

PREFACE

The following report is the conclusion of a study made by the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture on the present situation and the opportunities facing agriculture in Kent County, New Brunswick. The study was launched in Moncton in June, 1973, in the form of a public inquiry where for three days the committee listened to the trials and grievances of the farmers of Kent and the views of other interested parties.

The concluding report has not been written for government agencies: it has been written for the people of Kent County to whom we are so indebted for their support.

"It is these same people and their descendants who have been living in Kent County for nearly 200 years. The Acadians are the descendants of the first immigrants who came to this county at the birth of the colony. The first Acadian parishes of Kent County, such as Grande Digue, Cocagne, Bouctouche, St. Louis and Richibucto Village received their first settlers well before 1800.

The Acadians were ably supported by their English-speaking compatriots in their efforts to open and develop the area. The villages of Rexton and Richibucto saw the first English-speaking citizens to settle in the central part of the area. These two villages also were founded nearly 200 years ago.

These Canadian citizens of different origins collaborated wholeheartedly because they all felt in their own hearts they were thus serving their country through the only means available to them, namely breaking and cultivating the land which enabled them to feed their own children and the other citizens. And it is this common heritage, so difficult in the making, that people would give back to the forest without any further consideration, forcing the rightful owners of the land consequently to give up an equity that quite often has only come about through nearly two centuries of hard work. That must not be".¹

It is to these people, the people of Kent, that this report is dedicated.

¹ Extract of a speech made by Senator Hervé J. Michaud in the Senate, on February 2, 1971.