ANNUAL REPORT

195

BUREAU OF INSECT PEST CONTROL

The opening month of our fiscal year is the Bureau's usual time for starting the defoliation survey. This activity was already in progress when hurricanes Carol and Edna struck. All of our personnel and equipment were immediately placed on emergency basis, and assisted several towns immediately on road clearance. Roads to fire towers were opened, and later our activities were moved to Willowdale State Forest where a valuable pine stand had suffered severe damage.

On return to the Dutch elm disease control program the normal procedure was followed for several months and then increased requests for assistance became noticeable. Largely due to hurricane results the laboratory reports of confirmation gave an indication that the disease had been scattered to much larger areas. Requests for town assistance for the balance of the year have gained, both in quantity and areas involved. At the close of the year we find that elm condemnations have increased three-fold, even though we know that many towns failed to scout their towns. So, even with the known increase the whole story is not known at this writing. A very conservative estimate would indicate that five times as many elms contracted the disease in 1955 as in 1954. For information purposes only this Bureau removed a total of 737 elms in a little over six months with two crews, each consisting of a foreman and three laborers.

As soon as statewide defoliation records were tabulated a recommendation was submitted for the 1955 Regional Aerial Spray program. The area included the northern portion of Norfolk County, a portion of Middlesex County and the eastern half of Worcester County - a total of 66 adjoining towns, plus a separate, but heavily infested area in Lynnfield and Peabody. With the

inclusion of a southern Berkshire plot of 15 towns a Regional project totalling 83 towns was approved and the project set up for planning. A more detailed report of two spray projects is attached. The spraying for Gypsy Moth
control was completed a week earlier than any of our previous projects and
we were able to have all equipment back at Headquarters checked, repaired,
cleaned and stored ahead of schedule. It was our intention to resume defoliation work but within 30 days we were assigned to an emergency aerial spraying of some 200,000 acres in Barnstable County for the control of Pine Looper.
A separate resume of this activity is also attached.