

least possible expense and inconvenience to the parties concerned. I think that the estimate of \$100 is a little high. I think Mr. Brooks is more correct in stating the cost at about \$25. It must be remembered, Mr. Chairman, that this question of whether or not there has been an adoption is only important after the death of a veteran, and there must be some reasonable evidence available, and it would be extremely difficult perhaps after the death of the veteran to obtain anything that could be considered reasonable. Therefore, I think it is very important to have it definitely stated that there must be legal adoption: Something considered by a court of law to be legal: Legal by statute or legal by the custom of the province.

Mr. GILLIS: Mr. Chairman, I do not know what the circumstances are in New Brunswick, but for years I have had the privilege of helping people under those circumstances to get legal adoption papers for children, in the case of the last couple that I worked for the fee was \$50.

Mr. BROOKS: When was that?

Mr. GILLIS: Within the last couple of years.

Mr. BROOKS: It has been changed very recently.

Mr. GILLIS: I do not think that is an exorbitant change: There is a lot of work to be done. In this case the lawyer had it on his hands for about a year. An application is made and there is a probation period, and there is considerable work, and I consider the \$50 charge a pretty reasonable charge for the work involved; but the people I am thinking about could not afford that \$50, or they would have adopted these children years ago, and there are a lot of people in this country under those circumstances. The question really is more provincial than it is federal, but I am only raising it now so that the commission might think about it, because there are children being deprived of the rights of these Acts under these circumstances. \$50 may not sound like a lot of money to us, but it is a lot of money to someone eking out a living on a small pension.

Mr. GOODE: I think, Mr. Chairman, the point has been made before Mr. Gillis spoke on this matter. This is not important until after the veteran dies, and that supports Mr. Gillis argument, because where are you then? The veteran dies and this child has not been legally adopted: What is the mother going to do? I am not a lawyer, but I can say that in our province it would be most difficult for a lady to legally adopt that child unless she went through a year, perhaps, of investigation. What is the position of the department in this case? These parents have had this child for five years, and it has been understood in the neighbourhood they are its legal parents, and right after the veteran dies it is found the child was never adopted?

Mr. BURNS: You mean in regard to insurance?

Mr. GOODE: Yes.

Mr. BURNS: The wife would be the beneficiary.

Mr. GOODE: But what about the children? We will say both parents die.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, naturally the children would inherit.

Mr. BURNS: Any modification or relaxation of the rule that legal adoption is required affects other legislation—the Pension Act to mention only one—and perhaps it would be sufficient for the point raised by Mr. Gillis if the department should give the assurance that the Social Service division and the Veterans Welfare branch will look into this with a view to finding some way whereby adoptions can be facilitated.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the clause carry?

Carried.