

themselves in this unequal situation by putting some anti-strike-breaking and anti-scab legislation in place.

Mr. Thorkelson: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question on that issue in Powell River. I would note he has brought that up in the House before with the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women in Question Period. She answered at that time that it was a contractual dispute. It was essentially a labour-management dispute. I am sure that her department has carefully looked at that. I would not be surprised if there had not been consultations between her department and the Department of Labour.

I join with the member in deploring the action of the management of that institution. I only hope that the dispute is solved so that these women can return to their jobs, have some opportunity and are able to live their lives with dignity.

On the question of affirmative action, I would hope that we as a government continue in our efforts in that respect. We have done quite a bit in the past and I am sure there is more we can do in the future.

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing.

I noticed that the previous member spoke with a great deal of praise for the government's actions on violence against women. This country has become increasingly concerned over the plight of women with respect to violence against them over the last number of years. This motion is very appropriate. When we take a detailed look at the government's action in this area, we see that last year the government announced with much fanfare a \$137 million program to deal with violence against women. But when we looked at it closely, we found out it was actually going to spend something like \$15 million last year and \$20 million this year for a total of \$35 million spread over two years. The balance of the program spending was going to take place somewhere in the future, when everyone in this country knows very well that the Conservatives will never be the government in that period of time.

• (1520)

At the same time the government announced changes to the Canada Assistance Plan. It limited the payments

Supply

to the provinces of Alberta, Ontario and British Columbia. What amounts of money were involved in that? Was it \$15 million or \$20 million? No, it was not.

In the first year the province of Ontario lost \$415 million. In the second year, \$1.2 billion. In the first year the province of British Columbia lost \$200 million. In the second year it lost \$900 million. The total losses to those two provinces for two years was \$2.7 billion.

On the one hand we have the government announcing a \$35 million program with much fanfare to fight violence against women. At the same time we have the federal government taking \$2.7 billion away from two provinces.

We have to take a look at the programs funded under the Canada Assistance Plan dealing with violence against women. First, the Canada Assistance Plan is used to fund transition houses or safe homes. That program provides women with first-line protection when they have to leave their homes because of violence. We have the government giving \$35 million on the one hand and taking back \$2.7 billion, affecting transition houses.

It provides support programs in the form of income assistance for women who are forced because of violence in the family to flee their husbands or partners and take their children with them. What is the government doing? It is offering a nice PR program of \$35 million but it is taking away \$2.7 billion, affecting basic income assistance programs that support women who had to leave families in which violence has taken place.

Programs of counselling for women who have been traumatized and immobilized because of violence against them assisted these women in recovering their dignity, regaining their self-assurance and getting them back into the labour market. Here we have again the government announcing with much fanfare its glitzy \$35 million and cutting \$2.7 billion from the very kinds of programs that could assist women.

It cuts out programs for sexual abuse, not only sexual abuse for youngsters but also counselling services for adult survivors of sexual abuse. We have this situation where the government gives a little and takes away 90 times more in programs that directly affect women in violent situations.

It cut out child abuse programs.