

*Manitoba Flood*

those whom I represent in this house, I want to assure the government that we will support them in whatever they decide to do to assist the people of Manitoba who are affected.

I cannot share the feelings of some who have spoken, that this is a matter that should be finalized tonight. I think the government is taking a fairly level-headed view of the whole thing. They have said, "Let us see if this is a national emergency; and when the extent of the damage has been made known, we will take action". I have every confidence that they will take the same decent action they took in British Columbia two years ago. I just want to assure them, on behalf of this group, that we will support them in whatever they feel it is wise to do.

The third thing that I think would be in the minds of Canadians, as it is in mine, is this. We want to see the government speed preparations, just as fast as they possibly can, to prevent a repetition of this thing in the future, and to speed up negotiations with the friendly nation to the south of us. Let us get an agreement on diking, on making dams and diversions, and whatever is needed to see that the waters of the Red river are controlled. Having said these things, I shall not delay the house any further.

**Mr. Daniel McIvor (Fort William):** I was just going to ask a question. I thought the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) was quite clear in saying that he stands ready to co-operate with the premier of Manitoba, to take his direction from him and to do everything possible to help, as was done with regard to British Columbia. I thought that was quite clear.

**Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West):** I did not intend to take part in this debate; I know we have other business to get on with in the house; but since this debate has extended over the dinner recess I just want to make a few brief remarks. I trust I will be in order.

I rise to speak as a member representing a riding through which runs one of the greatest rivers in Canada, namely, the Columbia river. The residents along that river have suffered from floods on several occasions, and in 1948 severely—

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Herridge:** Pardon me, Mr. Speaker, I am in order. I am saying that, because it indicates my sympathy for the people who live along the Red river. I do not want to be ruled out of order by the amen chorus opposite. I rose, Mr. Speaker, because I know something about the problems that people suffer from flood damage.

[Mr. Low.]

As I said previously, many residents in my riding suffered extreme damage in 1948, and face very severe damage in the near future unless the weather changes in the basin of the Columbia in British Columbia. I am not going to repeat the arguments put forward by many hon. members today. I simply want to say that I support those hon. members who have made a plea for financial assistance and other assistance from the federal government to the people of Manitoba who need it.

Before resuming my seat I do want to say that in my opinion we are suffering these difficulties on these great rivers in Canada, such as the Fraser in 1948, the Columbia in 1948 and on the Red river today, because of the lack of an over-all conservation policy that includes flood control and erosion control.

When speaking this afternoon the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) gave a historical review of the situation on the Red river. It had severe floods in the eighteenth century, in the nineteenth century, and has had periodically until this day. Here we are in this age, with all the resources at our command, scientific, technical and human, and we allow these recurring floods and do very little about it so far as the development of an over-all plan is concerned.

I am of the opinion that this policy, which I would term a bits and bobs policy, is totally inadequate in this age. The program of assistance rendered by the federal government to the Fraser river people was well received and was excellent. If assistance is rendered to the people of the Red river it will be work well done. That, Mr. Speaker, is not a final solution to the question; it is just a bits and bobs approach to the question. So far as my own constituency is concerned—and I am going to stay in order; I am mentioning it because I am conversant with it—commencing in 1892 petitions and letters were sent to the federal government in connection with flood control and erosion control. Resolutions went forward from the legislative assembly of British Columbia and even letters from lieutenant governors, and today the problem is no closer to solution than—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I have ruled that the only flood conditions we can consider at this time are the flood conditions in Manitoba.

**Mr. Herridge:** I accept your ruling. I was just giving a parallel case to the Red river situation. I have gone into this question, Mr. Speaker, to some extent with the officials of the various departments, and it is one that seems to present constitutional difficulties.

When it comes to the question of flood control on a navigable river, I understand that