

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

**QUESTION 583-18(3):
PUBLIC INFORMATION REGARDING RESOURCE ROYALTIES**

February 21, 2019

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Earlier today I reviewed how the Minister of Finance did not provide the information requested in my written questions on resource royalties from October 31, 2018. Can the Minister explain why the information requested, a breakdown of resource royalties from 1999 to 2017 by commodity type, was not provided in his response? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The resource royalties for the period from 1999 to 2013 by commodity type were not provided because the information that is available combines the Northwest Territories information with data from the other three territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that. So that explains some of the reasons, that the federal government combines it, and so on, but last week I tabled extracts from a privately published book by a former deputy minister and devolution negotiator that clearly showed the resource royalties paid to the federal government from 1980 to 2009. Can the Minister explain how such information was published, and yet he could not provide it in response to a written question from a Member of this House?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The excerpts from the book that the Member refers to are from the public accounts of Canada. The data represents the three territories combined until 2003, when Yukon went through their devolution, and combined the Northwest Territories and Nunavut as of 2003 until 2014, when the Northwest Territories went through devolution. The Member has requested Northwest Territories royalties only. We can provide this table to 2017, but it will not match the production value table, because the data is an aggregate for the three territories over the same years.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that. I spoke earlier today of the world-wide movement toward more transparent and open public reporting of government revenues from non-renewable resources. Even most of the diamond mining companies operating in the NWT support the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. Can the Minister of finance tell us whether he and his staff have studied the standard developed by the initiative, and when we can expect it to be adopted or implemented by this government?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Department of Finance, we are aware of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative standard for reporting. To date, the government has reported aggregate royalties rather than royalties by mine to respect the confidentiality of financial information of individual mines, as required per the Northwest Territories Lands Act.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Now we get that it's restricted because of wording in the Lands Act, so I look forward to that being changed. Canada is a supporter of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and has provided funding to a variety of countries, such as Peru, Indonesia, Tanzania, and even Mongolia to fix up how they report revenues. This country has adopted the standard through the Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act, so can the Minister tell us when our government will get on board and begin to report royalties paid by commodity type, or even by individual companies? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I understand that the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is reviewing the Mining Regulations and transparency and accountability principles, and that all will be taken into consideration as we move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.