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NEW ENGLAND
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PROCEEDINGS
1968



UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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1968 ANNUAL MEETING

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

JUNE 17, 18, 19, 1968

ECONOMICS COUNCIL EYES RURAL TRENDS

by

Robert Matorin
Foster's Daily Democrat
June 18, 1968

"Rural New England is in transition," Robert M. Gidez, former executive secretary of the New England Regional Commission at the University of New Hampshire said here last night. "Our concern is now a total development strategy."

Gidez was featured speaker at the opening session of the annual meeting of the New England Agricultural Economics Council now in session at the University.

About 100 professional workers in agricultural, economics, program administration, and related social sciences are participating in the three-day conference.

The six-state area, according to Gidez, has always been more highly urbanized than the country as a whole. In northern New England, hardly more than one-tenth of the rural population is engaged in agriculture.

The amount of land devoted to farming in the region has declined steadily, dropping more than 60 percent from 1960-67, while the number of people in non-agricultural work is growing.

"The agricultural base is declining," he said, "and agricultural employment with it." Jobs, transportation, markets, education, and health services must be brought to New England in such a way as to keep the rural values.

The dilemma, he continued, is to bring urban services without adding urban problems.

To accomplish this, Gidez and session observers Dr. Jean Wyckoff, of the University of Massachusetts, and Professor William Henry of UNH, agreed an all-encompassing view is needed.

"We've dropped the people out of our rural development projects," Wyckoff said. "We must use an inter-disciplinary approach to the total problems of today."

Among the conference events scheduled for today, W. C. Libby, acting president of the University of Maine, and member of the President's Commission on Poverty, will speak on "The People Left Behind," at 3:20 p.m., Murkland Hall.