve it.

MR. HARRIS: I can't even apply unless I am legally adopted.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Tannas.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you. I'd like to inquire as to the citizenship of, first of all, the natural father, and secondly, the natural mother.

MR. HARRIS: My mother and natural father were born in Brandon, Manitoba. They're both Canadian citizens.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Again for clarification, committee members, the situation is that Mr. Rufus Leroy Harris is a Canadian citizen whose father was an American citizen. If Mr. Rufus Leroy Harris were to apply for dual citizenship, that would, in view of Canadian/American relations, presumably give Mr. Jim Harris an opportunity to apply as well. He's advised the committee that he could not make that kind of an application unless he were legally adopted.

Mrs. Laing.

10:54

MRS. B. LAING: Another question to Mrs. Harris. Your husband isn't here today. Is there a problem? Is he ill?

MRS. HARRIS: Well, he was in a car accident, and he received some injuries that he's still going to a physiotherapist about. So it would have been a little difficult for him to come today, but that's all. Once his treatments are over, he'll be fine.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Committee members, any further questions? Parliamentary Counsel has a question?

MR. RITTER: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to direct a question to Mrs. Harris, because you're going to have to speak under oath on behalf of your husband. Both yourself and your husband approve of the adoption?

MRS. HARRIS: Yes, we do.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Anything in summation that you'd like to tell us? All right. Thank you very much for your application today.

MR. HARRIS: Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Well, ladies and gentlemen, I believe that takes care of our agenda for today. Is there any other business that any of you would like to bring up at this time?

Mr. Lund.

MR. LUND: I move that we adjourn.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All in favour? Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 10:56 a.m.]