pleased that the agreement has been reached by the Government of the Northwest Territories on the division.

My colleague, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, indeed will be working and meeting with both groups, the government and the native groups in that area, to arrive at the steps that are to be taken so that we can move quickly to its completion.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiaq): Mr. Speaker, on September 25, in this House, the Prime Minister stated about his new aboriginal agenda: "The objective will be the enlargement of aboriginal capacity for self-government within the framework of the Canadian Constitution".

Since the creation of Nunavut will achieve that objective for the Inuit, will the minister agree to the proposal by the leader of the Government of the Northwest Territories in terms of committing financially the amount needed to create that territory and ensuring that the western portion of that territory does not suffer as a result of that division?

Hon. Shirley Martin (Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)): Mr. Speaker, the financial arrangements as well as all of the administrative arrangements are points for discussion in the upcoming meetings, and they will be looked at very closely.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for LaSalle—Émard.

An hon. member: Your father is listening.

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, whatever you do, don't call me out of order today.

Mr. Speaker: Whatever the hon. member does, don't give me reason.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. The minister intends to apply very strict criteria to the James Bay project. However, he did not apply the same criteria to Point Aconi in Nova Scotia or the Alcan project in British Columbia. These projects were exempted because, according to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, there would be no environmental damage.

My question is this: does the scientific information on which the decision of the Minister of Fisheries was based, which includes scientific opinions that are totally unacceptable, reflect the criteria the Minister of the Environment intends to apply in future?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is referring to the Point Aconi project, he should know that we initiated an assessment of this project. We considered all the points raised by the public throughout Nova Scotia with respect to the Point Aconi project. According to the experts, all the questions that were raised could be dealt with through action that was taken and in fact requested by the company concerned. Once the criteria had been met, there was no need to request a public panel on a matter that, according to the experts, could be dealt with satisfactorily.

• (1450)

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, if there is any indication of the problem of defending the environment with this government, it is that the Minister of the Environment refuses to stand up and defend the record of his government.

For some months this government has defended its case with regard to the Rafferty-Alameda, but I would like to cite a federal official who said yesterday: "Irreparable harm is being done to the environment by the Rafferty-Alameda project." The fact is that irreparable harm is being done to the environment by this government.

Given the very high quality of scientific attack which is being levelled against the evaluations that were done in the case of Point Aconi and in the case of Alcan, will the minister order a complete review of these projects now? Or, once again must the Canadian people and this side of the House push this government and this minister into doing its job?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat something I have said quite often. This government is following the EARP guidelines exactly in the way that the former government put them in.