

Economics

Dalton Camp, the New Brunswicker who once led the Progressive Conservative Party's national association and who is now the prolific author of books, newspaper columns and magazine pieces, says New Brunswick and the other Atlantic Provinces continue to be tails on the national economic kite. "We get yesterday's Toronto weather today," he says, and he notes that the Atlantic Provinces occupy the bottom four rungs of the national income ladder.

Trees

Among New Brunswick's problems, the spruce budworm nibbling away at the basic pulp and paper industries may be the most formidable. Extensive and expensive efforts to eliminate it have failed. The moth lays its eggs in clusters in mid-summer and after a metamorphosis and a winter's rest, the eggs emerge as leaf-cutting caterpillars in the spring. Both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are afflicted and both began fighting the pest with DDT sprays. When environmentalists complained of the toxic results, Nova Scotia stopped all spraying and New Brunswick switched sprays. Nova Scotia hopes that the budworm will die out after it has eaten the available wood in a limited area, a passive method that has worked in the past.

Despite the worm there are still plenty of trees in New Brunswick—eighty-eight per cent of the province is covered by them and 15 1/2 million acres are productive forests—but the industry is not booming. The Conference Board in Canada, a non-profit organization which attempts annual economic forecasts, believes that logging and the associated construction industry will decline in the 1980s.

Mining

Another major New Brunswick industry, mining, is looking up. It became a significant part of the economy rather recently: in the 1950s students from the University of New Brunswick analyzed sulphur deposits in the Bathurst area and found in addition to the iron and sulphur anticipated, substantial amounts of zinc, lead, copper and silver. Within a year 50,000 mining claims were filed. After the initial excitement, things calmed down and two major mines were developed, Brunswick Mining and Smelting on the Nepisiquit River, and Heath Steel to the southwest. Together they produce nearly all the base metals as well as silver, with zinc the most valuable commercially. In the 1970s deposits of antimony, an extremely rare and valuable metal, were discovered. Zinc production



Lobsters make a substantial contribution to the economy of the Maritimes.



Louis Robichaud



Richard Hatfield



New Brunswick is covered with trees, but the market for forestry products is expected to decline in coming years.