

*The Address—Mr. Patterson*

the Fraser is a mature river, meandering across an alluvial plain which men have wrested from the river—seeking to confine it within a diked channel.

This is the source of concern and of the problem that faces us in that area. The second paragraph of this report reads as follows:

In 1948 the dikes were weak—neglected after some years of moderate freshet conditions—and the river overtopped and breached many of the dyking systems. Along with other rivers in the province, the Fraser caused extensive damage to homes and private property, particularly in the lower Fraser valley. This valley is tremendously important—

I should like to emphasize that, Mr. Speaker.

—not only as an agricultural and industrial area, but also because through it pass most of the transportation and communication routes linking the main coastal centres with the rest of the province.

Here, we have the problem outlined, Mr. Speaker, and we find that down through the years considerable attention has been given to attempts to resolve some of the problems such as the problem of flooding or threat of flooding that occurs each year. Only those who were in the area at the time have any comprehension of the situation that existed when the great 1948 flood took place. I was not in that exact community at the time, but I was there shortly afterwards and heard about the inconvenience and the harmful effects that resulted from that particular flood.

This situation has been recognized, and down through the years attention has been given to it. In 1955, the Fraser river board was set up. This was the successor to the dominion-provincial board for the Fraser river basin. I should like to refer to the terms of reference given to this board as set out on page 3, section 5:

The board shall plan, to provide and carry out the aforesaid survey and report and shall determine what developments and controls of the water and incidental resources of the Fraser river basin in its judgment would be advisable, practicable, and in the public interest with particular reference to the following aspects:

- (a) Flood control
- (b) hydroelectric power

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have this problem outlined for us. The board introduced an interim report in 1956 which contained specific recommendations which it felt were necessary and advisable at that time. The thing that concerns the people of the lower Fraser valley at the moment is that in spite of the fact specific recommendations were made nothing has been done up to this time. We have been advised that the final report of the board will be brought in some time this spring, possibly in March. It is our hope and expectation that as soon as this report is introduced the governments concerned, both

provincial and federal, will give immediate attention to it and will endeavour to work out a satisfactory solution of these problems.

I should like to mention some of the recommendations that were introduced at that time. The first one is that the responsible authorities improve, restore and maintain the present river-diking system of the lower Fraser valley. The second recommendation reads as follows:

2. That until studies are made to determine the effect of storage provided by multi-purpose projects, no program of permanent flood protection (other than to restore and repair the present dikes as recommended in 1 above) should be initiated.

The third recommendation had to do with the effects of erosion. On a number of occasions I have brought to the attention of the house instances in which considerable areas have been involved in the results of erosion with the loss of many acres of valuable agricultural land along the river. The fourth recommendation had to do with a restriction of the use of this land to such developments that would suffer least by natural or planned flooding. The fifth recommendation is that the responsible fisheries authorities be encouraged to accelerate that part of their scientific investigations which are directed towards the solution of fisheries problems related to storage dams in the Fraser river basin.

The sixth recommendation dealt with investigating the requirements for a stage prediction service for the Fraser river, with a view to implementing such service as soon as possible, and the seventh had to do with additional stations that would be required to provide adequate information for future developments.

As I have pointed out, these recommendations were made in 1956, but unfortunately very little has been done to implement them, at least so far as visible results are concerned. However, this matter is under active consideration and it is creating a great deal of interest and concern in the valley. As I have said previously, I trust that as soon as this report is brought in the governments concerned will give immediate and active consideration to the implementation of the recommendations, to the end that the flood threat along the Fraser river will be alleviated.

The second matter to which I would like to refer is one of local interest. It is the development of the Abbotsford airport. It is a very fine airport, but unfortunately it is not used very much. Of course, when the Vancouver international airport is fogged in, then the Abbotsford airport is used, and also private flying clubs avail of it. Attention is not being given to developing the airport