

## ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

### QUESTION 931-18(2): SUMMARY OF COUNCIL OF CONFEDERATION MEETING RESULTS

October 4, 2017

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. The Premier, I believe, was in Ottawa yesterday and maybe even this morning. I want to welcome him back. I'd also like to use this opportunity to get an update of what was discussed and any outcomes at the first Minister's conference. Can the premier provide us with a brief summary of the main issues discussed and any outcomes? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The Honourable Premier.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the opportunity to attend the swearing-in of the new Governor General of Canada and I was honoured to be invited. It was a very impressive ceremony and we have a very impressive new Governor General. I also attended a meeting of the consult of federal Premiers and attended a First Ministers' Meeting hosted by the Prime Minister of Canada with the three national Indigenous government leaders and the Premiers of all the provinces and territories. Then we moved into a First Ministers' Meeting with just the Prime Minister and the premiers. The agenda for the first Ministers is obviously set by the Prime Minister. We had briefings on by the governor of the bank of Canada on the state of the economy and also by his statistician who went into more detail. We had an update on NAFTA negotiations. We had an update on small business tax, an initiative of the federal government. We also discussed cannabis and then we had a very short period left for a round table discussion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Premier for that list of what he did in Ottawa. It was very thorough and I appreciate that very much. I guess I'm most interested in the First Ministers' conference. Can the Premier tell us as he did mention that cannabis was on the list of topics discussed. I'm wondering if carbon pricing was also discussed. Can he tell us what sort of positions were put forward and whether there was any resolution of these issues at the First Ministers' conference.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** As I said, the agenda is set by the Prime Minister so I took some representation to have cannabis added to the agenda by the consult of federation. Carbon pricing was not discussed. It was not on the agenda. The discussion on cannabis mainly followed up on the consult of federation meetings that we had earlier in the year in Edmonton where the Premiers expressed concern about the fact that a lot of work still had to be done in five key areas with regards to implementation of the cannabis legislation.

We were reminded once again that there were still some concerns about the lack of time that June/July of 2018 is too soon and that we don't have enough time to get properly ready. The prime Minister indicated that this was not an evented time. It was a progress over time where we're looking to protect our youth and our children from the bad effects of drugs. Also, we're trying to make sure that the bad guys didn't get to keep all of the money. The longer we waited to implement, more money goes to the bad guys. We had a very good briefing by the parliamentary secretary. He talked quite a bit about enforcement of impaired driving or cannabis impaired driving and how that was going to work. He talked a lot about education. We also talked about the retail methods that would be used. I raised the matter of we have dry

communities in the Northwest Territories and obviously to have communities where we don't have cannabis would go against the initiative of legalizing cannabis.

The parliamentary secretary did advise that our member of parliament has invited him to visit the North and he would be visiting at some point in the near future. I think that would be very helpful. There's still a lot of concern about licensing of retail or distribution methods and also the production of cannabis is still felt by the Premiers in a lot of the provinces that as soon as cannabis is legalized, there's not enough production available to meet the demand. That was the gist of the discussions, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Premier for his very thorough answer. I very much appreciate getting the information. Can the Premier tell us whether he had any side meetings with Northern territories Premiers, and generally what might have been discussed, and any outcomes?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We attempted to organize the meeting with the three Northern Premiers because historically, we work to have a united position on a lot of these issues. Also, we are doing work on a Pan-Territorial sustainable development vision which we are trying to do in conjunction with the development of a Federal Arctic Policy Framework, but we were not able to get the three Northern Premiers together because it was just too short a period of time, and everybody was arriving at different times.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Once again, I would like to thank the Premier for that information. I really do appreciate getting this information from the Premier, and I know he is just fresh off the plane. Again, I sincerely thank him for this. I know that other Ministers also go to federal-provincial-territorial meetings. I am just wondering, this sort of reporting back would be really helpful, at least for myself and probably other Members on this side of the House. Can the Premier find a way to more systematically get back to Regular Members about what happens at federal-provincial-territorial meetings like the First Ministers' Conference?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** In practice, generally, FPT meetings and even the Council of Federation meetings, generally, we share whatever communiques or decision documents that are released with the standing committees and the Members, and we are prepared to continue to do that. In this case, the First Ministers' meeting, there was no communique or documents that were issued, so I would be prepared to brief the committee if we can find the time to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.