Remember: Dikes are safe at present. You will be warned if necessary. You will have time to leave. Don't get excited.

Thus read a bulletin to Vanport City residents from the Housing Authority of Portland on May 30, 1948. In spite of repeated assurances from the authorities, the Columbia River broke through the dike protecting the city on the soggy afternoon of Sunday, May 30, the same day the Housing Authority issued its reassuring bulletin. A 10-foot wall of water rushed in, and within two hours, the homes and possessions of many students and families, as well as the Extension Center buildings, were under several feet of water. Vanport City was destroyed, and the dreams of a permanent college appeared to be lost.