

Trans-Canada Highway

great deal to the people of Winnipeg and the Red river valley to have the interest, sympathy and attention of all Canada and of other countries during this time of crisis—and that interest and sympathy have taken many tangible forms which have meant a great deal—it is to be noted that the siege is one that will last for some considerable time. Even if news comes in two or three days that the waters have started to recede, it will not mean that the danger is over. Hon. members must realize, as they will from the reports that have been received, that large residential areas are being protected by the tremendous dikes that have been built. Even though the water should drop three, four or five feet there is still danger of flooding in those areas if those dikes should go.

I want to add my word of appreciation of the assistance rendered by those who have done so much hard work in the city these past few weeks, both civilians and service personnel. It has been a magnificent job indeed. One hesitates to select any particular group to which to pay tribute, but I do want to say a special word about the young people of the greater Winnipeg area. These are the younger people whom we sometimes think of as the modern generation, whom we sometimes consider not quite as responsible citizens as we think we were, who sometimes make a little more noise than we think they should. During the few days I was at home I discovered that they are all in work clothes, all in rubber boots, spattered with mud from the work they are doing—young men and young women, yes boys and girls. When you see them riding on the streetcars they are not singing or talking or cracking jokes; they are dead tired from the work they have done. I feel that special tribute should be paid to the young people who have done so much.

The other concern that will be with our people for some considerable time after the waters start to recede is the danger to the health of our community. That, I believe, is one of the reasons why efforts have been made, with considerable success, to get a great many of our people out of the city. The estimates vary all the way from 80,000 up to 100,000 as to the number of people who have left Winnipeg, many of them under compulsion because their homes have been flooded or they have been ordered to evacuate, but many of them voluntarily in order to relieve the strain on public utilities, the health authorities and the hospitals. For many weeks the health of our city will have to be watched, and we will need all the help we can get from any source.

After all that is done; after the dirt and refuse have been cleaned away and we are reassured as to the health of our people; after the rehabilitation has started, then our people will want action, definite and responsible, that will lead to steps being taken to ensure that a disaster of this kind will never recur. I am not an engineer, and I cannot propose the exact details of a solution; but I am satisfied that if there is the will to do it, and if the money is made available, engineers can find a way to make sure that this tragedy will not be repeated in future years.

TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY—AGREEMENT WITH
NEW BRUNSWICK

Mr. D. A. Riley (Saint John-Albert): Mr. Speaker, I have noted with considerable regret that as yet no agreement has been entered into between the federal government and the government of New Brunswick with respect to that portion of the trans-Canada highway project which will cross my province. Since the season for road construction is rapidly approaching, I would urge the Minister of Resources and Development (Mr. Winters) and the officers of his department to do everything possible to bring about such an agreement with respect to the trans-Canada highway in the province of New Brunswick.

I am not clear as to the points of difference between the negotiating parties, but I am wondering if it is the question of route. If that matter is of concern to the parties and keeps them at variance, I would strongly urge that every assurance be given the people of the city of Saint John and the surrounding area that the trans-Canada highway will pass through that city. I hear of the possibility of the highway coming down the river to Fredericton from the northern part of the province, crossing the bridge there and proceeding via Jemseg on route No. 9 to the town of Sussex. If this route were followed it would completely by-pass Saint John, the commercial centre of the province, and the centre of the area within which the most interesting and most important tourist attractions are located. On the other hand if the highway were brought through Saint John it would mean that this important artery would be forty miles closer to the town of St. Stephen in Charlotte county, which has been the port of entry for the bulk of the tourists coming to the maritime provinces from the United States.

This, of course, is a matter of real concern to us in Saint John and vicinity. Recently we learned that the federal government was making a large grant toward the construction of a car ferry which would transport tourists