

partisanship. The Atlantic regional veterinary college is such an issue. It would not be just an education facility but is a proposal for a major ingredient in the economic infrastructure of the Atlantic region. It would especially complement fisheries and agriculture, but it would have multiplier effects right across the board. As such there is a lot to be said for it.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), when he was a member of an earlier cabinet, took steps to bring the college into existence. I would like to pay tribute to the leadership role he has played and continues to play in that connection. Because this is a non-partisan issue I urge all members—regardless of politics, regardless of party, and regardless of where they sit—to support the motion and to do so vigorously.

● (1630)

[Translation]

Mr. Marcel Ostiguy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would very briefly like to respond to the questions raised by my hon. colleague on the other side, the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. McMillan), concerning the establishment of a fourth veterinary college in Canada, to be located in the Atlantic provinces.

That college would, of course, be located in the Atlantic provinces and would aim its courses of study on preventive animal and marine health as well as fish hatcheries. It could of course extend preventive medicine to all other forms of agricultural production. This issue is of great interest to the government at present, Mr. Speaker, and in particular to the Department of Agriculture, and has been so for several years, since Agriculture Canada is quite aware of the situation which exists at present in the maritimes. Everybody can appreciate the importance of having enough veterinarians to satisfy the needs of the agricultural sectors in these areas and to ensure the training which may be necessary.

Agriculture Canada employs a good many veterinarians who have always had an important role to play in developing Canadian agriculture, especially in the fields of livestock and poultry production. Veterinary medicine will also have a role to play in developing fish hatcheries, a field which up until now was in the hands of biologists. But first of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to review briefly the situation as to the possibility of establishing a fourth veterinary college in the maritimes.

As mentioned by the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. McMillan) a national survey was made in 1970 and 1971 of manpower resources in the field of veterinary medicine and techniques which revealed a general shortage of veterinarians across Canada. The committee, therefore, recommended an increase in the number of annual inscriptions at Canadian veterinary colleges. Two years later, cabinet agreed to negotiate an increase in the number of veterinary colleges by accepting, in principle, the setting up of a fourth college. In 1974, the federal government signed agreements with the provincial

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governments concerned accepting, in principle, to finance up to 50 per cent of the costs incurred to expand the three existing colleges, namely, those of Guelph, Saint-Hyacinthe and Saskatoon. On the other hand, in 1975, the governments of the maritime provinces, as pointed out by my colleague, the hon. member for Hillsborough, asked Dr. Howell, dean of the veterinary college of Ontario, to conduct a study on the needs of their area and the possibility of establishing there a fourth veterinary college.

At the time, Agriculture Canada paid half the cost of the studies. In his report, Dr. Howell recommends the creation of a school of preventive animal and marine health at the Prince Edward Island University located at Charlottetown. Later on, the council of ministers of the maritime provinces studied Dr. Howell's recommendations and set up a committee to look into the situation further. By that time, the P.E.I. government had contributed \$200,000 to finance the study. Throughout that period, it had opposed the recommendation to set up the veterinary college in Charlottetown. It wanted the college built in Truro.

Besides, it was on January 28, 1980, that the matter was withdrawn from the agenda of the council of maritime premiers because Premier MacLean thought Prince Edward Island could not afford the financial cost of the project. Mr. Speaker, how is the study and planning for the establishment of that fourth college progressing? The development program of the Ontario veterinary college is completed while the Saint-Hyacinthe school of veterinary medicine in the riding I have the honour to represent in the House, expansion and development work is moving very nicely. At the Saskatoon veterinary college the development or expansion project is still at the planning stage.

So I think that with the expansion of actual colleges, until this fourth college is established, it will be possible to meet the demand for veterinary education better. It must also be pointed out that every year the Guelph college reserves a minimum of six places for English-speaking students from the maritime provinces. As far as the Saint-Hyacinthe veterinary college is concerned, the University of Montreal has reached an agreement with the New Brunswick education department to take at least—and that is not many—two students a year from that province. As you can see, students from the maritime provinces are not totally devoid of opportunities of registering in veterinary medicine colleges. They are not totally deprived, Mr. Speaker, but I am convinced—and I believe my colleagues in the maritime provinces know it quite well—that there are a lot more young people in 1980, in this coming decade, interested in going into that field of education.

Mr. Speaker, recently we learned that new regulations on brucellosis in the United States had been amended and that that amendment to the amendments to those same regulations helped Canadian exports of livestock to the States. And the new set of regulations introduced by the Department of