

## 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly

### Third Session Second Sitting February 4 - March 12, 2009

**FEB 18, 2009**

#### **Lack Of Analysis on Board Reform Initiative**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to speak today, as well, on the issue of the government's plan to reform boards in the Northwest Territories. I spoke numerous times about my belief that the government has not done adequate or meaningful costing, research, consultation or analysis as it pertains to board reform.

Mr. Speaker, no one can debate the fact that efficiencies need to be found. This continues to be a priority of the 16th Assembly. We seem to have gone from finding efficiencies, which is a noble pursuit, to potentially gutting our education, health and housing boards. The edict that we go from 70 to seven boards from Minister Miltenberger is not what Regular Members envision. This is not what we wanted. You cannot point your finger at the Regular Members. This is Cabinet's plan plain and simple.

In my opinion, the move to regional super boards will do nothing to address efficiency. The Minister has yet to articulate exactly what the problems are. These super boards will add another level of bureaucracy and be located, staffed and administered in regional centres. Mr. Speaker, will there be a corresponding loss of jobs in other communities? Absolutely.

What the government is moving toward is an erosion of ministerial and legislative responsibility and accountability. With these super boards administering close to 70 percent of our annual budget, why would we even need 19 MLAs when the responsibility and oversight of close to 70 percent of our budget is done by what very well could amount to be appointed boards and chairs? Mr. Speaker, we should be looking at ways to increase the responsibility of Ministers so accountability in our government can be maximized.

Mr. Speaker, this government needs a lesson in consultation and what it means to engage the stakeholders and the public in a meaningful way. To date, they have failed miserably in consulting, researching and explaining what it is that they're trying to do or to fix. The style of this government in its short time is to intimidate, to bully and to push around those most vulnerable in our society. Mr. Speaker, this abusive power has to stop somewhere. Mahsi.