

disasters that are overtaking western Ontario and some parts of the province of Quebec through the overflowing of rivers in these two central provinces. Other provinces have experienced similar conditions on former occasions.

In the province of Quebec two rivers, Portneuf and Chaudiere, frequently overflow their banks. Two years ago I made a fairly substantial investigation into the possibility of flood-proofing the Chaudiere river, but it is a problem which will call for the work of eminent engineers to find out the best and easiest methods of preventing the overflowing of the Chaudiere in Quebec. On the other hand, I am convinced that it can be done. It should be done, and it can be done, but not by ordinary methods. The same applies to the Portneuf. Both rivers, down through the years, have frequently overflowed their banks, bringing disaster in their wake.

In Ontario, however, there are other rivers with which I am more familiar and I will speak of them for a moment or two. Yesterday I took note of the flow in the Moira river at Belleville. There was no possibility of disaster there this year, the water escaping freely. Going west, one comes to two or three small rivers, one of which is in the town of my hon. friend the member for Peel (Mr. Graydon). I refer to the Etobicoke river. That is a small watershed, but in flood times it can cause a considerable amount of damage. It can bring disaster to my hon. friend's fine and beautiful town of Brampton.

Mr. GRAYDON: It has on previous occasions.

Mr. MacNICOL: The river flows through the middle of the town and there is no present means of taking care of any large rush of water. I endorse what the leader of the opposition said in submitting his suggestion to the government, and I am sure that every member of the government is equally seized of the importance of doing something.

What can we do? It has been suggested that we use the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act in connection with a problem of this kind, but I do not know that the P.F.R.A. lends itself to flood control in those rivers in the old settled parts of Canada. I suggest that the time has come when an over-all federal authority should be set up charged with the responsibility of carrying out flood prevention and directing the work of flood prevention on rivers generally throughout the country.

Reference has been made to a river flowing through the constituency of Your Honour, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the constituency of Brantford. I refer here to the river Grand. I

believe it was just prior to or after the federal election of 1935, I have forgotten which year, that the matter came before this house. I brought it up myself. At that time I had made an exhaustive survey into what had been done in the Ohio valley, the Muskingum valley, Ohio, and in the Miami valley, Ohio, and I suggested to the government of the day that they adopt the same plans that had been followed in the United States. I suggested that the federal government put up 37½ per cent of the cost of flood-proofing rivers, the provincial government to contribute 37½ per cent and the municipalities 25 per cent. I believe that was the ratio adopted in your own area, Your Honour. In due course the present Shand dam on the Grand, three miles north of the town of Fergus, was erected. I had recommended that two dams be built, one on the Grand itself, north of Fergus, and one on the Conestogo, which flows into the Grand river south of the town of Fergus. At that time the engineers seemed to think one dam would be sufficient, and that dam has already saved its cost several times over in preventing the flooding of Grand river communities during the last few years.

As you know, Your Honour, two or three years ago your own city was threatened, but the flood did not occur because of the existence of the Shand dam, north of which water was stored. The Shand dam has a water conservation volume equivalent to 46,800 acre-feet of water. That is a vast body of water, when one considers that in each acre there are 43,560 square feet. When that is multiplied by the total area of the lake, it means that the present Shand dam north of Fergus conserves approximately two billion cubic feet of water. If the dam had not been there and that two billion feet had all run down the river we would have had real flood conditions recently. A few days ago the engineers found it necessary to open the Shand dam sufficiently to allow 12,500 cubic feet of water per second to go out of the reservoir into the river. Had that not been done, the dam would have overflowed. I do not believe there is any danger from overflowing, as some people apparently think, and I make that statement because of the existence of the overflow in the centre of the dam, which is of concrete and is perfectly designed to control the overflow of water.

I suggest, therefore, that the question which the leader of the opposition has brought up is an important one, and I rise to endorse what he said to the government and, through the government, to that department, whichever it may be, which has the controlling of