veterans of both world wars as well as veterans who were subjected to the indecencies and the inhumanities of prisoner of war camps. Unfortunately, the Government did not reflect the view of the Minister of Veterans Affairs. Instead, it reflected the view of the Minister of National Defence and the Associate Minister of National Defence. It is shocking that the Minister of National Defence and the Associate Minister of National Defence would not fight for the men and women who represent and have represented this country in time of war and peace.

● (1650)

Not only is the Associate Minister unprepared to defend their rights, he and his colleagues have made it quite clear that any attempt on Armed Forces bases across the country to collect signatures in opposition to this cruel and unjust measure will be met with potential military sanctions. Unfortunately, the Associate Minister of National Defence and the Minister of National Defence have not heeded the fine work that has been done by the Minister of Veterans Affairs. It is clear to all Canadians who have taken any interest in the Armed Forces that the name of the Minister of Veterans Affairs evokes sympathy and respect among veterans and non-veterans alike. However, the same cannot be said for the Associate Minister of National Defence and the Minister of National Defence who have refused, even when confronted by their colleagues, to protect the pension rights of former members of the Armed Forces.

At the very least, the Minister of National Defence, in concert with the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald), could have put an addendum to this excellent Bill saying that veterans and at least hose who served in the Korean War should not be caught in the trap that has been laid by the Minister of Employment and Immigration in the new definition of income. If the Government is prepared to wield that heavy hammer over all workers in Canada, it should, at the very least, exempt those who have represented our country in time of war. The Government has ignored the recommendations, the counsel and suggestions of the Canadian Armed Forces Pensioners Association and in fact suggested that if that association did not remove the name "Canadian Armed Forces" from its name it would be prosecuted. Imagine the spectacle of the Associate Minister of National Defence leading the veterans of this country into court because they had the responsibility and opportunity to use "Canadian Armed Forces" in the name of their organization.

Those of us who examine the intent of the legislation and regulations dealing with the Canadian Armed Forces and how it can properly be represented, recognize that the intention is to prevent private firms, corporations and other concerns from trying to make money off the Armed Forces by somehow representing themselves to be something else by use of the words "Canadian Armed Forces".

The Associate Minister of National Defence has chosen to take this regulation to the ridiculous extreme by suggesting to veterans and former employees of the Armed Forces that they will be prosecuted by the Government and the Minister if they write a letter to the Minister of National Defence asking him to speak on their behalf in Cabinet and in the Government on the issue of pensions as they relate to income for the purposes of unemployment insurance benefits.

I suggest that the Minister of National Defence and the Associate Minister of National Defence take a page from the book of the Minister of Veterans Affairs and recognize that their mandate as Privy Council representatives of the Armed Forces in Cabinet should be to protect and promote the interests of the Armed Forces in Canada rather than support the heavy-handed measures that have been taken by their colleagues, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The Minister of Veterans Affairs is not afraid to speak out and introduce good legislation. He is not afraid to speak out in opposition to his own Government. He is prepared to call a spade a spade. He recognizes that his number one priority should be the defence and enhancement of the quality of life of veterans, particularly those veterans who have fought for this country and were imprisoned during the two world wars as well as the Korean War.

This Bill demonstrates that he is prepared to put his money where his mouth is and take steps to improve the situation not only for veterans but for their spouses, widows and children. I believe the Minister of Veterans Affairs should be congratulated on his efforts.

I only wish that the good sense which has been demonstrated by the Minister in this particular issue would somehow filter over to the Minister of National Defence and the Associate Minister of National Defence. They have clearly abandoned their responsibilities to veterans on the issue of pensions and the definition of income. In other words, they are toeing the Party line even though other Members on the Government side, including a former Minister of National Defence, have the guts to stand up and be counted.

Even organizations within their Party, such as the Oromocto Progressive Conservative Womens Association, are prepared to mobilize in opposition to the government policy. Those of us in political Parties know that women are the backbone of any political organization, and when the Progressive Conservative women's organization fights against a Government policy, the Government is losing the backbone of the organization which put it into office.

The Government should follow the example of the Minister of Veterans Affairs and introduce legislation that will support and improve the quality of life of our veterans rather than falling in line, lock-step, with the initiatives introduced by the Minister of Finance in November, 1984. Those measures were subsequently endorsed by the Minister of Employment and Immigration and were implemented in two steps. The first step was taken last year with respect to severance pay and the second step was taken this year with respect to pensions.

I do not believe that the Government realizes that the current discontent among those on army bases across the country is only the tip of the iceberg. I encourage the Govern-