

already consuming the land, is creating a situation in which Canadians will find it impossible to have any hope, not with respect to all the things that we already associate cynicism with in the political process, but also with respect to this whole question of the environment and the rule of law. Yet, that is precisely what the government is doing in appearing at first to have made deals about the environment, then ignoring its own statutes, and being found in contravention of those statutes by the courts. And so it goes until the situation we find ourselves in today, where it appears that the minister knew that the panel had resigned, that construction was proceeding, and it was not until it became public that, thanks to being questioned in the House of Commons, he now is in the position of feeling that he has to do something about it.

If the minister has any commitment whatsoever to the integrity of the environmental review process, to the integrity of the role of government in protecting the environment, and for the sake of future governments—never mind this one—the only thing he can do is to revoke the licence. That is what we hope to hear from the minister later on today. Perhaps he will choose to make that announcement in the House when he speaks to this particular motion put forward by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

I am very happy that today we have the opportunity to debate Rafferty—Alameda, and I congratulate the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle on making it possible. I was also pleased to be able to second the motion. It gives us an opportunity to spend some time on this particular environmental question, but also on the larger question of the environment. I think on a day-to-day basis, or indeed on a month-to-month basis, it does not get as much attention around here as it should. It is as if, Mr. Speaker, we are all in a lifeboat somewhere and we are spending all of our time arguing about who the captain will be or how we are going to distribute the last remaining lunch that we have. In the meantime, the boat is sinking and nobody is willing to pay any attention to the fact that the boat is sinking. Well, the boat is sinking.

To use another analogy—a favourite of mine—which goes back a long time: the canaries in the mine are dying. We remember that miners used canaries in the mines so, when the canaries began to die, they knew that it was time to get the hell out of the mine because they can not

breathe the air any more. Well, the canaries are dying all over the place.

The canaries are dying when there are no more fish left in the ocean to provide a livelihood for fishermen and fisherwomen. The canaries are dying when 10-year-old saplings or seven-year-old saplings have to be planted in Toronto, instead of the three-year-old saplings which used to be planted, because the three-year-old saplings will die due to the quality of the air in Toronto.

The canaries are dying all over the place and these are just a few examples. I could go on and on. And yet we, in the House, with our endless prattle about things that do not really matter when stacked up against the environment, are doing the Canadian public a great disservice by being so preoccupied with these penultimate matters, instead of the ultimate question of human survival, for that is what we are talking about. In each and every case, when we are talking about an environmental issue, we are asking if we have the collective political will to survive as a human species, to have a truly human, fully human future, or are we some kind of unintelligent species which will simply not wake up to what it is doing to itself and to its environment, and are we destined to collective self-destruction?

In that respect, individual Canadians can do a lot of things such as collecting stuff to recycle, buying green products, and all those sorts of things which are happening now. But, in the final analysis, that will not be enough unless policies are put into place and there is the political will by governments and the international and global communities to deal with this problem. I am sorry, but I do not see that kind of will displayed on the other side of the House. I do not see it in sufficient quantity internationally for that matter. There is a lot of talk about sustainable development, yes. One cannot turn on the TV or radio, or read anything now without hearing or reading about sustainable development.

We need to talk about what development means and what sustainability means, because this phrase has become cheapened. It has become the standard language of public relations people and everyone else who wants to be part of the new thing happening *vis-à-vis* the environment. Well, public relations will not get us into the 21st century and 22nd century with a liveable environment. Only real political will will do that and real hard political choices that none of us will enjoy, not just the rich, the powerful, the polluters, but every one of us

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