

**15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly**  
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**Lack Of Support For The Secondary Diamond Industry**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to speak today about diamonds. I don't feel satisfied that this government has given the residents of the Northwest Territories and the Members of this Assembly all the answers to what went wrong with the Sirius factory -- why the Leviev Group was denied access to rough diamonds to run this factory.

This government is losing millions of dollars on this plant. Where does the blame lie? This distasteful story raises a number of very fundamental issues. Who takes responsibility for the development of our economy? Is it the 19 of us duly-elected Members of this House or is it the diamond producers? If this government is going to accept the fact that the mining companies get the last word, maybe we should just close up shop and throw them the keys.

I want to assure every person here that I will continue to fight for the independence and the integrity of the decisions and the will of this Legislature and this government. What we have here is a huge disconnect between what the producers are saying and what the government is saying, and if you throw in the proponent, the Leviev Group, somewhere in the middle of all of this is the truth. What is the truth? What really happened here? Why was the government asleep at the switch while the deal with the Leviev Group went off the rails, Mr. Speaker?

If the government knew -- and I think they had a very good idea -- why didn't they step in? Where is our obligation to protect the secondary industry and mitigate our losses? I was shocked to learn yesterday during the Finance Minister's budget address that the secondary industry and the potential economic growth that that would bring to the Territories was nowhere to be found in his budget address, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Boo.

**MR. RAMSAY:** No, the producers are in there, but he's not in there, it's not in there. He mentioned all producers by name, but did not mention the secondary industry. I hope this omission does not indicate the government's overall view of our secondary diamond industry. Mr. Speaker, today, later on the order papers, I will have questions for the Minister of Finance with regard to this issue. Thank you. ---Applause