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Housing and Home Finance Agency
Office of the Administrator

EMERGENCY RELIEF IN FLOOD-STRICKEN AREAS

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
EIGHTY-SECOND CONGRESS,
FIRST SESSION .**

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFICIENCIES AND ARMY CIVIL FUNCTIONS

JOHN H. KERR, North Carolina, *Chairman*

**CLARENCE CANNON, Missouri
LOUIS C. RABAUT, Michigan**

**GLENN R. DAVIS, Wisconsin
GERALD R. FORD, Jr., Michigan**

CORNEL D. ORESCAN, *Executive Secretary to Subcommittee*

H. J. Res 292

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EMERGENCY RELIEF IN FLOOD-STRICKEN AREAS

SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1951.

WITNESSES

COL. WRIGHT M. HIATT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS

HON. WINT SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

HON. ERRETT P. SCRIVNER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

HON. MYRON V. GEORGE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

HON. KARL STEFAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEBRASKA

Mr. CANNON. The committee will please be in order. The committee meets this morning to consider a budget estimate for \$15 million to be expended without regard to the limitation in section 8 of the act of September 30, 1950, Public Law 875, for disaster relief. Press reports received, and letters and telegrams and long-distance calls from the States affected, indicate a flood of unexampled proportions affecting Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and States below on the river. The flood has broken all former records and has assumed the proportions of a national disaster.

CAUSE AND EXTENT OF FLOOD CONDITION

We shall hear first Colonel Hiatt. Colonel Hiatt, will you indicate the extent of the situation and the area covered by it?

Colonel HIATT. Due to a peculiar meteorological condition which resulted in a so-called high up near the border between Canada and the United States in the vicinity of Montana, and a warm air mass of Gulf air coming in, heavy laden with moisture from the South, there has been for the past 6 weeks a condition of sporadic and intermittent rain over the State of Kansas. The flooding started in the latter part of May and there have been almost continuous daily rains since then over the whole State, of varying intensity. The principal basins affected—

Mr. KERR. What do you mean by a high?

Colonel HIATT. Barometric high pressure; it means that normally the air is cold and dry and in general circulates counterclockwise.

Mr. KERR. And then it comes in contact with warm air?

Colonel HIATT. With warm air or warm weather—a warm weather cyclone from the Gulf. It is almost like siphoning water from the Gulf of Mexico and dumping it on the State of Kansas.

Mr. CANNON. It has evidently resulted in a rainfall unprecedented in the meteorological history of this area. Will you proceed?

Mr. SMITH of Kansas. Mr. Chairman, in that connection, the weather records in May, June, and July so far show that it is the highest rainfall in the history of the State for the past 80 years.

Mr. CANNON. The press reports that the water is at the highest stage in certain points in Kansas, especially at Kansas City, in the history of that area.

Colonel HIATT. The topography of Kansas is rather peculiarly adapted to the concentration of run-off when storm conditions like this occurs, so that the converging flood crests, as we call them, move down the stream in such a manner that they tend to build up and concentrate both in intensity and in quantity at the mouth of the tributaries. So that in the past month there has been great flooding on the Kansas River Basin, throughout most of Kansas, and the Arkansas Basin which drains on down through Oklahoma and the State of Arkansas.

Mr. KERR. Will you describe the significance of the green blocks on the map?

Colonel HIATT. Those are flood-control projects recommended by the Corps of Engineers, sir. The red blocks are the projects that are authorized for construction, but not yet built.

Mr. CANNON. As I understand, the estimate before us does not deal with flood control, but deals solely with emergency relief?

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CANNON. To take care of the emergency conditions brought about by this unprecedented amount of water?

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir.

PRESENT CONDITION OF THE FLOOD

Mr. KERR. May I ask another question here? Tell us something about the condition of the flood now. Has it abated any?

Colonel HIATT. No, sir; the crest is at Kansas City right now.

Mr. SCRIVNER. I think I will be able to give you most of those details, Judge.

Colonel HIATT. The crest has exceeded the maximum of record from the Kansas River and the flow there is more than 360,000 cubic feet per second, something of that order.

Mr. CANNON. How does that compare with the normal flow of the river, and with previous floods?

Colonel HIATT. I would say it is more than 60 times the normal flow of the river even at fairly good stages, sir. It is the greatest flood of the Kansas River that has ever occurred, on record. In Kansas City itself, there is no great human suffering. According to our reports, the civil defense organization is working satisfactorily. Commercial businesses which, in general, are up on the bluffs, have been requested to be closed. All liquor stores and bars are closed. The lower parts of the industrial region, the marshaling yards, the railroad tracks, the refineries, the bridge approaches, are all under water.

Mr. CANNON. This morning's New York Times carries a picture on the front page showing a building in the business district of the city, surrounded by an 8-foot level of water.

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CANNON. So it must have reached the commercial district also?

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir. I was distinguishing between commercial, such as offices and dry goods businesses and department stores which are in general up on the bluff. Down below are the industrial parts where are the factories, the stockyards, the refineries and the railroads—those types of operations occur. I was differentiating between industrial type of operations and commercial.

Mr. KERR. Those projects represented by the green blocks, have they been authorized by law for their construction?

Colonel HIATT. No, sir.

Mr. KERR. None of them whatever?

Colonel HIATT. No, sir. I have a larger scale map, if you desire to go into details, of the Kansas City region. That would be a little bit better, if you are principally interested in this area [indicating on map]. However, I would like to emphasize that the Osage Basin has suffered the worst flood of record in certain reaches. The Neosho River has exceeded maximum flows of record at certain places, and so has the Verdigris River. However, except for the Osage, these rivers down here [indicating on map] drain into the Arkansas. The Osage is going to contribute to the flood crest, to join the one that is moving down the Missouri River from Kansas City at this time. The predicted stage at St. Charles is about 13 feet over flood stage next Friday.

Mr. CANNON. What is the condition at Argentine and Armourdale?

Colonel HIATT. They are under 12 to 15 feet of water, sir.

Mr. CANNON. Although hitherto they have not been subject to flood?

Colonel HIATT. No, sir. The utilities are functioning satisfactorily. There is no industrial water supply. There is not too much need for an industrial water supply. I asked about water purification units and I am informed that they have sufficient to take care of the urgent needs. The food situation appears to be well in hand. In general, from the military standpoint, human suffering is reported to be not too acute at this time. All the casualties, of course, have not been reported. The last report I had in the last 3 or 4 days is that there had been about 24. The fires reported in this morning's paper are abating and pretty well under control.

Mr. CANNON. The reports that we get are to the effect that many families have been driven from their homes up and down the river.

Colonel HIATT. Thousands, sir. Not only in Kansas City, but in the whole State.

Mr. CANNON. Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri?

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir; not once, but several times in the past month. The towns of Hays, Kans., has been completely evacuated twice.

Mr. STEFAN. Where is Hays? Show it on the map?

Colonel HIATT. It is right here, sir [indicating on map]. That is normally fairly high ground, but they had intense rain and it is on a flat creek bed.

Mr. CANNON. Marshal law has been declared in some of these areas?

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir; particularly Manhattan.

Mr. KERR. How would you protect that area? It would seem from the map that you would have to protect it with dams northwest of there.

Colonel HIATT. That dam there [indicating] is operating very successfully on the Smoky Hill River. There are other dams not shown.

This map was made up to show principally the major structures involved. In these smaller tributaries you do not need such big structures as you go down near the main stem.

SITUATION IN THE MISSOURI RIVER VALLEY

Mr. DAVIS. As far as I can tell, there is no flooding of the Missouri River at this time. It is all the small rivers westerly from there?

Colonel HIATT. That is right. The Missouri River from Fort Leavenworth down is falling, sir. There are about 90,000 second-feet, which is not a bad flood in the Missouri; thank God for that. Had there been a flood on the Missouri River, we would just begin to hear about it and it would continue on down and we would have even worse conditions down towards St. Louis. And they are going to be terrible as it stands now.

Mr. STEFAN. How far north and west is this flood stage?

Colonel HIATT. Generally as shown in blue on the map. There is a flood crest moving right in here at this time on the Arkansas River. The Arkansas River is a peculiar stream in that you can have a serious flood anywhere and not have much water down in here [indicating]. It seeps into the ground and is stored in the draws as it comes down the valley.

Mr. STEFAN. Has any of that been activated by the breaking out of dams that previously had held the water back?

Colonel HIATT. No, sir. Not dams, but certain levees in Topeka and Kansas City have failed.

Mr. CANNON. With relation to your comment on the lack of flood waters in the Missouri Valley, we had telephone and telegraphic word from there, yesterday and today, that a vast acreage is inundated; that the M., K. & T. and the C., B. & Q. lines have been broken; embankments washed out and train service interrupted. Highway bridges are out. Telephone and telegraph lines are broken. The wheat crop, which is within a week of being harvested, has been lost in an area extending from Jefferson City, past St. Charles, to the mouth of the Missouri River.

Mr. SCRIVNER. And this water coming down from the Kaw is going to exaggerate that.

Mr. CANNON. You expect it to be even worse.

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir; as a matter of fact, when I spoke of human suffering, I was speaking as a soldier, sir. I am visualizing atomic bombs, and so forth. But the human loss and the damage to property, and so forth, are terrific.

Mr. CANNON. Photographs were published in local papers this morning showing automobiles washed off the road, and drifting in the river. They were able to take photographs of occupants who in the opinion of the reporters were drowned, as the machines went down the river.

Mr. GEORGE. Colonel Pace stated yesterday that the damage in Kansas City, Mo., had run \$300 million.

Mr. SCRIVNER. And since he flew out there yesterday—he is out there now—he has revised that estimate upward considerably.

Mr. GEORGE. They have lost all of their county bridges and structures clear up and down all the steams.

Mr. CANNON. The President has sent the Chief of the Corps of Engineers out there. Have you had any report by the Chief of Engineers from the field up to this time?

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CANNON. His reports corroborate all the testimony that you have been giving us?

Colonel HIATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. SMITH of Kansas. In that connection, I just heard Colonel Potter from the Department of Engineers say that it was his estimate that this was the biggest catastrophe in dollar loss in the history of the United States.

Mr. CANNON. The estimate seems to be justified by the latest reports. Thank you, Colonel Hiatt.

We shall now hear Mr. Lawton, the Director of the Budget.

NATURE AND CHARACTER OF RELIEF TO BE ADOPTED

WITNESS

FREDERICK J. LAWTON, DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Lawton, we are in receipt of an estimate forwarded to Congress recommending an appropriation of \$15 million to be spent for disaster relief. What is the character and extent of the relief you think would most effectively provide for the situation reasonably at this time?

Mr. LAWTON. Mr. Chairman, the estimate as submitted under the provisions of the Relief Disaster Act, Public Law 875, which was passed in September 1950, provides—that is, the law provides that in the case of any disaster of this nature, a major disaster, the Federal agencies can utilize their personnel, property, supplies and other things, to aid or loan to the State and local governments. Further, they can distribute food and other consumable supplies. They can donate equipment and supplies that are surplus. They can perform on public and private lands the protective work incidental to the protection of life and property; the clearing of debris and wreckage, making emergency repairs and temporary replacement of public facilities of local governments which are damaged; and, in addition, grants can be made to the States or local governments involved for their work in connection with the repair and replacement of these facilities.

This flood is of such major proportion and the damage in the area so broad, the damage so great, that we felt this amount of money, which is in addition to the \$800,000 now pending in the independent offices bill, will undoubtedly be necessary to take care of a flood of these proportions.

In addition, there are, of course, provisions in the same act for the Federal agencies to rebuild and replace their own structures which are damaged by such a disaster. In this area there are a great many Federal installations; these are Air Force and Navy and other bases, and a number of other defense areas and some defense plants which are Government-owned.

We feel that the proportions of this disaster are so great that the amount of \$15 million will enable us at least to do the major immedi-

ate emergency things until there is some clearing of this and we can see what the extent of the damage is.

Now, in addition to these funds, of course, there are the usual emergency flood funds of the Corps of Engineers which are for protection during the course of the flood.

There is about \$3 million available to the Bureau of Public Roads for repair of damage to public highways, bridges, and so forth, on the primary and secondary systems, but not on the local road systems.

So we feel that this disaster is one that requires funds to be made immediately available through grants to the States and utilization of the Federal agencies where they have supplies and equipment and personnel and facilities available to aid in restoring order out of the chaotic condition that is prevalent there now.

Mr. CANNON. Out of such funds as are presently available, what relief have you been able to supply up to this time?

Mr. LAWTON. Immediately at the cresting of the flood, of course, the main work there has been done by the Corps of Engineers and the Coast Guard, and by the use of some military in this area from Fort Riley, Manhattan, and so forth. During the cresting of the flood, there is not much repair work that can be done. The flood must abate before the debris can be removed. In the meantime, the Secretary of Agriculture has advised that he has surplus food available in case it is needed and there is in his possession disaster aid loan funds which will be available for loans after the flood has abated.

That generally is the picture. The President has directed Mr. Foley, who is the Coordinator of Relief of this character, designated as such by the President under Executive order that was issued in March, to take all means to contact all Federal agencies and to make whatever resources there are available to the States to ameliorate the conditions that are there now and to help in the temporary repair and restoration of this flood damage.

Mr. CANNON. What assistance has the Red Cross been able to afford up to this time?

Mr. LAWTON. I think some of the Congressmen can give an answer to that better than I. I do not know.

Mr. CANNON. And the local communities are cooperating?

Mr. LAWTON. Yes. Of course, this requires that the Federal Government's agencies cooperate with the State and local agencies. This work is being done in cooperation, and to help them.

I think that Colonel Hiatt has described generally what the problem is in these areas, but I think in addition to the Kansas situation there is the probability of continuing damage over in the area of east Kansas into Missouri, on the Missouri River.

METHOD OF ADMINISTERING FUNDS

Mr. CANNON. How is it proposed that the funds requested in this appropriation be administered?

Mr. LAWTON. The head of the Home Finance Administration is the coordinator who will see that the various Federal agencies exercise their separate responsibilities under various laws other than this one, and to make such examinations and such agreements as are necessary with the State and local people for the advance of funds to them.

He will have the job of seeing that the resources of the Federal Government are made available and applied to this problem.

Mr. CANNON. There is one thing that should be made clear—we are in receipt of numerous requests for help to reestablish broken levee systems and destroyed highways in the inundated areas. Mass meetings are being held to petition the Government to provide appropriations for flood control and protection against further floods.

PURPOSES OF FUNDS REQUESTED

None of this money, as I understand it, can be spent for such purposes. The funds here proposed are purely for relief.

Mr. LAWTON. Yes.

Mr. CANNON. To alleviate the situation brought about by this unprecedented inundation?

Mr. LAWTON. That is correct.

There is a provision in this fund against any permanent construction. All that can be done is the temporary repairing and making things usable at the moment.

Now, the Bureau of Public Roads does have some funds for emergency repair of highways on the primary and secondary systems, but that is a fund apart from this one. That is not involved in this fund. It is a separate appropriation that they have.

Mr. CANNON. The only property damage to which this fund might be applied would be to get houses back on their foundations and to wash the mud out of them so that they can be made habitable; to build at least temporary bridges where roads have been destroyed; to remove the debris from the streets so that they can become passable; and to adopt such sanitary measures as will prevent the spread of contagion following the fall of the water. Money can be used for such purposes as that?

Mr. LAWTON. It can be used for that, and for the provision of medical supplies and that sort of thing.

Mr. CANNON. To house the people and feed them and supply medicine until they can be put back in their homes?

Mr. LAWTON. That is right. They can bring in any housing facility—demountables, trailers, and other things that are available. They can pay the transportation and bring them in there for use during the period.

This act is purely a relief act, relief during emergency situations. It has no provision in it for permanent construction of any kind.

Mr. CANNON. Any money which may remain unobligated after those acute needs were taken care of would not be spent?

Mr. LAWTON. It would be in the fund for any similar situation occurring in any other part of the country. We have had these things periodically, but not quite as severe as this. We had the snow damage, as you remember, in the Northwest. We have had floods over a lesser area for which we have granted money, and Minnesota and the Dakotas and places like that were the places where the disaster was more localized and the damage was not as extensive as this.

Last year we had around \$2,000,000 available in this fund.

Mr. CANNON. Then the expenditure of this fund for such purposes is not limited to any one State or any one section; it would serve the whole area covered by the flood, and all the States involved, extending from Nebraska down to Oklahoma.

Mr. LAWTON. It is available Nation-wide.

Mr. CANNON. It is Nation-wide, for any disaster anywhere in the Nation.

Mr. LAWTON. Yes; it is not limited to floods. It applies to drought, fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, storms and any other catastrophes of that general nature.

Mr. CANNON. This money is to be expended without regard to the limitation in section 8 of the act of September 30, 1950, Public Law 875. What is that limitation?

Mr. LAWTON. That is the limitation of \$5,000,000 in the aggregate to carry out the purposes of the act. That limitation was placed in the act at the time that it was passed. We recommended there be no limitation since the annual appropriations by Congress, depending on the severity of a particular disaster, would be a better guide than to attempt to say in advance what the total disaster needs of the country would be from now on. We feel this disaster is so widespread, that it covers so many fairly large cities—it has wiped out bridges and highways all over the area—and the county road system which Public Roads cannot touch—that this money ought to be made available. There is the need for it, and we ought to be able to meet it.

If the need is greater than this amount of money, we ought to be able to come back to you gentlemen and put before you in more detail what the needs are. At this time nobody can state specifically what amount of money is needed, but I think you will probably hear this morning the extent of the damage, and the widespread nature of the damage that has covered all these areas. Whole cities are practically immobilized. We feel there should be an amount of money available that will meet this disaster without question.

Mr. DAVIS. As I gather, we are meeting here in our capacity as a deficiency subcommittee rather than as a civil functions committee?

Mr. CANNON. This has nothing to do with civil functions. We are meeting as a deficiency committee.

Mr. DAVIS. There is just this much; the language is very broad and perhaps necessarily so. There are two phases of it inasmuch as we are going beyond the limitations of the act. We should know what limitations there are and how far you can go in spending this money, and then what about the on-the-spot administration of it?

You have told us about Mr. Foley being the coordinator. We will say, for example, that the money is appropriated. Can you tell us a little more about who is going to spend it and what limitations there are going to be on the spending, and what kind of check Congress will have on it after it is gone? When are we going to know about what happens to it?

Mr. LAWTON. There is a provision in the basic act itself that calls for a report to the Congress; a full report of all funds expended under this. Public Law 875 is the general limitation on the expenditure of the fund. That act specifically sets forth certain things that can be done. I have enumerated a number of them here. That act in itself, in section 3, says exactly what the Federal agencies can do and what the limitations are on what they can do as to aiding public or private property. In the private end of it, it is the removal of debris. In the public end, it is the repair and rehabilitation of public structures; that is, State, municipal, and county structures and bridges and things of that sort. It is not the reconstruction of them but merely the rehabilitation and repair to make them usable at the time.

Mr. DAVIS. It would be reasonable to assume, for instance, that Mr. Foley would call on the Army engineers to do a job of this kind?

Mr. LAWTON. He would call on the Army engineers. The other departments of the Army would be called upon for such things as trucks, bulldozers, medical equipment, tins of food, and things of that sort, if they are necessary.

The Coast Guard is going out there now with some of their rescue equipment—boats and life-saving equipment, and so forth. They have transported some people here from the east coast especially trained in that sort of work. They are out there now.

The Department of Agriculture will make surplus foods available. The division engineer of Mr. Foley's organization, stationed in Kansas City, has been in touch with the people out there in getting reports on that. It is his job to see that the money is spent in accordance with the terms of this act; that the grants that are made to the State or the local communities are made for the purposes that are in accordance with this act. It is operated on that basis, and has been for the last 4 or 5 years, and it has operated in several major disaster areas.

I think that the record has been shown here to the Congress, a satisfactory one, in meeting the demand. The Federal agencies themselves can have the authority to repair and replace their own structures, and if the funds are not sufficient they are authorized to incur a deficiency and come back to the Congress for supplemental appropriations. That is provided in section 6 of the act.

Mr. KERR. You think the law is sufficient to meet every requirement to protect these people and cover the situations that we have been discussing?

Mr. LAWTON. This is a recent law. It was enacted following several of these disasters, and Congress was really spurred on by the Portland, Vanport disaster on the Columbia River, and following that the Congress carefully went into this, spent a year considering it, and set forth the terms and conditions under which aid of this character could be granted.

Mr. GEORGE. In the case of bridges we have some counties that have lost at least 100. Those bridges are completely gone. There is no chance for repair. Would this take care of that?

Mr. LAWTON. It would take care of providing temporary crossings—pontoons—but not the permanent reconstruction of the bridges.

Mr. CANNON. We have with us a number of representatives from the various States affected, and opportunity will be afforded all to be heard.

Mr. STEFAN. We who come from the North and West have just suffered a tremendous loss from the floods, those coming down the Missouri from my district and those coming down from the Republican River up there. That country is represented by Mr. Curtis, who is here, and we realize that the Kansas area is now suffering as a result of a lot of the water that has come down from our district. We are suffering the aftermath, and these other people are going to suffer the greatest disaster that has ever been experienced in this country.

As I have listened to Mr. Lawton here; what we are doing here is merely temporary work. These questions have been asked: What is going to happen regarding the bridges? Nothing but temporary work is to be done. I can see the exhaustion of these emergency funds that the Army engineers have and the Public Roads. They will be ex-

hausted in this operation, in my opinion. What have you to say about that? We will have to replenish, will we not?

Mr. LAWTON. We felt that the emergency funds in both the Corps and Public Roads, to the extent they are depleted, should be brought back to a level which will permit the meeting of a subsequent emergency.

Mr. STEFAN. That is what I had in mind. You will have to replenish the fund.

Mr. LAWTON. We do not have anything in the way of a figure now that will permit us to come in.

Mr. STEFAN. After the water goes down, you will see what the loss is.

Mr. LAWTON. You will have the same situation you had following both the Columbia River floods and the severe snowstorms in the Western States. These funds are to be utilized, and the law itself provides that as far as Federal funds are concerned for Federal installations, they are to be replaced, and the emergency funds for the Corps and Public Roads should be brought back to a state where they would be in readiness to meet another emergency. You can never put enough dollars in there at one time to be certain that you are going to cover the situation for a full fiscal year. It is an emergency fund, and it should be maintained at some emergency level so that you can at least initiate, as you have time to replenish the funds, the meeting of an emergency situation of this character.

Mr. STEFAN. I do not want to lose sight of the fact that the waters come down from our district after leaving a lot of damage behind, bridges out and roads out, and they are in bad shape.

I am interested in these emergency funds. I think the Public Roads and the engineers have about \$1,000,000 apiece.

Mr. LAWTON. Public Roads has \$2,900,000 at this moment. The engineers have nearly \$10,000,000. They have \$3,000,000 carried over from last year and \$7,000,000 is included in the current civil functions bill.

Mr. STEFAN. I thought there was \$1,000,000 for the Missouri River. That is all used for emergency and will be exhausted when this is over, in my opinion, because you are going to let them use as much of that as you can.

Mr. LAWTON. As much as is necessary, of course, at this stage.

Mr. STEFAN. Do you anticipate they will use all that up? You said that you could not tell.

Mr. LAWTON. You cannot tell. You cannot tell about the roads.

Mr. STEFAN. What will the mechanics be for replenishing the fund?

Mr. LAWTON. A supplemental appropriation.

Mr. STEFAN. Do you believe that \$15,000,000 is all that you are going to ask for additionally?

Mr. LAWTON. That is what we will ask for now. We have no judgment that that is the right or wrong figure at the moment. We do not know.

Mr. STEFAN. There is a prospect that \$15,000,000 will not be enough.

Mr. LAWTON. It is certainly enough to start with. Whether it is enough to finish, that is something else. If it is not, we will come back for a replenishment of the emergency fund.

Mr. STEFAN. We must not leave the county commissioners and the municipal officials with the belief that we are appropriating money for permanent structures.

Mr. LAWTON. We cannot do that.

Mr. STEFAN. It is for temporary work, and it is within the limits of the Disaster Relief Act and within the limits of the Public Roads and Flood Control Act. The flood control emergency funds are not to rebuild new levees, but to repair the ones under pressure at the time of the flood.

Mr. CANNON. Thank you, Mr. Lawton.

Sitting nearest us is Congressman Scrivner of Kansas.

Congressman Scrivner, will you give us some information as to conditions in your section of the country and the need for emergency relief in this connection?

WITNESS

HON. EVERETT P. SCRIVNER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

Mr. SCRIVNER. Mr. Chairman, I find myself in a rather odd situation sitting on this side of the table as a witness instead of on the other side. I further find myself in a rather strange position of asking for further expenditure of Federal funds rather than a lesser expenditure.

I think the chairman understands my situation because he probably finds himself in somewhat the same condition himself this morning. Although we have been talking about this situation as it relates to Kansas and primarily the focal point of Kansas City, Kans., and Kansas City, Mo., the floodwaters about which we have been talking will, during this coming week, move on down the Missouri Valley. Of course, with regard to that Valley, the chairman has personal knowledge and could contribute far more than I possibly could.

I will confine my comments purely to the State of Kansas.

While we have been talking primarily about the Kansas River as the one doing the largest share of the damage, the other rivers are doing a considerable part of the damage. Some of them are rather small.

My district runs from Kansas City, Kans., to just a little south of Fort Scott, along the Missouri line, and a little below Iola and Humboldt in this double tier of counties [indicating]. So primarily we are getting the full effect of it right in here [indicating], starting this side of Topeka and right down to Kansas City, Kans.

For instance, here [indicating] is the little Marias des Cygne, sometimes called the Osage. It does become the Osage down in Missouri.

I cannot even contact the city of Ottawa this morning to determine the conditions. The latest report I had was that water was going down the main street of the city of Ottawa almost 10 to 12 feet deep. Ninety-five percent of the business buildings in the town and 40 percent of the residential structures are under water. The water is moving down and it will hit the railroad center of Osawatimie. Finally, it will be greater as it hits into the Osage River over in Missouri. That has not been discussed much.

There has been tremendous damage in that valley through all of these small communities, some of which have been almost completely wiped out. There is no communication with Ottawa by way of phone, railroad, highway, or anything else. It is completely isolated.

Mr. Rees can tell you more about the situation in Emporia and Council Grove.

Now, coming on down the Neosho River, it hits in my district below Burlington, into Iola. As soon as the crest hits, the public utility will be out. These streams, the Neosho and the Marias des Cygne have almost annual floods. They will flood Humboldt and run on through Mr. George's district into Oklahoma.

Mr. Rees and Mr. Hope can tell you much more in detail of what has happened at Hutchison and at Wichita and on farther south on the Arkansas River.

I will confine my remarks to the Kansas River because Mr. Cole, whose home used to be in Topeka as was mine, can tell you what has happened there to nearly 25,000 people. Topeka is the center of the Santa Fe Railway activities, the Union Pacific and the Missouri Pacific. His district will go on to Manhattan.

If this had been the first flood of the season, it would not have been this bad, but this is the second or third flood. For the third time the city of Manhattan is under from 4 to 6 feet of water.

Mr. KERR. So the dams are totally inadequate?

Mr. SCRIVNER. We have very few of them completed. Kanopolis is the only one completed, and having it in there has resulted in the saving of Salina from one big flood.

These are purely emergency funds. This situation has to be taken care of now.

My home town of Kansas City, Kans., is divided not quite equally, but almost, by the Kansas River which runs into the Missouri right at this point [indicating]. On each side of the Kansas, as you go through the town, it is flat. It is the Kansas Valley. In this valley are huge industrial installations. Not only that, but there are thousands upon thousands of homes of these workers who work in the steel plants, the refineries, the packing plants, and the soap plants who live adjacent to their place of work.

As you go out beyond the city limits, you find a still wider bottom which is one of the most productive truck-farming areas in the entire world. They raise a tremendous quantity of produce. Then on down we get on into the farming area where they grow corn, potatoes, and all of that.

The engineers have done a very fine job of building protective dikes from the mouth of the Missouri back to the Kansas. But with this tremendous flood of water coming down, one of the local dikes built by the drainage district fund out of their own tax money, broke and a torrent of water ran down Kansas Avenue. While this is an industrial and home area, the street is completely lined with commercial business establishments. The water came down with such tremendous velocity that it crossed in behind the protective dikes, rushed clear across the river and over the dikes on to the far side of the city where it inundated four major packinghouses. They are completely down. There is not a single head of livestock in the stockyards. The Stock Exchange Building is 8 feet under water. No meat will come out of them for many, many weeks.

Mr. CANNON. I was told last night that in the stockyards the water rose so rapidly that it was impossible to move the livestock and that much of it drowned.

Mr. SCRIVNER. They got most of them out. There probably were some hogs lost. They are hard to handle. Of course, the horses and mules were in the barns.

The warning was very short. This was an unexpected thing. The water broke through one of the local dikes and came down with such tremendous velocity. At Seventh and Kansas Avenue the water was 15 feet deep. That is a main business thoroughfare coming through by the Cudahy Packing Co. over into Missouri.

This dike broke in the middle of the night. These people were warned that there might be danger, so most of them left. Perhaps there are a few who did not escape. Coming as it did at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, most of them got out with barely the clothes they had on their backs. Their homes are submerged. Everything is gone. They are being taken care of in public buildings, or in the Memorial Building, the churches, schools, warehouses, and so forth, and the Red Cross up to now is doing a good job of feeding them and bedding them down. It is tough.

On the south side of the Kansas River is what is known as Argentine. Fortunately, Argentine is narrow. Now, Armourdale is 18 blocks long and from one to seven blocks wide and densely populated. The hills go up rather steep to protect the Argentine area, but in Armourdale 5,000 to 7,000 people were driven out of their homes. There were over 20,000 people driven out of their homes overnight right in that community. I could go on and give you the details that have been coming to me by telegram and telephone calls, but I will not. This will be, when all the facts are marshaled, in my opinion, the greatest flood disaster that has ever hit the Nation. As a matter of fact, rather than \$15 million being sufficient—and you know I feel this deeply or I would not say it—it should start at \$30 million; \$15 million will give us a start now, and we have to have it now.

Now, just above the confluence of the Kansas River and the Missouri is the Fairfax Airport and the Fairfax industrial district which is behind a large levee. The Missouri River, as you have been told, is not as high as it has been in the past. If it had been as it has been in the past, we could not cope with the situation at all. Now, in that area we have enormous installations. We have International Harvester, one of the finest National Biscuit Co. plants, a Chevrolet parts plant, mattress factories, and General Motors has an assembly plant which will soon be assembling the F-86 fighters, and all of those are in that area. If they go, the loss will be incalculable. Our water and light plant is there. I talked to the mayor a few minutes ago, and he says they are as yet able to retain levees by sand bags and that they feel the water and light company plant can be saved.

Now, when this tremendous volume of water came down and hit the confluence of the Missouri, it moved immediately across stream, and there it is now hitting the levees which protect the Kansas City (Mo.) Municipal Airport. The fear now is it will cut the levees and make a break. They have moved everything out of Kansas City (Mo.) Airport and are now going to Grand View some miles outside the city. Just beyond that, on that side of the river, is another industrial

section, the North Kansas City industrial district, which, while it is primarily industrial, has also become heavily built with the homes of these workers, all of whom have been ordered out overnight. The disaster will probably hit them some time today or tonight.

The last word we had was that the flood crest is holding fairly steady, but the Engineers have been getting their information up and downstream and they feel that there will be another foot and a half or 2 feet which will add to the damage that has been done.

The levees of the city of Lawrence have gone out. There has been enormous damage there, particularly in the city of North Orange. They have all had to move out. They are desperate. All up and down the stream there are villages and communities, 300 to 500, and they have been entirely wiped out. Their homes are gone and everything.

Truly if there ever was a real need for emergency disaster funds, this is it.

I wish to commend the chairman and the committee upon the speed with which they have acted, realizing this need, and I want to commend them upon taking their time on Saturday morning at this hour to make it possible to present this request to the House of Representatives Monday.

MR. CANNON. In this instance, if the money is to be supplied at all, it must be supplied at once.

MR. SCRIVNER. That is right.

If the committee think they need more information, the other members of the Kansas delegation are here. Some of them are not particularly concerned now about the emergency and disaster part of it, although we are apt to be hit at Wichita where we are building our B-47 and where we have a bomber-trainer base. Mr. Rees' district is in Emporia, and Mr. Cole is at Manhattan, and Manhattan and Topeka have been tremendously hard hit. I think, if the chairman feels there is adequate time, it might be well to hear from them.

MR. CANNON. Mr. George, the committee would be glad to hear you at this time.

WITNESS

HON. MYRON V. GEORGE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

MR. GEORGE. I just want to call the attention of the committee to the fact that most of our rivers do run from east to west and go into Missouri. I happen to represent an area of the State in which our drainage goes south and dumps into Oklahoma. We have a good deal the same situation on these streams, only in a smaller way, that they have up here [indicating]. The damage, so far as the valley is concerned, is just as great. We do not have the city property damage at the present time. However, these rivers are cresting 4 feet higher than any known record. This is about the third time that these rivers have gone out. The Arkansas goes out of my district below Wichita. This is the Neosho River, which becomes the Grand River when it gets into Oklahoma, and they all go into the Arkansas to create a tremendous flood problem every time that we have excessive rains up here. It is not uncommon for us folks to have floods. We

know what they are. We are in complete agreement that we want flood-control dams, but that is not involved at the present time.

I would like to impress upon the committee that this has set the economy of our State down 10 years, and some of these counties at least 50 years, because clear up and down here they have lost all their structures.

Mr. CANNON. That is a rather impressive statement.

Mr. GEORGE. I think that is a true statement and will be verified by all the rest of the Congressmen. Of course, we want temporary relief, but I think we should get a permanent correction of the situation just as soon as possible. I certainly will have some proposals that will correct it.

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Rees, we would be glad to hear you.

WITNESS

HON. EDWARD H. REES, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

Mr. REES. Just very briefly: I would like to express my appreciation, along with members of the delegation, for the committee meeting this morning and hearing Mr. Lawton. He presented this matter in a splendid way.

We are here together at this time. It happens that I represent the Fourth District. This disaster goes right across my district, starting out at Wichita here, and over at Junction City in the other direction. We are all familiar with the city of Wichita, with 200,000 people, and there we have these great installations building aircraft.

Mr. CANNON. To that extent it affects the war program?

Mr. REES. It certainly does.

Over here at Junction City we have an installation, Fort Riley.

We are talking now about immediate help, the temporary help for this disaster. It is almost impossible to describe it to you gentlemen. It is very unusual to have this sort of thing happen, because ordinarily at this time of the year, as the chairman well knows, we are looking for rain and need moisture. Now, it is just in the opposite direction. So, starting with Abilene and going across here, there is tremendous damage.

The greater part of the city of Abilene is under water. The people have been driven from their homes and moved out and are being temporarily taken care of by the Red Cross and the people of the community.

Then we have Junction City, where the water is 5 and 6 feet deep in the streets and the people have been moved out from that town.

Council Grove is a little town of 2,300 people. All the people there were moved out and taken to the little towns on the hillside. Some are living in tents. In Morena there are about 2,000 people. It is under water about 6 feet, and all the people have moved out. There are several other places of 1,000 to 1,500 where the people have had to move. So, there are thousands of people along the river there who have had their farms and everything destroyed.

Speaking of the farm crops, of course they are all gone. It is now a question of trying to save a little of their property. The main

thing that they have been doing out there in the last few days is giving attention to the saving of lives.

The Red Cross is doing a splendid job. They moved in there with all kinds of equipment—boats and helicopters, just to give temporary relief to see that typhus does not spread.

Another thing mentioned by Mr. Lawton is that the utilities are out. They are out in Council Grove and most of these towns that I have described.

In my home town of Emporia they have had to stop the Santa Fe trains there. They have 2,000 people in there that have been there for 3 days. It is the worst catastrophe that you can imagine.

Mr. CANNON. It is so acute it would be difficult to describe in a few words?

Mr. REES. That is right.

Mr. KERR. With reference to the area which you are so interested in and have discussed, how often has it been flooded within the past few years?

Mr. REES. We have had floods in the last 2 years in this area, but none comparable to this one. This is the worst in history so far as I know.

Mr. KERR. I assume that they were destructive.

Mr. REES. We have had a lot of loss because of floods, that is true, but this is the most destructive.

I want to say to you that the people of that community will do everything they can. They will certainly do their part to handle the situation, but the flood has been so disastrous that we are going to need some help.

Mr. STEFAN. Where is the city of Wichita?

Mr. REES. The Arkansas River is all around the city, and around those installations that we have.

Mr. STEFAN. Is it around the airplane installation?

Mr. REES. Yes; but it is not destroying anything.

Mr. STEFAN. Has the crest been reached?

Mr. REES. Yes. It has been reached clear on down to Topeka. In fact, the water is going down.

Mr. STEFAN. There is no more danger at Wichita?

Mr. REES. No, sir. The water is going down slowly in all the places that I have described. I appreciate your giving this time.

Mr. CANNON. We will now hear from Mr. Hope.

WITNESS

HON. CLIFFORD R. HOPE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

Mr. HOPE. Mr. Chairman, my district is in the grange area of the Arkansas River. We have had high water a considerable part of the time in that river, but it is not one of the areas where there is an acute situation at this time. I therefore am not going to take the time of the committee, except to associate myself with the remarks of the other members of the delegation.

This is the greatest catastrophe that Kansas has ever suffered. We are going to need a great deal of temporary relief.

I am very grateful, as a citizen of Kansas, and as a Representative of that State, to the committee and the Bureau of the Budget for the promptness with which they have attempted to deal with this matter, because it is a real crisis that requires prompt action.

Mr. CANNON. Thank you, Mr. Hope.

We will now hear from Mr. Cole of Kansas.

WITNESS

HON. ALBERT M. COLE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

Mr. COLE. I, like Mr. Hope, do not want to take the time of the committee, except to express, first, my appreciation for this splendid and prompt action.

Very briefly, I represent the northeast part of the State through which a great many streams run. The south part of my district is bounded generally by the Kansas or Kausus Rivers.

At Topeka, the capital of the State, from 20,000 to 25,000 people have been evacuated, and it is completely under water, the north area, because of the greatest flood that has ever occurred.

West of Topeka is Manhattan, the home of the Kansas State College, and the business section of Manhattan is completely under water to a depth of 12 feet.

Those are the two largest towns, but all throughout the whole northeast part of the State there are flood conditions.

Pattawatomie County has lost a hundred bridges; Jefferson County a hundred or a hundred and twenty-five, and Jackson County 20. All those streams are in a flood stage. Many farm homes have been lost. Farther down the Kausus River, the small town of Perry has been under water two or three times.

Up above Manhattan is Marysville, which has been under water twice already this spring. It is a town of about four or five thousand. All through the whole northeast part of our State we have had flood conditions that have not been known to the memory of man. It is a serious, critical, and terrible flood condition.

Mr. CANNON. Thank you, Mr. Cole.

We will now hear from Mr. Smith of Kansas.

WITNESS

HON. WINT SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

Mr. SMITH. I would like to point out, Mr. Chairman, one significant fact: Judge Kerr asked about flood control. Here is a dam that was just dedicated at the first of June. Here [indicating] is another dam on the same stream. The Army engineers estimated that with those two dams there would never be any flooding of the Smoky Hill River.

Here [indicating] is the town of Salina, Kans., 26,000 people, on the Smoky Hill River below the two dams, and 8,000 people are homeless.

Mr. CANNON. Can you let us have the names of the dams?

Mr. SMITH. The Cedar Bluff Dam and the Kanopolis Dam.

The engineers estimated that these dams would hold back all of the floodwaters of any flood; yet those two dams are overflowing now, and Salina has the greatest flood in the history of the city. The rains fell between the lower dam and Salina, and now 8,000 people are homeless in Salina on the Smoky Hill River. Even though the Army engineers built their dams anticipating that they would hold back the runoff of all known rainfall, yet they are overflowing as a result of the present flood.

Mr. RABAUT. You bring that up to show the enormity of the rainfall?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, and the catastrophe to our State. I concur with what the rest of the members have said. All up and down the river there are floods, little towns and farms are completely inundated.

Mr. STEFAN. How high are the two dams the engineers said would hold back all the waters?

Mr. SMITH. Cedar Bluff is 250 feet above the bottom of the river, and it drains 8,000 square miles. Kanopolis is about 150 feet above the river bed.

Mr. STEFAN. Both are overflowing?

Mr. SMITH. Both are overflowing.

Mr. STEFAN. The engineers indicated they would hold back any known flood?

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. STEFAN. But it did not hold this one back?

Mr. SMITH. And these are flood-control dams, not reclamation dams.

Mr. SCRIVNER. I might point out that when we speak of floods in Kansas we speak of the June rises due to the melting of the snow. I can show you some of the weather reports which show that in some of these communities they had as much as 8 and 8½ inches in an hour or an hour and a half. Such rainfall is one of the things that has brought all this about. It has stopped raining in this area now, but the Weather Bureau reports are not optimistic. It is just one of those things. While we had a big flood in 1841 and another in 1881 and again in 1903, none could ever compare to the unprecedented situation that we have today.

Mr. STEFAN. I would like for the record to show that Mr. Curtis, of Nebraska, was present and is very much interested. He has been called away from the committee room.

Mr. CANNON. We will now hear Mr. Armstrong, of Missouri

WITNESS

HON. O. K. ARMSTRONG, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I appreciate this opportunity to say just this brief word with regard to how this unusual flood condition affects the Sixth District, which I represent. It starts in right below the Jackson County line and extends down opposite Fort Scott, or a little below, bordering on Kansas. From reports that I have just received, the north five counties of this district are seriously affected, that is, Cass County, Johnson County, Pettis County, Bates County, and Henry County.

On the 5th of July I was in the district and went with a number of citizens from these northern counties to inspect the Sedalia Air Base, which is in Johnson County, and which, it has just been announced, will be reactivated. At that time I was informed that rain had fallen very heavily every day for 3 weeks, and, as far as I know, it has fallen almost every day since. On the very day that I was there the rivers of Henry County had swollen to such an extent that large numbers of people were then isolated. Since that time I do not know how many, but increasing numbers of people, thousands of them, have been cut off by the swollen streams of this area and the backed-up waters that have come in now from the streams of Kansas.

Of course, I will deeply appreciate any action on the part of the committee that would give any relief for the citizens of this area.

Mr. CANNON. Thank you, Mr. Armstrong. We will now hear from Mr. Moulder.

WITNESS

HON. MORGAN M. MOULDER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Mr. MULTER. Of course, the flood conditions existing in Kansas have been aptly described here. The floodwaters are now flowing through Missouri. The catastrophe that has been described in Kansas is now going down the Missouri River, as you know.

My district starts at the western boundary of Jackson County and the eastern boundary of Cole County, and the Missouri River flows directly through the center, and from there on it goes through your district, Mr. Chairman. You are familiar with the conditions that exist there.

The Osage River is, of course, at the highest stage that has ever been known below the Bagwelldom and the Lake of the Ozarks. All of the floodwater that Mr. Scrivner described flowing down the Osage River goes into the Missouri. In addition to that, the Grand River, the Chariton River, and all of the tributaries on the Missouri in the State of Missouri are now at the highest flood stage ever known. I have received telegrams from Booneville and all of the towns up and down the Missouri River within my district describing the conditions that exist there. I do not have them here. It is the most devastating flood that has ever been known in the history of Missouri.

The question arises in my mind as to whether or not the figure mentioned here will be sufficient to take care of the situation in order to give adequate temporary emergency relief.

Mr. CANNON. The indications were that the cost would be considerably in excess of the amount recommended in the estimate. The idea is to provide the minimum amount at this time. This would start the program and if future funds are necessary they can be taken care of later.

Mr. STEFAN. As I understand Mr. Lawton, this \$15 million will be supplemented by the emergency funds of the other agencies?

Mr. LAWTON. Yes.

Mr. STEFAN. There will be more available than \$15 million?

Mr. CANNON. We will now hear from Mr. Carnahan of Missouri.

WITNESS

**HON. A. S. J. CARNAHAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM
THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Chairman, I will not take much time of the committee. I certainly want to associate myself with the other Members from Kansas and Missouri, in complimenting you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the committee, for your prompt action to relieve as much of this suffering, distress and destruction as possible. It is gratifying to know that the relief agencies and the local people are making an unusual effort to take care of the situation, but of course the proportion of the disaster will overwhelm them, and they must have relief from other sources. It is certainly hoped that the long-range planning in the future will attempt to make less likely disasters of this type.

Mr. CANNON. We thank you, Mr. Carnahan.

Mr. CANNON. We should be glad to hear Mr. Irving at this time.

WITNESS

**HON. LEONARD IRVING, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM
THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Mr. IRVING. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to speak a word in behalf of my district and the other areas that are affected. I appreciate the attitude of the committee in taking such prompt action in this matter. Congressman Scrivner, of Kansas, has quite thoroughly described the condition both in Kansas City, Mo., and Kansas City, Kans. The portion that he described, in what is known as the West Bottoms industrial district, lies in Congressman Bolling's district, the Fifth District. The Fourth District, which I represent, takes in the eastern half of Kansas City and the city of Independence, Mo., and all of the county.

It is not as badly affected as the western side of Kansas City, Mo. However, I understand, that the water supply is about 50 percent affected and the people are boiling water for drinking. I also understand that the north Kansas City area, which Congressman Scrivner touched on briefly, which is in Mr. Welch's district, was ordered evacuated this morning.

In Kansas City there is an industrial district which lies on the south side of the Missouri River, known as the East Bottoms, of which a great portion is in my district. In this area are the grain elevators and the power plants, the electric light and the water plant, the round-houses and the freight yards of the Santa Fe, the Missouri Pacific, and the Chicago, Milwaukee Railroad. Here the water is about 15 feet deep. It is a terrible catastrophe.

It is much more serious than any picture that we can paint here with words, and I feel the same as Congressman Moulder, that the figure is not adequate but it is certainly a start in the right direction.

Mr. CANNON. Thank you, Mr. Irving.

Mr. CANNON. We should be glad to hear Mr. Jones of Missouri at this time.

WITNESS

HON. PAUL C. JONES, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Coming from a district which has probably suffered more from floods than any other section of Missouri, I think I can appreciate the problem that these gentlemen from Kansas and western Missouri face.

The fact of the matter is that more than a week ago the water was so high on the Mississippi at Cape Girardeau that train service was disrupted. There were no trains running from St. Louis to Cape Girardeau and the service that is ordinarily by train from St. Louis to Memphis has been operated by bus, from St. Louis to the cape, and then train service from Cape Girardeau to Memphis.

Of course, we have been trying for years to get some relief and some people heretofore have been unable to appreciate some of our problems down there. While I do not like to see any of these disasters, I think this will at least cause some of the Members of Congress to become more conscious of what a flood really is. We have been through it so often down there that we have more or less become accustomed to it. For instance, more than a week ago they were having flood sales in the stores at Cape Girardeau. The water had gotten into the stores and into the warehouses, and it was impossible to remove the merchandise.

I certainly appreciate the prompt action of this committee in meeting to take care of this emergency and in the action of Mr. Lawton of the Bureau of the Budget in coming up here, to see that we do get some money to take care of the situation at this time.

Thank you, sir.

Mr. CANNON. Thank you, Mr. Jones.

Mr. CANNON. We shall be happy to hear Mr. Short, of Missouri, at this time.

WITNESS

HON. DEWEY SHORT, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Mr. SHORT. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, though I can add little to the tragic news and strong pleas that have been given to you by other members, I am grateful for the opportunity of joining my colleagues in urging you to promptly pass this emergency relief measure.

Calamity has suddenly and violently struck the great Middle West—the bread basket of our Nation. Particularly have the States of Kansas and Missouri suffered the worst floods in their history. For several weeks torrential rains have fallen not only in those two States but in most of the Missouri Valley, sending all rivers out of their banks to inundate thousands upon thousands of acres of the richest farm lands in the United States.

Not only have entire crops of every kind been totally destroyed, but much livestock has been drowned and several human lives have been lost. Industry as well as agriculture has terribly suffered. Great

fires have followed in the wake of devastating floods, to add to the loss of property and human life. Bridges have been washed out, airports submerged, communication lines broken, and railroad tracks isolated. Thousands upon thousands of people have been driven from their homes and a state of emergency has been declared in Kansas City and other nearby towns.

Transportation is at a standstill at many points in Kansas and Missouri. This is not one catastrophe but a whole series of catastrophes, as unprecedented, angry rains have fallen over a vast area for the past several weeks. Packing plants, soap factories, grain elevators, flour mills, railroad yards and shops have been flooded and it is estimated that the total damage will run anywhere from \$500,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000. The water supply of the two Kansas Cities has been polluted and the great stockyards are under water.

Of course, Mr. Chairman, it will be impossible for our Government to repair all the damage done, but certainly Congress, which has been so generous in extending aid to foreign nations, can vote at least the small amount contained in this bill for food, clothing, and shelter for those people who have been driven from their homes and are in the greatest distress.

I am sure that every single Member of the Congress has the deepest pity and sympathy for these unfortunate people, and that he will be glad to cast his vote for this appropriation—inadequate as it might be. Certainly, any help given to these distressed people will be most welcome at this time.

Mr. CANNON. We shall be glad to hear Mr. Stigler, of Oklahoma, at this time.

WITNESS

HON. W. G. STIGLER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Mr. STIGLER. Mr. chairman and members of the committee: I am pleased to have this opportunity to appear before your committee and call your attention to the recent damage in Oklahoma by excessive floods. The damage is State-wide and at this time it is most difficult to estimate the amount in dollars and cents.

On my side of the State I had several telephone calls during the past week with reference to the damage done to valuable bottom land by the overflow of the Verdigris River. Some time ago Congress authorized the construction of the Oolagah Dam which would have prevented this overflow had it been built. So far, however, the Congress has refused to appropriate any money to start construction of this very important project. I also have been informed had it not been for the Fort Gibson Dam, which is almost complete, the Arkansas River would have overflowed and caused tremendous damage.

I am hoping, Mr. Chairman, that a sufficient amount of money is appropriated by your committee to take care of the emergencies in Oklahoma. From what I have read and heard about the great amount of damage done by the floods, I can think of no greater reason why Congress should appropriate sufficient money to begin construction of the dams now authorized in Oklahoma.

Mr. CANNON. We also have with us Mr. Albert of Oklahoma.

WITNESS

HON. CARL ALBERT, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Mr. ALBERT. Mr. Chairman, I desire to join with my colleague, Mr. Stigler, in the statement he has just made. I desire also to stress again the need for bank stabilization funds on the Arkansas. If this river gets out of control in Oklahoma this year, the loss will be far greater than the amount now needed to do the job.

Mr. CANNON. Unless there is some further statement, that concludes the hearing.

Mr. RABAUT. I should like to compliment the chairman on his prompt action in this matter. He has done it not only in this instance, but many times heretofore, for instance, in the recent disaster in the West, when so many cattle and lives were lost. He is to be commended for his alertness.

Mr. CANNON. We appreciate the cooperation of the committee and the Members of the House who have appeared on such short notice and at this inconvenient time. The committee will go into executive session.

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