

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

QUESTION 543-18(2): POST-SECONDARY STRATEGIC AND ACTION PLAN

February 8, 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, monsieur le President. The Minister of Education seems to be very popular today, so I have got some extra questions for him. In my statement earlier today I talked about how we can build a real post-secondary education system here in the Northwest Territories. I know that there is some sort of a strategic plan being developed for Aurora College. Can the Minister tell us whether this plan will contain any ideas on how the college relates to other institutions, such as College nordique and Dechinta? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Aurora College's new strategic plan will not directly involve other private post-secondary institutions in the Northwest Territories. It will look specifically at how the college can best serve the interests of the NWT residents. We did have NWT residents, as stakeholders, give input into that strategic plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for his honesty there; a bit of a disappoint, though. He just was talking about partnerships and so on, and it is too bad that this strategic plan for Aurora College is not going to consider linkages with other post-secondary institutions.

There must be some sort of terms of reference or a contract scope of work for this strategic plan. Will there be any effort or investigation of a broader post-secondary education framework or strategy? Perhaps the Minister could agree to share the terms of reference for that strategic plan with this side of the House?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We will get that information to the Member as well as with the report, when it is finally done, and get committee's comments on the report, as well as looking forward to the future work of all our post-secondary institutions here in the Northwest Territories. That includes Dechinta as well as College nordique. We do have partnerships with them. We do fund them.

As I mentioned, we will be developing a new over-arching legislation for post-secondary education here in the Northwest Territories that will have positive impacts on all of our post-secondary institutions.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that response. I have spoken about how Canada is the only circumpolar country without a university and that federal government is looking for transformative change investment opportunities. Has the Minister had any discussions and made any approaches to the federal government regarding investment in post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes, we have.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Boy, if we could only get the Minister to answer "yes" or "no" to some of the other questions that he has had over the last week, that would be fantastic. I guess I was hoping for a little bit more detail. I am sure he can provide that in response to my next question, as well.

Can the Minister commit that during the lifetime of this Assembly he will work with Regular MLAs and the public to develop a full post-secondary education strategy and action plan for the Northwest Territories that includes a university? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier, with the development of that new over-arching legislation for a post-secondary education here in the Northwest Territories, that is the beginning of it, and that is the initial step that we have to do before we can start having those talks. So hopefully, we will have that legislation brought to committee soon.