



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Session**

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## **HANSARD**

**Friday, November 3, 2000**

**Pages 697 – 728**

**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**



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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2000****MEMBERS PRESENT**

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Honourable Jane Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

-- Prayer

**MR. SPEAKER:** Good morning, everyone. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 23-14(3): Family Violence Awareness and Action**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the issue of family violence in the Northwest Territories.

As Members of this House know, a public awareness campaign on family violence was launched on Monday and has continued all this week. This campaign represents the collective efforts of non-government and government agencies to raise awareness throughout the Northwest Territories on the pervasiveness of family violence in our society. It is also intended to make all Northerners aware that we each have a role to play in working to eliminate family violence.

During 1999, there were 436 reported incidents of spousal assault by a male perpetrator. In a 1997-98 national survey, the Northwest Territories had the third highest use of shelters in the country, with the Northwest Territories rate for that year being five times the national average. Shelter use is still high today. 639 admissions were reported in 1999-2000, with 53 percent of these admissions representing children.

These statistics reveal only part of the violence tragedy that continues to plague our communities. We know that crimes such as spousal and sexual assault often go unreported. Victims of violence may not report an incident because of:

- secrecy surrounding the issue;
- the dependency of the victim on the perpetrator;
- the lack of knowledge about available help; and
- repercussions for reporting the event, such as further violence by the batterer.

Violence takes many forms. It can be physical, psychological, emotional, financial and-or sexual. At the family level, it usually impacts women and children. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, over half of

the clients using Northwest Territories shelters are children. Many of them suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder due to the long-term effects of living with violence and the associated ongoing stress in the home.

Children experiencing abuse are more likely to be the next generation of victims and abusers than children who have not been abused. The practice of violence is passed from generation to generation. Boys who grow up in violent homes are three times more likely to become abusive partners than boys who were not raised in violent homes. Girls raised in violent homes are twice as likely to become victims of spousal violence than girls who were not raised in violent homes.

Mr. Speaker, government plays a vital role in addressing family violence. Our programs and services must offer support to people in times of personal crisis as well as when people require assistance in recovering and healing from a violent experience. This past Wednesday, I was pleased to announce the official launch of a pilot program for women and children's healing and recovery. This pilot responds to the complex needs of women and children who have experienced a traumatic event. It demonstrates that strong partnerships between non-government and government agencies can result in innovative and effective programming.

We cannot quietly overlook the devastation that results from family violence. Over the past week, the Premier and Members of this House have shared their thoughts on how family violence affects them, and why we as a government need to speak out on this issue. While change will not happen overnight, this government can work with leaders of our communities, as well as leaders of other governments and organizations, to take action against family violence. As the Premier and I have stated this past week, we are making family violence a priority and continue to strongly uphold this government's commitment to zero tolerance of family violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS****Member's Statement on Addressing Family Violence in the NWT**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too support the notion of zero tolerance but I believe it is critical, Mr. Speaker, that we as a government provide the resources that are going to be needed to deal with this problem. We cannot continue to operate with the concept that we can manage the problem for the people by taking people out of families, putting them into shelters, taking the children away and putting them in facilities outside the communities. This has

to be dealt with at the community level and the resources have to be there to combat violence in our communities.

I had the opportunity to host the Governor General in Fort McPherson earlier this summer. When we met with the community justice committee and elders in our community, one of the biggest topics raised in that meeting was family violence and how we as community members and as governments can deal with this problem.

One thing that was notable were the restraints put in place by the laws that we have, the resources in our communities to deal with these problems, and also the lack of, or in some cases the very need, to have resource people in our communities to deal with these problems and not take our problems out of our communities and not deal with the problem at home.

I for one feel it is critical, Mr. Speaker, that as a government, we have to improve the resources we have in this area. We have to improve facilities to deal with this problem.

I combated this problem in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly in dealing with the Tl'oondih Healing Program. The Gwich'in Tribal Council invested over \$2 million to construct a camp to deal with problems such as family violence, alcohol abuse, sexual abuse and other issues that are apparent in our communities. Yet to date we have received very little support from this government.

How can we as a government stand up and say we support zero tolerance without having the resources in place to do the job to ensure that we change our laws, improve the structures we have in our communities to assist people who have been violated and to assist those people who have carried out the violence? We can do something to change this problem.

With that, Mr. Speaker...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I may not have caught the last part of Mr. Krutko's statement. Your time had expired, and I had pressed the button already. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude the last portion of his Member's statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I think it is apparent that this government has to do more in regard to this matter, resources and ensuring that we have the adequate infrastructure in place in our communities to deal with this. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services questions on this matter. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

### **Member's Statement on Resources Dedicated to Family Violence Programs**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make some comments on family violence week. First, I would like to commend the government on drawing attention to the problems of family violence in the North. I would also like to extend my appreciation to all of the communities in my riding and throughout the North that have held activities during Family Violence Week in attempts to raise the profile on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I had great reservations earlier this week about standing up in this House and making a statement on family violence that was probably not going to have much effect. I only have to draw your attention to 1983. The Legislative Assembly of the day passed a motion that adopted a principle of zero tolerance against all people and endorsed the goal of eliminating family violence by the year 2000.

Well, we are now in the year 2000. Since that motion was passed, according to national crime statistics, the number of annual violent crimes in the Northwest Territories has increased from 4,826 to 5,063 between the years 1994 and 1998, with the biggest increases appearing in the last two years. This is a period during which other types of crimes such as property crime actually decreased in the North. It is also a period of time in which violent crime on the average dropped in the Canadian provinces.

However, while the violent crime rate in the Northwest Territories increases, the attention paid by the Government of the Northwest Territories to community health programs decreases. The main estimates for 2000-2001 for community health programs showed a decrease in the proposed annual expenditures of approximately \$190,000 compared to the previous year's estimates.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories must play a more effective role in preventing family violence. We all know that in the smaller communities we have limited or low paying jobs and poor housing conditions. That always results in low self-esteem and unhealthy living conditions. This places pressure on the families, which can eventually lead to violence, abuse or addictions.

Mr. Speaker, if we are serious in attempting to change the violent crime statistics in the North, we have to reduce dependency on social assistance. We have to build self-esteem. We have to generate employment in our communities. Mr. Speaker, we may have to examine our existing programs to see if they are achieving the goals we are setting in this House.

If the lack of financial resources is the problem, then it becomes essential that we measure, in a meaningful manner, the effectiveness of our existing programming expenditures and, if necessary, channel our resources into new programs.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. McLeod, the time allowed for your Member's statement has expired.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are

there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. McLeod, you may continue.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I realize that the government by itself cannot totally eliminate family violence. However, it is important that we do more than stand up here year after year stating our dedication to ending family violence while our crime rate increases. It is important that this government and all of us do what we can as well as we can to end family violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Member's Statement on Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Halifax**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make my statement in my own language. Mahsi.

(Translation starts) Mahsi. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In October, I had the privilege of attending a CPA conference in Halifax. This conference was a gathering of legislators from across most of Canada. At this conference, there were a number of information sessions. The one I attended included restoring public perception of parliament, today's youth and tomorrow's Leaders, what should be the role of religion in politics, technology in politics, family policy in Quebec, and the consequences of under funding our post-secondary educational institutions.

During discussions, I shared with other delegates how the Dogrib are using the BFI Funds to support aboriginal education. At this conference, I noted that across Canada we are all facing common problems. By attending this function, I had the opportunity to learn how other provinces are approaching the same issues we are dealing with here. (Translation ends)

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Lafferty, the last part of your statement was not translated because of a technical problem. Would you just repeat the last part of your statement?

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I will be sharing with my colleagues some of the information from this conference. Hopefully, we can implement some of the successful strategies used by other jurisdictions. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### **Member's Statement on Family Violence a Symptom of Social Problems**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I as well would like to speak to the issue of family violence. Family violence affects all our communities and unfortunately, many of our families in our constituencies. Mr. Speaker, while this family violence is a symptom and if we are indeed going to eradicate family violence, we have to start dealing with the root causes. We have to deal better with education issues. We have to do a better job with employment, with housing. We have to come up with an alcohol and drug

strategy that will enable us to deal with the terrible problem of alcohol abuse and children born with FAS and FAE. We have to help families with their parenting skills.

Mr. Speaker, new money is not necessarily the only answer. We have to look at how the government is spending the money it currently has. Is it spending it in the best way possible? Is there real cooperation between Health and Education, Culture and Employment? We are dealing with common clients on this issue. With Housing and Justice, do they actually meaningfully work together and come up with common strategies? We have to have the government complete some of its many ongoing and incomplete strategies, such as the alcohol and drug strategy. A few years ago, we had five alcohol and drug facilities. This year, we have one. We are still waiting for the alcohol and drug strategy. We are waiting for the early intervention strategy. We are waiting for the continuing care strategy.

Mr. Speaker, these are done separately but, in actual fact, they are linked because they deal with the same people in our constituencies. So yes, as a government we need to speak up on this issue but as a government we cannot stand up and say we cannot do anything else because we do not have any new money. There are many ways we could deal with the issue by better spending the resources we have.

We can expand the classification of what a single mother is eligible for in terms of income support and being able to stay home and not cut it off at four-years old. All these things will work to help family violence. They are real, concrete, demonstrable phases of government we can do to show that, while we are morally and politically committed to this fine sentiment, we are also taking a critical, hard look as a government at what we do as one of the major funding agencies in the Northwest Territories to deal with this significant issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Miltenberger. Declaration de députée. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

#### **Member's Statement on Recognition of Academic Excellence**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize academic excellence by all students across the Northwest Territories and particularly three students from Weledeh who have received the Minister's Award for Academic Excellence;

- Miranda Bolstad received the award for attaining the highest mark in the Northwest Territories in 99-20 English 30 departmental exams;
- Ivan Pelov received the same award for the highest mark in Chemistry 30; and
- Matthew Voytilla received the same award for the highest mark in Physics 30.

We need to celebrate the achievement of these young people and express appreciation to all of those people who have provided support to them, especially the parents and teachers in our school system.

As our economy continues to flourish, we need strong academic performance by our Northwest Territories students so that they can take the jobs in the North. Let us all work together in support of healthy families and communities to ensure all northern students have a bright future in the Northwest Territories. Miranda, Matthew, and Ivan, I wish you much success in your continuing studies and look forward to when you return to careers in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Member's Statement on Hardships and Abuse Endured by Elders**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge Family Violence Awareness Week. There are many people suffering as a result of this continuing and terrible tragedy of family violence. Especially the most vulnerable segment of our society, our elders. There are elders we live and work with, Mr. Speaker. These elders have worked all of their lives. Their retirement years should be peaceful, but many find that they are not. There are elders living right now in deplorable conditions. They are being financially, emotionally and physically abused.

According to national statistics, seven percent of older adults experienced some form of emotional or financial abuse last year. This abuse crosses all parts of society. It is our role as legislators to help people in trouble. There are no NWT laws aimed at protecting elders from abuse. Some elders are really suffering, and their situations look bleak. There are no shelters for them to go to in times of desperate need. We could help them through new policies and legislation, Mr. Speaker.

The price we as a society are paying for this abuse is costly. Some of our people cannot be whole individuals because of what is going on in their private daily lives. The Status of Women Council is asking government to work with community groups to increase awareness. I suggest this government take a look at having specific legislation drafted to protect elders in abusive situations and consider starting up elder shelters. This is long overdue, Mr. Speaker. Let us make their future safe and secure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Member's Statement on Programs to Assist Senior Homeowners**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning I rise to speak on the issue of seniors. Mr. Speaker, seniors in the Northwest Territories have raised many of us. They have raised us and taught us their values. They have paid their dues, so to speak, Mr. Speaker. They have paid for their own way and many continue indeed to pay their own way. Many continue to own and maintain their own homes.

In these days of increasing costs, it is becoming more difficult for seniors to remain independent. Mr. Speaker, I refer specifically to the seniors' fuel subsidy. As increasing costs for fuel in the Northwest Territories impacts seniors, it is becoming more difficult for them to remain in their own homes. Homes

that they have built, and in many cases with their own hands, and that remain in their families.

We have some programs in the Government of the Northwest Territories for seniors who do not have their own homes, and we have stepped in to protect those seniors in those situations. For seniors who remain in their own homes, we have limited programs that continue to shrink as the years go by. Mr. Speaker, I raise this concern and will question the appropriate Minister as we get into question period on the seniors' fuel subsidy in the hope that we will be looking to work with the seniors to keep them independent and a valued part of our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

**Member's Statement on Update on Activities in Inuvik**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I am pleased to provide this Assembly with an update on various activities that have occurred in Inuvik since our last sitting. In July, Inuvik successfully hosted the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Northern Games and the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Northern Arts Festival. Both of these events put the town of Inuvik on the map and provided a good economic boost for the town of Inuvik. I wish to thank all of the organizers and the volunteers who put countless number of hours in to ensure that these two events were such a huge success.

In September, the Members of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly met in Inuvik for a fourth Caucus planning session. I hope each Member enjoyed the good Delta hospitality during their stay in Inuvik. I wish to thank Ingamo Hall, who hosted an elders lunch for the Members. These elders luncheons are held at Ingamo Hall every second Thursday.

In October, the residents of Inuvik went to the polls and elected a new mayor and council. I wish Peter Clarkson, the new mayor-elect, and his council all the best and I look forward to working with them to make the town of Inuvik a better place to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 3, Members' statements. Ms. Lee.

**Member's Statement on Clarification of Statement on Tabled Document 58-14(3)**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on the basis of the media reporting based on what I said yesterday, I am afraid that I may not have been as clear in what I said, so I would like to elaborate a little on it. Mr. Speaker, it should be understood that in my statement, I was not challenging the soundness of the legal opinion Mr. Miltenberger gave us in the House. What I am challenging is the interpretation of that opinion that he has chosen to put on it.

I believe strongly that the legal opinion in question does not have the evidence to support that Cabinet has broken its own law. I believe strongly that the legal opinion in question does not have the evidence to support that there has been any conflict of interest arising out of this issue.

In fact, the opinion states to the contrary, and I quote from the opinion, No. 5, page 9, where it says that "There is no direct evidence of any legal conflict of interest arising out of Mrs. Sorenson's appointment." I also believe the opinion is based on incomplete information due to the confusion and uncertainty about the function and substance of this position. The writer of the opinion accepts that. I quote from the opinion, page 3, fourth paragraph: "Any exemptions to political involvement in the statutes and regulations seems to be based on the job title and function of the position in question."

Again, Mr. Speaker, I am not making a judgement about the opinion. I respect this opinion as the opinion of a professional. The point is that the opinion is based on admittedly incomplete information, and therefore it is an incomplete and inconclusive opinion, subject to more information. One has to be very careful in how it is used.

The allegations, Mr. Speaker, that have been made and spread out all over the media based on this legal opinion are very serious and far reaching. It goes to the trust and respect the people in the North have about the integrity of this government, of the consensus government we are all a part of.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, another implication arising out of this is that any person working for this government can become a subject of discussion in this House based on incomplete or misinformed information where they do not have the power to defend themselves. Mr. Speaker, we live in a small town, even in Yellowknife and in this Territory. For most of us, all we have is our name and our reputation, and no one should have the ability to use their power to damage that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Ms. Lee, go ahead.

**MS. LEE:** Mr. Speaker, may I please have consent to finish my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? We have a point of order. Mr. Krutko.

#### Point of Order

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I believe Ms. Lee is imputing motive in regard to stating her comments that make comments or rumours. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Krutko, I am not sure what the point of order is. Would you clarify the point of order? Specifically, what you are getting at? Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my point of order is based on imputing motive in regard to Ms. Lee's statement, where she states in her comments the rumours that have been going around states this and other issues. Because it is stating that these are rumours, it is not actual factual information. That is the basis of my question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I am not certain at this point...from where I sit, it does not appear that you have a point of order. However, I will take it under advisement and give my ruling at the earliest opportunity, which would probably be Monday. In the meantime, I think the Member has a right to conclude her statement. She sought unanimous consent. Are there any nays to the Member's request for unanimous consent to conclude her Member's statement?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Nay.

**MR. SPEAKER:** We have a nay. Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

#### Member's Statement on a Plan to Attract the Convention and Meeting Trade

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fall and winter are a busy time of year for gatherings in the North. This year will be no exception. In a couple of weeks, the Geoscience Forum will flood the town with about 300 people in the mining and oil and gas business. In March, we are going to have 500 youth from across Canada meeting here for the Canadian Youth Against Impaired Driving national conference. Prospects North next September could see as many as 350. The list goes on.

The North is what the convention and meeting trade might call an exotic destination. We are off the beaten path. We are expensive. We are a bit unpredictable and we are very different from the mainstream meeting venues of Banff or Vancouver or Winnipeg.

Central to the planning of all of these events, big or small, Mr. Speaker, are the facilities that Yellowknife and other communities in the Northwest Territories have to offer to attract conventions. We have the hotels, airline services, restaurants, shopping, and unique attractions to satisfy what a lot of delegates want.

What we do not have, some would argue, is a dedicated convention centre. There has been talk lately about plans of some development companies to create such a facility in Yellowknife. That is great, but until the plan is unveiled, Mr. Speaker, we really have nothing to go on. I would urge anyone out there who has a viable plan: do not be shy. Tell us about it.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I think we have other things we could work on to enhance this very valuable and very viable part of our tourism industry. We need a collaborative approach to bringing the services and the facilities together to combine resources to do a really good job of attracting and hosting conventions and meetings.

The challenge for us is to get a consensus and a will among business and government to work together and join forces. Set up the marketing and coordination systems that will attract and serve the conventions and meetings that I am confident are out there.

I think it is timely to raise this issue, Mr. Speaker, as our government has a draft tourism strategy out there, and so does the Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism Association. Can we not work together, Mr. Speaker, to bring our common goals into focus? I believe we can. I believe the convention and meeting industry is one we can agree on and continue to build what promises to be a vital and profitable part of our tourism future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey. We have a point of privilege. Ms. Lee, what is your point of privilege?

### Point of Privilege

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have all the knowledge of the rules of the House, but how I understand point of order is that you can raise a point of order where you feel your right as a Member to represent the interest of your public has been jeopardized in any way.

I wanted to raise a point of order the earliest moment I had the opportunity, because I had the time to think about what Mr. Krutko just did. I think I have been treated unfairly in that the two speakers who spoke before me had unanimous consent from the Members of this House. I gave unanimous consent for Mr. Krutko to speak on his point.

As a courtesy to the fellow Members, and in order that I have the right and power to speak for what I think is important to myself, my integrity, my reputation as a Member, and for the good of this House and the good of the people and the good of my residents, I should have equal opportunity. I do not believe I should be treated in any different way.

I believe Mr. Krutko did that, and he jeopardized my power to represent in a fair manner. I seek your order and ruling on that, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. I am going to have to review the issues that have gone by, but I do agree that you do have a point of order. I do not agree that you have a point of privilege, because your privilege has not been denied. Your ability to carry out your duties has not been extraordinarily denied. You sought unanimous consent to conclude your statement. That was denied as a normal process of this House. This happens from time to time, and therefore you do not have a point of privilege or order. Now, we will continue. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

### Member's Statement on State of the Economy in the Northwest Territories Outside of Yellowknife

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to address the state of the economy in the Northwest Territories and specific issues that affect it.

I was shocked yesterday to hear some of the Members from Yellowknife speak about the state of the economy and how it affects Yellowknife in housing and the cost of living. We outside of Yellowknife envy Yellowknife considerably when it comes to the economy and the development of the North.

While Yellowknife seems to be under a boom in the diamond industry, we outside of Yellowknife are still waiting to get our turn at economic development. The so-called diamond industry is seen from outside of Yellowknife as being a Yellowknife diamond industry.

Not too long ago, about a month ago, Mr. Speaker, the former Mayor of Yellowknife made a statement on the radio saying that Yellowknife was suffering because of losing 600 government jobs. I would question that statement, Mr. Speaker, and I would need some hard evidence that would confirm that.

The oil and gas industry is looked upon by people outside of Yellowknife as being their turn at getting some economic development. The oil and gas that is flowing through the blood and veins of the Minister of Finance. We are going to invite him

to Hay River and try to tie into those veins so we can get some of that oil and gas that is flowing.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I made some comments about the support of the fishing industry in Hay River. In checking Hansard of November 1, I see that the Minister of Finance stated that: "\$2.5 million was going in support of the fur industry." In checking with Hansard of November 2, I see that the Minister of Finance stated: "We have approximately 1,000 trappers now, earning between \$800,000 and \$900,000." I would think, Mr. Speaker, if that kind of money is available in the fur industry, we can cut down on the amount of subsidies we are giving in that area and give more to fishing.

Do we have a plan, Mr. Speaker, in the Territories? I certainly hope we do. I hope as a government that we are looking outside of Yellowknife to benefit all the Northwest Territories when it comes to economic development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

### ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Return to Question 179-14(3): Emergency Response on the Territorial Highway System

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by Mr. Delorey on November 1, 2000, regarding emergency response on the territorial highway system.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have the primary responsibility to respond to an emergency on the territorial public highway system. The federal RCMP Act defines the mandate of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to deliver police services in Canada. By agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories, the RCMP deliver policing services in the Territory. Policing services in the event of a highway emergency is one of the responsibilities included in the territorial police services contract.

Depending on the exact nature of the emergency, assistance from a number of federal, territorial or municipal agencies may be required. The police service, as the primary agency, will call on auxiliary emergency services as necessary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

### ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize in the gallery today Mrs. Rosemary Cairns, Mrs. Vi Beck and Mrs. Theresa Handley from the Status of Women Council.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to recognize the ladies from the Status of Women Council, and especially Mrs. Finance Minister.

-- Laughter

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Welcome. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Honourable Members and colleagues, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to be able to introduce and recognize visitors in the gallery, the delegates from Taimyr Autonomous Okrug, in Russia, the Speaker, Viktor Sitnov.

-- Applause

He is the speaker of the Taimyr Autonomous Okrug, and Member of the federation council. Accompanying him is Semyon Palchin, the deputy governor of Taimyr Autonomous Okrug.

-- Applause

Vladimir Luzgin, the chair of the committee on legislation, Taimyr Autonomous Okrug.

-- Applause

Yuri Galushko is the senior specialist, PR department, Norilsk Nickel.

-- Applause

Enver Batchayev is the assistant to Mr. Sitnov.

-- Applause

Accompanying them is Richard Colvin, with the Canadian Russian Parliamentary Program.

-- Applause

Welcome to the Assembly. We had a bit of a tour here, and I learned quite a few things from the Speaker from the Duma. To get order in the House, he raps on the table. I will see if I can incorporate that. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

#### ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 193-14(3): Remittance of Taxes Owed to the GNWT

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Finance Minister. It is about the hotel tax. I think as the Finance Minister gets up to introduce a bill for the proposed hotel tax, it is important that we take a good hard look at other taxes he has under his control.

The payroll tax, for instance. He proudly announced that we collected \$8.8 million in payroll tax last year, Mr. Speaker. I am curious. When people are late in remitting payroll tax, do we

send out notices encouraging them to remit this tax or do we sort of just wait for them to send us the money?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

##### Return to Question 193-14(3): Remittance of Taxes Owed to the GNWT

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with any tax, if people are late in remitting the taxes that are owed, then certainly they receive notices. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

##### Supplementary to Question 193-14(3): Remittance of Taxes Owed to the GNWT

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I am sceptical, I will take the Finance Minister at his word and I will do a little research. I know Revenue Canada charges interest and penalties for people who are late in filing or remitting. I assume then that we do the same. Can the Finance Minister assure me that we charge interest and penalties on late payroll tax?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

##### Further Return to Question 193-14(3): Remittance of Taxes Owed to the GNWT

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, we charge interest on any payments that are late. I assume it is the same for payroll tax. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

##### Supplementary to Question 193-14(3): Remittance of Taxes Owed to the GNWT

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to find out, in the 1999-2000 year where we collected \$8.8 million in payroll tax, how much of that would have been interest? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

##### Further Return to Question 193-14(3): Remittance of Taxes Owed to the GNWT

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that as notice. I do not know how much we earned in interest last year. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

##### Question 194-14(3): Varying Definitions of Métis

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are directed to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, regarding the issue of the definition of Métis.

I became aware late in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly when this issue came up, that in fact there seems to be a number of different definitions within government in terms of what constitutes a Métis. The differences, as far as I know, are Health and Social Services has a different one from Education, Culture and Employment, and different from Aboriginal Affairs, as it relates to land claims, devolving Métis lands and these kinds of very sensitive issues.

I would like to ask the Minister, is he aware of this concern? What steps does he intend to take to try to address this matter? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Return to Question 194-14(3): Varying Definitions of Métis**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of the concern. There has been correspondence directed to me on an infrequent basis. It has been brought to my attention. Just yesterday I met with the president of the South Slave Métis Tribal Council in regard to that issue as well.

There is concern out there about the definitions being used. I have stated to those individuals that I am interested in looking at this issue to ensure that from our perspective, we are using the appropriate definition. Also, I directed the comment back that we would like the input of the various organizations down the road as well.

Our definition, of course, was done in consultation...I am informed by my officials that it was done in consultation with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. There was some information passed on to us. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### **Supplementary to Question 194-14(3): Varying Definitions of Métis**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was not quite clear in the Minister's response. Is he indicating that there is in fact a standard definition or that it is an issue they are working on collectively trying to come up with a standard definition? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Further Return to Question 194-14(3): Varying Definitions of Métis**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** No, Mr. Speaker. I cannot state that there is a standard definition. We have a definition within the Department of Education. That has been used, but there was some concern expressed by several organizations about that. I am looking at that. I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, about the definitions being used by other government departments. My comment earlier was that I will take the initiative to check to see what definitions are used in other departments. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### **Supplementary to Question 194-14(3): Varying Definitions of Métis**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is good to hear that the Minister is going to take the initiative on this. Could the Minister as well indicate the time frame that he would like to see this done. It is a long outstanding issue. It is of great importance to, of course, Métis people in a lot of sensitive areas. I would like the Minister to indicate a time frame if he could, please.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Further Return to Question 194-14(3): Varying Definitions of Métis**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sorry. I cannot commit to a specific time frame. I will commit that it is important from my perspective to address this issue but as we all know, this involves the Aboriginal Affairs Department as well as all the government departments. I am not sure what complications may arise in this. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### **Supplementary to Question 194-14(3): Varying Definitions of Métis**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can appreciate the complexity of the issue, so if the Minister is unable to commit to a time, can he possibly commit to a date some time say before spring where we hopefully have a resolution to this, as there are many people waiting to see what the government definition of Métis will be? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Further Return to Question 194-14(3): Varying Definitions of Métis**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Well, as usual, the Member is very capable of twisting the question around in a different fashion of asking the same question. As I mentioned, this is a complex situation at the moment and I have to take the approach that there are many other parties involved in this and we have a definition at the moment and I want to look at that to see if that can be corrected, if that is necessary.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### **Question 195-14(3): Simplifying the NWT Regulatory Process**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today goes to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Mr. Speaker, I have been talking to a lot of people in the city who have repeated again and again about the complexities of the regulatory process in regard to resource development in the North. My colleague from Hay River has stated earlier the importance of oil and gas development. I do understand the Minister has been doing some work in order to

simplify that process. I wonder if the Minister could update the House on where he is with that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Return to Question 195-14(3): Simplifying the NWT Regulatory Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, yes, it is true. I have been doing a fair bit of work on trying to simplify our regulatory processes, as the Member has pointed out. I have had meetings with the various agencies, either personally or through my department. We have discussed and I think we have an agreement in principle among all of the agencies. They are all basically federal agencies, not territorial. We have agreement among those agencies that in principle they agree with doing one coordinated process for the regulatory screening and environmental assessment for the proposed pipeline.

There is a meeting being held on November 21<sup>st</sup>. It is being coordinated by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board. I expect that at that meeting, they will be able to iron out a lot of the details. Our government will be represented there as an observer, not as a partner, since this is really a federal process. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 195-14(3): Simplifying the NWT Regulatory Process**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From what I understand of what the Minister is engaged in, he is trying to bring all the parties who have a stake in it or who are the participants in the regulatory process and within that jurisdiction in the North, bringing them all together, looking at what their legislative requirements are and figuring out the process to streamline it. How I see it, Mr. Speaker, is that those laws are there for a reason and it may not be that simple to simplify them even if all the parties involved agree with that.

So I am just wondering if the Minister could elaborate more on how he sees this process working. I do not know if my impression is clear. I just want to give the Minister an opportunity to explain it more.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 195-14(3): Simplifying the NWT Regulatory Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you. Mr. Speaker, let me very quickly summarize the situation. Generally, if I just look at the territorial level, there are three environmental assessment bodies. One is part of the Inuvialuit Land Claim. There is the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Process and there is the National Energy Board process. If we just let each of them go their own way, then we would have three preliminary screenings. We would have three sets of environmental hearings and boards set up, so we would have

environmental boards tripping over each other trying to have meaningful consultations.

So my objective is to have them work in one coordinated fashion where you would have one board representative of all three agencies that would hold one set of hearings. Then we do not have problems with people getting tired of groups coming to their communities and asking for information. We would also prevent the problem of conflicting recommendations from it.

This is not in any way to compromise or get around any of the need to be very diligent in this process. It is more how to coordinate so we do not have all these boards each doing their own independent thing but still recognize the importance of protecting our environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 195-14(3): Simplifying the NWT Regulatory Process**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is very important that we do this in support of the oil and gas industry and, contrary to what is being said here, I believe it is a good thing for Yellowknife to be booming with the diamond industry. One community doing well is not a big thing for the rest of the Territory. I wonder if the Minister could advise us if he foresees using a similar process of the diamond industry, because, as he is aware, BHP Diamonds Incorporated is going through a regulatory process to deal with the changes that they are making to the kimberlites, the new kimberlites they are going to be processing.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 195-14(3): Simplifying the NWT Regulatory Process**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, wherever it would be necessary when we have more than one agency involved, then we want to streamline the process. However, in the case of the diamond mines, we really only have the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board process. It does not involve the National Energy Board or any other falling under a land claim right now. Even in those cases, we want to work with the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board to ensure that even there the process is streamlined.

As we know, this whole process is recent. We are still working with them to iron out any kind of overlap or duplication that may be happening but I assure the Member that, as the next mines come on stream, we have learned a lot from the past processes and will continue to refine and streamline how it is being done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**Question 196-14(3): Services Signs on Highway No. 3**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Just outside of Rae on Highway No. 3, there are some service signs. Unfortunately, because the signs are so small and are not reflective, they are totally unnoticed by motorists travelling on Highway No. 3. Can the Minister tell me which department is responsible for highway signs indicating services available? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. I understand that you directed this to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It is a highways question. To the honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, it is directed to you. You can answer it if you choose.

**Return to Question 196-14(3): Services Signs on Highway No. 3**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the question was who has responsibility whether to put up signs on the highways and so on. That is a responsibility of the Department of Transportation. I am sure if there is information concerning RWED issues on the signs that my department would work with the Department of Transportation.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Perhaps Mr. Lafferty could clarify the types of signs, whether they be highway or tourism signs. Thank you. Mr. Lafferty, supplementary.

**Supplementary to Question 196-14(3): Services Signs on Highway No. 3**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did say services signs. Services is economic development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will just clarify that for the Minister. Mr. Speaker, after the road construction was completed on the section between Rae and Stag river, the signs that were replaced were smaller than the ones that had been there before the construction began. Can the Minister tell me, are there guidelines for services signs that indicate campgrounds, stores, hotels...are there guidelines that say all signs should be the same, or can they be all different sizes, Mr. Speaker? That is my question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Premier.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I believe the question should be referred to the Minister responsible for Transportation. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Premier has forwarded the question to the Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 196-14(3): Services Signs on Highway No. 3**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe all signs that are erected on the highway right of way need the approval of the Department of Transportation before they are erected.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 196-14(3): Services Signs on Highway No. 3**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was for the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. The reason that I asked the question to him was according to the expenditure report, signs are mostly for tourism and economic development were in the budget for the Minister responsible. The sign was paid for in the North Slave. It was in the North Slave budget in the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. That is the reason that I asked the question to the Minister responsible. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. I am not sure if there was a question there at all. Is there a question, Mr. Lafferty?

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will rephrase my question. I would like to ask the Minister, in the expenditure reports for the North Slave region for tourism, there is money spent on signs, service signs and campground signs. It was in the budget as RWED. I would like the Minister to explain why they are paying for signs if they are the responsibility of Transportation? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. There is a bit of confusion as to which Minister the question has initially been directed to, but as the Speaker, I am going to exercise my prerogative and direct it to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 196-14(3): Services Signs on Highway No. 3**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker. I think this is a question for the Minister responsible for Education, no?

-- Laughter

Mr. Speaker, the reason that we have a budget in RWED for signs in the tourism section of our budget is that we do have responsibility for paying the costs of putting up signs that provide tourist information. When we put those signs up along the highway, they have to be put up in accordance with guidelines that are set by the Department of Transportation. They are in our budget because they are part of our tourism budget and they are our responsibility. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. It is either Friday or a full moon, I am not sure which. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 196-14(3): Services Signs on Highway No. 3**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Am I to understand that the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is not responsible for giving clear direction to motorists about the tourist information? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 196-14(3): Services Signs on Highway No. 3**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, we are responsible for giving clear information with regard to RWED's mandate. The main piece of that is tourism. We have responsibility for that. Mr. Speaker, we erect our signs along the highways in accordance with guidelines that are set by the Department of Transportation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as in my Member's statement regarding seniors, I have a question for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, because his department manages the seniors' fuel subsidy. I would like the Minister to let Members know how that program works and how seniors access it. Is it, for example, covered by volume or is it a fixed set amount? With that, I will wait for his answer and then proceed to my other question. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, it is available to seniors who own their own homes. It is a fuel subsidy that is available for either five cords of wood, 2,275 litres of oil, 3,105 litres of propane, a similar quantity in electricity or in natural gas, Mr. Speaker. It is available for those who own their own home, 60 years and over. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, has there been any increase in that amount, for example, fuel oil, 2,275 litres? I believe the Minister made reference to the home heating oil. Has there been an increase in that in the last five years? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** I do not believe the quantity has been increased. I stand corrected if it has not, but my understanding is that it has not been increased in quantity over the last five years, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the area of seniors, for example, who have wood stoves in their homes. He did say five cords of wood. Does it matter the cost of getting that wood if someone has to go and get it or pay for it from someone else? Is there a cost attached to it? The same goes with home heating oil. As the price goes up, the amount is not affected by price. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you. I am a bit confused as to the exact question, but I believe what Mr. Roland is suggesting is there a cost involved to get the delivery of this to the home? If that is correct, I am not sure what the arrangement is. It is my understanding that it is delivered to the home in the case of fuel oil or propane and so forth. That cost is covered. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, so in fact, as you named them: for home heating oil; for cords of wood; and hopefully natural gas will be included in there now, there is no extra cost borne by the seniors to have that brought to their homes? This is not sensitive to price, but it is based on volume, correct?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is my understanding at this point. It is the quantity of fuel that is supplied or the quantity of the wood that is supplied.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

-- Interjection

I apologize. I thought that was your final supplementary, Mr. Roland, but I have been corrected. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed it is Friday, I believe. Mr. Speaker, final question to the Minister responsible for the fuel subsidy for seniors. It seems like there has not been an increase in over five years. Knowing the cost of living in the North has not stopped, in fact, seniors continue to be squeezed every year winter comes around to pay for increased power generation and power costs and so on, can the Minister commit

to re-looking at the area of the fuel subsidy towards increasing it for seniors? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Minister Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 197-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Allocation**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are covering the increased cost of the fuel that is supplied through the department because it is based on quantity that is supplied. I believe there must have been criteria at the time as to why that amount of fuel is allocated. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Question 198-14(3): Mandate of the Minister Responsible for Seniors**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following up on the questions of my silver-haired colleague from Inuvik, I would like to talk about Speakers.

**AN. HON. MEMBER:** Seniors.

**MR. DENT:** Seniors, sorry.

-- Laughter

I would not question the Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seniors deserve to have programs delivered by this government in a coordinated fashion. I believe that the one-window approach is best. That is why I think Members and the public welcomed the Premier's recognition of the importance of seniors through the appointment of a Minister responsible.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday when questioning the Minister responsible for Seniors about the mandate, he said, according to page 1524 of the unedited Hansard: "The reason a Ministry for Seniors was established would be best answered by the Premier."

Mr. Speaker, I would like today to ask the Premier, what is the mandate for the Minister responsible for Seniors?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return to Question 198-14(3): Mandate of the Minister Responsible for Seniors**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for Seniors is a designation for people of the Northwest Territories to know that on issues dealing with seniors, for seniors who wish to raise issues with this government, we have a Minister designated who can be approached by agencies, the public and individuals to address the issues of seniors. That is the designation. I do not know that you would call it a mandate. The Minister responsible for Health and Social Services actually has most of the mandates, you would say, to deal with the specific issues, resources, services, programs that relate to seniors. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 198-14(3): Mandate of the Minister Responsible for Seniors**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the goal should be to have as clear a route as possible for seniors to get information, one window obviously being best.

The Premier just said that when seniors have issues, they could go to the Minister responsible for Seniors. If there is an issue with seniors housing, is it expected that Members of the public or seniors should go to the Minister responsible for Seniors? If they have a concern about the seniors fuel subsidy, should they go the Minister responsible for Seniors? I am a bit confused when the Premier says people with issues should go to the Minister. Could he please clarify that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 198-14(3): Mandate of the Minister Responsible for Seniors**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Member for the question. I think it is a good thing to clarify. The main reason is to profile the importance of seniors in the Northwest Territories, particularly this year, and to allow for a one-window approach. Seniors have issues regarding justice, education, health and social services, housing, so rather than have them go through the difficulty of going from Minister to Minister, department to department, they have the comfort of knowing they can go to the Minister responsible for Seniors. That Minister will assist them to deal with their issues by providing support and assistance to them, giving them the proper advice and access to the appropriate Ministers. That is, in my view, the primary use of this designation. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 198-14(3): Mandate of the Minister Responsible for Seniors**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure that seniors will welcome the news that they have one Minister to whom they can address all of their questions in this government. If that is going to happen, if the Minister responsible for Seniors is going to now start receiving all of the phone calls from seniors, what resources will he have to make that office work? What resources, both fiscal and human, will the Minister responsible for Seniors have to assist him in doing his job?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 198-14(3): Mandate of the Minister Responsible for Seniors**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that most of the seniors who have issues they need to address with agencies and departments know who to approach. Sometimes there is a case where a senior may find that they require more than the assistance of one department or one Minister, or that the issues and concerns raised involve, for instance, perhaps Justice or Housing and Health and Social Services. It is for primarily this type of situation that we have made that allowance. Seniors also have

access, as you know, to their individual MLAs to assist them with accessing and getting support to government programs and departments that they wish to access. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 198-14(3): Mandate of the Minister Responsible for Seniors**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we publicize the fact that there is now someone available in government to help seniors deal with cross-departmental issues. I think if we do that, it is going to increase the workload. I would like to ask the Premier, will he commit to work with his Cabinet to find funds to support the position, to make sure that there are human and fiscal resources available to the Minister responsible for Seniors to actually get the job done? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Further Return to Question 198-14(3): Mandate of the Minister Responsible for Seniors**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Should the Minister responsible for Seniors feel that there is a need to address this, Cabinet is always open to hear advice and requests from Ministers.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 199-14(3): Family Violence Programs**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services in regard to a statement I made regarding the lack of resources and also the lack of support mechanisms in our communities to deliver programs that relate to community violence within the family and also within our communities. I think one of the big problems we see in our communities is the way the system operates. If there is violence within the home, it seems like it is the mother and the children who are taken out of the home, sent outside the communities and then a lot of times have to come back to that same environment without dealing with the problems at hand.

A concern that I have is that I think it is important that this government finds a way that we can try to sit down with the families, the communities and find a mechanism to resolve these issues within the communities, so that mothers and children do not have to leave their homes, that there are mechanisms there that we can work on to do that.

One of the concerns I have, Mr. Speaker, is that one of the fundamental principles that this government has is that the Minister and health boards have as principle number one that all residents of the Northwest Territories will have access to services and needs and are treated fairly in respect to health and social service systems. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the concern I have is that the way programs and services are delivered, it seems like a lot of these programs are at the larger centres, yet there is nothing at the community level.

So I would like to ask the Minister what is she doing to improve the development of the programs for violence in families and also in communities so that we can have a community-based program so that we can deal with these problems in the small communities?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Return to Question 199-14(3): Family Violence Programs**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to thank the Member for Mackenzie Delta for his Member's statement today and for raising some of the concerns that are faced by communities in the area of family violence. This is a very important area and hearing the statements from the other side of the House today gives me some hope that as a government, collectively we can look very seriously at how we can start to resolve some of these problems.

Mr. Speaker, we do expend quite a substantial amount of resources in the North to address social problems under areas such as addictions and mental health, the children and youth programs, health promotion initiatives. There are activities which are going on in the communities. Mr. Krutko raises the issue of women and children having to leave communities because of the lack of resources that are available and going to larger centres.

I guess just from a demographics logistics point of view, it does make sense that there are some resources located in larger communities, partly because of the population that they have to serve and also partly because of the volunteer component in some of the larger communities. However, we do try to be fair in terms of distribution of resources. When I look at the funding that goes into family violence, I do see quite a number of small communities that are represented there as well.

Certainly, the problem is large and we have a long way to go in addressing it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 199-14(3): Family Violence Programs**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the other area that I feel is critical that this department looks at is ensuring that there are significant resources in our communities to carry out the programs to ensure families and communities have access to these programs. So I would like to ask the Minister, what is she doing to ensure there are significant resources in our communities?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 199-14(3): Family Violence Programs**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have an opportunity as the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services to work with the

Standing Committee on Social Programs and to take the input of Members of this House and represent those when we are doing our business planning. I know that this is not the business planning Session, but I hope that Members will be supportive when this government does go forward with initiatives to add critical investments into these areas where they are much needed.

It is true that many of the people who are working in the area of mental health, social workers and child protection in the communities have a very heavy workload and sometimes do not get to do some of the coordinating and some of the early intervention that could take place for families and children who are at risk of violence and other types of social danger. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

#### **Supplementary to Question 199-14(3): Family Violence Programs**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the Minister stated in this House that there was a program that they just established with the Status of Women and that there was \$500,000 allocated from this government and from the Stanton Health Board. So I would like to ask the Minister in regard to having come up with these resources for this program, what is the possibility of other regional groups or other regional health boards being able to access similar funds so they can also carry out such a program?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### **Further Return to Question 199-14(3): Family Violence Programs**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the project that Mr. Krutko refers to which is Women and Children's Healing and Recovery Program and this was launched in Yellowknife, the announcement of it was this week and, in fact, the program is underway now. The Member is correct. That \$500,000 is being put towards this, \$250,000 from the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Board and \$250,000 from the department.

The money that is being spent on this from the Department of Health and Social Services is money that was previously committed and used for the funding of the Northern Addictions Services and when that program was no longer in existence, we began to look at other alternatives in which we could invest those monies. So this is a pilot project and certainly, if it goes well, it is a model that we like to see expanded to the regions and utilize there. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

#### **Supplementary to Question 199-14(3): Family Violence Programs**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate that this government, in regard to my comment of their principle where they talk about fairness of our programs and services to all residents, that we do not just deliver

programs on the basis of picking apples off a tree. You have one group that comes in with a good proposal and you do something for them but you forget about the others. The problems are not just unique to Yellowknife. The problems occur in all the communities. So I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, when will we see an increase in programs and service dollars to all communities in the North so we can deal with this problem?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### **Further Return to Question 199-14(3): Family Violence Programs**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the initiative that was announced this week also involves the very extensive participation of some non-government organizations, including the Status of Women, the YWCA and the Yellowknife Women's Centre. This effort was not singularly a government effort. We worked in partnership with these groups and it is a fact that almost half of the people in the Northwest Territories do live in Yellowknife. This is a magnet community. Many people do come here and certainly these resources that are allocated are not exclusively for the use of Yellowknifers. Women can be referred from communities in the Northwest Territories, but we need to test this model out, so this is why this is a pilot project. Like I said, it would not be going ahead without the extensive involvement of some of the other organizations committed to family violence and healing and recovery in Yellowknife.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

#### **Question 200-14(3): Ambulance Service on NWT Highways**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question to the Minister responsible for Transportation. It has to do with his return to oral question. When I brought up my issue about safety on the highways, I thought I was addressing it quite plainly as emergencies having to do with accidents, and who is responding for basically ambulance service and that sort of area. Apparently, there was some confusion there.

It is Friday, and we seem to be having a problem with establishing what Minister is responsible for what here. I do not think this one is any less complicated, Mr. Speaker. I am trying to find out who I can ask questions to and address the situation that I feel is very important to the travelling public. I have a number of questions and they will not all be addressed today, but who is the lead department on organizing or setting up emergency services to respond to accidents on the highway? I will specifically state ambulance service.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. I shall direct your question to the honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return to Question 200-14(3): Ambulance Service on NWT Highways**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that I will just take the question as notice and respond to the Member on Monday. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 201-14(3): Minister's Statement on Family Violence**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you. Based on the comments of the Minister responsible for Health, the Honourable Jane Groenewegen, I will ask her this question. It is regarding her Minister's statement this morning on family violence. In it, she states that during 1999 there were 436 reported incidents of spousal assault by a male perpetrator. I am not sure if that is what she said. We will have to check Hansard. If that is the case, then I have many questions for the Department of Justice, and I will need to get the Minister to clarify that, if it is a true statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Yes, I shall direct that question to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, but be aware that is where the questions go. Your supplementaries will have to go there as well. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Return to Question 201-14(3): Minister's Statement on Family Violence**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge and as far as the statistics that I have been provided with, that is correct.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 201-14(3): Minister's Statement on Family Violence**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I have a hard time believing that there were 436 reported incidents of spousal assault by a male perpetrator. I think we have to clarify that for the public perception. I mean, the public is watching us here and I think we have to make sure our statements are correct.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The question is directed to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Further Return to Question 201-14(3): Minister's Statement on Family Violence**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a copy of it here now. I think if we do not put the emphasis on "a" male perpetrator. We said that there were 436 reported incidents of spousal assault by a male perpetrator. That might need some clarification. In each of the 436 cases, it was a male perpetrator. We do have statistics on acts of violence perpetrated by females as well but that was not in the statement. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Question 202-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Increase**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following along my earlier question on the seniors' fuel subsidy, and knowing that now it is clearly identified that the Minister responsible for Seniors is the one we should work through as well, my question is to the Minister responsible for Seniors. Is he working with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment? Seeing that there has been no increase in the seniors' fuel subsidy, is he working with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to have that amount increased, to offset the increased costs of seniors owning their own homes? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could I have the Member repeat his question? I am going through my briefing book here.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Yes. Thank you. The Minister is seeking clarification on the question. Mr. Roland, if you would be so kind as to oblige.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know we have to get accustomed to this directing questions. The Minister has a new responsibility in this Assembly but it has been clearly identified today in questions that issues regarding seniors should be channelled through the Minister responsible for Seniors. That is my understanding. In my earlier question to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, there has not been an increase in the seniors fuel subsidy for more than five years. I am asking the Minister responsible for Seniors if he is working with the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment to have the seniors' fuel subsidy increased. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Steen.

**Return to Question 202-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Increase**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister responsible for Seniors, if I receive questions of this nature from the general public, or concerns expressed of this nature from the general public, I would direct them to the appropriate departments. There have been some questions in the past from seniors in different areas in the Northwest Territories about specifically increasing the amount of fuel subsidy. However, I have never had the opportunity or reason to question the program as it is being delivered by Education. I redirect those people to bring their concerns to the appropriate department. I also advise them that if they still have a problem as to getting satisfactory results, satisfactory answers, that I would use my Ministry as a direct avenue to the appropriate Minister.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 202-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Increase**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, understanding that process, and again, as stated earlier, constituents also use Members to bring issues to the table. This is what I am doing here. I have received calls from seniors saying that once again, the winter season is upon us, the costs are going through the roof, and I am requesting first, of the Minister responsible for Education, Culture, and Employment. I did not feel that he gave me an adequate response in my last question, so now I am going to ask the Minister responsible for Seniors if he will, on behalf of seniors in the Northwest Territories, request the Department of Education, Culture and Employment increase the amount of seniors' fuel subsidy that is available to them. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 202-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Increase**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know if it would be appropriate for me as a Minister responsible for Seniors to request the Department of Education, Culture and Employment increase the seniors' subsidy for fuel. I would pass that on to him as a request from concerned citizens. I am sure that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has programs they review on an annual basis with the standing committees to see if there is a need and if we can afford to increase the subsidies.

I do pass on the requests when and if we receive them but I do not accompany those with a recommendation from myself as a Minister. As a Minister, although I am given to some degree responsibility for seniors to increase their profile and the importance of their programs, I do not take it upon myself to spend another department's funding. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 202-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Increase**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will have to review Hansard as to what the real role of the Minister responsible for Seniors is. I am not asking him to spend money on behalf of another department. I am asking him to bring the concerns of seniors in the Northwest Territories who are impacted by the seniors' fuel subsidy. His support as Minister responsible for Seniors, to go into the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, because that is where the program is under and I understand that. His support to have it increased, that is what I am asking for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is he going to lend his support to seniors and request the department to look at increasing it? That is what the question is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 202-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Increase**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I am trying to clarify my role here as the Minister responsible for Seniors. I do not have the capability of spending another department's funding. I do not have the opportunity or the resources to review programs as the departments are able to do. However, I do receive these types of concerns not only from individuals, but also from the seniors' society. They are involved to a large degree as to whether or not we increase programs, whether or not we change them or whatever. I cannot respond to the Member and say that I support this program or I do not support this program, the subsidy being increased. I just cannot respond to that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 202-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Increase**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, I am not asking the Minister responsible for Seniors to spend another department's dollars. I am asking him as the Minister responsible for Seniors to bring this issue to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and garner his support in trying to see if Education, Culture and Employment will raise the subsidy limit. That is what I am seeking here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 202-14(3): Seniors' Fuel Subsidy Increase**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for the question. Mr. Speaker, I am having difficulty getting it across to him that I may support the program and I may support the increase for the subsidies, but it is still the decision of the appropriate department as to whether they will do it or not. I do not know if the Member is suggesting I put my weight as a Minister behind the request, that is fine. I have no problem supporting requests from seniors provided we can afford them and provided the department is in favour of it as well. However, I cannot just on my own make these types of decisions, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Question 203-14(3): Income Support for Productive Choices**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes. Regarding Family Violence Week, one of the things that we know, Mr. Speaker, is that women who are in abusive relationships who do not have gainful employment or are unable to get on income support may be required to go back into abusive relationships that they otherwise would not be sticking around in, Mr. Speaker.

When we talk about productive choices in income support, I am wondering if Mr. Ootes can speak to the fact that women raising children at home can receive income support if their child is three years old or younger, but not if they are over three years old. Is that the case, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 203-14(3): Income Support for Productive Choices**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, if memory serves me correct, and again I stand to be corrected because I have to go by memory here, Mr. Speaker, I believe that a single mother with a child up to age three is a productive choice. I believe that a mother with two children up to age six is a productive choice. I go by memory on that, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 203-14(3): Income Support for Productive Choices**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a mother than who chooses to stay home and raise a four-year old is, in the department's assertion, making an unproductive choice? Would that be a correct assumption? Mr. Speaker, I will rephrase that. Why would a four-year old child not be considered productive?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. We did not catch the whole question because the switching had already occurred. Would you rephrase your question for clarification for the Minister? Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am concerned about mothers at home raising four-year old children not being able to receive income support. They are not considered to be productive choices. Is this the case?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 203-14(3): Income Support for Productive Choices**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in all likelihood, there was rationale developed as to why the age was attached to this. It could very well have been on the basis that pre-school is available at that particular point, where prior to that, of course, the mother may need to...may not be in a position to hire babysitters, childcare sitters, rather, and to access other types of programs. Once the child may have access to such things as pre-school programs, it frees up the single mother to possibly access other training programs and so forth. That may have been the rationale. I will get back to the Member with the exact rationale for this. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The time for question period has expired, but you are allowed to finish your supplementaries. Mr. Bell, second supplementary.

**Supplementary to Question 203-14(3): Income Support for Productive Choices**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there was ever a rationale for this, I would hazard a guess that it was money and our lack of money. I am glad the Minister has agreed to get back to us and discuss the rationale for this, but would he not agree that certainly this is a problem for us if we are telling mothers who may or may not be eligible for pre-school that a three-year old child is a productive choice but a four-year old child is not?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. It sounded like you are seeking an opinion of the Minister. I will allow the Minister to answer if he chooses. Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 203-14(3): Income Support for Productive Choices**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I think we need the rationale behind this, to look at it from that viewpoint. As I mentioned earlier, I will get back to the Member on it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The time for question period has expired. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**Written Question 12-14(3): Payroll Tax Remittance**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my written question today is for the Minister responsible for Finance:

1. In the 1999-2000 year, how many times was the \$100 failure to file penalty charged with respect to the payroll tax, and how many times did the GNWT recover that \$100 penalty?
2. Are parties wishing to contest penalties or interest charged for late filing or failure to file payroll tax required to make an official application for remission?
3. How many times in 1999-2000 was remission granted for payroll tax penalties or interest?
4. How many auditors does the GNWT employ to audit payroll tax remittance directly?

Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS**

**Reply 2-14(3)**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was not planning on doing a reply to opening address, but I would like to thank the Member for Mackenzie Delta for considering this option that is available to I understand all Members to speak once in every Session.

Mr. Speaker, my main desire to speak is to make sure that I protect my right to speak in this House because, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the biggest asset politicians have, and really the only thing that people can ask of a politician, is their power to speak. I recall that in my first ever speech in the House, which was titled *Voices of the People*. What I said there was that I believe my job here is to voice the opinions of the people of my riding and at the same time, it is my responsibility to listen to the voices of other representatives here because they in turn represent the people of their own riding.

I think what is important for me is that when my right to speak in this House is jeopardized in any way, it is not really just about me. It is about the people I represent. The people I represent are much bigger and much more important than whatever limitations and shortages I may have.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I just want to be able to express what I was trying to say earlier today. I will have to ask for forgiveness because I am speaking without a lot of notes and I have not really prepared this and I may have some repetitions and I may ramble on. I think that a good thing about this is that there is no time limitation, so hopefully I will take the time to think about what it is that I am saying.

At the end of this, Mr. Speaker, what I want to do is speak on the issues that are really important to me as a representative. Concepts such as integrity, honesty, good government, the role of consensus government, my ability to represent the people who voted me in, and who are really the only people I am working for in this Assembly. Concepts such as Members' privilege, independence to speak, abusive power of those who have the power, the role of AOC maybe. I do not know. I am just going to start.

Mr. Speaker, what I was saying earlier was that, based on what I was hearing in the media yesterday and today, I was getting the impression that I was not as clear as I would like to have been about what I was trying to say. I respect the role of the media and I respect that they do not have all the hours in the day to report in their media about what it is that I am saying, even though I think that is the most important thing. So I just want to have an opportunity to put it on record about what it was that I was trying to say here.

Mr. Speaker, what I said was with regard to the opinion that was discussed in this House and, Mr. Speaker, I want to say for the record that I respect the right of any Member in this House to take a position on things because that is the power of us. That is the responsibility. I respect the right of Mr. Miltenberger to say what he had to say about the opinion that he had. At the same time, I have to respect my right to say what I think this opinion says.

So once again, Mr. Speaker, it should be made very clear that I am not challenging the soundness of the legal opinion Mr. Miltenberger tabled in the House. Incidentally, I think most of the Members on this side of the House agree the opinion should have been tabled.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, what I am challenging is the interpretation of that opinion that he has chosen to put on it. Mr. Speaker, I believe strongly that the opinion in question does not have the evidence to suggest that this Cabinet broke the law. I think that it is necessary to repeat this because this is a very serious challenge. We should challenge that and we

should state that but when we do, we should be clear about what evidence we are presenting. Mr. Miltenberger has his own view on that. That is fine. I respect that. However, I have to say what I think of it.

I say that on the basis of having read the opinion, having listened to the legal advisor about what she says was considered in that opinion, and I say it in terms with the background of having worked in that executive position in Executive.

Mr. Speaker, secondly, I believe strongly that a legal opinion on such a law is complex but it does not say that there was any conflict of interest arising out of this issue. I reserve the right to say that. In fact, the opinions states to the contrary. I once again quote from the opinion, No. 5, page 9, "There is no direct evidence of any legal conflict of interest arising out of Ms. Sorensen's appointment." The fact is, Mr. Speaker, by saying that you have an opinion and growing power from an opinion that does not really say what it purports to say, the damage has been done.

There is a doubt out there about the integrity of this government and trust the people have in this government. It is important that people who do not believe that or agree with that opinion to speak out and say so. Mr. Speaker, what I was trying to explain in my conversations with journalists and in any other settings is that I really think that you should hear what the functions and duties of this position are. This is not clear because it is a new position.

It is something that is more commonly found in a party system. However, I do believe that any Premier, any leader of a government has the right and prerogative to work out a position that best suits them. The fact that that is unclear to the people because it is new, it is not defined, does not necessarily conclude that it is something else just because you do not have the facts to back that up.

I am really not interested in talking about this job because I think enough has already been said about that. I just wanted to say that based on the lack of understanding and lack of information about what this job is, the legal opinion is not complete and the opinion says that. This opinion says that they do not have the information to go on. They do not have the job description or whatever they need to go on and they admit that. So to say that it says conclusively what you want it to say is irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about what this has done to a civil servant and people that work for the government. I represent those people who work for the government. They should be protected from the kind of smearing and accusations that are hurled in this public forum.

We Members have very wide power to speak on any number of the issues and that is the best asset we have. That is a very important tool we have. We have to have the freedom here to speak on things that we feel are important for our constituents or our communities that we represent and our Territory. It is a total privilege and we have immunity from prosecution or retribution in saying what we do in this House because it is such an important value. However, in order for us to maintain that and to use that, we must also be responsible. Every privilege comes with responsibility. I am very disturbed by the trend that we have set here in speaking about a person, a

position, and allowing it unchallenged for four days in a wide media. It is not really about the person, but does anyone feel safe about now coming to that sort of scrutiny?

This is not rumour, Mr. Speaker. I had a deep conversation with my assistant about this and she says she feels unprotected that someone will not attack her in this House. All of us in this House have clerical staff. Their job descriptions are varied. Everyone knows that. They do whatever the Minister or Member needs and the degree or extent of their responsibilities depends on where the Members come from, what the Member's background is, what the Member's interests are...any number of things, and how the Members choose to use that assistant. It is such an essential position for us to do our job here. So they should be protected. Infringing and violating the privacy of one person is not just about that one person. It is about everyone else and that we cannot take lightly.

I must state that very strongly over and over. Mr. Speaker, we live in a very small community. In all of the Territories, there are only 42,000 people. The political community is very small. The civil service community is very small. Everyone knows everyone here. I know for myself, the only asset I have is my reputation and my name. I am not rich. I do not have a lot of property. I do not even have a huge family. Name and reputation is what I have. I have worked all my life to build that. In asking the public and everyone else to respect my reputation, I have to grant that to other people. I believe that whenever I ask for privilege and concession to be who I am, I have to give that to another person because otherwise there will not be any.

That is especially true for those who are elected. We have freedom to say what we need to say, but if it is going to target a person or the integrity of government, integrity of another person backed up by this legal opinion, then you had better be sure about what you are saying. You should be surer than if you are talking about a government policy or something like that. Mr. Speaker, I feel the need to say this also, because in my ten months as an MLA, I have been told over and over again that if you do not speak out that means that you condone it, that you are consenting to it.

You know, there is a rationality in that, Mr. Speaker, because obviously, not all of us can always speak on every issue on where we stand. Whenever you have a group of people speaking on an issue, then you know one or two people will speak for you, and then you generally agree. If you do not agree, you must speak out.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that I reject any notion out there that the AOC on this side of the House, and AOC meaning Accountability and Oversight Committee, is somehow a homogeneous and united body that has homogeneous sets of interests and political agendas. To accept that, Mr. Speaker, is to assume that the interests and needs of 11 Members are similar, and that is anyone with an elementary understanding of the communities that we represent, and the issues that we bring forward, and we know that cannot be the case.

I believe the AOC and all the committee structure that we have in this consensus government is borrowed from parliamentary tradition, which we do in many other areas. It is really there to serve us and help us do our job. It is an official way to organize ourselves.

People expect us to be accountable. People expect us to be critical of government whenever it is necessary. People expect us to represent our views on any given issue. In order to do that, all Members agree that it is a good idea to set a committee. I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, in anyway that says that we are a group as one and there are no other opinions, and that if the head of the AOC or any given Member of the AOC speaks on an issue that it is unanimously agreed by anyone else.

Mr. Speaker, I do not really know how long I have spoken here. I just want to make it clear that we as Members should have respect for other Members to speak. I have never made an attempt, and I do not always agree with all of the opinions that are spoken here, but I have never stopped another person from outlining their position. I would discourage any other Members from doing so.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to tell my constituents, that the fact that I am talking about this issue today does not mean that I do not care about other issues. On top of the agenda for my issues are regulatory process of the resource development, introduction of hotel tax, about which I have raised many objections in this House, and I have met with every stakeholder that I could think of and have discussed a lot. I will be raising objections to that, and my concerns, in due course.

On the top of my agenda also is family violence issues and the general social wellbeing of our residents. I feel that we have not done enough in our one-year mandate, and I look forward to having the opportunity to discuss more of that. Mr. Speaker, I have also raised the issues in this House about lack of funding in our health boards, and how it is necessary to look at it from a total perspective.

I also am very concerned about the lack of training opportunities we have, in order that the northern people are trained to take on some of the jobs that are available in the diamond industry and the oil and gas industry. I think we are experiencing a boom in many parts of this Territory, but that would mean nothing if our people are not able to take advantage of that, Mr. Speaker.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say that what is happening here in this House over the last four days has really brought to question the integrity of this House. There have been accusations hurled around based on a legal opinion that has at least a conflicting interpretation about what it is. I think that it has done a lot of damage to the concept of good government. In the end, I believe Mr. Speaker, that is all that we are here for.

We are here to work towards a good government, and in order to have a good government, there should be a check of differing opinions. It does not mean that one is free to hurl accusations and bring an accusation of dishonesty into it without evidence to say so. Whenever that sort of accusation is made, anyone who disagrees with that has an obligation to say that. You cannot just hide behind whatever you want to hide behind.

I think that the voters and the people out there have the right to ask us to opionate. That is the only thing we can do. We have to have opinions on things. Where do you really stand on what the accusation is? This is not a good government. This government is being dishonest. It has broken its own law. That

is a very serious discussion. That is a very serious issue, and where are the voices? What do you really think?

I am saying that the evidence as presented does not say that, and where are the opinions of others? I have a very serious concern about abuse of power. Power is always subject to abuse. People with good minds and good sense and a sense of respect for integrity should always challenge anyone who abuses their power.

Mr. Speaker, I will say once again, I will not tolerate any effort on the part of anyone in this House or outside of this House to muzzle me in any way. It is not about me. Once again, it is not about me. I can speak for myself on personal issues. It is about my power to represent my people. An effort to muzzle me is an effort to muzzle them, and they deserve better.

Mr. Speaker, I must say, many days and many hours of my work here, there were times when I just wanted to say nothing. I wanted to be one of the group. I wanted to please some people, or maybe not others, I do not know. It is really difficult when you have never been in public before, in public life, to opinionate and try to seek independence. When there is any dark moment or doubts about my ability to represent my people and speak on issues, I have to say over and over again, it is not about you. It is about the 460 people who went out and put an "x" next to my name. I still cannot believe people did that. People put a trust in me to say "We trust you. We trust that you are going to go into the House, and speak for me, to speak for what is good for our city, and speak for what is good for the Northwest Territories, and speak for all."

In order to do that, I had to be so much bigger than myself. Everyday I have to say it is not about you, it is about the people, and you have to speak up. If anything happens to diminish my power, which in turn diminishes the power of the people, then I have to speak up. Throughout it all, I want to protect the integrity of the people, the individual and the form of government we have.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have said enough. I appreciate the opportunity to do so. I hope that in doing so, I have made my points clear, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. At this point in our agenda, I would say that we take a short break.

-- Break

**MR. SPEAKER:** I would like to call the House back to order. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### ITEM 11: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**Committee Report 4-14(3): Report of the Review of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly for the Years 1997 and 1998**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Report of the Review of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly for the Years 1997 and 1998.

#### Introduction

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight met to review the Report of the Auditor General for the years 1997 and 1998 on September 26 through 28, 2000. The first day involved briefings by staff from the committee and staff from the Office of the Auditor General on issues raised in the Report of the Auditor General. Public meetings were held on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of September, 2000, at which time committee members took the opportunity to raise issues with witnesses that came before the committee. The list of witnesses included the comptroller-general, Mr Lew Voytilla; Mr. John Carter, assistant comptroller general, Mr. Doug Doan, assistant deputy minister of the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development; Mr. Afzal Currimbhoy, chief executive officer of the Business Development Corporation; Mr. Fred Koe, president of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation; and Ms. Elizabeth Wyman, vice chair of the NWT Development Corporation.

#### Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development -Assistance Programs for Businesses

The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development have a number of programs that provide financial assistance to businesses in the Northwest Territories. These include the NWT Development Corporation, the NWT Business Credit Corporation, the Business Development Fund and Community Futures. It became apparent during the discussions that the roles and mandates of the different funds are not clear. Is the intent of these funds largely social, to assist communities where there is not much economic opportunity, or is it support for qualified northern businesses? Committee members feel it is time for these programs to project a clear idea of what the intent of these funds are; a social vehicle or an economic vehicle.

#### Absence of Regulations for the NWT Development Corporation Act

The NWT Development Corporation Act prescribes that regulations be developed for subsidies paid by the corporation. Despite the Act being in force since 1990 and this issue being presented in the 1996 Auditor General's Report, regulations have not been developed to date. Instead of developing regulations, the Financial Management Board issued a record of decision (ROD), dated November 14, 1989, to set the limits on the subsidies. The use of RODs and directives rather than regulations to govern subsidies is of grave concern to the committee. RODs are not public documents. Despite assurances from the comptroller general that the content of the ROD was made public, it was not done so in the avenue created in the legislation. Regulations are more available to the public thus more open and transparent.

Corporations are intended to operate at "arms length from government"; but there is the potential that they may then feel that they do not have to comply with Financial Management Board RODs and directives. In his appearance before the committee, the president of the NWT Development Corporation indicated that the ROD and directives issued for subsidies were seen as "guidelines". The rules governing NWT Development Corporation subsidies have slipped from a legislated requirement for regulations to a record of decision to mere "guidelines".

There is a difference of opinion between the comptroller general and the president of the NWT Development Corporation. The comptroller general indicated to the committee that the NWT Development Corporation should be following the directives explicitly. Should there be a legitimate reason why the directive would be inappropriate in a particular investment circumstance, the NWT Development Corporation should acquire an exemption from the Financial Management Board Secretariat prior to issuing funds. The comptroller general further stated that to date, the NWT Development Corporation has never sought such an exemption.

As stated earlier, the issue of the using RODs instead of regulations has been raised in previous Auditor General's reports. This causes the committee to question how seriously the government considers the Report of the Auditor General and its review by the committee. The comptroller general has indicated that it would not be difficult to transfer the RODs into regulations and "it should be able to happen before Christmas".

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Standing Committee recommends that the present Financial Management Board's record of decision setting the limits for subsidies issued by the Northwest Territories Development Corporation be transferred into regulations by December 31, 2000.

#### **NWT Development Corporation - Lack of Information on Jobs Created**

The Financial Management Board record of decision stipulates that operational subsidies and investments from the NWT Development Corporation to its subsidiaries be based on each job that the subsidiary creates. The job may be created directly or indirectly. The Auditor General noted that the NWT Development Corporation has not collected information on the number of jobs created. Therefore, it cannot be determined if the subsidies and investment monies exceed the limits stipulated by the FMB. The comptroller general stated to the committee:

"...we cannot provide to you the reports from the Northwest Territories Development Corporation that would verify that the jobs were actually created in the numbers that they anticipated".

Compounding the situation, the Financial Management Board and the NWT Development Corporation have not reached an agreement as to the definition of "job" for the purposes of measurement. In spite of the requisite information failing to be collected and a lack of agreement on the definition of job, monies continued to flow to the corporation.

As a result of information not being compiled, neither the government nor subsequently the committee has any concrete evidence as to how effective the NWT Development Corporation is in fulfilling its mandate. Further to this, it has to be questioned why monies continued to flow to the corporation when it was in contravention of the Financial Management Board's record of decision governing its subsidies.

#### **Overexpenditure by the NWT Development Corporation**

The Northwest Territories Development Corporation Act requires the corporation to obtain Financial Management Board approval when subsidies to subsidiaries exceed the maximum

amounts approved by the board. During the year ended March 31, 1996, the corporation exceeded the approved subsidy for Northern Forest Products Limited by \$747,320 without acquiring the proper approval from the FMB.

For these violations of expenditure guidelines to occur, there must have been a complete lack of monitoring and a disregard for legislative authority. Concerns were raised as to how many other government programs are operating under the same parameters as the NWT Development Corporation. This issue is addressed again in this report under the heading of "Monitoring Third Party Compliance".

#### **Multiple Dipping**

The Auditor General observed cases where a business proposal received funding from more than one government program. In some cases, monies from one program were used as equity to secure funding from a second program. Each department or corporation remains responsible for only its portion of the funding and there is no responsibility for any one entity to play a lead role and monitor all the government's funding or investments in a project. The committee's concern is that multiple dipping and the lack of co-ordination between the different funds makes the overall financial risk to the government greater than it would be if funding came from just one program.

#### **The Business Credit Corporation**

Section 15 of the NWT Business Credit Corporation Act prohibits disclosure of details pertaining to loans made. The committee is of the mind that the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and its lending agencies must weigh client confidentiality against accountability to the public when lending public funds. Expectations are different when public money is borrowed as opposed to when money is borrowed from a chartered bank. Loans made through the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development are a higher risk. The committee felt that there are some details of loans that should not remain private. There is client information that can be released to the public without jeopardizing the business. This client information is important for the public to see what is being done with public funds and alleviate the scepticism and mistrust circulating around on how this government has issued loans to businesses in the past. Further, the committee is of the opinion that there should be a statute of limitations for disclosure of loans that have gone bad.

#### **Recommendation 2**

The Standing Committee recommends that the NWT Business Credit Corporation Act be reviewed to make appropriate information on loans available to the public where such information will not jeopardize a business;

And further, that the Act be changed to allow for information on bad debts to become public after a suitable period of time.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would request the Chairman of AOC continue with the report.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **Accountability and Performance Measurement**

#### *Linkage of Staff to Goals*

The committee discussed the need to include clear goals and performance measurements in both departmental and territorial corporation business plans. Integral to the achievement of goals are monitoring and tracking systems. Employees are instrumental in the achievement of goals but their roles are not being identified. This results in the lack of a clear accountability framework for the achievement of goals.

The committee questioned the comptroller general regarding the accountability of staff when goals and monitoring are not accomplished. The comptroller general indicated that tools to achieve accountability of individuals are limited and include job appraisals and performance bonuses. If a performance was bad enough, a person could lose their job; there was no need to implement other punitive measures.

The committee is of the opinion that an individual staff member's performance appraisal should be directly linked to the department or agency's business plans and the benchmarks used to mark progress towards goals. If a goal or benchmark is not accomplished, it should be determined why not. If the reason is human in nature, then corrective actions should be made. Employees are an integral component of accountability. Corrective actions do not need to be punitive but should include regular performance appraisals, re-evaluating job descriptions on a regular basis and training. Departments and territorial corporations need to ensure that each employee's job description fits into the goals in their business plan.

#### **Tools for Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Enforcement**

Many of the issues reported on in the Auditor General's report can be attributed to the need for more diligent monitoring. In the final paragraphs of the report, the Auditor General highlights the need for monitoring investments.

"Monitoring is highly important for the Government to know that its funding is achieving the results it expects (par. 8.8)".

This statement can be extrapolated and applied to all government activities -- monitoring is needed for the government to know it is achieving the results it expects.

Unfortunately, the government appears to be delegating authority and resources without having the necessary systems for monitoring, evaluation and accountability in place. Changes have been made to the Government organization to address financial restraint but corresponding systems for monitoring and evaluation were ignored. This has resulted in a situation where we have delegation without monitoring and accountability.

The committee is alarmed over the government's inability to take action when a department or corporation does not follow proper procedures. There appears to be nothing other than withholding managerial bonuses or in the extreme case, termination, to deal with transgressions. Time and again Members have been informed that ultimately, the Ministers and deputy ministers are responsible for their departments.

However, when a department or agency is found in violation of government procedures, are these not the people held accountable? What are the consequences and where are the accountability frameworks? During the review, the comptroller general commented that there are limited tools in the government to get prompt adherence to procedures. When breeches of government procedures occur and no corrective actions are taken, public perception of government accountability suffers.

#### **Recommendation 3**

The Standing Committee recommends that the Financial Administration Act be reviewed to address requirements for accountability frameworks, monitoring and tracking systems, and more tools for ensuring compliance with policies, regulations, directives and procedures.

#### **Monitoring Third Party Compliance**

The committee noted that there have been changes in the structure of government and the methods by which it delivers programs. The comptroller general indicated that upwards of 50 percent of the Government of the NWT's budget is being delivered by third parties. Further to this, it is unclear what systems and procedures the government has in place to monitor third-party compliance with the conditions of contribution agreements. Without proper monitoring, the government will not have a complete picture of whether important policy objectives are being met. Monitoring of compliance with the conditions of the contribution agreements is important to ensure that the intended results have been achieved.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The Standing Committee recommends that it be a condition for all future contribution agreements to include a functioning monitoring and reporting system to ensure compliance with GNWT objectives;

And further, that the Financial Administration Act be reviewed to address requirements for accountability frameworks, monitoring and tracking systems, and more tools for ensuring Third Party compliance with GNWT objectives.

In its response to the 1995 report of the Auditor General, the Financial Management Board Secretariat did indicate that legislative changes to the Financial Administration Act might be considered in order to improve third party accountability. To date, these changes have not been made. The Comptroller General indicated that a third party accountability framework will be developed in the winter of 2000-2001. It is hoped that the government will include in these changes measures to ensure that effective monitoring mechanisms and accountability frameworks are put in place and, more importantly, enforced to prevent a situation similar to the overexpenditure by the NWT Development Corporation from re-occurring.

#### **Contracting**

The Auditor General conducted a limited review of contracting practices to gain an understanding of the process and to

identify areas of risk. As a result of the review, there were areas of potential risk associated with some of the contracting practices that were examined. Chapter 6 of the Auditor General's Report presents a summary of their observations and indicates that a more in-depth review or audit will need to be done to conclude the extent of areas of risk that are cause for concern.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Standing Committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly request the Auditor General for Canada to conduct an independent review of Government Contracting to ascertain the extent of the areas of risk to government

The committee expressed concern that the Government is using request for proposals (RFPs) process far too often. The public does not view RFPs as an open and transparent contracting process. The comptroller general stated that there is a study of best practices that has been completed and proposed reforms in contracting practices will go forward for Financial Management Board consideration in the near future.

#### **Environmental Clean-Up and Related Restoration Costs**

Successive reports of the Auditor General have expressed concern over the potentially huge liability resulting from the absence of an allowance for environmental restoration costs. The 1997 report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations recommended that a list of contaminated sites be prioritized, identifying sites that pose a risk to the health and safety of people or wildlife. The committee further recommended that funding be identified and final clean up of these sites be conducted at the earliest possible time. The Auditor General notes in paragraph 2.16 of the report that, and I quote:

"At present, the government has not prioritized the list of potentially contaminated sites, as it does not yet have the data to do so."

The comptroller general indicated to the committee that post-division there are about 451 sites with potential environmental liabilities. He further indicated that, and I quote:

"They are doing quite a bit to inspect those sites over time and to take remediation action where it is appropriate."

#### **Recommendation 6**

Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee recommends that the government readdress the recommendations regarding environmental clean-up and related restoration costs presented in the Report of the Review of the Report of the Auditor General to the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly for the Year Ended March 31, 1996.

#### **Government Response to the Auditor General's Report and the Need for Timelines**

On behalf of the government, the comptroller general has informed the committee that action was being taken on a number of the issues that were raised in the Auditor General's report. However, the government has not set firm timelines as

to when these actions will be completed. During this review, the committee was informed that regulations for the NWT Development Corporation, and I quote: "should be able to happen before Christmas"; a third party accountability framework will be completed sometime this winter; a study of best practices has been completed and reforms in contracting practices will go forward to the Financial Management Board in the near future; and that, and I quote: "quite a bit" is being done to inspect sites of potential environmental contamination and "take remediation action where it is appropriate". Mr. Speaker, the lack of firm timelines does not enhance committee confidence that the government is acting expeditiously on these matters.

The lack of regulations for the NWT Development Corporation, the need to assess environmental restoration costs, and the NWT Development Corporation not collecting information on jobs created to show compliance with Financial Management Board records of decision are all issues that have been raised in previous Auditor General's Reports dating back to the mid 1990s. Yet these issues to date remain unresolved. This raises the concern of how seriously the government regards the Auditor General's reports and the committee's review of the reports. It is now time for government to become serious and put into place an action plan to address these issues; an action plan with benchmarks, an accountability framework and timelines.

#### **Recommendation 7**

The Standing Committee recommends that the government develop an action plan for presentation to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight that deals with the recommendations raised in the Report of the Auditor General to the Legislative Assembly for the years 1997 and 1998 and the recommendations in this report;

And further, that the action plan contains benchmarks, an accountability framework and firm timelines.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate that included in the formal committee report are the transcripts of the public hearings held on September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of this year.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the standing committee on its public review of the Report of the Auditor General for Canada to the Legislative Assembly for the years 1997 and 1998.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the deputy chair and Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland, that the report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight of its review of the Auditor General of Canada's report to the Legislative Assembly for the years 1997 and 1998 be received by the Legislative Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. Those abstaining. Thank you. The motion is carried. Committee Report 4-14(3) is moved into committee of the whole. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of

motion for first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

**ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS**

**Bill 13: Hotel Room Tax Act**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have two. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Tuesday, November 7, 2000, I will move that Bill 13, Hotel Room Tax Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Bill 15: An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act and Public Service Act**

As well, Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Tuesday, November 7, 2000, I will move that Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act and Public Service Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Minister responsible for Health, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**ITEM 16: MOTIONS**

**Motion 9-14(3): Legislative Assembly's Declaration on Family Violence**

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

WHEREAS family violence has a serious and traumatic impact on the health and wellbeing of spouses, children, families and communities;

AND WHEREAS this impact has far-reaching and long-term consequences, including addictions, mental, social and emotional problems, dysfunctional family relationships, crime and suicide;

AND WHEREAS adults who experienced family violence as children often experience violence in their own families, men are more likely to be violent in their relationships and women are more likely to be victims;

AND WHEREAS family violence will continue to affect our northern society as long as people continue to tolerate or ignore its occurrence;

AND WHEREAS all Northwest Territories people, young and old, deserve to live in homes and communities free from family violence and its tragic effects;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the Members of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly declare their intent to address the issue of family violence through their personal commitments to help stop family violence through their own actions and leadership, and further support a collective commitment of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly to work in partnership with communities and their leaders to help lift the silence surrounding family violence and create caring supports for people experiencing violence;

AND FURTHERMORE, the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly invites all northern leaders, including leaders of aboriginal governments and organizations, municipal governments, trade unions, boards, agencies, and societies to adopt the principle of zero tolerance of family violence in spirit and in practice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Your motion is in order. We have a motion on the floor. To the motion. The honourable Minister responsible for Health, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I outlined in my Minister's statement earlier today, family violence continues to be a critical issue for the North. Therefore, I am pleased to bring forward this motion, seconded by the Member for Frame Lake, as an affirmation of this government's commitment to work to address this issue.

In 1994, the 12<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly made a commitment to zero tolerance for all forms of violence, and endorsed the goal of eliminating family violence by the year 2000. While this was an honourable and commendable goal, it was quite optimistic.

Mr. Speaker, we know that family violence is a complex and difficult matter for victims, perpetrators, families and communities. It can take many forms: physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial, and property abuse. Power and control are at the root of this abuse.

As leaders, our approach to this issue can shape attitudes. Many Members have risen in the House over the past week to share their perspective on this difficult issue. This is a key step in working towards the elimination of family violence in order to openly talk about it so we minimize the feelings of shame and stigma, act as role models and actively show what is and what is not deemed acceptable behaviour.

In addition, government as a whole can take steps to raise awareness of the issue, provide for adequate emergency, intervention and support across the North for those affected by violence and implement policies and practices that make it clear that violence or abusive behaviour is unacceptable.

It is important to remember that government alone cannot stop the violence. It is up to us as leaders but it is also up to all Northerners to take personal responsibility in whatever way each of us can in our lives to uphold the principle of zero tolerance.

We have seen societal changes towards issues such as drinking and driving. Public pressure has made this less acceptable. In the same way, we can confront the devastating effects of family violence if we bring it out in the open, talk about it and make it clear that we do not in any way condone it. All of us as individuals must be vigilant in speaking out against family violence in order to ensure the respect for and the safety of all Northerners.

Working together, we can eliminate family violence. I welcome the opportunity for discussion on this very important motion here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to speak in favour of this motion. This is a cause I have supported and spoken out on numerous occasions in the past. Mr. Speaker, in 1994, the Legislative Assembly passed a motion which stated that this Legislature has adopted the principle of zero tolerance of violence against all people, and the goal of eliminating family violence by the year 2000.

It has been noted by several this week that it is now the year 2000 and unfortunately, we have not achieved the goal set out in that declaration made six years ago.

So, Mr. Speaker, again we must all speak out and rededicate ourselves and our efforts to raise awareness across the North of this terrible problem. Mr. Speaker, personally, I make the commitment to do whatever I can to bring an end to this tragic cycle of family violence.

Individual agencies and government, as has been noted, cannot solve this problem on their own. We must all work together and support organizations such as the Status of Women Council for the Northwest Territories and the Northwest Territories Native Women's Association, who have done so much to raise awareness of violence against women and children.

As has been mentioned by the Minister and others today, Mr. Speaker, the statistics from 1999 paint a very disturbing picture. It is hard to imagine in our small population 436 spousal assaults by male partners being reported to the RCMP last year. Over 200 sexual assaults being reported to the police. This is an extremely alarming figure given our population, since statistics show that only ten percent of sexual assault crimes are ever reported.

Mr. Speaker, there were 95 reported cases of sexual abuse of children and youth under the age of 18. Although family violence is a concern across Canada, Mr. Speaker, statistics show that women in the Northwest Territories use shelters at a rate five times higher than the rest of the country. We know, Mr. Speaker, that over 50 percent of federal inmates have suffered from abuse or witnessed family violence as a child. So obviously, Mr. Speaker, family violence contributes to a tremendous loss of people's ability to be successful in our society.

The Legislative Assembly, with this motion, is taking an important step of renewing its commitment towards the elimination of family violence but we have to take more than this first initial step. Our government must now develop a concrete strategy for dealing with the problem. It has to be a very broad strategy. This goes back to an issue of self-esteem in large part, so we need to have a strategy that involves education, involves dealing with addictions, involves healing, but it goes beyond that. It involves economic initiatives and opportunities for all people in all communities to have the opportunity to develop themselves.

We must also evaluate how we spend our money currently. Check which programs work, build on those that are successful and change those that are not working. We also must find a way to increase funding as it is necessary to help train counsellors to improve rehabilitation programs and to add to the amount of shelter space that is currently available. Mr. Speaker, women and children in crisis need to know that a safe

place will be available and that alternatives exist other than returning to their abusive partner.

Mr. Speaker, we know that children who are abused or grow up in violent homes are immediately at a disadvantage. They are more likely to suffer from emotional behavioural problems and are at a higher risk of ending up becoming abusers themselves. It is only by breaking this tragic cycle that we will allow our children to grow up in a peaceful society that allows them to reach their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, family violence is unacceptable. We must work hard to break the silence and never let it remain hidden. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. To the motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too am pleased to stand in support of this very valuable resolution of this Assembly. I would like to address specifically Clause 4 in the resolution: Whereas family violence will continue to affect our northern society, Mr. Speaker, as long as people continue to tolerate or ignore its occurrence. Breaking the silence, as colleagues have already said, is very much a part of making a difference and turning the corner on violence in our society. This Assembly can do much to alleviate that.

We can dedicate resources of time and people. We can create strategies and studies. We can put all sorts of things in place, but until people recognize and acknowledge what is going on around us in our communities and our workplaces, the resources we put in place are probably not going to get much value. So I would urge that leaders in every other venue of our society, Mr. Speaker, also consider the responsibility that they have to break the silence.

I would hope that we would hear discussion and awareness in places like the municipal forums and among associations of government, professional organizations, chambers of commerce, industry. This is where we will really begin to see how we can make a difference by demonstrating leadership. I hope that every other leader in the Northwest Territories will listen and look at what we are doing here today and follow our example. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, this is a very important part of the fabric of a family and the Northwest Territories. The fact of having a home that is safe and caring and have parents who love their children and their spouses enough to avoid any form of abuse. Mr. Speaker, I support the principle of this motion, that we stand up and we speak about the violence that happens in our homes and in the Northwest Territories, how it is not acceptable to have a husband beat on a wife and, in some cases, a wife beat on a husband. How it is unacceptable to abuse children, children who in my eyes were given to us as a gift from the good Lord above.

Mr. Speaker, I made a commitment to my wife that if there is not enough love there for me to stop me from being abusive,

then there is not enough love in that home to be there. I think that is a serious commitment. If I am going to be there, I have to honour my wife. That is not just in speaking to it, that is in following through with actions so that my children can see how it is that a husband should behave to his wife.

-- Applause

Mr. Speaker, I have also come from the other side of the tracks. That is why I say I support this in principle. There are issues at times when we, as a society, start to measure other people and measure them in a sense of who is doing what and what is right and what is wrong. Now as a father, I discipline my children. When they have crossed the line that I and my wife have set, I will discipline them and they know I do it because I love them. If I did not love them, then I would walk away from anything they have done that might be wrong in the eyes of the law or the family. We must temper that. We cannot discipline our children in anger. That is inappropriate.

Mr. Speaker, we have to be careful as we set out the guidelines for the people of the Northwest Territories. We cannot make it so that parents' hands are tied if their children go beyond the guidelines that we set as a society that are acceptable or not. More importantly as parents, because it starts at the level of being a parent. I cannot look at my neighbour and judge them as to how they are raising their children if I am not doing the right things myself. So we must be careful when we go about things as a government in making declarations and so on.

In light of the government situation of the stats that have been presented to us as Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is good that we do something that will open up the doors to speak about the violence that happens in our communities, in our homes, to our loved ones, but we must move beyond that. We must go beyond that in the sense of as a government, are we putting the necessary resources in place to prevent more violence from occurring? If we do not have the necessary resources, are we spending the resources we have to date in the proper areas?

Mr. Speaker, it was once said by a previous Member of the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly: "A campaign without dollars is no more than just a slogan." We need to go beyond that as Members of the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly. I need to know as I stand up here that what I am saying today, I will not turn around tomorrow and go back home and make like I never even said things that were important to me in raising my family.

So I agree with this motion and I support it but I also caution all of us that we must first look inward. That goes to all leaders in the Northwest Territories. If we are going to lead by example, we must look inward before we look outward. I must be able to look at myself in the mirror every morning and know that what I am doing is right as a father, as a husband and as a friend before I can look at anybody else and call them any other way. I think we have to start with ourselves.

I start with myself in my home and by that set the example for my children when they grow up. I thank my parents for the standards they set and how they lived their lives, because as I watched them grow together and teach us as children, they set the examples for me to live by and that is so important.

I urge Members to lead by example. I urge every council out there to lead by example. More than that, I urge our government to ensure that the funds we have in place are being applied correctly. If we do not have enough funds, we better start digging to find more. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. To the motion. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too support this motion, but reluctantly. I know the motion may sound good but at the end of the day, what is it really going to do? I for one feel that we have to make amendments to this motion to include commitments by this government financially and also achieving goals. When we talk about zero tolerance, how many people are we talking about taking off that list of people being violated with regard to violence and also in regard to effects on our communities?

Mr. Speaker, I for one feel that we have to do more than just make statements. We have to be able to have the resources and have the people in place to assist in the communities, but also give the communities and the people in our communities the tools to do the job and deal with the issues themselves. We have a just system that has to be reviewed. We have legislation in place that could be improved, especially when it comes to enforcement of different court order and what not that may be in place, especially when there are women to ensure they are protected and that they do have some space to deal with their problems.

I also feel it is important as a Legislature, we have the ability to improve our laws and improve the legislation that we have in place to avoid the biggest impact we have when it comes to violence, which is the effects of alcohol abuse in many of our communities. Right now, we have legislation in place that requires 60 percent approval of passing plebiscites in our communities so that the communities can deal with alcohol effects on our communities. So we can find some control mechanisms to restrict the flow of alcohol in our communities where a large portion of these wild crimes against families and women take place because they are alcohol related.

Yet as a government, we have those abilities to do that and we can do that today or tomorrow. Yet in order to make these statements and carry them through, we as a government also have to be able to have the foresight to make some changes to the way we do things. We cannot continue to establish mechanisms, cut programs and services in the areas that we know will impact communities and bring down the levels of support we have in our communities. We used to have four alcohol and drug centres in the Northwest Territories. We are down to one. I think that as a government, we have to do more to deal with this issue in the context of a family.

Violence has been around for a long, long time. I think people have to realize that it is not going to be resolved overnight but I think people have to be educated that it is not called for and there is no need to have violence in our communities, in the work place, or on our streets. We see it every day. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we continue to walk by, close a blind eye when we see violence being created on our streets or see people violated where we see someone walking down the street with

black eyes, with bruises, knowing that they were violated yet nothing is being done.

So I would like to close, Mr. Speaker, by stating that I for one feel we have to do more in regard to this motion by stipulating some strong conditions and establish some goals that we as a government want to achieve. We did that with the Education Act in regard to FAS in our schools. I think we can do that with this motion on a similar basis. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the motion. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to speak in support of this motion. I think that before I go on, I would like to just say that I am speaking... whatever I say for the next few minutes is in honour of all the victims out there in our territory who have been a victim of any type of family violence. I think that definition is very large. Mr. Speaker, I would also speak in appreciation of the women out there, in particular those who have worked really hard to bring this kind of motion in this House, namely the Council for the Status of Women. I know there are people who are working on this cause. As well, I would just like to thank the Minister and the Member for Frame Lake for pursuing this and bringing it again into the House.

Mr. Speaker, I have already stated in this House on this issue and I think that it is very important to know that there have not been that many motions that have been passed by this House in the last year. I think of a motion in support of the pipeline project. We passed a motion in support of the Human Rights Act and, most recently, I recall a motion to support the Public Service Commission. I must say that we should be proud that we are passing, or we are discussing and hopefully passing, a motion where we started with Human Rights Act and giving importance and urgency to the issue of family violence.

Mr. Speaker, I have stated earlier that I think it is very important and it should not be underestimated, the power of the elected leaders and leaders of our community to speak up and say that any type of family violence or violence against another human being is not acceptable and that it will not be tolerated and that the people with the power and the medium to speak out and say so.

Mr. Speaker, I do believe that the government has a role to play in making resources available to deal with some of the related issues pertaining to violence, such as addiction abuse, people who need counselling and all sorts of other areas that other Members have spoken of. I think there could also be an argument...not an argument, but another side of that is that it could be stated that some of those conditions are as a result of family violence in the house where children are growing up.

I believe that physical abuse of a person is sometimes not as serious as the mental abuse that takes place when one is subjected to violence. It goes right at the heart of one's sense of self and right at the heart of one's sense of integrity and self-esteem. The result is that the person is permanently damaged and less able to go out into the world and function as a whole being.

I am not sure if the intervention of the government is all there is. I think that as the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake has stated, the role of father and mother and the parents in the family is

important. I think the role of political leaders and community leaders is important and we cannot say enough as a group that we will not tolerate this.

One message that I want to leave in honour of the victims is that I have been close to family violence and directly affected by that. What I want to tell to the people out there who are suffering from it especially is do not be a victim of that permanently. Although it is hard, you can overcome it. Whoever abused you in any way, mentally or physically, sexually, do not let that person be a second winner in making you permanently damaged so that you cannot be the best that you can be. If you are abused and your personal integrity is violated, it is true that it will be harder for you to become the best that you can be to the fullest extent you can be but it is not impossible. Go out and seek help and know always that people in this Assembly and people who are there to speak for you and they will do everything they can to help you. Do not let that be the impediment permanently preventing you from becoming all that you can be because every person in this territory and in our communities has a place. You deserve not to be violated or abused.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I just want to say once again that I support this motion whole-heartedly and that I am proud to be part of the Assembly that is saying it and publicly declaring it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, noting the time, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that this House sits beyond 2:00 p.m. to continue consideration of Motion 9-14(3). Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. We have a motion on the floor which is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. The clock will be extended to conclude this item. To the motion. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak in favour of this motion. The majority of my comments stand in my Member's statement today. I just want to reiterate the critical need for us as Legislators to not only raise the profile and break the silence but use the power and authority we have and the resources we have to do some concrete improvements in dealing with family violence. We have spent millions of dollars over the last decade or so on this issue. It is still a significant problem. So very clearly we have to look not only at new money, but how can we better use the funds that we have. This is a very, very important issue that affects all of our constituencies and all the people in our constituencies. So I would hope that in addition to the fine sentiment, the Cabinet, the government and the many departments will start actually working together and take a critical look at how to be more effective with the resources we have, at the same time as we look, as my colleague from Boot Lake said, for new additional resources. So I fully support this motion, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, like my colleagues, rise today to speak in favour of this motion. It obviously is very important to heighten awareness in this area. We talked about breaking the silence. If we continue to sweep family violence under the rug, it will continue to fester and be a problem, as it has been for many years. It will continue on for many years, but I think it is important, as many of my colleagues have stated here today, that we pay this more than lip service and this becomes more than just empty, hollow words.

In 1993, we had a zero tolerance declaration and we watched violent crimes rise in the Northwest Territories, even though in the rest of Canada, Mr. Speaker, they are on the decline. So I think if we want to send the message to children that they seek out an adult or a peer and discuss family violence in their lives or if we want to say to mothers that they should seek help and leave abusive relationships, we have to do more, Mr. Speaker, than just make hollow promises and embark on rhetoric.

I think we have to take a good hard look at the programs this government delivers. What are we really saying if we are asking women to leave abusive relationships when we know that single mothers with children often live below the poverty line and often have a difficult time accessing resources, Mr. Speaker? What are we saying to children when we ask them to report family violence and then there are no resources for them and no support for children who talk about family violence?

Mr. Speaker, we have heard that there is no new money. I think that is something that everybody in this House can accept. However, I think it has to be about priority setting. It is fine and dandy to talk about economic development and what we are going to do in various different industries: oil and gas, mining, but we simply cannot forget about family violence. We are going to have to dedicate some of our dollars to solving this problem, Mr. Speaker. It should be of the highest priority. I do not think we can say on one hand we are dedicated to making the elimination of family violence a priority and yet on the other hand be closing treatment centres, as Mr. Krutko has said.

We have high unemployment or low paying jobs. We have a lack of shelters for people who are abused, Mr. Speaker. We simply are going to have to do more if we really are going to do anything to combat this problem.

So like my colleagues, I want to speak in favour of it. I think it is important to heighten awareness, but heightened awareness without resources and without dedication to this problem simply are not going to get the job done, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. To the motion. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to also speak in favour of this motion. As most of my colleagues have already stated, the number of factors that come into play in the context of this motion, whereby this government has to make a commitment to put more resources towards addressing the issues that are involved in family violence. As an individual that has come from a very large family, I feel very fortunate and very rich as a human being to

be able to sit here and say I can recall at no time that family violence has had any impact on my life.

I will say that I did experience some of it in families that were very close to us and it was extremely hard to deal with that. Even when family members wanted to be open about it and break the silence, it was very restrictive and a very dangerous situation for them to do it in. I know that is a hard area to address, but it is something we have to do.

One of the things I think we cannot forget is to support and mention the people and the organizations that are doing a lot right now, today, to address family violence. This motion is not new. We have had motions like this before and there are individuals and organizations out there that are trying to do a lot to break the cycle in family violence. I think we have to support that and acknowledge the fact that there are groups out there that should not give up and work harder and know that we are supporting them in their efforts.

We also have to look at the laws that control family violence and how they are hampered in trying to get into situations, knowing situations of family violence. In a lot of cases, their hands are tied as well as to what they can do to deal with that situation. So a lot of the laws we have will have to be looked at. As a person, I have no problem standing here and saying I fully support zero tolerance in family violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. To the motion. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to say that I support this motion on the floor. Like my colleagues around us who have spoken before me, they have all said financially we are unable to help our caregivers and the staff who we have out there. There is a way that we can maybe make changes and that is to be proactive. We have to nip it in the bud, like they say, and start putting this into the schools at a younger age where we know it will make a change.

Some areas we cannot help too much now, as in where the situations are already there. We have to do something in the areas where we think we can cut it off and make sure that it does not happen and continue. That is to put it into the school system, into the education system. If we do it at an early age, then we might make a difference. For our caregivers who are out there, we will have to give them new directions and maybe put more tools out there to do the job that we want them to do. To that, I once again say that I support this motion, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. To the motion. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I too am proud and pleased to support this motion. Zero tolerance is an achievable goal. In spite of all the good work that is being done by others, including the Status of Women, the Women's shelters and so on. This goal of zero tolerance will only be realized if all of us as leaders, and I include us, municipal leaders, aboriginal leaders, private sector leaders, if we all lead by example. Our commitment cannot end with comments here today. We cannot stop here. There has to be consequences to violating our

commitment, and we need to be public and we need to be clear about what those consequences are. There are no excuses for violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an important and significant motion. It is one that is an important step in the right direction to ensure that we tackle this very important issue that is so prevalent here in our Territory. Family violence is not acceptable, neither is violence of any sort, Mr. Speaker. Violence of any sort is not acceptable. We need to all pay attention to this very important subject.

As leaders, we have a role to play, as all leaders in the Territory have a role to play. It is my belief that we can make a difference in this if we continue to discuss this, to speak about it, and wherever possible to pass the message to others that the issue of violence against other people is not acceptable.

We can make improvements in this whole area, and it is my firm belief that if we all set our minds to it, it can be achieved and we can make significant progress in this area.

I am very appreciative of the Northwest Territories Status of Women, who I know have been working on this for years, have dedicated a lot of time and a lot of effort on their part to it. We have with us today Vi Beck, Rosemary Cairns and Theresa Handley, who just stepped out for a moment. I am very appreciative of the work that they have done.

I personally have worked a bit with the council over the past few years, not in the past year, but previous to that and was able to at least learn of their work in this area that has been so significant to bring attention to this area. I want to also thank the Minister for this important motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. To the motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to express my support for this very important motion. I know right now it is just paper with the words that we say. There are not many resources behind it. For as many resources as we have, we could throw as many resources to it, as much as possible, but knowing that at the end of the day money is not going to solve this problem.

It is a personal choice, Mr. Speaker, amongst all people to respect ourselves and to respect one another. Only if you achieve that will violence then be reduced. What is violence? What is zero tolerance? What do we mean by zero tolerance? Do we have billboards out there that explains what violence is, emotional or physical?

I would like to suggest that this government develop some literature that could be put in public places that tells people what violence is. What do we measure ourselves against?

Physical violence is self-explanatory. We see the marks on people. We see the black eyes. We see the fat lips. We see the blood. There are other forms of violence which leads to disrespect, which leads to physical violence. Let us identify those other areas so that it is clear in our minds and in our hearts. It does not have to be a campaign. It could be just

posters in the school hallways, in municipal buildings, on the streets and on public buildings. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. To the motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I am very pleased to stand in front of you all to say that I support the motion based on the fact that there is a set of principles that are going to guide the direction as to where we go from here. As you know, I spent many years investing in young offenders who had been victims of family violence, crimes, and other injustices done throughout our territory.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I think to defend my rationale and my philosophy, I still believe that economic development drives social and cultural development. Not in terms of how much money we make, but the type of investment that we have at the community level. I find quite often, and I speak to you passionately about this, that it takes a whole community to help the children grow out of situational problems which are varied and many. If we really look at the basic assessment of our life, I think we should really place much more emphasis on job worthiness.

People tend to feel good for themselves and I agree, yesterday hearing many of the questions this House raised about the renewable resource sector, because that is where the majority of our aboriginal people come from. The majority of the people who emigrated North, who developed their homes, their family is in the North, now are victims of this situation and the circumstances surrounding it.

I want our people to realize that it not only takes money, but also investment in terms of how we define the role of people in the community. I am really sad to say that if we dig deep into the statistical data, that many of us who have problems are those people who really had problems integrating to the community lifestyle.

I think we should really look back at where we come from, and we should revisit the methods of where we should begin to teach, not only in terms of the high tech and the things that we normally speak about our education system. We have a great and high failure. I want us to realize that and I am certainly in support of this motion. I wanted to explain that this is the philosophy that I carry and I hope that you share that with us. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. To the motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of years ago, the people of Canada watched in horror as a story unfolded about a special armed forces Canadian soldier who tied up a 16-year old child in Somalia and systematically beat the child until the child died. Mr. Speaker, perhaps we do not understand the motives and the reasons why men are driven to do these things. In a moment of humour, a character on the TV program "This Hour has 22 Minutes" Babes Bennett, was commenting on that and she said her view of it was that "Why do we feel that it does something?" She said anybody can pistol whip an unarmed civilian into submission. Why is it that women do not do that? She said "We just do not feel like it, that is all".

I thought there was humour in it, but it also drives at the point. Why do men continue to beat women, children and elders? Why do men continue to bully women, children, elders? It is not only at home that this violence takes place. Violence in many forms takes place on the streets and at the work place. Is it because men want to control and silence and feel power over those they physically are stronger than? Is it to vent pent-up rage? I do not know that.

I just know that even today not everybody agrees that this is wrong. There are still people in this world who believe there are occasions when children should be beaten. They actually believe there are occasions when women should be beaten, that it is justifiable to beat people.

In this Legislature, I believe we have an opportunity because we are on TV. We are reported on every day to show people how we should relate to each other. We show a degree of tolerance and respect and appreciation for one another that perhaps is not shown enough out there in the streets and the communities, in the homes, in the constituencies for the people whom we represent. I believe that.

Mr. Speaker, my mother was widowed since '75. Just two years ago at the age of 78, she was beaten by a man in Fort Good Hope. One of my sisters was medicated to Edmonton a year ago, again beaten by a man. She will never regain her full health. That is how close this is. So of course I support the motion.

There are people who would say we should throw more money at it. I do not disagree with that. I also know it does not cost money for us to set an example every day in this House. It does not cost money to make a declaration. It does not cost more money for us to challenge our chiefs, our Métis leaders and our mayors, our councillors, and the people who work in our communities supposedly on behalf of our constituents. Challenge them to make the same declaration, because in the end, the more of us that make it, the more of us that commit to no violence and to show no tolerance for violence against not only our children and our women and our elders but each other as well. In the end, it will really cost no money. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. To the motion. The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am standing here today to support the motion. I think this declaration on family violence is a very good initiative on our part. It will demonstrate to people in the North that we are putting on notice that we are aware of the violence that takes place and has been going on for many years.

I am aware of it as a former chief in my community. I have dealt with many instances of this nature and it continues today. We are all aware of it and we want to bring awareness to this situation here in the North in our society. We are here elected by everybody in our constituency, or the majority of the people in our constituency, to represent them the best we can. We are here to try and make life better for people in the North in all ways. We build facilities. We fix the roads. We put programs and services in place and we are throwing money at different things that we are trying to make life better in the North. At the

same time, there are relationships that go on in our communities and the homes that we are saying are not right.

There has to be a way of addressing it. We cannot go into every home and try to correct everything. I think by making this statement here in the House and challenging our northern leaders, including the leaders of the aboriginal governments and organizations, municipal governments, trade unions, boards, agencies, societies to adopt this principle of zero tolerance.

So we are putting a challenge out there to all the leaders in different organizations in our communities to say that we understand this situation exists. It is perhaps a little better than it used to be a long time ago, but it is still there and we should all try to make life better for all our people in our communities. So for that, I am standing here in support of this motion. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. To the motion. The Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what we have heard today on family violence takes on many forms and affects all members of the family. Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to highlight violence against seniors, better known as granny bashing.

Mr. Speaker, we all know this happens within families in one form or another. In my communities in Nunakput, the leaders are encouraging the NWT Housing Corporation to construct seniors' facilities as a means of reducing seniors abuse. I am encouraged to be advised that the NWT Housing Corporation is in fact responding favourably to this type of request all through the Northwest Territories. I am encouraged that this would serve to reduce to some degree seniors abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I support this no violence - zero tolerance motion. I think we should look at it as a means of not just the younger generation. We should look at it as applying to violence to all levels of the family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. I have no further names on the list. Madam Minister, would you conclude the debate?

**HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would encourage Members not to be overwhelmed by the magnitude of this problem of family violence. As Mr. McLeod shared, sometimes we do wonder about the usefulness of standing up and talking about these things in the Legislature, but as the Premier said, many people in the North are watching us. They may only know us through the words and the actions that we portray in this House. As our colleague for the North Slave also mentioned, we must be proactive. If we are not, who will be? We cannot accept that our Territory is known for these statistics and that our residents suffer the consequences of this insidious reality of family violence.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of children, women, elders and those in our society who are vulnerable, I do thank the Members of the House today for their strong views that they have expressed on this very important subject. On behalf of the Members of this House, I thank the many frontline workers and the volunteers

who devote their life's work to ending this problem of family violence. So thank you, Mr. Speaker. With that, I would like to request a recorded vote. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Minister. A recorded vote has been called for. Question has been called. All those in favour, please rise.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Handley, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. Roland, Mr. Dent, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Bell, Mr. Nitah, Mr. Braden and Mr. Steen.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining? Thank you. The results are 18 in favour, zero opposed and no abstentions. The motion is carried unanimously.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Members. In recognizing the clock, we are going to proceed to Item 22, but before I go to orders of the day, I would like to report on my ruling on the point of order made by Mr. Krutko on November 3, 2000.

I wish to provide my ruling on the point of order raised by the Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko. I have reviewed the unedited Hansard and rule that the Member, Mr. Krutko, does not have a point of order, as the Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee, did not impute motive on behalf of anyone in her Member's statement.

-- Applause

Also, before I go to orders of the day, I would also like to call the House's attention to a visitor in the gallery, Ms. Vicky Latour, who is the mother of our Sergeant-at-Arms.

-- Applause

Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

#### ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Social Programs immediately after adjournment; for Monday morning at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, at 10:30 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Social Programs; and at 12:00 p.m. of the Striking Committee.

Orders of the day for Monday, November 6, 2000:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions

8. Return to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
  - Motion 10: Referral of Tabled Document 32-14(3), Report of the Chief Electoral Officer to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures
17. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 12, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2000-2001
  - Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
  - Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, No. 3
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 8, Justice Statutes Amendment Act
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
  - Bill 2, Write-off of Debts Act, 2000-2001
  - Bill 3, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2000-2001
  - Bill 7, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2000
  - Bill 9, An Act to Amend the NWT Power Corporation Act
22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, November 6, 2000, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

