

service for the present year do not contemplate very much work of this kind. So far as I can gather, those estimates are rather directed towards military service in connection with the air service of Canada. Essentially, it is a military force, and probably, under present day conditions, no military force can exist or should be allowed to exist without a suitable air force. But there is the other side to the question; there is the civil aviation side and that is the side which should appeal to the House, perhaps more than the military side. Something should be in the Estimates to preserve that force for the purpose of looking after our forests, for the discovering of fire and for preserving a large amount of this country's wealth which, at any time, may be devoured by flame.

Mr. CALDWELL: Might I suggest to the minister a method of fire detection that has been used in the maritime provinces for the last two or three years? It is possible it may not apply so readily to the prairie provinces. The New Brunswick government has sought out the highest mountains in that province; it has erected on them towers or shelters for the look-out men who are stationed there, and these shelters are connected by field telephones with headquarters or with the local telephone line, so that the men can get connection with headquarters. In this way they are able to detect fire at a great distance because, from the high peaks, one is able to get a survey of a large stretch of territory. This method of fire detection is very inexpensive; whereas the air service for fire protection, while it is very efficient, is very expensive. Our provincial government uses the aerial method as well, but in a very limited degree, on account of the fact that look-outs, as they are called, have been established pretty generally throughout the province on those high mountains. I just call this to the attention of the minister, because I feel, in this way, a small expenditure gives great results.

Mr. MANION: Does the minister happen to have under his hand at the moment the percentage of timber and of pulpwood in the Dominion which is under the control of the Dominion government and the percentage which is under the control of the provincial governments.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I have not the figures with me, but I think I can get them.

[Mr. Guthrie.]

Mr. MANION: The reason I asked the question is that I should like to ask another question bearing upon this matter. I suppose the minister has been receiving copies of circulars which have been distributed by various people who are deeply interested in the forests of this country. In some of the circulars sent out by men who, one would conclude, are very well posted on the question, serious statements are made as to the condition of the forests of this country. As the hon. member for Centre Vancouver (Mr. Stevens) has said, if the statement in regard to the rapid depletion of our forests can be sustained, the condition is certainly a serious one for this country. In view of those statements, is the minister's department looking into this question and taking into consideration the idea of dealing with those statements, and, if they are correct, of bringing about legislation to carry out the suggestions put forward in those circulars?

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Is it intended to discontinue the aerial patrol service in southern Alberta, or to do away with the High River station?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): That does not come under the control of the Department of the Interior, but I can say frankly that the department will be glad to avail itself of the services of that patrol. No doubt that matter will come up for discussion when the estimates for that particular service are being considered.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I understood that this matter was under the Department of the Interior, and I also understood that the minister had secured some permanent buildings in High River for this service.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): It was never under the control of the Interior Department but under the Air Board, up to last year at least.

Mr. MEIGHEN: And Dr. Deville, of the department, was on the Air Board.

Mr. MANION: Has the minister any information on the question I asked a moment ago?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Fifteen per cent of the total area is under the control of the federal government, and that area is found in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.