

this training centre would be readily accessible to the university students at the University of Moncton who are interested in agriculture and to those who intend to take up agronomy.

The Senate Committee on Agriculture however, understood the need for French-speaking farmers in New Brunswick to have access to the services of agronomists of their own culture in order to establish a freer and more complete relation with them.

For that reason, after the Moncton hearings the committee convened a special meeting here in Ottawa on December 4, 1973, attended by representatives of the University of Moncton, Laval University and the College of Agriculture of Nova Scotia, for the purpose of studying the question of agricultural science teaching in the Maritimes, and particularly in the French-speaking regions of New Brunswick.

Let us note that the results of that meeting were most satisfactory since an agreement was made later on between the representatives of Laval University, namely, Dean Victorin Lavoie of the Faculté des sciences de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation, and Registrar Yves Chartier, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, the representative of the University of Moncton, Dean Roland Cloutier of the Department of Sciences. Under this agreement, about twenty students of the University of Moncton, recipients of bursaries from the Secretary of State, were able to register for agronomy courses at Laval as early as September 1974. Their agronomist studies once completed, upon their return to the farming areas of New Brunswick, they can then render indispensable services by becoming the life and soul of their milieus. Each year other students will join the group already in the field, thus ensuring the continued training of Francophone agronomists to carry on in New Brunswick.

At that meeting of December 4, 1974, the committee also had the privilege of very pertinent information from Dr. H. F. McRae, head of the Nova Scotia College of Agriculture. Allow me to quote you what Dr. McRae said:

It might be of interest to note that of all the students who took our technical courses in 1973, 33 per cent went to work on farms as managers or to perform similar tasks. Since the inception of the program, that is surely the highest percentage of people who went back to live and work on the farm.

This year, 1973, at the Nova Scotia College of Agriculture, there have never been more registrations. We have the highest number of students any institution has ever welcomed, in addition to which of those 400 or so students, 104 are women.

On the same topic, this is what Mr. Louis-Philippe Albert, of the Economic Policy Division of the premier's office in Fredericton, had to say:

It would also be profitable for New Brunswick to have a team of professors of New Brunswick, of professors of agronomy, of thinkers who are above politics and above the present circumstances who could analyze problems which arise all the way from the farm to the marketplace and make studies such as universities can undertake and such as those being carried out in Truro.

Having discussed with some of my colleagues of Nova Scotia—

Mr. Albert went on to say.

I understood that they could do nothing without this institution, without this group of professors of agronomy in Truro. We have none in New Brunswick. All this is a little outside the subject matter but it is nonetheless part of the problem.

Moreover, the best contribution the Department of Agriculture of New Brunswick can make to the establishment of this agricultural leadership which is so necessary in French-speaking agricultural circles of New Brunswick is to promote agricultural training at both the scientific and the technological level. The federal Department of Agriculture, through Agriculture Canada, in Fredericton, could also play a more decisive part in the new efforts which are being made to restore the agricultural industry in these areas.

For reasons that farmers do not fully understand, it seems that this institution is the one which often is the most hesitant to face the vital problems involved. "It is not within the functions of this institution to deal too much with the release of agricultural figures at the local level, but rather to deal with research", the officials of this institution like to repeat every time they are asked to take a position in this respect. This negative attitude from the officials of this institution is deeply disappointing. Precisely because of its particular resources available—high expertise and most modern facilities—Agriculture Canada in Fredericton, better than anyone else, can play there a prominent part. What is more urgent, incidentally, in the interest of agriculture in Canada, and especially in the province of New Brunswick, than looking for a solution to this alarming situation prevailing in New Brunswick where 40 per cent of the arable land is in serious jeopardy of losing all its potential for agricultural production?

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Unless ways are found to check land abandonment in the north and in the east of the province especially, agriculture will keep declining in those areas.

Those who continue to believe that farming can still become viable in economic terms in that area are very much concerned with this situation. As recently as January 22, 1976, the *Evangeline*, the Acadian daily newspaper, said, following the announcement of a community improvement project in the northeastern part of New Brunswick:

The original aspect of this document is that it emphasizes the development of the area while respecting its traditional vocation, namely rural life. The report stresses, and rightly so, that the northeast is particularly rich because of its natural resources, such as fishing, forestry, agriculture and mining, but those resources are often poorly exploited. For years these important sectors of the economy were overlooked while more emphasis was being placed on industry. That is no longer good enough.

The Acadian people are quite attached to their homestead and hang on to it because it is the only place where they really feel at home.