

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to repeat something I mentioned on a number of occasions before this House.

I am under a court order to have a panel at work. I will comply with that order. I will meet my obligation to appoint a panel as soon as possible to resume the environmental assessment work that was stopped last week.

At the same time, I said that the government would take the necessary steps to ensure that the Alameda project not proceed until a full and proper environmental assessment can be completed.

I would like to tell the House this afternoon that I am instructing officials to seek an injunction on continued construction and land acquisition related to the Rafferty-Alameda project.

**Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, in response to questions yesterday, the minister consistently referred to a full environmental review process only for the Alameda dam part of the Rafferty-Alameda project.

The predecessor to the minister knew in April from the panel reviewing the project that construction was proceeding on the project. He was told that it was the understanding of the panel members when appointed that none of this work would occur. He was there in July when he knew the work was proceeding.

Yesterday why was the minister only referring to the Alameda project. Has the minister given up on the Rafferty dam? Has he given up on the channelization? Will he tell us specifically what he is doing about the entire project and the construction of that project?

**Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I think my answer to the first question was very clear, indeed.

I will read it again. I am instructing officials to seek an injunction on continued construction and land acquisition related to the Rafferty-Alameda project.

**Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

There has been considerable confusion over the Rafferty-Alameda project. The minister says today that he is seeking an injunction.

I would be interested to know what the deal was, because we have heard several different versions. Premier Devine said that a deal was cut. I hope that this Minister of the Environment is not going to be the kind of Minister of the Environment who cuts deals behind closed doors.

I want to ask the Minister of the Environment this. On what grounds is the injunction pursued? Did he cut a deal with Premier Devine? What are the grounds for the injunction?

**Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I said very clearly yesterday that we were looking at a number of options to deal with this issue.

We were looking at going to the courts to have a clarification for an injunction. We were looking at the possibility of applying some sections of the Fisheries Act, a statutory form of action in this case. We were looking towards an agreement that, unfortunately, does not seem to be possible at this time to stop construction on Rafferty-Alameda.

What I am saying today is that following those discussions, we have opted to seek an injunction from the courts to stop construction on Rafferty-Alameda.

**Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** I have a supplementary question for the minister, Mr. Speaker.

The minister has known for some time that there were many problems with the Rafferty-Alameda dam. I have a letter here from the hon. Minister of Transport saying that a licence had not been granted under the Navigable Waters Protection Act for this project.

This means that back in August the licences had not been received. At that time, the Minister of Transport said: "Given the fact that this project has been recommended for a public panel review under EARP, no action will be taken on the Navigable Waters Protection Act application until the panel has rendered its decision."

There is no panel. There is no decision. I say to the Minister of the Environment that he knew in August that all of the proper licences had not been received. Why did he not take action then?

**Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I met with the various groups that are concerned on this issue.