

Manitoba Flood

in both cases the commissioners will certainly require expert assistance, and it is not intended to deprive them of any such assistance that can be of value to them in preparing proper reports.

RED RIVER VALLEY—REFERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

Hon. Brooke Claxton (Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs): If I may be permitted I should like to make a brief statement supplementing that of the Prime Minister, dealing particularly with the international aspect of the flood situation.

As hon. members know, the fact that the Red river rises in the United States, many miles south of the international boundary, and that consequently the floods in Manitoba are contributed to by waters flowing north into Canada from the United States, means that the problem of flood control is international, and can be solved only by joint action of the United States and Canada. For this reason on January 12, 1948, both governments agreed to request the international joint commission to make recommendations to prevent the recurrence of floods in the area of the Red river valley. The commission was required—

—to conduct necessary investigations and to prepare a comprehensive plan or plans of mutual advantage to the two countries for the conservation, control and utilization of the waters under reference in accordance with the recommended apportionment thereof.

One of the principal objectives of this reference is the maximum possible control of flood conditions in the Red river valley. This presents an exceedingly difficult engineering problem, in the solution of which engineering investigations are being conducted for the commission by an international board of engineers which the commission has established, and which works in close association with provincial and state engineering authorities. The government of Canada has requested the Canadian section to expedite in every way possible the completion of the engineering investigation now in progress, and the recommendations that will be based on this investigation.

In this connection the government was assured of the full co-operation of the United States. On May 12 the United States government extended to the government of Canada the sympathy of the government of the United States of America for those suffering from the ravages of the Red river flood in Canada. They also informed us that the United States section of the international joint commission had been requested

urgently to report, at the earliest date practicable, the best flood control measures to prevent the repetition of such disasters.

The government is grateful for this expression of sympathy, and is most gratified to have the assurance of the full co-operation of the United States government in this urgent and important matter.

Mr. Graydon: When did the international joint commission set up this board of engineers to make a report with respect to that project? I ask this question because there is a feeling that the international joint commission has been pretty leisurely about this matter, since it has been two years between floods and nothing has been done.

Mr. Claxton: I shall be glad to obtain the date for the hon. member.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Is it not a fact that from January 12, 1948, to May 1 of this year the international joint commission made no report with respect to the submission made to it two years ago?

Mr. Knowles: During which time we have had two floods.

Mr. Claxton: My understanding is that the facts on which the report necessarily must be based can be adduced only by the engineers who have been appointed by the commission to make the investigation, and it is the report of the engineers on which the international joint commission is waiting.

MESSAGE FROM BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. Speaker: A few moments ago I received a cablegram which I think I should read to the house. It bears today's date and comes from the House of Commons, London, England, having been sent at 5.21 this afternoon, British time. It reads:

Speaker,
House of Commons,
Ottawa.

The whole House of Commons is grieved at the sufferings of the city of Winnipeg caused by the present disastrous floods. The generosity and brave friendship of your country have warmed our hearts on many occasions not far distant, and to you, Mr. Speaker, to the afflicted citizens of Winnipeg, and to the whole Canadian people we send our heartfelt sympathy.

Douglas Clifton Brown,
Speaker

QUESTION AS TO DESIRABILITY OF BOMBING OPERATIONS ON LAKE WINNIPEG

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): May I direct a question to the Minister of National Defence? Can the minister say whether any consideration has