

**ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE**

**QUESTION 734-18(2): FAMILY VIOLENCE SURVEY**

**March 10, 2017**

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. I have spoken a couple of times now about the need to update the family violence survey. It was last done 10 years ago. In the June session, the Minister said that she thought the survey was a valuable tool and she would advocate for funds to do a new one. How is that going? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The conversation of an attitudinal survey is actually interesting, and I would like to kind of address that. I would like to start with stating that I am quite offended by the Member's statement, when she stated that it is clear that Members do not agree that family violence is insulting. Because Members do not have a desire to continue to punish individuals who have served their time after committing domestic violence but rather focus on healing, because we want to preserve rights in place, does not mean that Members do not understand or care about family violence in the Northwest Territories. If the Member meant that we do not agree on punishment versus healing, then, of course, the Member is certainly correct. The attitudinal survey, we did discuss it. We looked into it. We talked about it within different departments. We have made the decision that, with the state of the economy right now, with the way we are going right now, spending a hundred thousand dollars on a survey is probably not the best use of the money. I am taking the stance that I would rather focus that money on prevention and healing at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** I didn't realize that responses to questions were also a rebuttal time, but that is good to know. What I have asked the Minister for and she said she can't afford is a commitment to redoing the family violence survey. She said that it was a valuable tool, and she said she would advocate for funds to redo it.

How about just taking half the Cabinet to Vancouver? That would free up \$100,000, which is what the family violence survey cost last time. How about taking \$100,000 out of the infrastructure budget? There are a number of ways that a hundred thousand dollars can be found very readily by this government. I have seen it done, so how about finding that money?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. I would just like to remind Members that, whenever there is a question to a Minister, the Minister has either the right to answer or not to answer a question. Second set of questions to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to state that family violence is an issue within the Northwest Territories. It is something that we have to donate time and energy to. Again, I would like to say that I believe that we need to

focus on prevention and healing at this point. I also want to state, since it was in the question, that not only is the issue of family violence an issue within the Northwest Territories, we have to take care of all the residents, and that means we have to provide support and money to our mineral industry, to our infrastructure, to housing, to transportation, to education. We have a lot of priorities, and I will not advocate that we use all of our money to address one issue when we have many issues within the Northwest Territories.

**MS. GREEN:** I am advocating \$100,000 out of a \$1.7 billion budget. I am talking about half the population. I am talking about making people safe. We need to address this problem in more effective ways. What we are doing is not addressing the root causes of family violence. So my question to the Minister is: is she willing to make a commitment to look at a systemic fix to family violence? The information for that would be provided by a new family violence survey.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I am definitely committed to addressing the root causes of family violence, and the root causes of family violence is not an attitudinal survey. It is a lot of other things. It can be a host of ideas, and that is why I will commit to supporting prevention and healing.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. How is the Minister going to prevent family violence going forward? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is not my responsibility alone as a Minister, as a human being, to address the issue of family violence and the root causes. We are working across departments. We are working with our colleagues, Regular MLAs. We are working with Aboriginal governments. We are working with non-profit organizations. This is a societal issue, not one person's issue. I will commit to working in partnership with as many people, as many organizations I can, to address the issue of family violence.