

Mr. MANION: What information has the minister on the other question regarding the circulars, and the seriousness of the situation referred to?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): The officials of the department are aware of the circulars having been issued, and all efforts of the department are directed towards the preservation of the forests. Everything that is done has that end in view.

Mr. MANION: Do the officials regard these circulars as exaggerating, or rather representing, the condition that actually exists?

Mr. CALDWELL: Before the minister answers, I may say that I know the writer of one of these circulars, and he is willing to back his theory with his own money. I refer to Mr. Frank J. Barnjum.

Mr. MANION: That is the man I refer to.

Mr. CALDWELL: He has offered cash prizes to individuals in the maritime provinces, and also in Quebec and Manitoba, for the best area of reforested land.

Mr. MANION: Does my hon. friend know of the serious statements that have been made in regard to the conditions that exist?

Mr. CALDWELL: I will come to that. This man has also offered prizes to individuals for any area of young spruce and fir trees, but especially spruce, planted to the satisfaction of the forestry officers. He is putting up his personal funds to carry on this work, so that he is quite earnest about it. With regard to the destruction of forests by the spruce bud moth, I am only too sorry to say that I know what has been said to be absolutely true. It is estimated that 60 per cent of the spruce in New Brunswick has been killed in the last three or four or five years by this moth. I am glad to know that the evil is diminishing, and like other pests it may suffer a natural extinction. Otherwise, I feel that any action the Government or private individuals may take in the way of reforestation will be of no avail unless something is done to combat the ravages of this insect. I do not know whether the federal department has taken any action in this matter in the nature of research work. I asked the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Motherwell), one evening when his estimates were before the House, what was being done, and he replied that they were

using the aerial service to locate the killed areas so that they might direct the lumbermen just where to cut, in order to save the timber before it was too far gone. If the timber is cut within one or two years of its being affected it is still good, but after three or four years it is utterly useless, either as lumber or pulp. I thought at the time, although I did not express the opinion, that it is rather futile merely to give locations to the lumbermen. Having lumbered somewhat myself, I know that every lumberman has his own cruisers on the various grounds to determine where to cut, and where and to what extent there has been any damage. I would rather see a department of the federal government devote its money and energy to finding, if possible, a remedy for this evil, because some means ought to be found of combating the ravages of these insects. I do not know whether the minister's department has any data on the subject, but he can readily realize what a serious menace these insects are. Any large area of forest infected by flies, for instance, which migrate from one locality to another, is soon in danger of destruction. These flies attack the very tops of the trees, which have the appearance of having been singed by fire, and after a while the injury gradually works down until the trees are entirely destroyed. Perhaps the minister may have some information as to what research work, if any, has been done to ascertain the extent of the activities of those provinces that own their timber. I understood from the Minister of Agriculture that his department was carrying on some such work. Work of this kind, I think, should be undertaken by one department of the Government. The Department of Agriculture does something, while the Interior Department carries on independent activities, and thus there is likely to be overlapping. This is a serious question and the minister might say what the policy of the Government is.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): The work is carried out in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, whose entomologists make a study of insect pests. In British Columbia, where the bark beetle seems to be ravaging the forests, work is being done in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, the provincial authorities, and the Forestry branch, towards the extermination of all insects. I agree with the hon. member that overlapping should be avoided as far as possible, and that one department should un-