

purposes of collecting a pension in this particular initiative. I would like to find out from the Minister whether the inclusion of pensions paid to the person or the spouse from the flying accidents compensation regulations, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superannuation Act, the Penitentiary Act and the compensation regulations and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Pension Continuation Act, constitutes a change in policy. For example, would former members of the RCMP who had also been prisoners of war, be prevented from receiving a pension? If that is the case then I think in that particular section we want to be very careful about how we define income.

We have seen in another area of government initiative with respect to war veterans as well as members who worked in the private and public sectors a regulation, not even a Bill, which changed the definition of income and had a very serious and detrimental impact on thousands of Canadians. I would not like to see the same thing happen in this particular Bill because we definitely see that in Clause 14 there is a change in the consideration of income for the purposes of receiving an allowance.

We are a bit skeptical on this side of the House about the Government's motives. I would like to give the Minister a chance to respond to that.

**Mr. Lewis:** I rise on a point of order. In an effort to be of assistance to the Member let me tell her that there have been informal discussions with both Parties with respect to moving this Bill into Committee of the Whole House at report stage and third reading. It would be our intention to bring the officials in for a clause-by-clause study in Committee of the Whole House. The Hon. Member makes a good point on the issues she has raised, and if she wished to enunciate any other points that she wants us to address during clause-by-clause study, we will be glad to have that taken care of.

**Ms. Copps:** I am not sure that that was a point of order. It happens to be a good point, but I do not think it is a point of order. Nonetheless I draw that to the attention of the Government because I also have personal interest in this particular piece of legislation. My great grandfather was killed in the First World War, and my grandfather, as a result of numerous war injuries after serving in both wars literally lived out his last days through the help he had from the pension he received from the Department of Veterans Affairs. I know that there are many other Canadians who appreciate the sincerity of the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Hees). The Minister has shown sincerity both in opposition and in Government, and a willingness to fight for the rights of veterans. He showed that most recently when he went against his own Government's policy with respect to the redefinition of income when it comes to the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits. Unfortunately, while we can certainly wholeheartedly endorse the good sense and, indeed, the commitment of the Minister of Veterans Affairs on this particular Bill and the work that he is trying to accomplish on behalf of veterans, unfortunately the same cannot be said of the Government which he represents.

#### *Army Benevolent Fund Act and Related Acts*

That is clear to Canadians when they see a Government that is prepared to ignore the wise advice and counsel of the Minister of Veterans Affairs when it comes to the issue of the definition of income for the purpose of unemployment insurance, when they see the same Government prepared to ignore the wise counsel and advice of a former Minister of National Defence, and when they see that same Government prepared not only to ignore advice from within its own ranks on the issue of pensions and how they are considered as income for the purposes of unemployment insurance, but also from the Department of National Defence which seems to me to be at loggerheads with the Department of Veterans Affairs on this issue.

While we can congratulate the Minister of Veterans Affairs for the work he is doing, we note that the one hand giveth and the other hand taketh away. The other hand taketh away because certainly those veterans of the Korean War who find themselves in receipt of pensions are now being told that if they are in a position to work they cannot collect unemployment insurance. They must pay into the fund and can never collect even when they find themselves without a job.

While the Minister of Veterans Affairs has shown great support in this area, on the other side of the fence we have the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) and the Associate Minister of National Defence (Mr. Andre) who have not only refused to listen to the pleas of veterans on this particular issue and who have refused to listen to the pleas of ordinary working people, but who have also suggested that those veterans, those pensioners, those former employees of Her Majesty's armed services who decide to fight for their rights, should be threatened with prosecution if they use the words "Canadian Armed Forces" in their circulars.

For the last two decades we have had the Canadian Armed Forces Pensioners Association. We have had a loosely knit group of pensioners whose sole aim in life is to protect the rights of pensioners who gave good service to Her Majesty during the wars and between the wars, whether it be the First World War, the Second World War or the Korean War. I do not think that anybody could impugn the motives of the men and women who have come together in the Canadian Armed Forces Pensioners Association.

When they wrote to the Minister of National Defence on this issue, not only did they not get a supportive reply—as they received verbally and in writing from the Minister of Veterans Affairs—but the Associate Minister wrote to them citing a clause in which he has now made himself the Minister, because in the actual Act the Minister of National Defence is empowered, if he writes in his own hand to an individual or group, to force them to cease and desist from using the words "Canadian Armed Forces" in their information and publicity. No such right is attributed to the Associate Minister of National Defence. As usual, the Associate Minister of National Defence is the fall guy for the Minister of National Defence. The Associate Minister of National Defence took it upon himself to write to these men and women who were fighting for the rights of pensioners within the Armed Forces,