

## Standing Committee on Private Bills

9:32 a.m.

[Chairman: Mr. Renner]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good morning, everyone. I'd like to call this meeting to order. This is a meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills. I'd like to welcome everyone back again.

As you all know, we have some unfinished business to deal with from the last session. I expect we should be able to deal with everything today, and it won't be necessary for this committee to meet again until next session.

The second item on the agenda is approval of the agenda. Committee members, you'll note that on the agenda we have two Bills to deal with: Pr. 13, the TD Trust Company and Central Guaranty Trust Company Act, and Pr. 11, the Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Centre Foundation Tax Exemption Act. I had not included the Gimbel Foundation Act on the agenda, since I expected there would be some time required for these two Bills this week. Subsequent to setting the agenda, we received notice from both of these organizations that for one reason or another they do not wish to proceed with the petitions at this time. I have also received just this morning a letter from Murray Smith indicating that Dr. Gimbel also does not wish to proceed with his Bill. So with permission of the committee, I would like to add Pr. 6, the Gimbel Foundation Act, to the agenda.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Van Binsbergen. All in favour? Carried.

Any other changes or additions or deletions to the agenda? I need a motion to approve the agenda. Mrs. Gordon.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As amended. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Item 3, approval of committee meeting minutes. This is for the last committee meeting, Tuesday, May 10. Has everyone had an opportunity to review the minutes? Are there any errors or omissions that need to be noted? If not, could I have a motion to approve the minutes? Mr. Herard. Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Then we'll move to private Bills. Pr. 13, TD Trust Company and Central Guaranty Trust Company Act. Mr. Reynolds, would you like to update the committee on where we stand on this one?

MR. REYNOLDS: All members of the committee should have received in a package of material that I believe was distributed last week, distributed on October 19, a letter from McCarthy Tétraut, solicitors for the TD Trust Company, indicating that they did not wish to proceed at this time, that they prefer to defer a hearing on this Bill, as apparently the decision was made by the client in Toronto that the client preferred that the Bill go forward in Ontario and be heard by the Ontario committee and be worked out there before it is introduced and proceeded with in any other province. It's my understanding that the Ontario Bill will be introduced at some time this autumn in Queen's Park. In any event, that's where they stand. They've asked for a deferral, and they realize that it may not be possible to have a hearing this fall and it would have to come back before the committee next spring.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
Dr. Oberg.

DR. OBERG: I was just wondering if that's because they're a lot smarter in Ontario than they are in Alberta, or are they just more accepting?

MR. HLADY: Can we get a copy of that, whatever happens there too?

MR. REYNOLDS: Yes. Sure will.

MR. HLADY: Because that'll really set the tone.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other discussion, comments, questions?

Then what we need is a motion to defer the decision on this to a future date, and I don't think we can be date specific, because it's rather open-ended on their request.

Mr. Amery.

MR. AMERY: Okay. I move that the committee's recommendation with respect to Bill Pr. 13, TD Trust Company and Central Guaranty Trust Company Act, be deferred to a future date.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You've all heard the motion. Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Pr. 11, Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Centre Foundation Tax Exemption Act.

MR. REYNOLDS: Mr. Chairman, we were advised by Ms Hanson yesterday in a letter all committee members should have, dated October 24, that the petitioners for this Bill wish to withdraw it at this time. That's the advice of Ms Hanson.

To be clear, what has happened since we last met, as was indicated in the briefing that was distributed to committee members last week: the Edmonton city council executive committee met and passed a motion indicating that they did not support the passage of a private Bill with respect to the tax exemption for this organization. As I say, we have Ms Hanson's letter with respect to their desire to withdraw the Bill.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions, comments? If not, then I would entertain a motion.

MR. SMITH: I'll do that, and the motion says: I move that Bill Pr. 11, Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Centre Foundation Tax Exemption Act, not be proceeded with as the petitioner has requested that the Bill be withdrawn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Pr. 6, Gimbel Foundation Act. I received a letter from Mr. Smith this morning. I've distributed that letter to everyone. Mr. Smith, would you care to comment?

MR. SMITH: Absolutely, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Gimbel Foundation Act.

The petitioner has discussed with the Ministry of Health and with a number of members from this government the ability for Private Bills to in fact make a decision on a Bill that does not uniquely affect only one individual. The practice of foundation medicine in Alberta is one where there is no present policy from the Ministry of Health outlining the ability to practise, the ability for fees to be made

to the corporation, the tax structure, the corporate structure. The Ministry of Health has committed to develop a policy for foundation medicine, and we will await that policy. So it was on that basis that Dr. Gimbel asked me to withdraw the Bill from consideration by this committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Any further questions or comments?

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: It makes eminent sense, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Well, seeing no one wishes to speak, a motion would then be in order similar to the previous motion.

MR. SMITH: If I may just add, Mr. Chairman, prior to us taking a vote on this: by virtue of Dr. Gimbel petitioning this committee, he has stimulated the debate on foundation medicine. I think that's been an important debate for all Albertans to consider, and it also points out clearly the need for a policy from the department. So I don't feel the process went for naught, and it does point out that the ability of an individual to have access to this Legislature through this committee remains important.

I move that Bill Pr. 6, known as the Gimbel Foundation Act, not be proceeded with as the petitioner has requested that the Bill be withdrawn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Any further comments or questions?

MS LEIBOVICI: I guess the only comment I'd like to make is that I would hope the minister does look at what the submissions were. There were not any submissions from my memory that were in favour of a foundation being set up. I would hope the Gimbel group perhaps does not hope it would be easier to get the Bill passed through the Legislative Assembly process than through this particular committee and that some of the intent perhaps is not hidden through going to the Legislative Assembly. So I just want to add as a reminder to the minister that this is not an Act that was popular, and I don't think it will be popular whether it would have passed through this committee or in the Legislative Assembly itself.

9:42

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. We have a motion before us. All in favour of that motion? Any opposed? The motion is carried.

We have other business. At this point I would just like to update the committee on where we go from here. As I mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, since this concludes all the Bills before this committee -- we've now had resolution on all of them -- it will not be necessary for the committee to meet for the remainder of this session. We will begin receiving petitions for the next session shortly. I understand there are a few inquiries coming to Parliamentary Counsel's office now, and I suspect there will be a few more over time. So once we have the petitions received and the appropriate advertising and everything done for the various petitions we receive, we again will be reconvening during the spring session to deal with those.

With respect to my private member's Bill, I understand that regulations are now in the final draft stage. I have been involved with that. We're in the process of developing a self-help kit so that individuals requesting adult adoption will be able to go through the courts and will be able to do so without the assistance of a lawyer. I'm hoping everything will be finalized in sufficient time to have proclamation this fall or, at the very latest, early in the New Year so

we as a committee will not have to deal with adult adoptions in the next session.

I want to thank everyone for your support on that Bill. As you all know, the impetus for that Bill came through this committee. I'm very pleased with where we stand with respect to adult adoptions right now, and I look forward to having the process move into the court system.

With that I have no other business, unless anyone has any other business to come before the committee.

MS LEIBOVICI: A Christmas party for the committee members?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The budget is shot. Sorry.

MR. SMITH: If I can say something about how we care, how we listen, and how important Rob Renner's careful chairmanship is. Certainly on behalf of a petitioner I worked with, Mr. Renner, the petitioner and myself would like to thank you for your guidance and knowledge of this field of legislative activities. We look forward to the development and passage of your Bill, which indeed continues to expedite private Bills.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for the kind comments.

[The committee adjourned at 9:47 a.m.]