

*S. O. 31*

It will devise a plan of action with concrete timeframes for federal government action. The panel functions at arm's length from the government and it has an enormous task to complete in a relatively short period of time. The final report is due at the end of this calendar year.

At the present time the panel is fully engaged in the first phase of its mandate. It is holding a series of grassroots, largely private consultations in five nine-day tours to over 100 communities across Canada. So far, the panel has visited British Columbia, my own province of Alberta, Quebec and the Atlantic provinces. It is presently holding meetings in Ontario.

The panel is taking that approach to ensure that it is accessible to women everywhere in the country and to make it possible for women to come forward and speak about something which is so terrible and so sensitive that for years women have borne it in silence and in fear.

The panel expects to complete this first phase of its mandate next month and to issue a preliminary report by May 27, 1992. It will then enter its second phase which will involve a series of public consultations.

The very fact that this panel is at work examining this issue is already furthering the objective of public education and helping to send out the message that violence against women must be of concern to every man, woman and child in this country.

It is helping to get the message out to institutions, companies, professional organizations and labour unions. It is providing a forum and a focus for all sectors of society to come together to deal with this issue.

The panel's work is being well received across the country. Women and front-line experts are responding to the panel's call for involvement. We must remember that the panel itself is, for the most part, comprised of these front-line experts.

People have been involved in this issue for many years. The media has been receptive to the work of the panel, and the momentum for change is being maintained by the very presence of the panel in communities all across the country.

It is partly through this kind of continuing public awareness that we, as a government, believe that we can

build zero tolerance of violence against women in society.

The more people who know that such violence exists and how to recognize it, the fewer people will tolerate the social, physical and political factors at work to perpetuate the abusive power in Canadian society.

The more intolerant society becomes toward abuse and violence, the more understanding it shows for the victims of the abuse, the easier it will be for women to stand up to the abusing.

Some have suggested that we already know enough about violence against women and that we need not study it further. Research has been fragmented and scattered leaving individuals, groups and communities to grope for information and solutions. More often than not, they have found that the answers have often posed more questions rather than solutions.

The panel's work will do much to remedy this situation. It will bring together what we now know about the issue of violence against women and will make it readily available to all those who need it. The work will add to what we know. It will point out what we do not know and what we still must find out.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I think we should call it one o'clock and the hon. member will then have 10 minutes remaining in his speech plus 10 minutes for questions and comments, once we return to debate after three o'clock.

It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon, pursuant to Standing Order 24(2).

The House took recess at 1 p.m.

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**AFTER RECESS**

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

**STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31**

[English]

**IRAN**

**Mr. Bill Attewell (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville):** Mr. Speaker, Nathan Abramowitz sent me a picture of a stamp being issued by the Iranian postal service to mark the UN International Day of the Child.