

Standing Committee on Private Bills

9:04 a.m.

[Chairman: Mr. Renner]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd like to call this meeting to order. This is the meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills. If everyone will turn to the agenda page in your binders, the first item is approval of the agenda. If I could have a motion on that.

MR. AMERY: So moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Amery. All in favour? Carried.

You'll note that we have two sets of minutes to approve this morning, one from Tuesday, November 2, 1993, which was the last meeting we held prior to the break. Then we also have a set of minutes from March 8, which was our meeting last Tuesday. I think we'll deal with them separately.

First of all, November 2: any errors or omissions in those minutes? If not, then a motion to approve. Mr. Herard. All in favour? Carried.

Tuesday, March 8: errors or omissions in those minutes? A motion to approve then. Mr. Sekulic. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

We'll move on to our agenda for today then. We have three adult adoptions to hear today: Bill Pr. 9, Bill Pr. 10, and Bill Pr. 15. We'll deal with them in that order. As I mentioned at our last meeting, my intention is to have the hearing process for all of our Bills, and then we'll reconvene as a committee partway through. After we've heard half of the Bills, we'll reconvene to have our discussion on the Bills and make a decision for our recommendations. There will not be any discussion today as to the committee's recommendations. However, the same rules apply as we operated under last year: all committee members are certainly more than welcome to offer any questions or solicit information from the petitioners while they're here.

With that, Ms Marston, would you please invite the witnesses for Bill Pr. 9?

[Mr. Advani, Mrs. Barnes, and Ms Barnes were sworn in]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Reynolds. There is brief background information for members of the committee regarding this Bill. It was on the desk here this morning. Has everyone received a copy of it? Fine.

Just before we get started, I would like to give just a little bit of background information to everyone, particularly the group who has joined us this morning. I had an opportunity to talk with you earlier in the Confederation Room, but just to reiterate the process that we're in right now, your petition for your Act was received by the Legislature and in fact received first reading in the Legislature yesterday. The process now is that it has been referred to this committee, and this committee will hear from you, listen to your reason for asking for the Act, and then make recommendations back to the Assembly as to what course of action the Assembly should take.

This is an informal process this morning. We have an all-party committee sitting, and I think just before we get started, I would like to have the committee members introduce themselves, and you'll get a good idea of the cross section of people that we have on this committee. My name is Rob Renner. I'm the chairman of the committee. I'm the MLA for Medicine Hat.

MR. PHAM: Hung Pham, MLA for Calgary-Montrose.

MR. HLADY: Mark Hlady, MLA, Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. JACQUES: Good morning and welcome. Wayne Jacques from Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

MRS. GORDON: Good morning and welcome. Judy Gordon, Lacombe-Stettler.

MRS. LAING: Bonnie Laing, Calgary-Bow.

MR. AMERY: Moe Amery, Calgary-East.

MR. HERARD: Denis Herard, Calgary-Egmont. Welcome.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Lorne Taylor, Cypress-Medicine Hat.

MR. SEKULIC: Good morning. Peter Sekulic, Edmonton-Manning.

MR. WICKMAN: Good morning. Percy Wickman, Edmonton-Rutherford.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The other two people at the Table with me are Florence Marston, who is the assistant to the committee, and Rob Reynolds, who is the Parliamentary Counsel.

With that, then, I'm not sure who would like to be your spokesman, but if you would just give us perhaps brief background information and explain why it is that you're asking the Legislature to pass this Bill on your behalf.

MR. ADVANI: I will be the spokesman for the clients, and if the committee has any questions, Mrs. Barnes and Tammy will be pleased to answer those after I have made my submissions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That would be fine. Thank you. Go right ahead.

MR. ADVANI: Thank you, sir. This is the petition by Herta Barnes to adopt Tammy Lee Barnes. Tammy Lee Barnes was born in Lacombe on February 26, 1971. I believe the birth certificate has been filed; I'm assuming all the documentation is satisfactory. Tammy's biological mother left her with the petitioner and her late husband soon after Tammy was born. Unfortunately, Mr. Barnes, who was also proposing to adopt Tammy, passed away two years ago, in July of 1992. Tammy saw her biological mother on her first birthday and then saw her again six or seven years after that. By that time, of course, the biological mother had married and had two children from the marriage. Tammy has always lived with the petitioner and the petitioner's late husband. The biological mother took two court actions to try and obtain custody of Tammy; both efforts by the biological mother were unsuccessful. Tammy attended school at Lacombe, and she completed her high school and now has a daughter of her own, who is about a year and a half old.

9:14

Tammy has always expressed a wish, always wanted to be adopted by the petitioner and her late husband, and the petitioner and her late husband have always indicated a willingness to adopt her. Accordingly, Mrs. Herta Barnes, who is seated to my right, filed a petition and has complied with the provisions of the Act by advertising in the *Gazette* and in the *Lacombe Globe*, and I am assuming that no objections have been voiced by anybody.

We're very pleased that Judy Gordon, our MLA for Lacombe-Stettler constituency, has kindly agreed to sponsor the Bill and support its passage as Bill Pr. 9, to be known as the Tammy Lee Barnes Adoption Act. Therefore, Herta Barnes prays that the Bill be passed and that Herta Barnes can adopt Tammy Lee Barnes as a daughter. I might point out that biologically she is the grandmother of Tammy Lee Barnes. We'll allow the submission of that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Just before I turn over the floor to questions, Mrs. Barnes or Tammy, do you have anything that you would like to add at all?

MS BARNES: He said it all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fine then. I have Mr. Herard.

MR. HERARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's no information in this application as to whether or not the biological mother and biological father are aware of this proceeding. Could you perhaps enlighten me on that, please?

MS BARNES: I'm not sure my biological mother would care, and I'm not even sure who my father is.

MR. HERARD: Okay. But there has been the appropriate advertising, and you haven't heard anything negative from her?

MS BARNES: She knows, and she showed no interest whatsoever.

MR. HERARD: Okay. Thank you. Those are all my questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Reynolds has advised me that we have received no correspondence at all.

MR. KIRKLAND: Just one quick question. Herta and Tammy, I assume what has been said here today is exactly the proceedings you would like to proceed with. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions at all?

MR. PHAM: Tammy, is Herta your biological grandmother on your mother's side or your father's side?

MS BARNES: My mother's side.

MR. PHAM: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Gordon.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mrs. Barnes, do you have other children? How many?

MRS. BARNES: Eight.

MRS. GORDON: Eight?

MRS. BARNES: And they're all grown up and gone.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you.

MR. ADVANI: I'd like to point out that Tammy Lee Barnes lives at home with her grandmother on a farm. They're neighbours of mine, as a matter of fact. Sorry; somebody had a question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Laing had a question.

MRS. LAING: Yes. Mrs. Barnes, do your other children agree to the adoption as well? They're pleased about it?

MRS. BARNES: Well, they haven't really said anything about it. We've told them. They didn't say anything.

MRS. LAING: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

Mr. Reynolds, do you have any questions of clarification?

MR. REYNOLDS: No, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, seeing no further questions then, I would like to thank you for coming. The committee will be discussing this petition in upcoming weeks, and you'll be advised by Parliamentary Counsel as to our decision. It should be sometime in late April when you would hear further from the committee. We appreciate your coming today, and I wish you all the best.

MR. ADVANI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next Bill is Bill Pr. 10, Janna Adella Marie Kinnee Adoption Act. It'll just be a couple of minutes while we get everything ready for them.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, while we're waiting, the change from 8:30 to 9: was that only for this week or does that indicate . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, Mr. Wickman, that was just for this week. If you'll remember, we had originally planned to have four separate adult adoptions dealt with today. One of the petitioners was unavailable, out of the country -- as a matter of fact, working in Libya -- so with the one week's notice we were able to give, it was impossible for them to appear. We have rescheduled that one to, I think, April 26. That's the reason we delayed till 9.

MR. WICKMAN: I raise it because there is growing concern about the conflict between our caucus and such. If we meet at 8:30, in most cases I would expect we'd be finished by 10, which minimizes our conflict and even today, meeting at 9, there's no reason we shouldn't finish at 10.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, you raise a good point. It's hard to know how long the process is going to take. We do have two hours scheduled, so I didn't really think it would take that long for the three today, and we still may be finished fairly near 10.

[Ms Kinnee and Mr. Brookson were sworn in]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good morning. Welcome to the Legislature. We had an opportunity to discuss the proceedings outside this morning, but just to reiterate, your petition has been received by the Legislature, received first reading as a Bill in the Legislature, and then was referred to this committee for our recommendations.

The purpose of this meeting this morning is for you to have an opportunity to express the reason why you're asking that this Act be passed on your behalf and to give members of the committee an opportunity to ask you questions of clarification as they relate to the Bill. Just before we get started, I would like to advise that it's

basically an informal session. You're welcome to remain seated if you wish. There are microphones in the desk so you can be heard.

I guess there's no one in the gallery. That's fine; I won't explain to the people in the gallery what we're doing then.

I would like to have the committee introduce themselves. This is an all-party committee of the Legislature. We have both government members and opposition members on this committee, and representatives from a good cross section right across the entire province. I'm Rob Renner, and I'm the MLA for Medicine Hat.

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DR. OBERG: Lyle Oberg, Bow Valley.

MR. PHAM: Hung Pham, Calgary-Montrose.

MR. HLADY: Hi there. Mark Hlady, Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. JACQUES: Good morning. Wayne Jacques, from Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

MR. WICKMAN: I'm Percy Wickman, Edmonton-Rutherford, and good morning.

MRS. LAING: Bonnie Laing, Calgary-Bow.

MR. AMERY: Moe Amery, Calgary-East.

MR. HERARD: Denis Herard, Calgary-Egmont. Welcome.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Lorne Taylor, Cypress-Medicine Hat.

MR. SEKULIC: Peter Sekulic, Edmonton-Manning. Welcome.

MRS. SOETAERT: Colleen Soetaert, Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert. Good morning.

MR. KIRKLAND: Terry Kirkland, Leduc. Good morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fine; we'll get started. I don't know who wants to be the spokesperson, but basically this is your opportunity to more or less express the reason why you've asked for the legislation and a little bit of background information, anything that you feel would help the committee make the decision.

MR. BROOKSON: Ladies and gentlemen, the reason I really want to adopt Janna is that she's treated me like a father, she trusts me like a father, and she loves me like a father, and I, in turn, feel the same. As far as the family, they said, "It's about time."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Janna.

MS KINNEE: Susan said she would have a sheet sent over for each of the members. Basically, it reiterates everything, all the reasons why I want to go through with this adoption.

I love Dad. He's been there for me. He doesn't always agree with me, and I don't expect him to -- we're separate people -- but he stands behind any of the decisions that I make. He's always there for me if I need a shoulder to cry on or someone to hug because I'm in a good mood, whatever. I have two sons, and I love them both, and they and my husband love my father as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fine. Thank you.
Committee members, any questions? Mr. Herard.

MR. HERARD: Of course, I realize that all of the appropriate notices and so on have been published, but is there anyone who is against this proceeding?

MR. BROOKSON: No, sir.

MS KINNEE: No.

MR. HERARD: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just for clarification. Mr. Brookson, your wife is Janna's biological mother; is that right?

MR. BROOKSON: That's right, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.
Mrs. Laing.

MRS. LAING: Thank you. Just a question about your biological father. Has he had a place in your life in recent years?

MS KINNEE: My biological father gave me up for adoption when I was six and a half, seven years old. He did come back into my life when I was about 17. He doesn't live far from where we live, but we're lucky to see him and his family maybe once a year.

MRS. LAING: So there's no real relationship there.

MS KINNEE: No.

MRS. LAING: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions at all?
Mr. Reynolds.

MR. REYNOLDS: Excuse me. You indicated that your biological father gave you up for adoption when you were six and a half. Were you then living with your . . .

MS KINNEE: I was living with my mother.

MR. REYNOLDS: You were living with your mother, so you were adopted by someone else?

MS KINNEE: Right. He and my mother were divorced when I was 16. I have not seen nor heard from him since that time.

MR. REYNOLDS: That would be your adopted father, then, that you haven't heard from?

MS KINNEE: He had no use for either me or my mother. He was there, but he was not there; you know what I mean?

MR. REYNOLDS: I'm sorry, I'm not trying to pry into your emotions or anything.

MS KINNEE: That's okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any further questions at all from the committee? Introductions are taking longer than the process this morning. Well, I have no further questions.
Mr. Herard.

MR. HERARD: I guess what Parliamentary Counsel raises: does that create any kind of a legal situation with respect to the previous adoption and this one?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Reynolds, do you want to comment on that?

MR. REYNOLDS: It would not be a relationship any different than any other adult adoption in the sense of severing the relationships. When someone's adopted in any respect it has an effect on, let's say, the biological father. In this case, the biological father would have been out of the process, and the adoptive father will step into his shoes as it were. So, yes, this would have an effect with respect to the adoptive father, but it would be no different than any other adult adoption.

MR. HERARD: Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS KINNEE: If I could state one thing here: at the time of the first adoption, because of my age I was not given any kind of a choice in the matter. My biological father agreed to it, gave up his rights. My adoptive father, as I said, has not been around. He doesn't know that I have two children ages going on 10 and going on eight. He's never seen them; he's never cared. My father, as far as I'm concerned my dad, is sitting in this room with me. Whether the process goes ahead or not, that's not going to change the feelings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

I don't think there's anything further. I want to thank you for coming this morning and, as I explained earlier, the committee will be meeting in upcoming weeks to make decisions on our recommendations to the Legislature. You'll be informed of those decisions. It will probably be mid to late April before you would hear from us. Thank you for coming, and we wish you all the best.

MS KINNEE: Thank you. Thank you for your time.

MR. BROOKSON: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The final Bill this morning is Bill Pr. 15, for everyone's information.

[Mrs. Miles, Mr. Miles, Ms Miles, and Mr. Skrobot were sworn in]
9:34

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Reynolds.

I'd like to welcome everyone here this morning. This process that we're going through right now is the hearing process for the Private Bills Committee. You have petitioned the Legislature to pass an Act on your behalf that would formalize the adoption of Silvia. That Act has received first reading in the Legislature and now has been referred to this committee so that you have an opportunity to discuss your Act with this committee. The committee also has an opportunity to ask you questions of clarification, background information, so that we can make a decision. We in turn recommend to the Legislature the route that the Bill should take beyond first reading.

At this point I'd like to have the committee members introduce themselves so you're familiar with who we all are. We are an all-party committee. The committee consists of opposition and government members, a good cross section right across the entire province of Alberta. I am chairman of the committee, and my name is Rob Renner. I'm the MLA for Medicine Hat.

DR. OBERG: Lyle Oberg from Brooks.

MR. PHAM: Hung Pham, Calgary-Montrose.

MR. HLADY: Mark Hlady, Calgary-Mountain View. Good morning.

MR. JACQUES: Good morning. Wayne Jacques from Grande Prairie.

MR. WICKMAN: Percy Wickman, Edmonton-Rutherford. Good morning.

MRS. LAING: Bonnie Laing, Calgary-Bow.

MR. AMERY: Moe Amery, Calgary-East.

MR. HERARD: Denis Herard, Calgary-Egmont. Welcome.

MS LEIBOVICI: Good morning. Karen Leibovici, Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. SEKULIC: Good morning. Peter Sekulic, Edmonton-Manning.

MRS. SOETAERT: Good morning. Colleen Soetaert, Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

MR. KIRKLAND: Terry Kirkland, Leduc. Welcome.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

I don't know who wants to be your spokesperson. This is your opportunity to more or less explain to the committee how the relationship maybe began and why you're petitioning at this point for the adoption. So whoever wants to speak, please feel free.

MR. SKROBOT: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members. My name is Chris Skrobot. I'll make a few remarks and then pass the mike over to Mr. Miles, and he'll make a few remarks as well.

Before you is a petition to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly by Douglas Charles Miles and Sarah Kathleen Miles of the city of Edmonton. The petitioners wish to adopt Silvia Kathleen Miles, who is older than the age of 18 years and therefore cannot be legally adopted under the Child Welfare Act, and the petitioners request that an Act be passed for these purposes. The background information that I'm going to relate has been related to me by Mr. Miles and Silvia Miles.

Silvia was a Brazilian orphan. She was placed in an orphanage called Criences in Brazil. She relates that she believes her mother, Leonor Edna Vilela, passed away in 1979. The birth records do not indicate who her father is, and she doesn't know. When she was six years of age, she was transferred to a different orphanage in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and remained there until she was nine years of age. Apparently the dean at the orphanage arranged for her placement with the Miles family in Edmonton, and on May 1, 1983, she left for Canada.

She has resided with the Miles family ever since and eventually became a landed immigrant and obtained her Canadian citizenship when she turned 18. She attended school at Steele Heights junior high and Harry Ainlay high school. She is presently taking her first year at Concordia College. Her intention is to teach English as a Second Language or become a special education instructor.

Mr. Miles is a production technician at Dow Chemical, and Sarah Miles is a head nurse at the University of Alberta hospital. The

Miles have three other children: namely, Daniel Douglas, Stephen James, and Kaylyn Naomi. Silvia's name was changed on November 24, 1987, from Silvia Leticia Vilela to Silvia Kathleen Miles.

I am pleased that Mr. Zariwny has agreed to sponsor this Bill, and we request that an Act be passed so that she will have the same rights as the other Miles children under the laws of the province of Alberta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Mr. Miles, do you want to comment?

MR. MILES: Basically what I want to do is reiterate the comments I already made. I had a brief history prepared I was going to read.

Silvia Leticia Vilela was born in Sao Paulo, Brazil, October 8, 1973. Shortly after her birth, in desperation her birth mother left her between railroad tracks. Silvia was fortunate to be found and placed in an orphanage until she came to Canada on May 1, 1983. Silvia's birth mother died in 1979 of emphysema. Her father is unknown. She has no other birth relatives except for her brother. Paulo, her half brother, was placed in our home on May 1, 1983. After five years it was decided that Paulo required more help than we were able to give him.

We worked through an adoption agency, SAME, South American Missionary Evangelism. All expenses, including legal fees, escort fees, clothing, and transportation, were paid by my wife and myself. The total cost was between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

The Brazilian government would not authorize Silvia's final papers being released, because the Miles family was unable to adopt both Silvia and Paulo as a pair. The Brazilian government was unwilling to consider the request for Silvia's adoption to be finalized as an individual. Every request was made by a demand for more money to process yet one more paper. The financial requests became too demanding, and we decided to terminate any further correspondence with the orphanage.

In 1987 Silvia had her name officially changed to Silvia Kathleen Miles, at her request. Silvia became a Canadian citizen on June 1, 1992.

Although Silvia was nine years of age when she came to Canada, she did not speak English and had very little education. She graduated from grade 12 at 18 years of age. She's presently finishing her first year of university as she pursues a dream to become a teacher.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Anyone else have any comments? Fine.

I'll turn it over to the committee then. Any questions from the committee at all?

MRS. LAING: Thank you. Just a couple of questions about Silvia's placement in your own family. You would see her as being a full child and having full heritage and all the other rights that your other children have. Has that been agreeable to the whole family?

MR. MILES: Oh, yes.

MRS. LAING: Good. Thank you.

MR. MILES: My daughter said this morning: "Why are you going? She's been my sister for 11 years. She'll be my sister for the rest of my life. I don't see where it makes any difference."

MR. PHAM: Silvia, do you have any relatives left in Brazil?

MS MILES: Not that I'm aware of. I'm not really aware of that.

MR. PHAM: I just want to pass on a comment to you. You have been through a lot, and you have done very well for yourself. I am really encouraged to see the direction that you are taking to become an ESL teacher helping other students. It's very good.

MS MILES: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wickman.

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I always find it a bit uncomfortable prying into people's emotions, but I was kind of struck by the comment made about your brother. Do you maintain contact with him?

MS MILES: It's kind of hard to maintain contact with him, because I see him as a threat to my family, and I wouldn't want anybody to hurt my family.

MR. WICKMAN: Okay.

9:44

MR. CHAIRMAN: I see we've been joined by some guests in the gallery. This is the Private Bills Committee of the Legislature. Today we're dealing with hearing petitions for adult adoptions. This is an all-party committee, and we're now dealing with the third of three adoptions this morning.

Any other questions at all? I see no questions.

Mr. Reynolds, you have no questions of clarification from a legal point of view?

MR. REYNOLDS: No. As Mr. Skrobot and Mr. Miles both confirmed, Silvia certainly is a Canadian citizen. The preamble to the petition mentioned that you were a Brazilian orphan, so it was just good to clarify that point.

Just for members of the committee, I just wanted to indicate that we have the affidavits of advertising in the *Alberta Gazette* and in the *Edmonton Journal*, and we've received no objections, no letters of interest: no correspondence at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Amery.

MR. AMERY: Thank you. Silvia, you said you see your brother as a threat to the family. Where is your brother now?

MS MILES: I believe he's living in . . .

MRS. MILES: He's being adopted by another fellow, a single fellow who lives in northeast Edmonton. He has come after us with knives actually. That's what she means by a physical threat.

MR. AMERY: So he's in Edmonton.

MRS. MILES: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

Seeing none, then, I thank you for coming this morning. Early in April the committee will be discussing yours as well as the other briefs that we heard this morning. You should hear from Parliamentary Counsel regarding our recommendations in mid to late April. The Bill will have to come back to the Legislature, and it will be dealt with in the Legislature as to our recommendations.

It's difficult to say when that would be, but I anticipate that sometime before the end of June all Bills will be dealt with.

So thank you for coming, and best wishes to all of you.

MR. WICKMAN: Every success.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, members of the committee, that concludes the three petitions that we have to deal with this morning. We have an item on the agenda, Other Business. I have nothing to bring up under that unless anyone else has something you'd like to discuss.

Mr. Wickman.

MR. WICKMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'll be glad when we deal with your Bill in the Legislative Assembly and hopefully get support so we can amend it. I really feel uncomfortable with the process we have to follow, where we pry into people's emotions and such, and under the existing system it can't be avoided.

I thought all three that we dealt with this morning were very straightforward, and I really can't see any grounds for opposition. To relieve any anxiety, why can't we just deal with them, communicate with the people that we're prepared to recommend a positive recommendation?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we certainly could do that. I just feel that it's best if we have an opportunity for everyone to have a chance to sleep on it, to think about it. Obviously, the ones we're dealing with today are relatively straightforward. There's no way for the chairman to predict in advance how straightforward they're going to be, so I just would like the committee to go through due process. It won't speed up the process one bit by advising the people what our decision is going to be. As you're well aware, I as chairman have to get these Bills back into the Legislature, on to the Order Paper, and sometimes that's easier said than done.

While I appreciate what you're saying, I really don't think that it's that much of an imposition. They've been waiting an awfully long time now. If they have to wait two or three more weeks to hear our decision, I don't think that they object to that.

MR. WICKMAN: No, but the point I'm making is that they would sleep better knowing that they did well here and that we're prepared to recommend that it proceed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I'll take that under advisement. I did want to try a different system this year. We as a committee will then have had two ways of dealing with them. We can decide which we feel is best.

Mrs. Soetaert.

MRS. SOETAERT: That's okay. Terry was going to go.

MR. KIRKLAND: I had a feeling just for expediency's sake, I think, Mr. Chairman, to indicate to the people that we act quickly in this Legislature, that I have no difficulty going ahead with the decisions today. I certainly would support what the hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud indicated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I agree. All I can do is repeat my comments. It was a decision that I as chairman made that we would try a new process this year. I think that it's best. While I agree they all seem to be very straightforward today, there just could be something that comes up that we need to get some clarification on. We may want to have Parliamentary Counsel confirm some of the information we heard today. I think it's best that we do not deal with all of these petitions the same day they come in, that we give some

time for everyone to consider their ideas and come back at a later date. So I'm not flexible on that one. I'm not going to bend.

MRS. SOETAERT: Then could I suggest that we at least deal with it the next week, especially when it's adult private adoptions that are pretty straightforward. I know on other things maybe we should take a couple of weeks and consult with other people and get more information, but I think, number one, that this is an invasion of their privacy that I feel very uncomfortable about. These were pretty straightforward today, and often this committee shifts as to who's here and who's not here. You want the same people voting on the same issue that have been here. So I would ask that private adoptions that seem very straightforward, and I think we can at least be flexible in that, are dealt with a week later. They have waited a long time, and I just find this not respecting what they have been through so far. Certainly, sitting in front of us and telling us that her brother throws knives, et cetera, is quite an invasion. So I think in due respect to them, we could deal with it in a week if that's possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we did agree on a schedule at the last meeting, and I would like to give it a chance to see if it works. If we are all in agreement at the end of this session that it doesn't work -- well, actually, if my private member's Bill passes, then we won't have to deal with them anymore.

MRS. SOETAERT: So when will we deal with these?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll deal with these -- I don't have the agenda here. It's early in April. I think it's the week right after Easter, in April. That was what we had agreed upon, and I think we should stick with that.

One point that I should make, members. I was watching the questioning this morning and I don't think that it got to the point where I felt we needed to, but we do have the opportunity to go in camera at any time during these hearings. If you feel you're getting into a line of questioning that could be considered personal, then I would ask that before you get into that line of questioning, you perhaps suggest to the chair that we go in camera for that. I didn't feel that the questioning this morning was anything that needed to go in camera. Had we pursued that one particular line of questioning, I might have suggested that we do it. Keep in mind we have that option available to us. Hearings in this room are being piped throughout this building and are appearing in *Hansard*, so if we do get into a line of questioning that is personal, we have that opportunity.

Okay; anything else to come forward this morning then? If not, I'd entertain a motion to adjourn. Mr. Amery. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

[The committee adjourned at 9:52 a.m.]