

Supply

This is a challenge to the government to act now, to pull that permit now, to go to court as construction continues, to do what it should have done months ago and use whatever political, fiscal and legal means at its disposal to stop this project. Any environmental panel set up, if it does not do that, will be a sham. It will be useless, worthless, because the project will be done before it has an opportunity to complete its work.

• (1220)

We have not yet talked about whether there was or was not a deal between the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Minister of the Environment. There is only one way for that question to be answered and that is for the minister to table all documents, all letters, all correspondence, any draft agreement, and any information so that this House can draw its own conclusions.

I find it hard to believe, and I think any reasonable person would find it hard to believe, that the Province of Saskatchewan would expose itself to legal damage by letting contracts, by even calling for tenders, if it did not know it could proceed. There is only one basis on which it could have known it could proceed and that was some indication from the Minister of the Environment that it would be able to proceed.

Against that logic the government has an obligation to table any information relative to the claims by the Premier of Saskatchewan and by the President of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation that such a deal existed. Only then will we and the Canadian public know who to believe on this issue and who to trust with the future of our most precious environmental resources.

I challenge the minister and I challenge the government to stop trying to fool Canadians about its intentions on the environment. Tough words do not stop the kind of damage this project is going to do. It should be subject to a full environmental assessment. It should be subject to a full report. It is too late now for the Rafferty dam. Let us admit that. Damage has been done that cannot be undone, but let us stop the work now and ensure it does not go any further. Let us make sure the Alameda dam does not proceed along the same stumbling path that has been followed at the Rafferty dam.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, as a member of Parliament from Manitoba I have had a long-standing interest in the dispute over the Rafferty-Alameda dam. I had an opportunity to check the records this morning and see that I raised this in June, 1988.

I raised it as a result of information that came to me from someone who at that time worked in the minister's office. That person was concerned that the effects of this project on Manitoba were not being taken into consideration in the deliberations and agreements going on at that time between the Government of Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada with respect to the Rafferty-Alameda project.

The person I am referring to later resigned from the service of the Minister of the Environment over this issue and it was out of that resignation that came the support for the view that a deal had been made at that time between the Government of Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada with respect to Rafferty-Alameda, the deal being that the Saskatchewan government would accommodate the federal government on the Grasslands park in return for the Saskatchewan government having its way on the Rafferty-Alameda project.

The person I am referring to of course was Elizabeth May, who has since gone on to resume her work as an environmental activist and recently has authored a book with respect to the fight over South Moresby and Lyell Island.

I recall this to remind the government and the minister that the minister did not do the right thing with respect to the current situation in Rafferty-Alameda. He has already delayed in doing the right thing. We are at a disadvantage today because we know he may make an announcement later. We do not know what that announcement will be, but we can say that he has delayed in doing what we think is the right thing, which is revoking the licence. If the minister persists in not doing the right thing, he will be the third environment minister to have his credibility dashed on the rocks, so to speak, of the Rafferty-Alameda dam.

Tom McMillan, began his Ministry of the Environment with high expectations all around, and ended up discredited because of the way he handled the Rafferty-Alameda project. The next Minister of the Environment eventually left the ministry for reasons not related to the