

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

QUESTION 607-18(3): MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS

February 25, 2019

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Premier. Earlier today I raised the issue of public concern around the appointment of the workers' advisor by the responsible Minister. Can the Premier tell us whether he had knowledge of the appointment before it was formally made or announced? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Premier for that quick reply. Presumably, the Premier, as the chair of the Executive Council, exercises some oversight on ministerial performance and actions, including appointments. Can the Premier confirm whether he does exercise oversight on ministerial appointments and explain how he carries out that responsibility?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The appointment the Member refers to is a ministerial appointment. The position for which the appointment was made is consistent with section 107, subsection 3, of the Workers' Compensation Act.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Premier for reciting the famous section 107 of the act. He didn't actually answer my question, but I am going to go on. In the statement I made, I discussed the Cabinet-approved Boards Policy that states, "The process for appointments to GNWT boards should be timely, consistent, and transparent." Does the Premier agree that all ministerial appointments should be timely, consistent, and transparent, and that the recent workers' advisor appointment met those tests?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We track board appointments. Where Ministers have the responsibility for making direct appointments, we leave that to the Ministers. I am not in the practice of reviewing all decisions in hindsight.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks to the Premier for that, and I agree. Let's look forward, now. Lastly, there doesn't appear to be any policy or guidance around ministerial appointments for positions not on boards. Given the public concern around the recent appointment of the workers' advisor, can the Premier tell us whether he is now prepared to develop and implement a policy framework for all ministerial appointments? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I guess, first of all, we will have to determine: this may be the one and only ministerial appointment in the Government of the Northwest Territories. I guess that would be my first step, to determine whether that is the case or not. If there is more than one ministerial appointment, then we would determine whether there are enough ministerial appointments that would warrant to have more oversight.