

MEMBER'S STATEMENT – GREAT SLAVE – MAY 28, 2008

**MINISTER'S ADVISORY PANEL ON THE ECONOMY**

Mr. Speaker. I was going to talk about something different today, but after hearing the lead Minister responsible for the Refocusing Government Strategic Initiatives Committee, I thought I would talk about his statement instead. I'm happy to see that the government is moving forward with refocusing government. I'm happy to hear that the government is planning on conducting program reviews. I'm happy to hear that the government is planning to change the GNWT's approach to infrastructure. I'm also happy that they're going to be improving human resource management, improving service delivery and managing the cost of the government.

Unfortunately, I think these things should have been done before this budget came forward. These are the types of things we were hoping to hear and hoping to see prior to the budget coming forward. When the Premier came and talked to us about the need to change the way we do business, change the way the government operates, we were hoping to see that.

What we see with the budget that has come forward is cuts, cuts, cuts, and we don't see these types of things. It would have been better for all of us; it would have been better for the people of the Northwest Territories if we had held off on many of the budget cuts that we're proposing now and gone through this process that the Minister was talking about today rather than jumping into cuts immediately. I would love to see this government take back this budget and give us a status quo budget for the next couple of months, another interim budget, so that they could have the opportunity and the time they require to actually follow these processes and come forward with a decent, responsible budget that will allow the Northwest Territories to prosper.

Ultimately, though, I'm quite happy to hear what the Minister had to say. I think it's just a little too late. I think this needed to happen before the budget came forward. I'll stop repeating myself. I'll now sit down.