

**ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE**

**QUESTION 474-18(2): AME ROUNDUP 2017 MINING CONFERENCE**

**January 31, 2017**

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Last week, he, his Cabinet colleagues, and various officials attended the Annual Mineral Exploration Roundup in Vancouver at an estimated cost of \$75,000. Unsurprisingly, my constituents have been in touch with me about both the cost and the benefits of this trip. The media quoted the Minister saying: "I am confident that we will be returning to the North with the solutions that will define the next generation of exploration and mining in the NWT."

Could the Minister please elaborate on the solutions he returned with? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mineral Roundup, as I said last week when we were down there, is an important mission for this government in the Northwest Territories. We went down there and engaged with a number of stakeholders, from prospectors, to mining companies, to juniors, to finance companies, and got input on a number of things around the table, many of which my colleagues on my side have helped me discuss with these people in industry. We need to figure out a way to bring new mining people to the Northwest Territories to create new mining opportunities for the residents of the Northwest Territories, bringing jobs and business opportunities to fill the gaps that will be coming with the closure of the present diamond mines in the Northwest Territories. With these conversations that we've had with industries, and among the stakeholders and other government officials, we were trying to find solutions, to find a way to bring more mining investment to the Northwest Territories to benefit Northerners and businesses. That's what we did, and we've got a number of feedback from all people in industries. It was a great conference, and I believe a great investment on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** Keeping in mind that a meeting is not an outcome, but a means to an end, could the Minister please elaborate on the solutions that he returned to Yellowknife with?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated, we had a number of meetings with different stakeholders on how we can improve the mining situation in the Northwest Territories. If we want to get into specifics, the solutions, I could stand here and probably talk about stuff all day from mining -- from staking in the industry in the Northwest Territories, to go online, to the regulatory process, to better geoscience information available, to junior mining companies, to socio-economic agreements, and how do we deal with Aboriginal governments moving forward, to land claims. As I said, our regulatory process, and how can we make that better moving forward, once we get things straightened out with the Federal government. Those are a number of topics that

we discussed, and a lot of input from stakeholders, as I said, and I've got a lot of great information on how we're going to try to move this file forward.

**MS. GREEN:** As we all know, mining tradeshows are numerous. Not just the Roundup, but the Geoscience Forum, and coming soon, the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada. Has the Minister's department done a cost-benefit analysis of attending tradeshows, and if he has, can he share the results?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The one thing that I can say is Roundup this year was definitely -- it was cheaper than previous Roundups that we have attended. As far as doing a cost-benefit analysis of our attendance versus bringing mining to the Northwest Territories, this is a long process for juniors to become a viable mine in the Northwest Territories. One in 1,000 actually become a mine, if you look at the stats in the industry. We will be working towards trying to bring those things forward. It will be when we see some development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I take it, then, that there is no cost-benefit analysis of this, but rather a feeling that this is a good thing. Another possible use for this money which would be a good thing is to increase the Mining Incentive Program. That actually puts money directly into the pockets of the miners. Is there any thought to doing a cost-benefit analysis, especially since there are more tradeshows coming up, of putting the money into the Mining Incentive Program rather than into a junket? Thank you.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Mining Incentive Program is one of the things we heard around the table, as I said, along with a number of other things that I've previously mentioned. I will not commit to doing a cost-benefit analysis, just because I know going down there, meeting with industry, meeting with the Mining Advisory Board, the Chamber of Mines, the input that we get from a number of stakeholders, be it industry, like I said, or governments, or financial institutions, moving this file forward is to get down there and be in front of these stakeholders that want to look in the Northwest Territories, give them a clear picture of what we're doing, how we're trying to move things to make it more -- unlock our potential for these mines to open up in the Northwest Territories, and I believe it's good value for money with what we spent. The conversations were very valuable to myself and my colleagues on this side of the House, and I believe that Mr. Vanthuyne who was also there participating with us, this is the biggest part of our industry in the Northwest Territories. It's 20 per cent of our GDP. We've got to continue to work with these players, so how do we bring the next wave of mines to the NWT so we can all prosper. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.