

16th Legislative Assembly

Third Session

Second Sitting

February 4 - March 12, 2009

FEB 9, 2009

Confidence Motion Debate

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak today about Friday and the motion that was narrowly defeated. I'd like to thank all of my constituents who gave me their thoughts and feelings on this motion. I appreciate and respect the views that I got from all of my constituents. I just wanted to take a moment today to summarize why I supported the motion and where do we go from here.

For me, the motion on Friday would have addressed a number of concerns, the biggest one being the proposed changes to the Supplementary Health Benefits Plan. It would have been an opportune time to ask a potential new Premier and Cabinet what their positions on the changes were and whether or not they supported it.

The same can be same for board reform, Mr. Speaker. Do you support the initiative, yes or no? It would have made it easier to hold the Premier and Cabinet accountable for these items had they confirmed it through the Territorial Leadership Committee.

Also, the issue of the Opportunities Fund and the future use of these dollars could have been on the table. An interesting note to this, Mr. Speaker, is that on Friday afternoon, while the motion to remove the Cabinet was being defeated, the deal closed on the \$34 million loan, which was quite a coincidence. As it pertains to the economy, it would have been a great time to ask a new Premier and Cabinet some very important questions on how they would stimulate the NWT economy.

Mr. Speaker, these opportunities passed us by on Friday and now it's time for us to move on. I certainly hope that the Premier and Cabinet were not high-fiving each other this morning during Cabinet, but rather trying to understand and appreciate all of the issues that brought us to presenting this motion on Friday. I'd hope that they'd come up with a plan to address these real concerns.

Mr. Speaker, we want good government -- honest, open and transparent communications -- not backroom deals, half-hearted delays, poor policy and bad communications. These are the reasons people in the Northwest Territories were upset while Members were upset.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward, the questions and the scrutiny will be getting much more severe. Mr. Speaker, there will be a tremendous amount of pressure put on Members to work together, as the Premier said, to find a way.

Mr. Speaker, I do hope to be a part of the solution as we go forward from here and I look forward to discussions that are going to take place. Thank you.