

SENATOR MATZKE: Madam President, and members of the Legislature, I have never accused anyone in this Chamber of being a liar or a hypocrite, and I think that is inappropriate procedure for this body in any discussion. I think when people engage in name-calling, it is an admission that they do not have a valid basis for their argument. They have to resort to that type of inappropriate, ungentlemanly conduct. I think that this is a sincere desire to address a problem that is before us in this state. I think we all want to improve the adoption procedure. We all know, and it's very evident from the long hours of debate, that Nebraska has a hole in its law. Some people call it a loophole. It certainly is a deficit. This bill is really a simple bill. All it does is say that the biological father of a child is entitled to notice if that child is going to be placed for adoption, and is entitled to come before the court and request custody if he wishes to do so. Now, that is not necessarily an additional right for the biological father. That's been, parental rights have been established by the courts and by the U.S. Supreme Court in the Quinlan case. I think that when Senator Bernard-Stevens tries to draw an equality or a comparison between male and female in this, and say both sides have to have an equal commitment, there is some validity to that, but the situation is different. The woman who is pregnant for nine months is in a different situation than the man who, perhaps, with a one evening encounter can claim he is the biological father. Senator Bernard-Stevens makes the point that the biological father is only given five days. He is actually given nine months and five days. He, obviously, was there when the conception occurred. He has nine months to think about it. He has five days after the notice is given. The situation with the biological mother is just simply completely different. She is pregnant for nine months. She has nine months to make the decision as to whether she is going to place the child for adoption or not. It is an anxiety...it is a decision filled with anxiety, and if you, if you say to her, once you make this decision, you then have to worry about it for another week or two weeks or 30 days or 90 days, all you are doing is enacting a law which is going to extend the agony and anxiety of the mother. The whole system in our society is to arrive at some type of finality in legal proceedings and in personal relationships. It may seem kindly to give people time to change their mind. It is, in fact, just adding to the anxiety and difficulty involved. The courts will not...the courts will not hold people to their relinquishments if it isn't voluntary. Once it is made under our law, it become