

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 28 March, 1985.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

BUDGET DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance and the amendment thereto proposed by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Member for Rupertsland has 32 minutes remaining.

MR. E. HARPER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Despite the continuing emphasis by Indian Affairs on welfare and bureaucracy, the Indians are making great progress in developing self-sufficiency and running their own businesses. Last month, for example, I was in Norway House along with our Attorney-General. We visited our local stores, and we ate in one of our local restaurants that was operated by the Chief himself, Walter Apetagon.

This community, like any other other community, is making great progress in training workers for Limestone. There are training occupations for their members like driving, rock drillers, loader operators, rock crushers, carpenters and others, so they are seeing themselves participating in the development of Limestone in a short while.

Last year also, I was in Norway House along with the Premier, and we were honoured to attend the high school graduation there. They had the largest graduation ever held in Norway House. I think well over 30 people were graduating the class. Natives are graduating each year, and this is happening . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: There seems to be some of the microphones opened that are interfering with the speech - inadvertently - of the Member for Rupertsland, and I wondered whether that situation can be controlled. It is? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Until that happens, perhaps the honourable member will refrain from touching his own microphone.

The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. E. HARPER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said before, Natives are graduating in large numbers and from their reserves in great numbers. This government has maintained a quality of education for northerners and kept programs such as BUNTEP and PENT which have developed a number of Native teachers. Each year, when I travel to my reserves and the constituency I represent, I see many of the Native people are teaching in schools and many of the Natives are continuing to pursue careers in education and other careers. I remember the year 1979 when the Conservative Government slashed about 20 percent of the Native education program. Indian people are gradually taking

more and more responsibility for their education on reserves and this government has made good moves in that direction.

Indian people are taking control of their lives and their culture in other ways as well. The success and importance of Native Communications Incorporated is well known to Northern Manitoba. Currently 10 Indians are taking a course in Thompson on television programming. When they graduate they will be working at TV stations or on reserves in Manitoba. The Mechiso (phonetic) Television will be broadcasting part of the Native communication and will be completing an agreement with CBC within a week or two giving Mechiso Television access to CBC air time.

Manitoba, starting in mid-May, will truly represent the reserves as this 7:00-9:00 a.m. program will be Native language programming so that the people will be able to listen to the program in their own language. This is very exciting to me because it is important for the dignity and growth of our people. They will see and hear themselves in the media instead of the ugly types of images that appear too often on television or in newspapers.

On Tuesday, the Premier announced the agreement with General Electric to build turbines and generators; naturally, I am pleased with this. I am also interested in the \$2 million Economic Development Program for northern Native people beginning in 1985. This is to establish Native owned and operated businesses in Northern Manitoba. The Memorandum of Understanding that was reached with Canadian General Electric Company that was announced by our Premier means that General Electric will help to establish Native owned businesses particularly with respect to providing technical training and management expertise, the outcome of which will be aimed at establishing a nucleus of capability across Northern Manitoba which can provide the foundation for other northern Natives.

The government has also taken special measures to ensure that Native northerners will benefit from Limestone. At this time I would like to congratulate the Minister of Energy and Mines for bringing Limestone to reality and also for his support for Native northerners.

The government has in place a collective agreement which is between Hydro Council and the Project Management Association in which a hiring clause favourable to northern Native people is included. Qualified northern Native people will be hired first.

A number of initiatives are being undertaken with respect to Native people. Various training programs are being contemplated with the advice of northern Native people and also for business opportunities. A training agency is also being established in the North. Native people will provide advice and direction to the training agency. Also an information office will be established in the North regarding Limestone development; of course, Native people will be also involved there.

In summary, the Budget and recent announcement on Limestone show that this government will continue

its policy on developing the North in consultation with Native northerners. Native northerners will no longer tolerate cutbacks such as Northern Affairs experienced during the Conservative years. — (Interjection) — It would be nice. You're not even decent to be a Conservative.

In my work this year as chairperson of the northern working group and Legislative Assistant to the Minister of Northern Affairs, the Honourable Member for The Pas, I look forward to measures outlined in the Budget working for the benefit of northerners and all Manitobans.

So with that, I will conclude, Mr. Speaker. I am certain this government has vision. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to be speaking in this Budget Debate and I would like to welcome the new Assistant Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, the first woman to hold that position. I am very pleased to see you here and know that you are going to do a good job.

I would like to also congratulate the new member of the Cabinet, the Minister for Northern Affairs, and we will watch carefully what he is doing; and also a welcome to our new member, the Member for Fort Garry. I know he is going to be a good addition to our caucus.

Before I start on the debate, I would like to also pay tribute to the Member for Kildonan. I hope and pray that she wins her struggle against cancer, that we all miss her very much, and that goes for our side of the House every bit as much as your own.

Speaking to the Budget Debate, the thing that I guess that has appalled me the most on this debate is the lack of what it is actually doing for people when there is money available. Our leader has spoken often about the number of political staff, support staff that this government has hired and the cost to the government, approximately \$3.7 million.

Today, in Question Period, we hear that they're probably all going to be off on leave of absence - it doesn't matter what - out doing elections in other provinces. I really feel offended to think that this money is sitting there for people who are off in another province. Who then is doing their work? Well, probably the civil servants. This is not right, nor is it fair; and it's true. As the Member for Pembina says, if we can do without them for the time of the election, we can do without them altogether and we would welcome that money back in the Treasury.

Mr. Speaker, there is \$4.7 million direct-paid advertising, a total of \$8.4 million this year, and then we look in the paper, in the Winnipeg Sun, and it says: "Pawley throws a Limestone celebration. Pawley and his Energy Minister, Wilson Parasiuk, threw a reception yesterday at the Legislature to celebrate, and they planned to spend in fiscal 1985 and 1986 about \$1 million for ads and promotional material." Another addition to this. We've already seen the ads start. Most of us have seen them on TV and heard them on the radio. This was the first one, and this wasn't the two-tone colour one that was in the Press, this came out

of the Sun. They must have hurried this one in, and they didn't get the colour on it. But in the Free Press of March 23rd, it indicated: "Wasting tax dollars" - the editorial - "Is it necessary or right to spend a million tax dollars in the current economic environment to promote the early construction of the Limestone Generating Station on the Nelson River? This question must be occurring to every Manitoba taxpayer. It must be occurring with special force to every unemployed Manitoban." And that is exactly true.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many ways. Everyday we hear the government Ministers getting up and saying we can't afford to do this, and we can't afford to do that, and you want us to spend more money. We don't want them to spend any new money, we want them to take this money that they've squandered on advertising and put it into areas where it's needed.

Mr. Speaker, on Page 27 in the Budget under Human Resources - I'll just take one part out of that paragraph, and it says: "Money is limited this year." What a farce! Money is limited this year. Why is it limited this year? Because they're spending it all on getting themselves elected. This caring, wonderful government hasn't got money for human resources.

Mr. Speaker, on Page 28 of the Budget, it indicates that there is increased emphasis on measures and services to help the many children and spouses who have for too long silently endured family violence. Now, I'd just like to say a few words about spousal violence. It said in the Throne Speech that we are already making successful efforts against spousal abuse and child abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I have a pamphlet here that says why husband beating is a red herring, and I take offence at this government using the word "spousal abuse" when it is out and out simply wife abuse. There is no way that it can be referred to anything but.

In this pamphlet, on Page 6, it says, "Wife assault does more damage than husband assault. It is assaulted women who end up in doctor's offices and hospital emergency rooms." It goes on to say, "A wife-beater often hits his victims simultaneously, his wife and her unborn child. Forty percent of the physically abused women at Interval House in 1979 had been beaten while pregnant. Blows on the abdomen of the pregnant woman are common. This double target is not available for husband beaters." It went on to say, "Many assaulted women find that leaving their marriage does not remove the fear and violence from their lives. Violent husbands often hound and harass their wives for months after a separation has occurred. There is no evidence that wives who hit their husbands do the same. Truly, battered husbands are usually infirm or disabled and the physical removal of the victim from the home ends the violence, just as removing an abused child from the home ends the parental abuse of that child.

Does the women's movement not care about battered husbands? It certainly does. But if people think husband-beating is as common as wife-beating, they will continue to think the problem is just one of troubled marriages. In arguments that get out of hand, they will not see the need for social and political action to remove the "rule of thumb" principle in our society. We believe when all groups in the community agree to take responsibility for stopping wife-beating, this will automatically assist that very small number of weak and infirm husbands who live in fear.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the next time I hear the government or see them put out something that says spousal abuse, that they will change that to wife abuse and get back to what the issue is, not a play on words.

A MEMBER: We spend more time reorganizing the language. What we need is some action.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Speaker, this government is spending approximately \$8 or \$9 million on advertising. The central region for the committee on wife abuse, which takes in the Portage la Prairie, Morden and Winkler area, and they are allotted \$50,000 for the whole area. Now, this is disgraceful. They can hardly do anything with those funds. But this government has the money to spend on their political hacks - and I apologize for that - the political people - I don't want to use that term - and on their advertising and I think it's disgraceful.

In the Portage la Prairie area, this is an area that has got quite a good crisis centre going. Now these women, they work in a small office upstairs in the business district. When they have calls, they go out and physically remove the women and the children themselves. They will sometimes meet the RCMP but they go out and bring these women and take them either to a safe home if they have one or back to the office.

When I went up there to speak to them just on the general issues of wife abuse, because we're as interested on this side of the House as that side profess to be, and I know they are because I know the women on the government side of the House, a lot of them have come up through the women's movement and have been very active. I don't doubt that for one moment. I would think that they for one would be appalled at the type of spending that's going on.

I heard the Member for Wolseley talk about cows and highways and why spend money on this, but good heavens, surely even if you took 1 million out of that - 1 million - how far would that go to helping the women in trouble and helping these crises centres? But it has not been taken out because really the priorities of this government are to get re-elected. Really they say they care, but when it comes down to the "nitty gritty", and the actual "what do we do with these funds?", there's no doubt in our minds, it's there for us to see.

We've got the women out in the areas going out in the night, putting themselves at risk, bringing home women that are at risk and this government is giving them a paltry \$50,000, when they have \$8 or \$9 million laying around that they should be using some of these funds. Even if they don't use all of those funds, if they would take \$2 million out of there and put it into that. But they won't, they don't do it. So, consequently — (Interjection) — I hear what the Member for Wolseley is saying, and if it wasn't for the fact that this money has been spent on political aides, political people and on political advertising, I wouldn't have a thing to say about the money that they are spending. But when I see the waste and the money that's expended on programs to get them elected, and then they have the nerve to stand up and say that they are a caring government and all we're doing for women and children

and everyone else, then I say they're wrong, and they are really wrong.

It makes me annoyed because I didn't come up that route. I didn't come up the women's movement, and I'm sorry I wasn't a part of it, but I came up the traditional route. But that doesn't mean that I feel any less for the women that are out there in crisis and that are hurting, or for the children that are hurting. I feel that this government is very two-faced when they will spend the kind of money that they can on advertising and on public relations. There is just absolutely no need.

We have in the Portage area an executive director who is a social worker. She's got a degree in social work. Her top salary that she was getting was \$17,000.00. Out of the \$50,000 from the region they've topped her salary to \$20,000.00. Now is this the way we are treating women? Is this how we treat women? That she has to take \$20,000, and the political staff, the political aides are getting \$30,000 and \$40,000 and \$50,000 a year? Not on your life. Not on your life. They're having to top the funds. All they have for their staff are minimum wage, and they can't keep staff on minimum wage, and so they're having to top them.

Oh, the member talks about the Fort Garry Centre. Well, let's talk about the Fort Garry Centre because I don't mind talking about it. I don't care if it was a Tory Government, it was a Liberal Government or it was an NDP Government that cut the funding. Damn it all, they need that funding, and this government should step in and fund that centre. It's one of the few places in Winnipeg that we have, so don't tell me about that. I'm as cross with the Tories, I don't care who it is when they cut funding like that. So don't give me that garbage. You've got the money there, and if you can send aides out to Newfoundland and into Ontario to help with their elections, you can take that money and you can darn well give it to this centre because it's the last refuge for Winnipeg women.

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, the Portage Centre, the Morden-Winkler Centre, they can't keep staff on minimum wage. Training volunteers - the government says get volunteers. We have volunteers in the community. There's nothing like the rural area for volunteers, and for this government to tell them to go out and get volunteers. They are volunteering. What do they think the rural areas run on? It is volunteers, and it always has been; but it costs money to train volunteers, and volunteers are not going to have the same long-term commitment. They're not going to get up in the middle of the night. They're not going to be able to go out and rescue women and children; that isn't happening. They need some staff, and they're willing to do it without a lot of staff, but they do need some help.

In Portage la Prairie now, they have second-stage housing. This didn't come from the government funding. They've managed to find a house, and it's called McKenzie Hiebert House. This is someplace that women can go and stay for about three months, because even when you get a woman to a safe home or into a shelter, what happens is that after seven days they've got no place to go. If they haven't got secondary housing and they need more help and they haven't got money, they end up going back into a situation that they're fearful for and get more beatings.

Mr. Speaker, I can't say enough about the type of work that the women in rural Manitoba and in Winnipeg are doing, and they're doing it with very limited funding, yet this government, \$8 million, \$9 million that they're throwing away on advertising and political people. This province supports wife abuse.

In the Morden-Winkler area, they have all volunteers in that area. One of the indications that they have sent in the letter is that: "The limitations of safe homes are becoming increasingly apparent. Safe home accommodations are short term, maximum seven days. This time span is inadequate for a woman to maintain financial assistance, establish employment and housing. Transition housing will become part of future planning." These women are out there, and they are working.

This government started another campaign. It was the \$100,000 media campaign for wife abuse. Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said before, it is fine to have a campaign, but if when the women phone in they have nowhere to place them, they have nowhere to go, what happens to them? Do they ever call again? I mean, they think they are going to get help, because that's what these television programs are telling them and the programs are good. The advertising is good, but without the proper funding in place, then what you're doing is creating an expectation for women out there and they're hurting. This sort of thing, when they phone in and someone says to them, well, you'll have to phone the RCMP. They knew that sort of thing before.

These programs are telling them they'll get help. Someone will help them, and they mean that they are expecting to get actual physical help. They want someone there who can talk to them; if they need to get out of the home, to come and get them. There are some areas in this province that haven't got committees set up, so when someone phones up from that type of area, what happens to these women? Gee, I'm sorry, if you can get into Winnipeg, or if you can get somewhere. If they could do this sort of thing themselves, they would have done it, but they can't. They're beaten into the ground and they need help.

What is this government doing? I know that they are trying and they're doing their best, but it's all the upfront things, all the advertising and look how good we are. What I would rather see is some of that money get into the shelters, get into secondary housing and get into staff, so that staff can have some money and they'll keep at it. These women are working for literally nothing, and yet we have staff. The government has paid political staff that can take off anytime. What's a month here and there? I mean, sure, go out and help. It doesn't matter about these women. It's disgraceful!

This is one of the press releases that Community Services, I believe, put out. It was on wife abuse. It goes through all the areas that they've helped and all the places that they are giving money. And they are funding some of the shelters, not well probably but they're funding them, but it's not the shelters. It's what happens after that that has to count. At the back, the last part of it, it says: "March, 1985." That's when they launched their multi-media program.

Then the Winnipeg Free Press on March 20th says: "Wife abuse calls flood in," and the last paragraph: "We've had cases where women couldn't even phone us for help, because their husbands took the telephone and the telephone book with him when he left for work

in the morning, and the victim didn't have the money to go to a pay phone or the knowledge of who to call."

Well, what is happening in the City of Winnipeg? We have the calls coming in, but I was informed that there is no one that can go and get them. If these women don't have any money, if they're in that situation, how do they get to the shelters? Do they take a bus? Do they get on the bus when they're living in fear? I doubt that that's happening.

Winnipeg has got one - well, there are two shelters but one, Osborne House, is the one where the women go, but it's so limited. They can only stay there for the seven days; there is nothing for them after. That's why I am really rather offended that the Member for Wolseley would turn something like the Fort Garry Centre into a political matter. It doesn't matter what government isn't funding; that is beside the point. The point is that if one government is not, this government should be able to pick that up because they've got the bucks.

I'm not asking for new money. It's there in the advertising, and all the money surely hasn't been spent on the Limestone project. It must be there and they could fund it, because it's worthwhile. This is one place where women are getting some help and where they've got resources, and it's a shame that they are trying to turn it into a political football because that isn't what it is. We want to be able to help these women.

Well, what is the government reaction to the needs of wife abuse? One of the areas is they're going to hire a co-ordinator. Now, a co-ordinator isn't exactly what is needed at this time. They've got the Wife Abuse Committee; they have the region set up. What they need is the help out in the community.

This co-ordinator will be within the Department of Community Services and Corrections. Now, I don't know if they're planning to start another parallel committee in the department as well as the Committee on Wife Abuse - I've no idea - and what salary the co-ordinator will get. I'm betting it is probably close to \$50,000, and the total funding for a whole region is \$50,000, a lot of money to spend on one person at this time.

I'm not saying that position may not be needed at some time, and I know it probably will be a woman in that position, at least I'm assuming that. And I am happy to see women make that salary because they don't ordinarily, but at the same time there are priorities. This can't be the first priority.

These areas are crying for funding, and all I see is that \$8.4 million sitting there. What happens is another ad in the paper, another - oh, the word escapes me - anyway, it's in the newspaper, and it says: "Pawley adds \$260,000 in the payroll for political aides." Now, we've heard that. Members from our side have been talking about this all along, but when you put it in the perspective of what could be done to help women, to help children, then it takes on a little bit different light. This isn't just money for political aides, and then the political aides take off, so what's the point in spending that money? I just think it's ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Flin Flon said I don't know what political aides are. I know what political aides are. I'm just feeling that at a time when we're short of money and when this government says - what did it say in the Budget about human resources? - money is limited this year. Well, if it's limited this year, how come they're able to spend \$260,000.00? Every time you turn around, it's more political.

The Manitoba Advisory Committee on the Status of Women has done a report on the system's response to victims of incest. I'd like to go over the first page of this, if I may. "The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women is mandated by the Provincial Government to advise government on issues which affect the status of women. As the taboo against breaking the silence on incest has lessened its grip and increasing numbers of victims and survivors speak out to protest their treatment, it has become apparent that this is a subject which must concern all of us who care about the emotional and physical health of children. What is equally apparent is that this is a subject which must concern those who care about the status of women in our society and have a commitment to advancing the status to equality. The alarming statistics which demonstrate that this is a predominantly male crime perpetrated upon a predominantly female victim." And here we are again, another area where funding is desperately needed. The Member for St. Norbert had questions on trying to get \$65,000 that was there in the Core Area Initiative to fund a program that is obviously working and yet they can't seem to get it out of the system. They are crying.

There is a summary of recommendations, and I'm just going to give you two or three, but it all takes funds, and yet this government is wasting money on political advertising, and I am going to say it again and again. It is a disgrace, and if the people of Manitoba really get wind of it and they will, because we plan to tell them over and over again where this money can go.

Some of the recommendations in the Medical and Child Protection Services: development of child abuse units or teams within all Manitoba hospitals.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: This seems to be a very humorous subject to some of the members. I don't consider it so.

A MEMBER: The NDP seem to find it amusing.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.
The Honourable Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mandatory training for all students of medicine, nursing and psychiatry on incest in the sexual abuse of children; teaching approach to incorporate removal of blame from the victim; development of a children's 24-hour crisis line; allocation of funding for a child protection centre in Winnipeg to enable the hiring of additional psychologists, social workers and physicians; the expansion of premises; the expansion of therapy programming, and the expansion of preventative programming; allocation of funding for the development of child abuse centres similar to the child protection centre within each region of the province; mandatory training for social workers, psychologists, foster parents and group home workers on incest and the sexual abuse of children; development of special protection in

treatment homes for sexually abused children; to provide a temporary supportive environment for children whose non-abusing parent is unable to give protection; and house a treatment program for any child victim.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the things that are coming out in the victims of incest. This is a program that has been presented to the government, and yet they say in the Budget that money is limited. Now, money isn't limited, not if they can spend \$8 or \$9 million on political aides and political advertising. They don't need to be spending \$1 million more on Limestone; it's getting enough advertising without that. They don't need to spend that kind of money. If they took a quarter of that money, it would be more than adequate, but I don't think they should be taking any.

There was an article in the paper and it said, "Incest report criticized governments. 'Agency's request for more staffing, programs repeatedly rejected,' the study says. 'A lack of support by the Manitoba and Federal Governments is the major roadblock in developing services for incest victims,' says a study submitted to the province. 'Many of the agencies involved in this area have repeatedly been turned down in their request for increased staffing and programming,' the report says."

Now, we don't hear any of that from this government, we don't hear any of that at all. All we hear about are programs that they're advertising, how well they're doing, how they know it's there. We all know it's there. Now, what are they going to do about it? I suggest they take some of the funding out of this year's Budget that is there for advertising. The political aides that are in Newfoundland and Ontario, sack them now, we'll save those salaries. Let them stay in Newfoundland and in Ontario, and they can continue to work there, and we'll take that money and put it into helping incest victims and helping women. — (Interjection) — I'm very surprised, Mr. Speaker, at the amount of talk I'm getting out of the Member for Wolseley who is supposedly in the forefront of the women's movement, and yet I can't seem to grasp that that money is there. It's there for you to take, and it's there for you to put it in these programs. But because of this government's mismanagement there isn't the money, and the Minister of Finance wrings his hands and says money is limited. It isn't limited.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women has put out some very good reports, and there's one on the concerns of rural and farm women

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: . . . and in one of the recommendations - if you'll just bear with me a moment - it's the concerns coming — (Interjection) — out of the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns, and it's indicated, is that the rural family is under

increased stress caused from irregular and inconsistent income, seasonal workloads, weather and high interest rates. Then how do we find this government treating the farm families, the farm women? There's a news release, and it came from our side of the House, and it said the CRISP Program was instituted by the Lyon Government in January of 1981 as part of the White Paper Reforms brought in by that government. The new Child Related Income Support Program of 1981 was started in order to provide needed extra income to low income families raising children.

Mr. Speaker, then we go on where the Member for Gladstone wrote to the Minister indicating that instead of helping low-income farm families, it's cut about 1,000 out of the program, and the Minister that cut it out of the program comes from an area that's in the heart of the Manitoba farmland. Has he not been listening to what this side of the House has been saying about the farm problems? The farm community is hurting. The family farm has been placed in jeopardy because of this government's inaction, and what do they do? They take and they cut money right from the farm wife who is having trouble making ends meet. Money is not easy to come by these days in rural Manitoba and they should know that by now and this program is hurting them. What is this government thinking of?

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker — (Interjection) — yes, as the Member for Niakwa said, getting re-elected is the main thing for this government. That's all that matters.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to briefly - how much time do I have?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has three minutes remaining.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I want to briefly talk about the Affirmative Action Program. This, in a "Clear Choice for Manitobans" that we've been using for four years, has been wonderful stuff. In two spots in this they mention about the affirmative action. The Affirmative Action Program would be established for women in the public service and there would be similar requirements for business with government contracts.

The other day in the House when I asked the Minister of Community Services about the six community-based child and family services in Winnipeg, it turns out that there were five men picked as executive directors and one woman. Now I know the Minister had to be embarrassed. She was right. I did know the answer. But I wanted to hear her say it. She had to be embarrassed because this is something I know that she really believes in - and yet somehow she can't, even in her own department, have equal opportunity for women - but goes on to say that the whole affirmative action approach of this government has been to try to get more women in and moving up the ladders to different job fields. So when the jobs come open they will, by ordinary competition, be found to be the lead candidates. That is not going to work. It has never worked.

Women are already qualified and competent to get into these positions and they darn well should have been chosen. This government should be ashamed because that's the one thing, the one area, that they

put up front. They put their women Cabinet Ministers up front, but what's happening behind the scenes? Not a heck of a lot. And that just shows - one woman out of six - in an area that women have expertise, take training. Is this the chance that my daughter, who is completing social work this year, is going to have? She's not going to have any chance at all if this is what happens. You've got to take these women and put them in those positions because like men, they may fail occasionally, but I doubt it because they'll work doubly hard to make sure that they stay there.

A MEMBER: Good for you, Gerrie. Well done.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to mention the Department of Highways' commitment to women. "If there's politics cited into motion aids hiring, there was a respected Highways Department employee demoted while on vacation to make room for a political aide to Transport Minister John Plohman," sources said. It's a blatant political appointment. There's no question in the employee's mind. Senior officials of the department are holding their noses on this one and I don't blame them.

When the Ministers perceive to start parachuting people, and the people are perceived as good people by their superiors are being bounced, then it's "Hacks & Flacks Incorporated." Now, that isn't me saying it. That is this newspaper reporting and somebody from the MGEA or the department.

I want to say, the woman who had been filling the position temporarily and who had been promised a chance at it, was demoted — (Interjection) — back to typist.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member's time has expired.

The Honourable Minister of Employment Services.

HON. L. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't have an opportunity to participate in the Throne Speech Debate so I certainly welcome the opportunity to get into - I get twice the time, I've been advised - so I do welcome the opportunity to participate now and — (Interjection) — Thank you very much.

I just want, firstly, to congratulate people that should be congratulated including yourself, Mr. Speaker, for having to put up with the some of the shenanigans that go on from time to time and it is a difficult job being a Speaker and to be a fair adjudicator of this Assembly, particularly when you have certain members who like to interject perhaps more than they should.

At any rate, when I was listening to the Member for Kirkfield Park, I was saying to myself, I wish the Member for Kirkfield Park had been here as a member of the Lyon administration, because really I enjoyed a lot of her remarks and a lot of her comments - I didn't agree with everything, of course - but I sympathize with her concern for women. I only wish she'd been here during the years when her party was in government and see what happened, and what didn't happen. I really think in a way she's misplaced. I think maybe she should come and join the New Democratic Party because it's been our party and our government, Mr. Speaker, that has taken the lead in Canada and is taking the lead

in Canada, on various issues, various programs designed to help women, to improve and enhance the role of women in our society. There's plenty of evidence of that and one could stand here for a long time reciting that. So I really think perhaps the honourable member is misplaced.

She did mention the CRISP program and you know, Mr. Speaker, when times are tough you want to be able to give the money to the people who need it the most. I think if people understand the CRISP program is for low-income families, then it's a quasi form of welfare, if you please. It's a quasi form of welfare. I think some members opposite would be the first to criticize if we started handing out welfare money to people who had lots of assets.

In Manitoba, to get welfare money, to get social assistance money, you can have no assets. You have to show that you do not have — (Interjection) — Thanks very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If there are members who wish to carry on a private debate, perhaps they would do so outside.

The Honourable Minister of Employment Services.

HON. L. EVANS: The point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, people opposite would be screaming in this Chamber if we were giving out welfare money to people who had thousands of dollars worth of net assets and so on.

What has happened in the CRISP program is that we have tried to make as much money available for low-income families as possible. There was a regulation which said, "if you had over \$50,000 of net assets" - and I underline the word "net" - that's after all liabilities have been taken off, after \$50,000 worth of net assets, not including the family home, not including the principal vehicle, not including the furnishings in the home. After all that and if you are in that position then really, should the taxpayers of this province, who don't have that much money, be paying out funds to people in that particular situation? — (Interjection) — I am talking about net assets.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, if you ask the people of the Province of Manitoba if we should be paying out a form of welfare to people who have over \$50,000 worth of net assets - not counting your home, not counting your vehicle, not counting your furnishings - then I think if we did that survey, I think we'd find out pretty fast that the people would say, no, give it out to the people on low income. And that's what we're trying to do.

Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do is to talk about the economy and the Budget. — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, the Member for Turtle Mountain spoke from his seat and I recall he did make some sort of a statement somewhere criticizing what I had said. I made an effort to look that up in Hansard and for the life of me, I could not find it. So I would like him to find it for me and see what it says. But regardless, Mr. Speaker, that is the policy - well you could look for it if you wish - but that is our policy and it's a policy of trying to give the money to the people who need the money most.

At any rate, Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do is to talk about the economy and the Budget if I can

because I think that's the appropriate topic for this particular debate. If we look at the Manitoba economy, I think one would have to agree that it's a relatively small economy; it's a diversified economy; it's an economy whose industries are very much export oriented, whether it be the farming sector, whether it be the forestry sector, whether it be mining industries or whatever, the markets for those industries are essentially outside of the Province of Manitoba; indeed, in many cases outside of the Canadian boundaries; so that as those markets go, certainly so go those particular industries.

Even our service industries, Mr. Speaker, to a large extent are affected by factors beyond the local market. You often think of service industries as those personal service industries that affect strictly domestic markets within the communities of the province and so on but that isn't the case, because in the service sector you have financial institutions, you have communications companies, you have transportation companies which indeed service the entire national economy. As the national economy goes, so goes employment in the Canadian National and the Canadian Pacific Railway; so goes employment in the various major communications industries that we have because they are very much linked to the Canadian economy. So we have a small diversified economy, one that's very sensitive to factors beyond our borders.

I would say as well, we have to appreciate the fact that our big brother to the south, the Federal Government of the United States and the policies pursued by the American government, has indeed got to have a major bearing on the economic health of Canada, including the economic health of the Province of Manitoba.

The monetary and fiscal policies followed in the federal capital of this country in Ottawa certainly have to have a major bearing on what happens in our economy, whether it's a tight money policy, an easy money policy, whether interest rates are allowed to rise or fall has a direct bearing on the economic health of our business sector.

So I am suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that Manitoba is not an economic island unto itself. We as a government with whoever is in power can do certain things to help develop the economy but we have to recognize, hard as we may wish to try and as conscientious as any party may be, there are limits to what we can achieve. I would say therefore that the Provincial Government policies do affect the economy, can affect the economy, but they are only one set of factors that have a bearing on the economic health of this province of ours, on the rate of economic development.

I guess really when it comes down to it, when we talk about the role of the Provincial Government and the effectiveness of it, then we get into the political debate, the difference of ideology between the two major parties in this province, the Progressive Conservative Party on the right and the New Democratic Party on the left, then I daresay that the other parties floating around provincially are really, at this point in our history, very insignificant, whether it be the Liberal Party, the so-called Progressive Party or indeed the Core Party - or whatever you want to call it - the Western Canada concept. Basically, the political approach of the Conservatives I guess, with regard to the role of

government, is one which says in so many words, the less government the better.

I have heard many a speech made by the former leader of the Conservative Party, the former Conservative Premier of Manitoba, the Member for Charleswood now, saying the less government the better. The more we can reduce the presence of government in our society the better off we will be and that is the philosophical position. It's a legitimate position - I don't agree with it - but it's a legitimate philosophical position.

Our position is one that was espoused many a time by a former New Democratic Party Premier of Manitoba which says that government can be an instrument for positive good. It can be an instrument to improve the human condition, and that we can use government in a way that can help improve the economy, it can help improve the lot of disadvantaged people, it can do something to provide a little more humanity in our society. So those are legitimate differences of views and I guess that's fundamentally what it's all about when it comes down to it, our difference of ideology.

We can talk about advertising and so on, but that's not that basic in the sense of ideology because every government advertises whether you think it's a little too much or too little or in this place or that place. Let's face it, that goes on across the country. It goes on in other countries and so on, but that is not a fundamental ideological difference.

Then you look at Labour. I think the point of view of the Conservative Party, I would think, is that they are very concerned about certain Labour legislation. They think it may inhibit economic growth. There are certain elements of The Employment Standards Act that they may not be happy with. They'd prefer, I think, a lower rather than a higher minimum wage.

Our position all along has been to do whatever we can to improve the lot of the worker to the extent that you can with some Labour legislation, and I am going to add that ultimately workers have to look after themselves through the collective bargaining process, but there is a role that government can and does play for the unorganized sector.

When it comes to social programs, Mr. Speaker, generally, and there is the odd exception, but generally the Conservative position is one which puts social programs on a rather low priority on the scale of priorities. Social programs - and I wish the Member for Kirkfield Park was still here - but social programs by right-wing governments in this country - and by that I include the Social Credit in B.C. - really take a low point, a low level in the scale of action that a right-wing government would undertake. There's all kinds of evidence. One doesn't have to argue that very far. In fact the Conservative position is if you spend too much on social programming, you inhibit economic growth.

Our position has been, and historically the New Democratic Party and CCF before has been, to improve and innovate as much as we can on social programming and we think we have a long way to go. Realizing that money is short, we have to be more imaginative than ever before to try to harness our resources to bring about the needed social reforms and social development and by that I am including health care under that topic.

I say that some hard decisions have to be made today because we don't have that much money and we have to make some tough decisions regarding eliminating some audio-physio unit perhaps in a particular department, or looking at the land titles system in this province, to see whether there is some money that can be saved that could be redirected where it's needed.

I know the people in Boissevain want a Land Titles office. They look at it as part of their overall economic situation. But if you look at it this way, there is money I am told, to be saved even though there is a net revenue at the land titles office when you take all the costs into consideration, we are told that you can save at least \$125,000 each year by not having a Boissevain Land Titles office. When you take that and other monies you can save in the land titles system in other parts of the province - and I am using this just as an example - and say, okay, you've got a couple of hundred thousand in total from land titles. Now maybe we don't have to find more taxes for that \$200,000; we don't have to go into more deficit; but we can utilize that kind of money and perhaps enhance our hospital system.

Indeed this government is enhancing the day surgery at the Brandon General Hospital. It happens to cost roughly about the same amount of money, coincidentally, as we can save in the land titles system by cutting back there. I say if you ask the people of Westman, I think they would rather spend the money to improve the day surgery services of the Brandon General Hospital, which services the whole Westman area, than to see it spent on maintaining land titles offices around certain towns in that area. So, Mr. Speaker, times are tough but we are doing our best.

Just one last point, I guess, in ideological differences. I was going down the list. I think another one is that the Conservatives are inclined to go for the user-pay principle; we are inclined to say we should be providing as much as we can, universal services with no direct fee payment. This has been our traditional approach.

Mr. Speaker, I was saying, there is a limited amount that we can do. We have been prepared to take an activist, interventionist position such as we have demonstrated through the Manitoba Jobs Fund, and there has been a lot of information, a lot of emotion shed on the part of some members as to the lack of economic performance in Manitoba in the last few years, but the fact is, Mr. Speaker, we have been part of a North American economic downturn that has occurred, 1981-82. There has been some improvement, but times aren't as good as we would like them to be, and we are affected by that.

We are affected by what Ottawa does. If they want to cut back on spending in Manitoba, we are going to lose jobs; if they want to pursue a high interest rate policy, a tight money policy, that is going to affect the business growth in this province.

But, Mr. Speaker, what I've done is compare what has gone on in Manitoba with the rest of the country, because I think that's the only fair comparison. In other words, relatively how have we done? I have prepared a few tables rather hurriedly, and they're not printed as nicely as I would like them to be; in fact, I think I'm going to try to get them redone at some point. I am prepared to hand these out to the members so they can look at them and follow them along with me, if they so choose.

These are tables - all of this information is from Statistics Canada. I'll give it to the members, I don't know whether there are enough for everybody, but at least give it to those that are here.

We have looked at the performance of the Manitoba economy in relation to the rest of the country. I have taken what I consider to be the basic, the fundamental economic indicators. If you look, Mr. Speaker - I'm not talking about forecasts, I am talking about statistics of the performance that has occurred over the past dozen years or so - I look at the performance of the previous Conservative Government of this economy of ours, I looked at our performance under our government, in fact, I've looked at the performance under the previous New Democratic Party Governments and, if you look at the rate of economic growth in the past three years, you'll see that, compared to what's gone on in Canada, our rate of economic growth is 68.2 percent, about two-thirds of the Canadian rate of growth, certainly much better than that which occurred during the Lyon years in office, which is only 51.9 percent. I am passing these around so you can follow this with me.

There is no question, our overall economic rate of growth for the past three years has been superior to the rate of economic growth that has occurred . . .

A MEMBER: Draw us a picture, Len.

HON. L. EVANS: Okay, we've got pictures . . . in the four years of the Conservative Government. These are all official statistics, there they are. First page, Chart No. 1. Take a look.

Looking at No. 2, the investment in Canada, looking at the total capital expenditure, the rate of increase of investment in Manitoba as a percentage of the rate of increase of the total investment in Canada, and you can see that in 1982-85 it's just phenomenal, 2,904 percent of the Canadian rate which is a very high rate. What that tells you, Mr. Speaker, that in the past three years there has been very little investment growth in Canada; there has been substantial growth in Manitoba.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Distribute those to every member in the House.

HON. L. EVANS: We're distributing them now.

A MEMBER: Make sure they get it over there.

HON. L. EVANS: He's got one. If you look — (Interjection) — I'll give you the raw numbers. Chart 3, this has been done rather hurriedly, and I'm going to get it redone eventually and I'll give everybody another copy. But even if you look at private investment, Mr. Speaker - that was total investment. Just look at private - we're always talking about the private sector - in the first NDP term, Manitoba's rate was 47 percent of the Canadian rate of investment spending increase. In the second term, we were 98 percent of the Canadian rate. In the Tory term, it was 55 percent. We can't even calculate it in the last three years, because Canada's had a negative value. It has been minus 3.4 percent. What has been the rate of change of private investment in Canada in three years? Minus 3.4 percent. What has

it been in Manitoba? Plus 7.2 percent. We've got a plus and a minus, and it is sort of hard to calculate that.

You go on to Chart 4, jobs created, job growth or employment growth in Manitoba as a percentage of the Canadian growth of jobs: our first term in office, 3.3 percent; second term of office, 2.9 percent; when the Tories came in, it was 2.4 percent. We can't calculate it for the last three years because, again in Canada, it's negative. There are 6,000 jobs fewer in the last three years than there were at the beginning of that period, whereas we had a plus 11,000 — (Interjection) — That was Chart 4.

If you look at Chart 5, the first term of an NDP Government in Manitoba, 1969-73 - well we could have rated a little better but there we were - seventh or fourth last, if you will, No. 7. In 1973-77, we were in sixth place. And what happened when the Conservative were in office? Where are we? No. 10. That's where we were, at the bottom of the totem pole, No. 10, 10 out of 10.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say that there is the evidence of our relative economic situation. Now look at the 1982-84 period, Chart No. 8. We'd like it to be better but, nevertheless, here we are - fourth. We have improved our relative position 2.4 percent, fourth.

If you want to look at it a different way, we've got another chart. You can prepare an index, the next chart, No. 9. No. 9, when the Conservatives were in office from 1977-81, there it is. The dotted line shows the Canadian index of employment growth, there it is. Where's Manitoba? Well below the national average, there it is. That is what happened, we underperformed the Canadian situation.

What's happened since the NDP has been in office. That's the last chart I've got, No. 10. It has just reversed. There is the Canadian growth rate, dotted line, and the Manitoba growth rate is significantly higher than that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. EYLER: Order please, order please.

The Member for Morris on a point of order.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if I might ask the member whether he could provide the source of these statistics and raw data that are brought in to developing the graphs.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. L. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I will be pleased. I don't have the numbers with me at the moment, but I have no problem in giving the member the raw data, I can undertake to do that. The source of the information is Statistics Canada — (Interjection) — No, I did not, the source of the information is from Statistics Canada reports. As I say, this is historical information. This is not a forecast of, you know, two, three, four, five years. It's the most reliable data we can get, the latest data we can get from official sources. There is a set for everybody.

The other piece of information I'd like to share with honourable members is with regard to what's been

happening to the population of this province, and the fact is - tomorrow I'll provide that information, I don't have enough copies tonight. — (Interjection) — I'm going to make sure you get a copy. — (Interjection) — Yes, that's right. I don't have enough copies tonight, but I'll table it tomorrow as a matter of information. I'm very pleased to note that, today, Statistics Canada just released information indicating that Manitoba's population has increased substantially this last year, January 1, 1985 over January 1, 1984. We've had an increase in Manitoba of 11,400 people this past year and our total population now is 1,065,000 people.

But, Mr. Speaker, the most important — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Arthur says, they're all on welfare. Of course, that's absolutely nonsense because we continue to have either the lowest or the second lowest rate of unemployment of any province in Canada. But what I would like to point out is that today the very very interesting information we received from Statistics Canada, that ever since statistics have been compiled on interprovincial migration of people, which is the year 1962, ever since they have been tabulated by StatsCan in 1962, Manitoba has always shown a negative interprovincial figure. In other words, there have always been more people leaving Manitoba than coming into Manitoba.

A MEMBER: From how far back?

HON. L. EVANS: Its goes back to 1962 which is the year that this information was tabulated.

The information we have received today, Mr. Speaker, is that for the first time since these statistics were tabulated, that's 1962, that for the years 1982, 1983 and 1984, there's been a positive migration into the Province of Manitoba. And there it is on the chart, and you'll all get these charts tomorrow. — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Speaker, to heck with the statistics. They don't like that . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. L. EVANS: In 1978, 9,557, nearly 10,000, that was a net loss when the Conservatives were in office in Manitoba; in 1979, 13,800 net loss. In fact, there were so many people that left the province that our total population began to decline, our total was dropping, the first time since the dirty thirties. We had the Conservatives in power to have an absolute decline in the great Province of Manitoba.

There's no question, Mr. Speaker, that the interprovincial migration of people is a pretty fair index of our relative economic position, inasmuch as if there are jobs in Manitoba in a relative sense, in a relative sense if our economic is doing well, relative to the rest of the country, people either don't leave, or they come back to Manitoba, and that's what's happening because it's an index of our relative economic health in this province.

I make the point, Mr. Speaker, that it's better to have a bigger population, rather than a lower population. We've got lots of land, lots of space, lots of resources. We've got lots of opportunities here. Our population is still relatively small for our physical size. I say it's good to have a bigger population. It's good for business.

It creates more markets for our manufacturers. — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Morris says they don't have jobs. I repeat, our employment record, our unemployment rate is either the lowest or the second lowest in Canada. With all these people coming in, it should have deteriorated to 5th or 6th or 7th or something.

You know, it creates more opportunities for people to start a business, a bigger population. There's a greater demand for housing. It stimulates our housing industry. It gives more work for our Minister of Housing, there's more construction. So all in all, Mr. Speaker, we're better off to have more, rather than fewer people. So we have more people than ever before in our history under the New Democratic Party Government of Premier Howard Pawley. And, Mr. Speaker, it goes back to what I was saying originally with regard to the ideological differences between the Conservatives and the New Democratic Party. But we believe that government can be an instrument for good, it can be an instrument that improves the quality of the human condition.

The Conservative ideology is, the less government the better. We say, government can do something. We've got a lot of challenges to face in this province. We've got a lot of hurdles to overcome. Growth doesn't come easy. We've got to try harder. We've got to work at it, day and night, day after day, week after week, and we are doing that. We are doing our best to try to create jobs in Manitoba, to provide economic opportunities, and in doing so, Mr. Speaker, we are co-operating with the private sector and make no bones about that.

So, Mr. Speaker, what I'm suggesting is that when you look at the relative economic performance, because that's the only true measure, is the relative economic performance, you can't say, well, there are more people out of work today than there were X number of years ago or whatever, because there are more people out of work all over the country, all over North America, all over the Western world. So don't give me that garbage.

The fact is, in a relative sense we're doing better in the past three years than we did under the Conservatives for four years, and the people of Manitoba know that. They know that and they want to continue to have a government that's progressive, that's activist, that's prepared to take the proverbial bull by the horns and do whatever we can to stimulate the Manitoba economy.

So, Mr. Speaker, then — (Interjection) — in conclusion . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member has six minutes left.

HON. L. EVANS: Six minutes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Minister of Employment Services.

HON. L. EVANS: Well, Mr. Speaker, when I get all the interruptions, cat calls and all the excitement on the other side, I must be getting to them. I must be making some point.

So I gave you the graphs. I repeat, they're all from official sources. They're the latest estimates that we've got from Stats Canada, and they're for your edification, and we're going to tell the people of Manitoba that story and as I said, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the fundamental index is what has happened to our interprovincial migration because the people are voting with their feet. They are indicating their confidence in the Manitoba economy by coming back to Manitoba or conversely by not leaving Manitoba, and I say the information that we received from Statistics Canada today is very very significant, that for the first time since these statistics have been compiled, we've had three years of positive interprovincial migration.

I recall when we were in opposition, the people of Manitoba were very disheartened by the fact that Manitoba was starting to shrink under the Lyon administration of that day, and incidentally, I don't have the figures here. Okay, how about the deficit? I'd like to comment on that.

Well you see, Mr. Speaker, this is again the difference, as I was trying to explain. We're an activist government. We're prepared to do whatever we can to use government as an instrument to improve the condition of mankind. We are concerned about the deficit; we can't have a big deficit forever, but we have an appropriate Budget for our time. It's appropriate. — (Interjection) — I said in a relative sense we're doing well and, Mr. Speaker, the information in the Budget Address, in the Budget material is quite revealing. It indicates that the burden of debt charges per capita compare fairly well with provinces such as Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, PEI and Newfoundland and that, by and large, we're not out of line. So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's a deficit we can manage.

But what I get so amused about, is every time we say well we think we can save money through a Land Titles Office or closing down an audio-visual or look at the Psychiatric Nurses School, any time you try to create — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, you can remove a raft of people in this department and that department, but it still would be a very minor cost factor in many many ways.

What I am saying to you is that the deficit, the Budget is a Budget for our times. It's a very appropriate Budget. It's a Budget that the people of Manitoba have accepted but I say, Mr. Speaker, we have tried very hard to maintain a basic health system in this province, a basic education system and a basic social service system. I think we've done a very good job at that, because times have not been as good as we'd like them to be. The revenue flow hasn't been as good as we'd like it to be, but we have had to manage. We've had to tighten our belt. We've had to look at areas that are of less priority.

But what I find extremely amusing every time we come up with suggestions for that, we get criticized from the other side. No, don't squeeze the Land Titles Office. Don't look at a Psychiatric Nursing School. Don't take away an audio-visual. Don't do those things, but don't have a deficit and please don't increase taxes — (Interjection) — yeah, right, and don't increase taxes. So you can't have it both ways.

I say, Mr. Speaker, this has been a responsible Budget. It's a Budget that continues to stimulate the Manitoba

economy, and I tell you this, that the people of Manitoba appreciate this Budget. They appreciate our Minister of Finance. They appreciate our Premier and our government, and they will indicate that appreciation in due course when the next election is called.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. L. HYDE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure for me to enter into the debate on this the Budget which I believe will probably be the last Budget this government will want to bring down before they call the election.

The Minister of Finance and the government have lost all their credibility with the electors of the province. The people are just plain fed up with what has been going on, the way they have handled the business and the affairs of our province.

To think that today we have - what is it? - \$500 million plus of a deficit and it's still growing. This is what is the main issue that the people of the province are faced with. They just can't tolerate the fact that our province for the first time in its history has met this high plateau of a 500 million deficit to the Province of Manitoba. When you stop and think of the tax base that we in Manitoba have, it's just utterly ridiculous.

So now, Mr. Speaker, the Finance Minister and the Premier are trying to make some amends before they go to the people, and they're trying to soften the electors up so that they will be in a position where they feel that they can, once again, be elected to govern this province. It just won't work, Mr. Speaker, it won't work. The people, as I said, are fed up. They are just plain fed up with what has been going on by this province. Yes, the polls are indicating that they are running low on the polls. So, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that there will be a change of government when this Mr. Pawley and his Cabinet wish to call an election. I should say, the Member for Selkirk. I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard so often in the course of the last few months, in fact for the last year or two, when during the speeches since the government has taken office how they were going to handle the business of our province in a fair and straightforward manner. Mr. Speaker, that is not the case. The way they have been dealing with the people's affairs, they have failed to do this.

They promised the people of Manitoba all this. They have failed the people of Manitoba, and now they expect to be re-elected once again for another term. The people are fed up, Mr. Speaker, with the closed-doors attitude of governing of the Province of Manitoba. The people are fed up with the way our affairs are being mismanaged, Mr. Speaker. The Budget has been presented. It is a Budget that is, I suggest, supposed to pave the way for the New Democratic Party of the province to face the people before they call another election.

The Budget has presented no major changes, Mr. Speaker. The tobacco tax increase of 5 cents per cigarette, well I suppose it does bring something in, about \$12.5 million. That is if the smokers in the province continue to enjoy that habit.

I'm surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the government didn't raise the sales tax. I believe, Mr. Speaker, my personal opinion on this is that it is probably the fairest tax that could be imposed for the province — (Interjection) — Yes, the payroll tax is bad, but I honestly believe that probably the sales tax is one of the fairest taxes. It hits everyone. They have their duties and their responsibilities to the government.

I'm surprised that the Minister chose to add an additional tax on gasoline, a commodity that is already taxed to the point where the automobile operators are hurting. It seems that in a province like we have here in Manitoba, the working man or woman, they must have an automobile. They have to have an automobile to convey them to and from their place of employment. Up till now, Mr. Speaker, I was of the opinion that this government was one who cared a bit for the working man, but they have proved that to be different.

The diesel fuel tax, the one more tax that is going to put an additional burden on the cost of transferring our product to the points of export.

Mr. Speaker, with the government close to \$500 million in deficit today and in a position where they will be borrowing a further \$350 million this year just to finance their 3.6 million spending programs, with this in mind, I suppose we are lucky to get off with what increases they did bring down. I'm sure it will be very difficult for the Government of Manitoba to save our province's credit rating when the time comes.

The cost to the province on the government's advertising program for the Limestone hydro-electric project, the cost of advertising the Jobs Fund. This government is in a desperate position, Mr. Speaker, and worse still, our province is in a desperate position. The people outside of this building are waiting for the opportunity for the government to call an election and we'll clean this mess up once and for all.

Our party, we are ready, Mr. Speaker. Membership is an all-time high with the Conservative Party of Manitoba.

A MEMBER: There are 2,000 people turning out every nomination . . .

MR. L. HYDE: Yes, and that is why we wish - that the people want an election to be called. We have a good example as the Member for Morris just mentioned. It was just last week there were 1,500 people turned out to a candidate meeting to elect a candidate to run against the Minister of Agriculture. — (Interjection) — Yes, that does, that should tell you something. The Minister just won't be around; he won't be too difficult to unseat. He has lost control, Mr. Speaker. He's lost control of his department. His political hacks, if I may refer to them as such, are controlling him and he does not realize that.

The no-quota transfer on the dairy bids of this province - it is impossible, Mr. Speaker, to buy additional quotas that are needed by the young dairymen wishing to expand in their business. You apparently just can't buy quota if you need to earn more to expand your business.

In my own constituency, Mr. Speaker, a young farmer bought this farm for an investment of \$150,000 with the full intention of getting a milk contract or quota.

Today, with the present regulations that have been put in place this last couple of weeks, he can't proceed with his plans. The previous owner of this land - it was the third largest dairy in the Province of Manitoba - this land turns out to be not too suitable for anything other than a cattle operation whether it be dairy or a beef operation. However, this young man, 35 years of age, is in dire straits today. He told me just the other day, he says I guess I am just up the creek, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the people are fed up with this government's actions, their irresponsible attitude of governing the affairs of our province. This government has failed the people of Manitoba; the government has failed the businessmen of the province; this government has failed the manufacturing people of the province. They have failed the working man of this province. They failed. Why, Mr. Speaker? They even failed the membership of their own party.

It was just a short two days ago that a previous member of the N.D. Party of Manitoba remarked to me - he's a businessman, Mr. Speaker, he employs something like 20 men in his business - not long ago how he had received a notice from his party headquarters that they had not received his annual donation. His reply to them, Sir, was, yes, you did, the last time I had to send in my compulsory payroll tax. That's the way, Mr. Speaker, that the people in my constituency are thinking. They are fed up with the unnecessary tax of the payroll tax.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this government we have is going to need far more than just the Limestone Hydro project to get themselves re-elected.

MR. R. BANMAN: The Limestone cowboys.

MR. L. HYDE: The Limestone cowboys.

Mr. Speaker, how can the Minister of Health feel comfortable in announcing at a time like this that the senior people of our province can be expected to pay out - what is it - an increase in their charges at the personal care homes in Manitoba, or the personal care homes to increase? Effective May 1, 1985, the daily charge will increase from \$14.80 to \$15.25 per day, with subsequent increases, Mr. Speaker, of 45 cents per day to come into effect on August 1, 1985; November 1, 1985, a further 45 cent increase; and February 1, 1986, a further 45 cent increase. Mr. Speaker, the older people of our province, they cannot afford these here steady increases that are going to be put on them. The government would rather add \$260,000 into their payroll for their political aides rather than to assist the aging people of our province.

MR. R. BANMAN: That's Howard's Office alone.

MR. L. HYDE: Yes, that's for the Premier's Office alone. I'll read this: "Pawley adds \$260,000 into the payroll for political aides.

"Premier Howard Pawley has added more than \$260,000 to his million-dollar political aides' payroll, government spending estimates show.

"Pawley's budget for management staff salaries and administration expenses has risen \$314,900 this year to \$1.65 million.

"Included in that figure is an extra \$261,700 for more wages, bringing the total to \$1.37 million in the fiscal year of '85-'86, up from \$1.1 million.

"A political source said most of the salary increase in Executive Council is going towards a handful of high-priced political aides."

Mr. Speaker, this is going to the Premier's Office, the Premier of our province, that he requires additional aides to the tune of this many dollars.

"The source said the group includes former New Democrat MP Terry Sargeant, a \$39,000-a-year advisor to Pawley on Native affairs, attached to the Department of Northern Affairs.

"It's a very high-powered political group," the source said."

Another part of this paper clipping: "Gary Doer, president of the Manitoba Government Employees Association, acknowledged that Executive Council is a political office . . ."

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable First Minister on a point of order.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't want the honourable member to be misled by an incorrect newspaper report. I don't think it would fair to him or to members of this House for that to occur. Mr. Sargeant is not a member of the Premier's staff as alleged by the honourable member in reference to the article that he is reading.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.
The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether I am so far wrong on what I have stated tonight. The Premier of this province admitted in this House that Terry Sargeant, the former MP, is part of his staff, is on the payroll.

Mr. Gary Doer goes on to say that the Executive Council is a political office, but the increase "sets an extremely bad example in the time of restraint."

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.
The Honourable First Minister on a point of order.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would be delighted to acknowledge if it was true that Mr. Sargeant is a member of my staff. The fact is he is not a member of my staff.

A MEMBER: Apologize, apologize.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.
The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. L. HYDE: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I'll go on. On March 18th, at 9:30, you stated, in accordance with the Rule 35(3), I'm interrupting the debate on the motion for the question on the proposed amendment by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Now that we are debating on the Budget, I wish to continue to bring my concerns before this House on the proposed move by this government to close out the Psychiatric School of Nursing in Portage la Prairie.

I want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, this School of Nursing has for the last 25 years turned out a specialized trained nurse to care for the mentally retarded persons in Manitoba.

The suggested closure of this school has created so much concern with the staff of the Manitoba Development Centre and the nurses in training. The people of Portage have for so many years been attending and looking forward to attending the graduating classes of these special people. I say special people, Mr. Speaker, they must be special to take on the duties that they will be expected to do after they are finished with their course. I have without a doubt received 40 to 50 letters from nurses from the school, letters from residents, Mr. Speaker, of Portage, and most disturbing of all are the letters that I have been receiving from parents of patients of that retarded school. The Premier and the Minister responsible for the proposed closure of the School of Nursing is, I know, receiving as many letters possibly or even more, Mr. Speaker, than what I have received.

Mr. Speaker, I started to read a letter that is very disturbing to me when I was asked to sit down on the 18th of this month. It is signed by Mr. and Mrs. Eric Swaine in Portage la Prairie.

"Mr. and Mrs. Hyde: My wife and I are concerned regarding the contemplated closure of the School of Nursing at the Manitoba Development Centre. The first indication of the proposed closure was through news media in mid-February. It appears to be a unilateral government decision. Was there any public consultation or other community involvement in the information of this decision?"

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, there was none - none. The main concern is with respect to proper nursing care of the mentally retarded persons in the future. You must be aware that training in psychiatric nursing for the mentally retarded is significantly different from that of the mentally ill, Mr. Speaker. You must also have knowledge of the fact that 3 percent of the population being retarded to some degree, a considerable segment of our society. It is questionable that Manitoba currently has sufficient qualified human resources to deal completely with the mentally handicapped living inside and outside the existing institutions.

Closure of the School of Nursing at the Manitoba Development Centre would mean losing the only teaching facility dealing most directly with the mentally retarded. How and where will the student psychiatric nurse obtain proper introduction to the theoretical base and skills on which to build future nursing knowledge? How will the improperly trained psychiatric nurse of the future become competent to make total health assessments of the retarded? Without adequate training for this specific group, how will a nurse develop the precise early identification of risk factors?

Mr. Swaine goes on to say, "We take this opportunity to express appreciation and gratitude to the staff of the Manitoba Development Centre for the care and training extended to our son, a resident for the past 11 years. They are a dedicated group who have been educated in the field of mental retardation, capable of caring for developing the individual skills of the retarded to their highest potential." This letter, Sir, is signed by E.G. Swaine.

Mr. Speaker, it's just hard to understand why after 25 years of training specialized nurses in that school

that this government would take today and suggest - even suggest, Sir - that they move that school from Portage la Prairie. They would rather spend the dollars on advertising Limestone.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Portage School of Nursing has been building over a period of 25 years and cannot be duplicated at Brandon, Selkirk, Red River College, or any other community college.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and make mention — (Interjection) — yes, probably a hundred letters, but there is one article here that should be mentioned and I'm hoping the members of the government read this article and they can make amends. Mr. Speaker, this is a Peter Warren article: "The retarded are victims of politics." And rightly so. This is exactly what is happening. They are becoming the victims of politics. It goes on, "The rest of the province has indicated it does not give much of a hoot, but the people of Portage la Prairie are fighting mad against the provincial proposal to close down their psychiatric nursing school. The victim will not only be the community and the staff, but the handicapped can't handicap themselves," says the angry secretary-manager of the Portage Chamber of Commerce, Helen Lee. It's like robbing Peter, to pay Paul, but then you have to pay interest says the boss of the Registered Psychiatric Nurses' Association, Annette Ost?

About 10 instructors will be affected if the Provincial Cabinet issues the order to close down. Twenty-five students would have to finish their last year in Selkirk or in Brandon. But there is far more to this story than the closure of this one nursing school. It utterly reeks of politics. Mr. Speaker, it's a shame to think that this government would entertain the thoughts of jeopardizing the health and welfare of the patients of that school in Portage la Prairie over politics. Portage feels that such a move is just a start of an overall plan by Community Services Minister Muriel Smith to shut down the entire centre. And remember, the centre is the largest employer in that city of Portage la Prairie, with some 700 jobs, is prudent to the way their community has become known around the world for the compassion and the top-notch treatment for the retarded people.

Walking the streets of Portage, Mr. Speaker, groups of retarded people are accepted as an integral part of our life. The ordinary people of Portage have been inundated with letters of concern. One letter reads, "Dear Peter: Please do something, this stinks to high heaven, we need that nursing school." And that is signed by a lady I'm well acquainted with, Ada Ellwood; or David A. Mandrell of Winnipeg, it's a different type of letter. It reads "Mr. Warren, I am the father of an 18-year old daughter currently in her first year of Psych Nursing at Portage. She has dreamed of following her career and has had to make a number of personal sacrifices. They will be left in limbo with a year of her life wasted, dreams smashed and some statistics for the unemployment. The school currently trains more than 80 percent of the Manitoba psychiatric nurses and the Psychiatric Nurses Association puts forward a solid argument based on the financial considerations. The fact is that somebody has to speak up on behalf of the mentally retarded; Portage is just doing that."

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's a pretty strong indication of the feeling of the people, not only in Portage la Prairie, but provincewide. They are concerned about the actions of this government today.

It was amazing to me the other day when I questioned the Minister responsible for the community service. I asked her whether she had consulted with Dr. Glen Lowther. She didn't know, Mr. Speaker, the capacity of his job, and she's the Minister responsible. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Glen Lowther, the chief medical consultant in the province, Department of Community Service, expressed concern Wednesday, over the possibility of the province maybe closing the — (Interjection) — Psychiatric Nurses in Portage la Prairie.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. When this matter is next before the House, the honourable member will have nine minutes remaining.

The time of adjournment having arrived, this House is adjourned and will stand adjourned until 10:00 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).