

When the panel finally resigned because work was ongoing beyond what it believed to be the safety level, we immediately sought an injunction. It was refused, and I have announced today in the House that we will seek leave to appeal the decision to clarify that situation.

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[Translation]

CITIZENS' FORUM ON CANADA'S FUTURE

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

A few days ago, the *Ottawa Citizen* reported that a group of public servants was preparing a series of major constitutional amendments to change the division of powers between the federal government and the provinces. Would the Deputy Prime Minister confirm that information today? If that is the case, when will these proposals be submitted to the Spicer Commission?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the Citizens' Forum has been established to obtain the views of all Canadians from all parts of the country. It is expected that that process should take place to get a clear sense of what Canadians want and what they believe are important elements in furthering the development of a stronger Canadian federation. It is in that context that we want this process to move ahead.

I think the hon. member would understand that it has not been charged with the responsibility of bringing forth a constitutional amendment. That can only be done by the government of the day in collaboration with the provinces. Of course, I think it would be prudent, and I am sure the hon. member would agree, that we get some expression of feeling from the Citizens' Forum before we embark upon any kind of exercise in proposing further constitutional amendments. That is the position of the government.

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, my question is very simple and I ask the Minister to say yes or no.

Oral Questions

Is there a group of public servants working behind closed doors to prepare constitutional amendments while Mr. Spicer goes to the public and pretends that he is listening to them? Is the government doing a parallel exercise behind closed doors? Has it learned anything from Meech Lake?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Some hon. members: What the answer?

Mr. Ouellet: An article in *The Ottawa Citizen* states that there are public servants preparing constitutional amendments.

My question was very simple, Mr. Speaker. Are these people working behind closed doors and, if they are, when are they going to produce their document? Will the Spicer Commission be appraised of what the government is preparing?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I realize the hon. member wants a simple yes or no. I think I gave him a very simple answer. It would be, in our view, totally imprudent to embark upon a parallel process at this time which would advance suggestions for constitutional amendment before hearing from Canadians from coast to coast.

I agree with the hon. member. Quite simply, the Meech Lake process may very well have failed because of the lack of broad-based public input.

Some hon. members: What is the answer?

Mr. Mazankowski: Well, the answer is clearly no. The fact of the matter is that we have a process in place. We want that process to work and, if it is necessary to develop recommendations for constitutional amendment, the government will act in a responsible fashion, as it would be expected to do.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment.

The Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench rejected the sworn evidence of Environment Canada that irreparable harm to the environment will result from the continued construction of the Raffety-Alameda project. There are grounds for the appeal, as the Minister has pointed out, but, like the Oldman dam in