Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for that clarification. I also appreciate his clarification with respect to the treatment of income. I had been under the impression that the Minister did not support the Government's initiative with respect to unemployment insurance, specifically as it relates to veterans and those people who had been in the Armed Forces and who will not have an opportunity to collect unemployment insurance as a result of the Government's measures.

I do know that that was the position expressed by one of the former Ministers of National Defence, and perhaps I was confused there. I am sorry the Minister has taken this position because I believe he has a certain amount of political capital, shall we say, in the context of his Party. He is a man who has fought many wars politically in the House of Commons for a number of years. I do think that if the Minister were in a position to exercise his political muscle and capital with his colleagues, he might get the Government to back down on this most controversial and unfair measure.

I am sure the Minister cannot comment further in light of Government solidarity. I believe in my heart that the Minister does not agree with this measure, although he is bound by cabinet solidarity to tough it out. I would encourage him to continue to use his own influence within his Cabinet and his Party to have his Government change its position, because I believe the representations which are coming in from across the country from people who belong to all political Parties, Liberal, New Democratic and Conservative, show quite clearly that in this particular measure the Government has bitten off more than it can chew. I hope the Minister can convince his colleagues that at least to await the recommendation of the Forget Commission would be in his Party's own best interests.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South-Weston): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to make some very short submissions with respect to Bill C-100. My colleagues have already indicated that the Liberal Party is in full support of Bill C-100. I have a number of Legions in my riding and a great number of veterans who reside in York South-Weston. I know I speak for them when I congratulate the Minister and thank him for showing sensitivity, compassion and concern for veterans by bringing forward Bill C-100.

It is with a great degree of chagrin, however, that I say that other Ministers of the Crown, including the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) and the Association Minister of National Defence (Mr. Andre), do not show the same sensitivity, compassion and concern for our veterans. I note that the Associate Minister of National Defence is in the House and listening very attentively. While the Minister of Veterans Affairs is doing all he can within his jurisdiction to improve the plight of veterans in Canada by increasing their pensions and ensuring that their standard of living is elevated, there are other Ministers of the Crown who are doing what they can to derogate from those very positive measures. As my colleague, the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps), pointed out, the Associate Minister of National Defence used a very heavy hand in threatening the Canadian Forces Pensions' Committee with legal action because it uses the words "Canadian Forces" in its title.

I have a letter dated February 18, addressed to the Canadian Forces Pensioners' Committee. In that letter the Associate Minister of National Defence threatens this association, which represents thousands and thousands of veterans, with legal action. In the letter he requests, pursuant to Section 248 of the National Defence Act, that its use of the words "Canadian Forces" cease immediately and he enclosed a copy of Section 248 of the Act. Section 248 of the National Defence Act states:

(*a*) the words "Canadian Forces" or "Canadian Armed Forces" or the name of any component, unit or other element thereof or any abbreviation thereof or any words or letters likely to be mistaken therefor,

If used by any person, that person or organization is subject to prosecution. They are guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction. He is threatening legal action against this worth-while organization which has as its purpose, its *raison d'être*, the improvement of the lot of veterans. Is that any way to treat Canadian veterans? That is an example of the insensitivity of certain Ministers of the Crown.

There are other Ministers, including the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald), who bring in measures which have the effect of creating considerable hardship for the veterans of Canada. We have the Minister of Veterans Affairs, on the one hand, attempting to improve the lot of veterans and the Associate Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Employment and Immigration, on the other hand, doing what they can to derogate from the good that the Minister of Veterans Affairs is proposing. We all know that the Minister of Employment and Immigration introduced a measure which came into effect on January 5, 1986. It states that if one is collecting unemployment insurance benefits, or receiving a pension, then that pension will be included as earned income. Thereby, it deprives a great number of pensioners and veterans from receiving UI benefits. It is obvious that the Minister of Employment and Immigration did not consider the effect that this particular regressive measure would have on the thousands upon thousands of Canadians who are receiving pensions, many of whom are veterans. The Minister simply did not have the sensitivity, compassion or understanding with respect to the impact of this terrible measure.

● (1710)

In closing, I simply wish to congratulate once again the Minister of Veterans Affairs for being a first class Minister. He shows a great deal of class in the House in his fight for veterans.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nunziata: We know that other Ministers who should be fighting for veterans are not fighting for them. I am delighted to know that the veterans residing in my riding of York South-Weston are well served by the Minister of Veterans Affairs. I know that as long as he is in Cabinet he will