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Alameda Dam project be sealed and that they not be made public. The reason he gave for that was that it was in the public's interest. In other words, he stated that it was in the public's interest for the public not to know the complete story about the Rafferty-Alameda. Again, we say shame, shame, shame on the Premier of Saskatchewan.

In summation, let me state that the Minister of the Environment has only one option. He can only do one thing. Given the sorry and sordid history, given the political games that have been played between the federal government and the province of Saskatchewan, and given the court orders which are plain and explicit, this minister surely has no other recourse but to lift the licence to prevent any further construction, to have an independent, public, environmental review, and, on the basis of that report, then to make the decision whether or not to allow this project to proceed. But the first step he must take is to revoke the licence and revoke the licence today.

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by congratulating you on the responsibilities which you have assumed.

I would also like to explain to members of the House that the Minister of the Environment is unable to be present at this moment. He had planned to make the initial response on behalf of the government, as is traditional, but he will be here, hopefully, later this morning, prior to one o'clock.

I would like to take this opportunity to address what is a very complex and I am afraid, for some, a confusing issue, by providing some important, historical background on the establishment of the panel in question and its role up until very recently.

As many members understand, the process which we are discussing today began, in a very real sense, on January 29 with the appointment of the review panel by the Minister of the Environment and it has ended with the resignation of that same panel on October 12.

The panel itself, of course, was well qualified for the task. It consisted of Robert Connelly, chairman, who is an employee of FEARO; Hugh MacKay, a consulting

engineer from Winnipeg specializing in water resources planning; Dr. Donald Gray, chairman of the Hydrology Division at the University of Saskatchewan; Robert Bell, aquatic biologist from La Ronge, also from Saskatchewan; and Dr. Moodie, a professor of biology at the University of Winnipeg. It was a distinguished group most of whose roots, of course, were in western Canada.

The construction at the Rafferty site was to be voluntarily stopped by the Saskatchewan government once the dam had been rendered safe and was not to resume until the Minister of the Environment had responded to the report of the panel. While the licence issued under the International River Improvements Act was to remain in place, the province did agree to accept any modifications to the licence which the minister wished to make and which fell within federal jurisdiction. Moreover, the Saskatchewan government was to give favourable consideration to recommendations from the panel which fell within provincial areas of jurisdiction.

As part of the safety measures, the low-level outlet structure of the Rafferty Dam was to be made operative through the placement of downstream erosion protection and the installation of a control valve. To do so, the 1990 spring run-off was to have been stored above the Rafferty Dam. The province agreed, at the minister's request, to store as much water as possible in reservoirs upstream of the Rafferty Dam.

As is the case of all panel reviews, the terms of reference for the review were issued by the Minister of the Environment. The Rafferty-Alameda panel was asked to undertake a review of the environmental and related social impacts of the project. In addition, the panel had the mandate to make recommendations concerning the operation of the Rafferty-Alameda Dam, including possible structural modifications, if necessary. In formulating its recommendations, the panel was to take account of Canada's international obligations, including agreements with the United States related to the project.

Construction of the project was to cease, once the Rafferty Dam had been rendered safe, and was not to resume until the panel had submitted its recommendations to the minister. The minister, as needed, and in response to the panel's report, had amended conditions