

**Public Projects.**—This Branch has been working in close harmony with the Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries, Health and Welfare, Justice, Mines and Resources, National Defence (Navy), National Defence (Army), National Defence (Air), Public Works, Transport (including Air Services), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the National Harbours Board. In the conferences held, each construction project provided for by the various Departmental programs for the year 1946-47 was screened as to urgency and as to whether such project, if put into execution, would require appreciable quantities of materials or labour that should be devoted to the implementation of the housing program. Information as to the volume of potential reserve projects is being assembled.

**The Resources Development Branch.**—This Branch works closely with the Public Projects Branch in screening Departmental projects that have a relation to the development of natural resources.

An important activity being undertaken by the Department of Reconstruction and Supply, is the operation of the Forest Insect Control Board, which works under the Resources Development Branch. This Board was set up to fight the spruce budworm plague which has already devastated some 22,000 square miles of forest and is known to be present in approximately one-third of the accessible productive forest area of Canada. The Board is comprised of representatives from the provinces most seriously affected by the insect epidemic and is preparing a comprehensive program and endeavouring to have as much as possible of the actual work done by permanent Government Departments, both Dominion and provincial (see p. 263, Chapter IX). The present epidemic, unless controlled, may result in the loss of many years' supply of raw material for paper products, representing an export value of billions of dollars. As part of this fight, research scientists are engaged and laboratory facilities have been made available.

**Research and Development.**—One of the main functions of the Research and Development Branch is the dissemination of technical information to Canadian industry and manufacturing. A number of regional representatives are maintained throughout the country who are in personal contact with the industrial life of their several districts. Many established industries are being given assistance of a technical nature to improve the quality of their product, and to increase their rate of productivity. Close liaison by the Technical Information Service is maintained with the numerous Government and university research laboratories, and in many cases with private research laboratories. The technical officers on the Ottawa staff, other than those on loan to the Technical Information Service, are primarily concerned with the technical aspects of building research.

**The Depreciation Committee.**—Financial assistance is also made available indirectly to manufacturing concerns through the operation of the Special Depreciation Committee of the Department. Under an Order in Council (P.C. 8640, Nov. 10, 1944), the Minister of National Revenue may allow depreciation at not more than double the rates normally allowed in respect of plant or equipment built or acquired if the taxpayer is, in the opinion of the Minister, making a new investment by building or acquiring the plant or equipment. This is applicable to industries planning post-war expansion, conversion, or modernization, to enable them to change over as soon as possible from a wartime to a peacetime economy. The Committee receives from industry and manufacturers applications on prescribed forms, passes upon their merits and, if approved, the advocacy is then forwarded