

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

**QUESTION 96-19(2): CAMERON HILLS GAS FIELD ENVIRONMENTAL LIABILITIES**

**February 26, 2020**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I have some further questions for the Minister of Lands on the Cameron Hills environmental liabilities, how we got there. It is my understanding that we have something called "reclaim." It is a model for calculating liabilities. It is based on per-unit experience of remediating, reclaiming sites. Could that model actually be applied right now to the Cameron Hills site to give us even an initial estimate of what the liabilities are? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Lands.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, right now, it is in receivership. The receiver is actually doing this work. We have made a commitment. Once that is done, Lands and ENR inspectors are going to go in, and we may be looking at this. Right now, no. Thank you.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that. Clearly, though, we need to start to do our homework about what this contingent liability is going to look like. I am just wondering if the Minister can tell me how this liability is going to be entered into the public accounts?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I don't have the answer. I will get back to the Member. I have no clue how it is going to be done. It is the first time I thought about it or heard about it. I will take ownership of that, and we will get back to the Member with that answer.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank you the Minister for that. I didn't give him a heads-up about these because, obviously, I am kind of excited about this issue, to say the least, and the liabilities that are heading towards us, hurtling towards us. I want to ask the Minister, though: what are we going to do to prevent this from happening again? We have seen this happen again and again and again in the North, whether it is Giant Mine, Colomac, you name it. Name me one site that has actually been properly reclaimed, here. What is this government going to do to prevent this from happening again?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** This one I can answer. I appreciate the Member's commitment and willingness to bring this forward. Presently, the departments of ENR, Lands, OROGO, and ITI or Industry, Tourism and Investment, we are meeting. We are working on this. We are trying to make sure that we have the opportunity to learn from it

so we can make sure this doesn't happen in the future. We are also working with the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Resource Board in regard to that regulation, as well. We are trying to work with all the parties right now. Unfortunately, with this Cameron Hills situation, it happened, and we were working on trying to get the reclamation plan in place. Unfortunately, they went into receivership before we could do it. We are working on it.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary, Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le Président. I want to thank the Minister for that. I just want to remind him we were both Members of the last Assembly. This was a commitment made in the last mandate, to have in place a proper system to prevent this from happening. It didn't happen in the last Assembly. In the very first round of legislation post-devolution in the last Assembly, what we did was we passed a Public Land Act that removed mandatory financial security. How could that happen? First time we get a chance to try to deal with something like this and we remove the mandatory financial security. Unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. That act is not in force yet, thank goodness, but I want to see if the Minister is willing to re-evaluate what happened with the Public Land Act and put in place mandatory financial security again. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** We are willing to always look at things to improve it. We will look at it. I am not going to make a commitment here in the House that we will add it, but we will look at it. We will get back to committee at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.