

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

**QUESTION 619-18(3):  
NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD REGULATORY AUTHORITY IN THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES**

**February 26, 2019**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of the Justice, who is the regulator for oil and gas legislation in the Northwest Territories, at least in those areas where we have jurisdiction. Can the Minister tell us why the federal National Energy Board is the regulator of onshore and offshore oil and gas development in the Inuvialuit region? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Justice.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The National Energy Board was preserved as the regulator of oil and gas operations in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region through the devolution negotiations at the request of Canada and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. I understand also that Canada and the Inuvialuit had an interest in maintaining the existing relationship and that Canada in particular felt it was important to maintain as much consistency in the regulation of offshore resources with adjacent onshore resources as possible. That arrangement may have made some sense as an interim measure. OROGO, in my view, as since proven itself as an excellent regulator.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for promoting OROGO, and, at his suggestion, I have gone over and met with his staff, and I do agree that they're doing a good job. In the event, though, that there are interests in or development of petroleum resources that straddle areas where the National Energy Board and OROGO have jurisdiction, can the Minister explain how this would be managed?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I may have to look further into that issue, of these straddle types of arrangements, so perhaps I can handle the question best by saying that I will get back to the Member opposite.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that commitment. I recognize that Cabinet views OROGO as a bit of a hot potato. It appears to me that OROGO's doing a good job. I mentioned that earlier, even though there are limited oil and gas activities, they're doing some work on old wells, which is good. I'd like to ask the Minister whether our government has given any thought to asking the federal government to end the reign of the National Energy Board over the onshore areas of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and, if not, why not?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I thank the Member opposite for his kind words about OROGO. It is an established regulator now, and I believe that, at this stage, with this proven track record, both Canada and the Inuvialuit might be receptive to having a conversation around the benefits of replacing the NEB as regulator for in the ISR area. Increasingly, this government over the years is becoming master in our own home, if I may use the French phrase, "maitres chez nous."

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. We started a conversation here on the floor of the House, so I'm hoping that he could meet or pick up the phone and talk to some of our friends about this issue. In considering whether the National Energy Board should continue as a regulator of oil and gas activities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, there of course would need to be consultations with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. Can the Minister tell us, the public, whether he's had any of those discussions so far and, if not, why not? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** No formal request to have that conversation has been made, but it is something that I think we should be looking into. After all, we are maturing as a jurisdiction. The Member opposite mentioned the excellent work that OROGO is doing, so, yes, we should have that conversation. It is time, in my view, to re-examine this situation. Thank you.