

Manitoba Flood

project. To the best of my knowledge no recent estimates have been made but undoubtedly the cost would be very high.

The cost would be so high that it would be financially impossible for the city of Winnipeg to handle it by itself. Therefore, here is something which, after it is investigated and if it is found feasible, the Department of Public Works might perhaps undertake.

Mr. Hurst goes on to say:

According to the dominion government authorities, this submerged dam is the principal control feature of the river in this area.

That being so, I hope that when the estimates are before us the Minister of Public Works will be able to give us some information on it. Once again I should like to repeat that in my opinion this is a national disaster, and it is not good enough for the Minister of Justice to say: We have to wait and see what the situation is. Many people who are already seriously affected want to know now what is going to happen to them. After all, the fact that there may be some dissension in the government of Manitoba is no excuse for our doing nothing. It may be that the deputy premier of Manitoba thinks this is a national disaster and the federal parliament must assume some responsibility, but the premier of Manitoba is sitting on the fence still waiting and seeing. I do not think that the attitude of the premier of Manitoba has much to commend it, especially from the point of view of those who have suffered very much more than people like myself. I repeat, unquestionably the magnitude of the disaster is such that it is the responsibility of the parliament of Canada to come to the aid of those who are in such dire need of help.

Mr. H. W. Winkler (Lisgar): Last Friday night the mayor of Morris was quoted over the national hook-up as having said that nine-tenths of the ground in the town of Morris, Manitoba, was under water and that the water was steadily rising. My purpose in saying a few words this afternoon is to draw attention to the fact that for the last two weeks water has been coursing over an area considerably west of Morris, as well as in other parts, and in my constituency, which comes within four miles of Morris, lies a village called Rosenfeld. Rosenfeld was photographed from the air approximately ten or twelve days ago, and the pictures were carried in the Montreal, Toronto, and I believe in the local papers, showing that Rosenfeld then was completely under water. The water did not stay there very long. It has been gradually subsiding, and was what is known as a flash flood. Still farther south from Rosenfeld is a fairly large town, one larger

[Mr. Stewart (Winnipeg North).]

than Emerson, which was also gripped in the flood. Everything was tied up there for several days.

Still farther south on the international border is the small village of Gretna, a name known to all of us as the point at which the pipe line will leave Canada and go into the United States, towards Superior. Gretna is right on the border. Then, immediately across the border in the United States, in the state of North Dakota, is the Pembina river, which runs in an almost easterly direction from the Pembina hills and flows into the Red river not far from Emerson.

At the same time that Rosenfeld was flooded, this river overflowed its banks. The waters came across the international border and into the village of Gretna which, as a result, was quite submerged. May I also add that an ancient riverbed of the Pembina river, which appears to have left the river about ten or twelve miles west of Gretna, was also filled with a great torrent of water. This forced down toward Altona and Rosenfeld and no doubt contributed greatly to the flood which occurred there.

The town of Morden, in which I live, was also visited by a flash flood. The fire whistle blew at eleven o'clock at night. Those who were able to do so had to wade waist deep into the river to rescue people whose homes were deep in water. Of course at that hour of the night, and in the darkness, they did not realize the extent of the flood or how long it would last. Fortunately it subsided on the following day.

The conditions prevailing in the constituency of Lisgar are those which are apt to prevail in almost any part of Manitoba before this is over. I will not go as far as the last speaker has gone by stating that at this stage it is a national disaster; but it may well be. I do not think that matter is of such great importance because whether it be a national disaster or not will not make much difference here today. We know that people who are in water, people in whose homes water flows in the front door and out the back, will consider it a national disaster. It is just as wet to the man who is up against it, whether he is the only one affected, or whether there are thousands.

I do not think that at this stage we need worry about the terminology used. I believe, however, that we should lose no time, and I am inclined to take the view that the international joint commission is not losing any time, to do those things which will correct the situation.

The hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Juftras) indicated that these floods have been