

MEMBER'S STATEMENT – GREAT SLAVE – JUNE 5, 2008

CABINET COMMUNICATIONS

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Over the last couple of weeks there has been a lot of talk, both inside and outside of this House, on consensus government and whether or not it works.

I believe in consensus government. I feel that it can, and does, work. However, for it to be effective, it will take cooperation from all Members: those on Cabinet and those on this side of the House. Unfortunately, open two-way communication and open dialogue does not always occur.

Prior to the Territorial Leadership Committee, Members seeking Cabinet and Premier positions talked consistently of open dialogue and working together. After the completion of TLC the open conversation and productive dialogue existed for a time — unfortunately not for long.

Cabinet continues to suggest that they have continually included Regular Members in decisions and direction of the government. As a Regular Member, I feel this isn't always true, and here's an example:

Yesterday, according to the unedited Hansard, Mr. Ramsay asked the Hon. Mr. Michael McLeod — concerning the implementation of BIP — if he could come back to Regular Members and sit down with stakeholders in the area so we can work on this together and come up with a solution. According to the unedited Hansard from yesterday, the honourable Mr. Michael McLeod made the following comments: “I would commit to the Members, and I think all my committee colleagues would commit, that we would share the information with Regular Members on where we plan to go and the decisions that we're moving towards as the information comes in.”

This is an exact example of what Members on this side of the House are making reference to.

Once again we're being told by Cabinet what's being done — not included in the decision making, not being permitted to work together in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories.

Today I would like to encourage the Premier and Cabinet to think about their commitment “to work together” during the TLC. Working together is critical for the success of this Legislature and consensus government. It's time to re-find our way.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.