

**15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly**

**Fifth Session**

**February 7-22 & March 5-12, 2007**

**Third Sitting / Budget Session**

**MAR 9, 2007**

**Resource Royalty Trust Fund**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to discuss the issue of our relationship with the federal government and how we continue to just go along with being taken advantage of. We only have six months left in the life of this government and judging by the atmosphere and comments in this Legislature, both the government and Members of this House are beginning to feel the pressure that once again another government will come and go with absolutely nothing to show for its efforts in Ottawa.

We are extremely fortunate as a territory to have so much opportunity before us in the area of resource development. It has brought many jobs to our people. However, as a government, we continue to pay the price for developing these resources. The costs, Mr. Speaker, are undeniable. We continue to pay without any guarantee of a return. We pay for road infrastructure, for health care, education and other services, all the while watching millions and millions of dollars leaving our territory each and every year.

Mr. Speaker, when will we have surety on our future? When will the federal government understand that they must share the resources that they are taking from us? When?

Mr. Speaker, one of the very first topics I raised in this House three and a half years ago was the establishment of a permanent trust fund for our residents, which would pay dividends for future generations of northerners. Obviously today the government has not been successful in convincing anyone in Ottawa that this is the proper and right thing to do. There is no doubt, if you ask anyone who is aware of our situation, they will tell you that a dispute is at hand. Then why can't the Government of the Northwest Territories demand that the Government of Canada put aside the disputed monies?

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. The pressure is mounting. In fact, our Premier was in the press earlier this week, Mr. Speaker, saying that if he did not get a deal with Ottawa, he would seek re-election. Well, Mr. Premier, you better dust off the election signs. Mahsi.

-- Applause