

FLOODS NOW NATIONAL DISASTER

There are signs at last, as we go to Press, that the Fenland floods have passed the crisis. Working under almost impossible conditions repair gangs have closed the Earith gap. Through that fifty-yard break in the Great Ouse dike poured much of the water that inundated the Fen country in the ~~worst~~ ^{greatest} flood ever known, since it was drained three hundred years ago. Here, at its worst, is seen the desolate waste of waters under which are drowned Britain's crying need for a good harvest. Here, the national tragedy is seen as threatened ruin to scores upon scores of individual farmers. While the water was still covering their land to an incredible depth rescuers salvaged what they could. Precious corn, harvested with so much difficulty in last year's torrential summer, was saved wherever possible. There were places from which it could not be saved.

The loss in poultry, small by comparison, is nevertheless a great blow. At one ~~place~~ ^{place} a bull was rescued, after standing up to its neck in water for nearly five days.

Food had been taken to the animal; now an army Duck was ~~able~~ ^{happening} able to tow it away. Incidents like this were ~~happening~~ at many places in the hundred-square-miles of Fenland under water. Here, at any rate, one poor beast ~~was saved~~ ^{was saved} from ~~death~~ ^{drowning}.

FLOODS

To the Earith gap Northern Command sent a strong detachment of ~~the 7th Armoured Division and three thousand German prisoners~~ *troops 7 German prisoners.* In all, 4000 men were detailed for flood-relief between here and York. ~~Firemen worked with them.~~ Nine

Break in a dyke. amphibious tanks, Neptunes, were positioned to ~~fill up the gap.~~ *fill up to* The earlier attempt ~~to achieve that purpose~~

with ^a the Bailey Bridge had failed. ~~This time the emergency operation succeeded.~~ When all the tanks were in place the gangs worked all night to fill the spaces with sandbags, and all that time the waters of the Ouse were ~~pouring~~ *pouring* through. Not only is the autumn-sown corn ruined, it is doubtful if the land will bear any ~~serious~~ *crop at* crop this summer. The plight of farmers demands

national aid. It was at least one comfort to know that the first step was taken. Days of toil had ~~closed~~ *repaired* the Earith gap.