

ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

QUESTION 129-18(2): COMMITMENTS MADE IN LEADERSHIP BID

May 31, 2016

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to continue on with my questions for the Premier based on my statement. One of the key things that he promised was to assist in evening out the bumps of the resource economy by providing support for economic diversification. To that end, I'd like to hear from the Premier when he expects the agricultural strategy to be ready. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi. Honourable Premier.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The agricultural strategy has been worked on for some time. I expect it'll be ready sometime this year. It's just going through the rounds of the different departments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: Thanks to the Premier for that answer. We are looking forward to seeing it on our side of the House. My next question involves the promise to establish better government-to-government relations with aboriginal organizations and to speed the process of land claims. Can the Premier please tell us when he plans to present an offer to the Deh Cho and meet with the leadership of that organization.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: I'm pleased to say that we have made very good progress in this regard and had the opportunity to meet with all of the aboriginal governments that still have unsettled land claims. And had a number of meetings with the federal government, met a number of times with the Grand Chief of the Deh Cho First Nation. There's another meeting scheduled for this week. And I'll also be meeting with the federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs. So as your member knows, there's three parties to the negotiations. And it's more than just making an offer within a specific period of time. We can do that anytime. What we want to do is we're focused on results. When we make an offer we wanted to make sure that it's a very reasonable offer with a very good chance of allowing us to settle these long-standing land claims. And we also, our negotiators, are sitting down to have a good understanding on both sides so that we know what would be a very good reasonable offer.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Premier for that. I assume he had all of that information when he made the commitment to make a new land offer within 90 days to the Deh Cho First Nations. That hasn't happened. I understand the Deh Cho First Nations are eager for that to happen. So when will it happen?

MR. BOB MCLEOD: As I said I'm meeting with the Grand Chief this week, later this week. I'll be meeting with the federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs. Our negotiators are making sure all sides have a common understanding on the different positions. And so I expect in the very near future that we will be able to do so.