

Floods in British Columbia

down on the river's course as those dams are, certainly will not prevent such unusual floods as we have had this year. But I suggest that a program of construction of dams back at the head waters of the rivers, many of which rise in lakes where the raising of the level of the water by only a few feet would dam off a vast body of water, would go a long way toward preventing this sudden run-off with its disastrous consequences, such as we have had this year. I think some such program must be undertaken in British Columbia. I would call to the attention of the house the fact that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) is reported in today's press to have spoken in Saskatchewan in glowing terms of the enormous dam which is to be constructed with federal funds on the Saskatchewan river. We in British Columbia for some years now have been asking that the same terms and the same treatment be extended to our province as is given to the prairies by the federal government under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act or any other agency and as is now being given in a slightly different manner, but in the same general program, to the maritime provinces. We would like to have the assurance which the minister has just given to the people of Saskatchewan that federal funds will be provided for flood control and similar projects in our province and on the same scale as they are being given there.

I say those two points, in addition to the point covered by the hon. member for Vancouver North, should be included in any statement which is made by the government and which, with him, I hope will be made in the very near future.

Mr. A. L. SMITH (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to discuss the subject which has been raised, except to say that I could not agree more with anyone than I do with the two British Columbia members who have just preceded me this evening. I am not even going to make a plea for the town of Drumheller in Alberta, which was flooded out, or the town of Emerson, Manitoba. What has happened in British Columbia has assumed the proportions of a national disaster, and Canada must take its full responsibility, having regard to the proportions to which that disaster has attained.

I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that in what I am now about to say I shall not waste the time of the house. I had intended saying this when the estimates of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Fournier) were before the committee. However I have decided not to wait until that time, first, because I do not know when those estimates will be before the

[Mr. Fulton.]

committee, and for the additional reason that the minister is now in the house.

I intend to discuss the problem of housing—and I do not want you, sir, to be shocked for one moment. I am not going to talk about any general policy of housing in Canada. Rather I am going to talk about the matter of housing for members of parliament who do not live in Ottawa. Some of us come from quite some distance. I know my own personal experience has been that for two years my wife and I lived in a hotel bedroom. Even with your wife, there is not much room to circulate when you have only one room. I did not have two rooms, because I could not pay for two.

Last year I was in an apartment block. We paid \$165 a month for two bedrooms and a sitting room, without a kitchen. This year, after much chasing about, and after my having paid \$50 for breach of contract with respect to one place which—

Mr. BRYCE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the hon. member is speaking on a subject not related to flooding. If anyone now attempts to speak about the flood conditions will Your Honour rule that he has no right to speak on that subject, now that a new subject has been introduced?

Mr. SPEAKER: I must call the attention of the house to citation 345 in Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, which states:

Members may discuss various matters on the motion for the Speaker to leave the chair, without any amendment being proposed, but once—

And I call the attention of hon. members to this:

—debate is stopped on one matter, and another matter intervenes, members cannot again discuss the former.

That is the rule.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): May I do what I can to rectify the matter, so as to permit the hon. member to proceed?

Mr. SINCLAIR: Go on.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): I did not mean to hold anyone back.

Mr. BRYCE: I am only protecting any hon. member who might wish to speak about the flood conditions, because I know from reading Beauchesne that under the rules they would not have the right to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member has unanimous consent, then, of course, he can be permitted to go ahead.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Go on.