

15th Legislative Assembly

Fifth Session May 30 - June 8, 2006

JUN 2, 2006

Concerns With GNWT Human Resource Service Levels

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I am going to discuss an issue that I have brought up in this House numerous times in the past couple of years. That is how our government is handling the amalgamation of our human resources.

Mr. Speaker, last year I had a number of constituents who were very concerned over how they were being treated by the new HR division, now the Human Resources department. Some of the stories were very alarming. The Minister knows these well, and I do thank him for helping me resolve those issues.

That was last year, Mr. Speaker. Between then and now, have the business processes and the treatment of individuals improved any? The answer for me is still an emphatic no. The Minister's answer to fix HR was to rush out and hire an American company by a sole source \$450,000 contract to come in and tell him what was wrong. Results from this consultant's work should be forthcoming soon, as the Minister stated, I think it was, yesterday.

The problem, Minister Roland, is that the problems are still very evident in your department. Phone calls are not returned. Files remain incomplete. Responsibility is bounced from one person to another person, and getting a record of employment – well that would require quite a degree in patience, as it sometimes takes up to eight weeks.

The service levels remain unacceptable, Mr. Minister. People still stop me at the store, in the street, with horror stories about how long it is taking them to get their first pension cheques. Just the other day a man told me a story of how he waited 20 months to get his retirement issues resolved. He had to work two jobs once he left the employ of the government in order to make ends meet.

What I am very interested to hear from the Minister today is whether or not this sole source \$450,000 contract has done anything at all to improve the services to our employees and to the public we serve.

I want the Minister and the Members of this House to know that I do still remain committed to the amalgamation process of our HR services. However, I remain very skeptical of our government's ability and its leadership to take whatever corrective steps that are necessary to make this new HR department as accountable, transparent and as effective as possible.

Comments I hear from employees and the public are that it remains, in the words of many, a mess. Mr. Minister, I am leaving out many expletives that accompany the words "a mess." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause