

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

**QUESTION 335-18(3):
GIANT MINE REMEDIATION PROJECT SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

MAY 31, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources as the lead on Giant Mine. The Minister must have received the May 24th letter from the Giant Mine Oversight Board that asks that he "direct senior levels of management to expeditiously initiate a concerted and coordinated effort to develop and implement the Giant Mine remediation project socio-economic strategy." What is the Minister's response to that request? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as co-proponent of the Giant Mine project, the GNWT will be working with the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs in responding to the recent correspondence from the Giant Mine Oversight Body. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I would like to thank the Minister for that. Not just work with CIRNA on getting a letter together, but actually take some action as well, and that is the subject of my next question: what action has the ENR Minister taken to raise these northern benefits concerns with the federal Minister, who has received the same letter, and is he prepared to lead the urgent work of developing a socioeconomic strategy for Giant Mine remediation in partnership with his federal counterpart?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: ENR is the lead department for the Giant Mine project. However, we do work closely with other departments, such as ITI, through the Interdepartmental Working Group. This is a federal-funded project, and federal procurement and contracting rules are being followed. We continue to work with the federal government on bringing our concern forward. I believe our Minister of ITI, in his conversations with his counterpart, has raised it. I believe our Premier has also raised it in his discussions on there, as I have as well.

This work is expected to be completed by the summer of 2018. We will outline considerations to ensure Indigenous businesses and Northerners benefit from the remediation project.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for that. It sounds like more than one Minister is raising this matter in Ottawa, and that is a good thing.

There doesn't seem to be very good tracking and reporting of northern benefits from this project. I would like to know: how does the Minister plan to begin tracking northern benefits from the Giant Mine remediation in accounting for the future economic impacts of this project? I understand it is being led by the federal government, but what is he going to do to help make sure that better tracking of benefits takes place?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The main construction manager's contract requires them to track northern and Indigenous benefits. The Giant Mine Remediation Project team will be reporting on the socioeconomic benefits associated with the project on an annual basis.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks to the Minister for that. On an annual basis, maybe we can get something quarterly or something, but I am sure he is going to take that up.

Our government gets millions of dollars in federal funding for infrastructure projects each year that we administer to maximize Northwest Territories benefits. I don't understand why we can't manage the remediation of the Giant Mine, with appropriate federal oversight, and use our better-equipped toolbox and experience some benefit retention. Have the Minister and his officials considered whether we could take this approach and work with the federal government on Giant Mine remediation and use the full suite of our tools, things like negotiated contracts, the Business Incentive Policy, and so on, to make sure that the benefits from the remediation stay here in the Northwest Territories? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The federal government has contracting authority on this project, and they have awarded the contract to Parsons Canada. The benefit of having a main construction manager is that the delivery of the project is broken down into smaller work packages, which maximizes local opportunities for Indigenous and northern business. Using this approach, there are a number of contracts related to the project presently out for award. Once these contracts are awarded, we should have an indication on how the socioeconomic benefits are rolling out for Northerners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.