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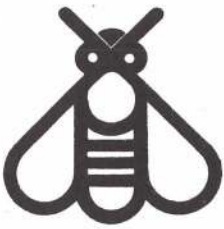
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THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

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In this issue. . .

. . . we have a close look at the action at the 1977 NBA conference, with full reports of conference addresses and discussions on the many remits. However, that's not all. MAF's honey grader reports on his many experiences in the job; we have another of our popular recipe features; there's copious beginners' notes and lots of news items. Next issue we promise a consolidated index. Have a happy spring!

Editorial

Reggae Poole and Joe "Fingers" Ward

THERE ARE some problems apparent at the annual industry conference. They are not problems which are a necessary result of the conference system, but they will have to be remedied if the system is to work to best advantage.

The most significant problem lies in the manner in which remits are presented and then voted on.

This year, South Canterbury branch delegates were gently reprimanded by the president and many delegates when they presented a number of provocative remits which were not spoken to by the branch delegates. Some of these made allegations of misconduct against farmers and MAF staff members. This remit was not backed by any substantial evidence and there were no delegates from the branch present who would argue in support of the allegations made.

While no-one would wish to stifle debate at a democratic gathering, there is an obligation for delegates to put forward well-researched remits, backed by cogent arguments.

However, it could be said in South Canterbury's favour that its delegates were wise enough to later withdraw branch support from those of their remits which were riddled with attacking fire from other delegates. Not so some branches, which rigidly stuck to their branch's riding instructions long after the tide of debate and logic had swamped their stand.

Rather than giving their delegates strict voting instructions, branches should arm them with principles they don't want departed from. Branches which put forward remits, or which strenuously oppose certain remits from other

branches, should at least go to the trouble of making a phone call or two to check the facts of their case out.

It is probable that if branch delegates or officers did a little more research than was evident at the 1977 conference, there would be fewer remits on the order paper. That would mean less time spent in the conference hall, more time to spend on important remits and better decisions.

Perhaps it would be helpful if there was an executive member in attendance at each branch meeting.

The time-consuming nature of the conference is also of concern to some. It would be surprising if some delegates didn't return home from Dunedin this year asking whether much time wasn't wasted. Are mayoral addresses relevant? Is a conference prayer relevant? Or perhaps these are worthy traditions which should be retained and the emphasis placed on making sure that only well-researched remits get onto the order paper.

Then there are the social occasions. If I was in Hawkes Bay's shoes I would be hard pushed to think of a way to out-socialise the southern Scots. Who can compare with the incredible Joe "Fingers" Ward on the piano and "Reggae" Poole as lead singer at 2 a.m. at the Dunedin social?

After all, it's probably the social occasions which remain longest in everyone's mind. That's where ideas are formulated, old enmities destroyed, friendships created and problems solved. See you in Hawkes Bay next year.



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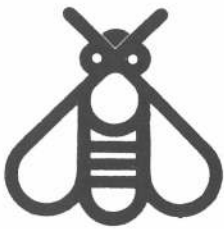
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**KING
BEE**

Green light for booklet

The Agricultural Press Company, represented by Trevor Walton, editor of the "NZ Beekeeper", has been given the go-ahead by the NBA executive to proceed with the production of a better illustrated and typeset version of the "Nectar and Pollen Sources of New Zealand" handbook which was originally compiled by Mr R.S. Walsh, formerly of the NZ Department of Agriculture, Auckland. The reprint will be available sometime in the New Year.

Concern at MAF vacancy

The NBA executive has expressed its concern to the director-general of agriculture that the position of chief advisory officer (apiculture) has taken so long to fill. Although the previous superintendent of beekeeping retired last year, public service appeals have delayed the formal appointment of the designated chief advisory officer, Vince Cooke, for many months. At the time of going to press, no date for the appeal against Mr Cooke's appointment had been lodged. Until the appeal has been ruled on, there will be no permanent appointment stationed in Wellington.

Auckland winds up

The vice-president of the NBA, Michael Stuckey, has been directed by his executive to take all necessary steps to wind up the Auckland branch of the association, which despite a large membership, has been unable to raise a quorum at any of its recent meetings. The assets of the branch will be turned over to the national association.

Back door prices

A quick run around of beekeepers at the conference indicates that honey in customer containers is selling at the honey house for between \$2.75 and \$2.90 a 2kg tin. The lower price seems to apply in more isolated districts — the higher price where honey houses are located in built-up areas or on main thoroughfares.

Private bulk exports

The NBA executive is to write to the HMA asking them what measures they are taking to implement conference remits from 1976 and 1977, asking for private exports of bulk honey.

Queen export incentives

The NBA executive has consulted with Mr Gavin, a major queen bee exporter, before putting a case to the minister of trade and industry asking for an extension of the export incentive scheme to cover the export of queen bees.

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Quotable quote:

"Conferences are interesting, but it takes a heck of a lot of backing and filling to get anywhere." — Marion Ward, at 1977 N.B.A. Conference.

Few reserves

With domestic honey prices held to an unrealistically low level by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, it appears there will be no money going into industry reserves despite record prices for our produce overseas. So far this exporting season, the average HMA export realisation has been 83.61c a kg, while local sales have been held at 61.15c kg. This disparity has dragged the average return for HMA honey down to 70.28c a kg.

Each increase of 1c a kg in the domestic honey price would direct an additional \$50,000 into industry pockets and reserves.

In order to rectify this anomaly, two members of the NBA executive and two members of HMA board have worked on a submission to be presented to the minister of trade and industry.

Wool board consulted

The Wool Board has been consulted by the NBA executive to get their comment on the operation of individual growers stabilisation accounts in the wool industry. It was the wish of the 1977 conference that similar accounts should operate in the honey industry.

More grading info

Following a 1977 conference request that more information be shown on honey grade certificates, the HMA has been approached by the NBA for early implementation of the change.

Herbicide controls

1977 NBA conference concern about the effect of herbicides and other agricultural chemicals on honey and other hive products has been directed by the NBA to the Agricultural Chemical Board for research and comment. The board has also been asked to ensure that chemicals are better labelled to indicate their danger to bees.

Why no sugar beet?

The minister of trade and industry has been asked by the NBA executive to explain the government's decision not to proceed with an investigation of the potential for a sugar beet industry in New Zealand. Many South Island beekeepers are concerned that a source of cheaper sugar for winter feeding of hives has been lost as a result of the decision.

Forest seminar representation

Branches of the NBA are to be informed of the dates of Forest Utilisation Seminars as soon as they can be obtained by the executive. The seminars, which are being held from time to time throughout the country, would probably welcome a contribution from beekeepers — a group of forest users who are usually disregarded in most forest utilisation equations.

New man on executive

Fortyone per cent of eligible beekeepers exercised their democratic prerogative mid-winter and elected Mr K. McC. Herron to an extraordinary vacancy on the executive of the National Beekeepers' Association. The vacancy resulted from the resignation of Mr Gavin McKenzie who is now stationed in Papua-New Guinea working on an aid project.

Other candidates elected were former president, Ivan Dickinson, president Percy Berry, and vice-president Michael Stuckey. While Mr Herron and Mr Dickinson were elected unopposed in the South Island, Mr Berry and Mr Stuckey survived a challenge in the North Island from Mr G. Martin.

Votes were as follows:

P. Berry	3820
G. Martin	1712
M. Stuckey	3290

According to Mr G.A. Beard, the election returning officer, only 345 of the 833 eligible voters exercised their right to vote. Of these, seven made informal votes.

Hive levy to NBA

The associate minister of agriculture has been informed of the NBA conference decision that the hive levy should be collected by the association and not the HMA in the future. The minister has apparently kept a space open in the government's legislative programme for the necessary amendment to be made.

American loan scheme investigation

The NBA executive is currently evaluating the worth of the USDA CCC loan scheme. The scheme is seen as a possible alternative system of financing the marketing of NZ honey which could be attractive to beekeepers disenchanted with the Honey Marketing Authority system.

Wasp work

The results of research into wasp behaviour are to be investigated by the NBA executive. It is concerned that DSIR and MAF research in this area may have petered out, or that there may be unpublished results awaiting implementation by beekeepers and others.

Planting trees for bees

The minister of the environment and the ministers for forestry and agriculture have been approached by the NBA executive to determine whether they are willing to introduce an incentive scheme to encourage people to plant trees and shrubs which supply nectar and pollen for bees. The ministers have been told that rural weed spraying programmes, often supported by government subsidy, have destroyed many nectar and pollen sources in recent years. The value of exported bee products to the economy has also been emphasised.

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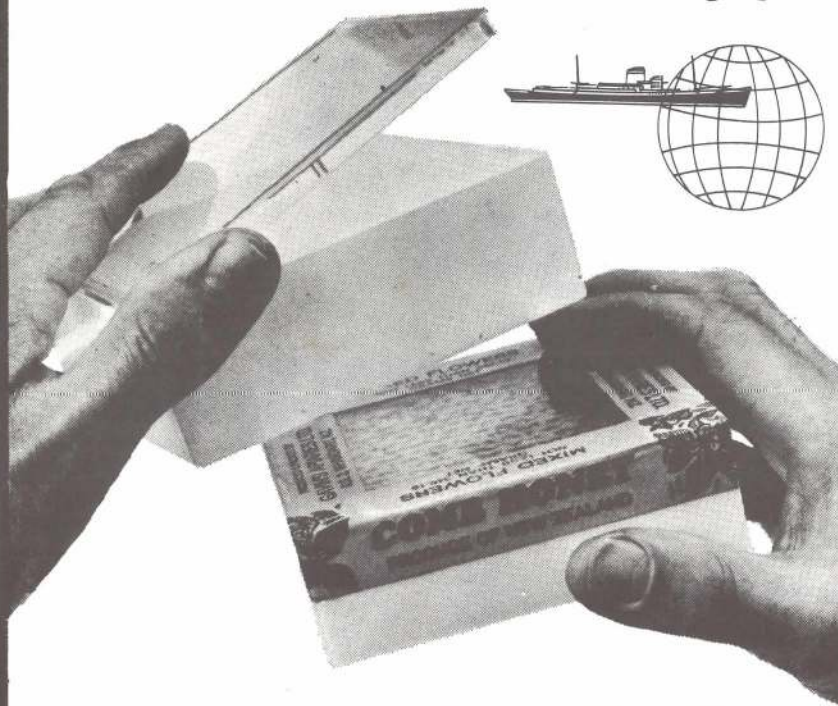


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OBITUARY

Wilfrid James Lennon

THE DEATH of "Wilf" Lennon on August 6 removes a personality well known to an earlier generation of beekeepers. Operating as a commercial honey producer at Omakau in Central Otago, Wilf took an active part in beekeeping affairs, served for a time as dominion vice-president and was editor of "The New Zealand Beekeeper" from 1942 until 1948. In the latter position his enterprising and crusading spirit came through in his forthright editorial style. He was also author of the booklet "Bees in their Bonnets", a history of the early years of beekeeping in Otago and Southland.

In 1951 the Lennons moved to Hawkes Bay for family reasons and after working for a time in the Valuation Department, Wilf was appointed in 1957 to the

position of superintendent-secretary of the Presbyterian Social Service Association in that area. During the next fifteen years, until his retirement in 1972, he was one of the foremost figures in community and social welfare work in Hawkes Bay and further afield.

In his retirement Wilf continued to take an active part in community affairs with a special interest in Birthright. In 1974 he was named "Citizen of the year" by the Havelock North Rotary Club.

Wilf is survived by his wife and his daughter Sally, both of whom gave him loyal support in all his work. He will be remembered by a very wide circle of friends and colleagues.

John McFadzien,
Havelock North

White Queens bought out by Gavins

THE QUEEN breeding business of Mr F.D. White of Kamo, Whangarei, has been purchased by Gavins Apiaries Ltd, a large commercial beekeeping firm situated 20 miles away, at Titoki.

According to the managing director of Gavins Apiaries, Mr Terry Gavin, the queen breeding business will continue to operate on the same sites used by Mr White and will be named Whiteline Queens. It will be kept quite separate from Gavin's honey producing business.

Mr White will continue to oversee the business and Mr Don Gibbons, formerly of Foxton, will be the manager.

"We have decided the White name should remain associated with the venture," Mr Gavin told the NZ Beekeeper, "in honour of Mr White who has produced large numbers of quality queens for the industry for almost 30 years. To Mr White, the industry owes much."

Mr White also wishes to thank his many customers for their patronage over the years and assures them of his continued interest in their welfare.

"Whiteline Queens offers this industry a continued and we hope, increasing supply of quality queens," said Mr Gavin. "And we undertake to give the best possible service."



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The original NBA badge, thought to have been first struck in the early 1920s, has been re-struck by the Otago Branch of the NBA, to commemorate the holding of the 1977 conference in Dunedin.

Although some copies were sold at the conference, a breakdown in the manufacturers' machinery prevented more than a few fortunate beekeepers from obtaining one.

A beautiful example of the badge-makers art, the NBA badge is now widely recognised as the mark of the well-dressed and distinguished beekeeper.

If you wish to become one of the hallowed ranks of distinguished beekeepers, send your \$5 and return address to:

Mr J. Garraway,
28 Main Rd,
Brighton,
DUNEDIN.



A Bacillus larvae bonfire in Southland makes an eloquent argument for disease detection at an early stage.

BETWEEN NOW and November 7, every beekeeper should inspect or cause to inspect all his hives and report to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries on their disease status.

With only one major bee disease of national concern, the disease to look out for is *Bacillus larvae*, otherwise known as foul brood.

To make the job easier, the Apiaries Act requires the ministry to provide all registered beekeepers with an appropriate disease reporting form.

And while the absence of that form would preclude a beekeeper from fulfilling his inspection requirements, it would pay anyone who hasn't received a form as yet, to contact the nearest MAF office and ask why. If you haven't a form, it either means you are the victim of a clerical error, or you are not registered.

The inspection and reporting requirement applies to every beekeeper. Ownership of only one hive is no ground for exemption.

It's all part of a programme which puts the onus for hive inspection into the hands of the beekeeper. The ministry's job is to ensure the appropriate control measures are implemented.

This means that regardless of the disease status of your hives on November 7, any beekeeper who finds foul brood in his hives at any time must notify MAF within seven days. Control measures don't have to be delayed — the beekeeper can burn the hives involved immediately — but the ministry men are meant to check that the job is done properly.

It's the beekeeper's job also to keep the ministry informed of the location of apiaries and hive numbers.

"It's a legal requirement," says chief advisory officer (beekeeping), Vince Cooke, "but most importantly, we can't help regulate insecticide spraying programmes if we don't know where hives are located."

For this reason the ministry is more concerned about apiary location than precise hive numbers. In practice, its officers don't amend the registered number of hives in an apiary unless they vary by five or more from the number registered.

Nevertheless, leave this discretion up to the ministry. Precise details of hive holdings, apiary location and disease status is in everyone's interest — especially yours.

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AUSSIES GET TOUGH

Dear Sir,

Australian beekeepers have reported that some overseas visitors attending the Apimondia Congress could be bringing out queen bees for their friends in Australia. In view of these reports, it would be appreciated if you could print the following in your journal:

Visitors to the XXVI International Congress of Apiculture, to be held in Adelaide in October are hereby notified that Australia's Quarantine Act prohibits people bringing bees or second hand beekeeping material into Australia. Anyone detected trying to bring in queens, bees or second hand material will be prosecuted, and the maximum penalty for contravening this law is a fine of \$2,000 or five years imprisonment.

Australia is free from many bee diseases, and visitors are asked to cooperate with the law to help keep it that way.

Yours,

R. A. Winn
Acting Apicultural Adviser
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
Adelaide

CONFERENCE MUSINGS

Dear Sir,

Conference is now past and we need to be fully aware of, and plan for a changing emphasis in our traditional methods of honey production and exporting.

The Comb Honey Producers and the NZ Honey Packers Association held well attended meetings during Conference and it became evident many producers are anticipating, or are in fact entering, the fields of comb honey production and retail honey packing to circumvent the HMA, whose realisations many believe are not reflecting current high overseas returns. My strongest criticism of our authority is that over the years it has been far behind in price adjustments. In fact we never seem to catch up with overseas realisations or even our own cost inflationary spiral. Not so many years

back our industry even fell behind our Australian counterparts, whose honey is considerably less accepted on world markets.

I suggest that the authority needs to meet more often as delayed decision making is proving very costly to this industry. It also appears that frustrations of this type are the motivating force of producers to diversify into areas of production not controlled by the HMA. This trend may well bring a new set of problems.

Diversification in principle is good, but as an exercise to simply by-pass the HMA to obtain higher returns gained on the export market it could well leave some producers in greater financial trouble than before. Speaking from experience, changing to comb and honey packing needs careful planning, financial resources and a fair amount of experience.

The real answer to industry's financial problems lies largely in the hands of the authority to ensure that producers get adequate returns commensurate with their investment in the industry, but sadly this is not the case. The authority must justify its policy of packing honey for the NZ market, where I understand it is forced by government to use the Base Price in its costings, which bear little relationship to the overseas realisations. Coupled with the fact that the authority is a statutory non-taxable board which is seemingly denied a profit margin, the industry is thus pressurised into accepting inadequate realisations. The net result of keeping retail honey prices down in NZ is costing producers and packers alike several hundred thousand dollars a year.

The authority's metric conversion from one pound to the 500 gram also appears to be amiss as it is cheaper per gram to buy 500 gram than 900 gram packs. This mistake is also losing the industry thousands of dollars.

Another problem area is the conditions for "private export" which are restrictive and largely unworkable and in need of urgent review. New regulations are needed to allow for private exports of bulk honey and a speeding up of grading and processing of applications. Speed is of the utmost importance according to those knowledgeable in the

general field of exporting. In view of the concern in the industry with the future of the HMA I suggest that before the HMA upgrades its packing facilities it seriously considers whether it can justify honey packing at all. The question of unit costs has really come home to me as a producer packer: out of necessity I have had to implement a more comprehensive book-keeping and costing system and have cause for concern at the pricing structure and reported packing costs of the HMA.

I cannot, and will not accept that the authority with its privileged position in our industry has the right to use its advantage to deny an adequate profit margin in the private sector; taking into account the fact that the authority handles only a part of NZ's honey crop.

A lot is being said of the potential for increasing NZ honey production, however this will not be realised until the profitability is returned to beekeeping, and a more realistic approach is taken to the promotion and sale of darker honeys. The financial plight of Southland beekeepers as evidenced in a recent MAF article in the Beekeeper is seemingly supported by comments from most other districts.

Therefore, I conclude that the role of the HMA should be in the form of a regulatory and research board serving rather than dominating the industry, and in a manner which will encourage private initiative in its long term development. Let us use everyone's expertise to ensure a future for all.

Yours,

R.L. Jansen,
Taupo Honey Centre.

GOOD ISSUE

Dear Sir,

Congratulations on a first class June journal. When this series started I was not at all impressed with the new cover design, but I now realise that it has one big advantage over earlier covers, that is, that one's filing system does not have to be first class to be able to locate the issues.

I do consider that the marketing notes provided by the NZ Honey Marketing Authority leave much to be desired to

bring them anywhere near the standard set by the Australasian Beekeeper journal. Expressions like — “Still somewhat sensitive”, “Further uncertainty”; “Prices have firmed” convey little to the average beekeeper, who may have export as his aim, but I presume that they are not meant to. What the New Zealand producer wants is facts and figures as are *always* quoted in the Australasian Beekeeper.

Finally, I would appreciate, you, as editor, keeping up your editorials and to take no notice of critics who want a publication for one section of our industry only.

Yours,

R. Davidson,
Timaru.

HELP FOR HOPKINS

Dear Sir,

At Matamata work is well under way to restore “The Tower” property by The Historical Society. This was the homestead and headquarters of the first estate, which developed 50,000 acres, and built The Tower as a place of refuge in the time when Te Kooti was on the loose.

In early 1880, Mr Isaac Hopkins established the first commercial

apiaries in NZ on the new clover of the estate about 400 yards NW of the tower. We have a photo of the apiary site and buildings.

As a lot of the Hopkins equipment would have been around the Waikato, we are wondering if anyone has any left, as it probably would be of Kauri. The boxes it seems were rebated top and bottom, the lids were gabled and made of wood. If any one has any could you please contact me, as we plan to feature the start of commercial beekeeping in New Zealand in the development of the property.

We even hope that in a few years we will be able to have conference at Matamata to celebrate 100 years of commercial beekeeping in New Zealand.

Yours,

C. Bird
R.D.2
Matamata

NEW HIVE NEEDS SPONSOR

Dear Sir,

I have invented a new model beehive known as the “Convertible R.A.D. Masterhive”. It is yet unknown to the beekeeping world and is of new-fangled unparalleled conception.

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The hive is not only convertible from a summer to a winter hive, but also has numberless facilities not yet to be disclosed until the right opportunity arises, my aim being here to contact a trustworthy sponsor abroad for a final touch (patents, plus commercialising same) that cannot possibly be accomplished in my isolated business world.

Have any of your readers contemplated a holiday in Tahiti — just a personal suggestion of mine?

I have also invented the “R.A.D. Presto Twin Uncapper”, which is just as incredible as the hive.

If any of your readers can help me in this regard, would they please write to me at the address below.

Yours,

R.A. Drollet,
Snack Bar “Vaima”
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A FRESH START

DAVID WILLIAMS, our beginners' guide, writes:

Many thanks for the letters. All were interesting and some instructive. I am pleased the occasional touch of poetry appeals.

For that reason and as a good introduction, here is a poem by the Nottinghamshire Nightingale, D.H. Lawrence:-

*Love has crept out of her sealed heart
As a field-bee, black and amber
Breaks from the winter cell, to clamber
Up the warm grass where the sunbeams start
Mischievous has come in her dawning eyes
And a glint of coloured iris brings
Such as lies along the folded wings
Of the bee before he flies*

*Who, with a fuffling, careful breath,
Has opened the wings of the wild young sprite?
Has fluttered her spirit to stumbling flight
In her eyes, as a young bee stumbleth?*

*Love makes the burden of her voice
The hum of his heavy, staggering wings
Sets quivering with wisdom the common things
That she says, and her words rejoice.*

THE SPRING ROUTINE

I MAKE NO apology for recovering the same ground covered a year ago. Although we are trying to produce a "philosophy of beekeeping", a subject fascinating in its infinite variety, it remains true that beekeeping for us is still an essentially practical hobby, so that any "philosophy" comes back to harsh reality every spring.

Spring Routine

Stores check and feeding: Check stores in mid-August (all dates apply to Bay of Plenty; please adjust accordingly for your own area). This merely means peeling back the hive mat and checking the bees are happy, healthy, comfortable and with ample honey to carry them through the intensive build-up about to take place.

If short on stores, remove two empty frames and replace with full ones saved from the same hive last year. For the amateur, identification is easy. I use a felt pen and a dot code, which wouldn't do for the man with hundreds because he couldn't be bothered, but is simplicity itself for the man with only a few.

If all else fails, feed with sugar. I just dump mine in a frame feed-

er and pour a moderate amount of water on top. The bees take it down as far as the water penetrates and then continue working it, so it is easy to add a drop more water on the next visit. No point in all this mixing of exact proportions into a syrup — that is for the experts.

Remember our rule: *There must never be less than the equivalent of two frames of feed in any hive at any time.* Remember also that 99 per cent of the problems in amateur beekeeping may be cured by either requeening or feeding, whichever is appropriate. On with the routine.

Spring examination: Virgil, writing in the first century before Christ, recommends that "The first examination of the hives should be made between the eighth day of Aries and the rise of the Pleiades. Use smoke, kill the vermin, remove the refuse, but before doing this you must observe certain rites. Abstain from love, be temperant in drink, wash your hands, avoid garlic ...".

Not altogether inappropriate advice for what I almost called spring cleaning, which is what it is.

This is one of the two major overhauls of the year, the other being at the start of the honeyflow. Remember that you may do more if you wish, but you should never do less.

Autumn requeening procedure almost amounts to a third, so it all fits in well.

Timing in Rotorua would be mid-September, the last week of November and Feb/March as convenient respectively.

Back to spring cleaning. The steps are:

- Pick a fine, clear, calm, sunny day;
- put two good puffs of smoke in the entrance;
- wait 30 seconds;
- one more puff in entrance;
- remove hive lid, turn upside down on grass, put spare super on it;
- tease up hive mat, smoking as you go;
- lay mat and smoker aside;
- gently lever up outside comb of second storey, lay aside
- giving easy access to remaining eight combs, so gently pry apart and examine one by one



You have now entered the danger zone — the time of year which makes or breaks a beekeeper.

- using a little extra smoke as and when needed;
 - those with brood, queen, go in spare super;
 - those empty or with stores remain in top box;
 - when examination of this box completed
 - *if queen and substantial brood in spare box, remove bottom brood chamber, either with or without floorboard;
 - for preference, replace clean floorboard; or
 - scrape old floorboard clean and replace;
 - place queen and brood box back on floor;
 - if, at *, most brood and queen remains in bottom, repeat examination as for top, having first removed top box and rested on grass;
 - sorting as you go but leaving queen and brood in this box;
 - in which case it will still be necessary to remove brood chamber you are working on and replace on clean floor;
 - in either case brood and queen is back in bottom box on clean floor, with any entrance blocks removed;
 - and any remaining brood goes in centre of second box with stores on outside;
 - new hive mat on top;
 - replace lid;
 - walk quietly away.
- My own variations on this will be yours also, in that I like to exchange most parts at this exam-

ination — the floor so it may be wire brushed, dried out, renovated if needed, boxes so they may be painted, frames culled having been moved to the outside during last season.

I also try to clean up the frames in use, scraping top and bottom bars, cutting back on sides of top bar along its length, removing propolis from ends of top bars and edges of frames, and so on but all this is routine at every examination whether trivial or, as here, major.

This spring examination tells you everything you presently need to know on your hive:

- Stores status.
- Bee numbers.
- Brood rearing.
- Comb quality.
- And, God forbid, disease.

And you also know that everything is where you want it to be.

DANGER: You have now entered what might be called the “danger zone”, that time of year that makes or breaks a beekeeper.

If you can prevent swarming and if the bees have ample stores on which to build up numbers, success is virtually assured. However, this is the time of year when swarms are most likely and, because amateurs believe a few windswept spring flowers do a summer make, is also a time of potential malnutrition.

Following the rules laid down here there is now no danger of starvation but there may be a danger of swarming and, if you haven't autumn requeened, almost a certainty. To help combat this, we have the quick queen cell check.

The ten second queen cell check: Under normal circumstances, the quick check every week is essential and effective. The sequence is:

- Two good puffs in entrance;
- wait 30 seconds;
- remove lid;
- gently separate top and bottom brood chambers;
- slide top one forward 5 cm;

- tilt up, smoking gently;
- smoke and carefully examine bottom edges of frames in top box;
- take a quick look down.
- lower top box;
- slide back into place;
- replace lid;
- walk quietly away.

Total time can certainly be counted in seconds and examination may take place in almost any weather.

If there are going to be swarm cells, that is where they will be, with the important proviso that your combs must be of high quality. Any broken or buckled ones will provide the nice little crannies the bees prefer to hang cells in and which you cannot see without a full frame by frame check — another good reason for rigorous culling.

The other rule is that a full examination must be made if queen cells are found, so that this is an open-ended check — if no cells, be happy; if cells, be active!

When do you cease these checks? After your pre-honey-flow general examination. Once the honey flow starts the bees concentrate their energies on nectar gathering and usually forget about swarming for another year.

Then, about Christmas, you order your queens for Feb/March, requeen then, and you have taken the first essential step towards next year's trouble-free beekeeping.

Queen Excluders

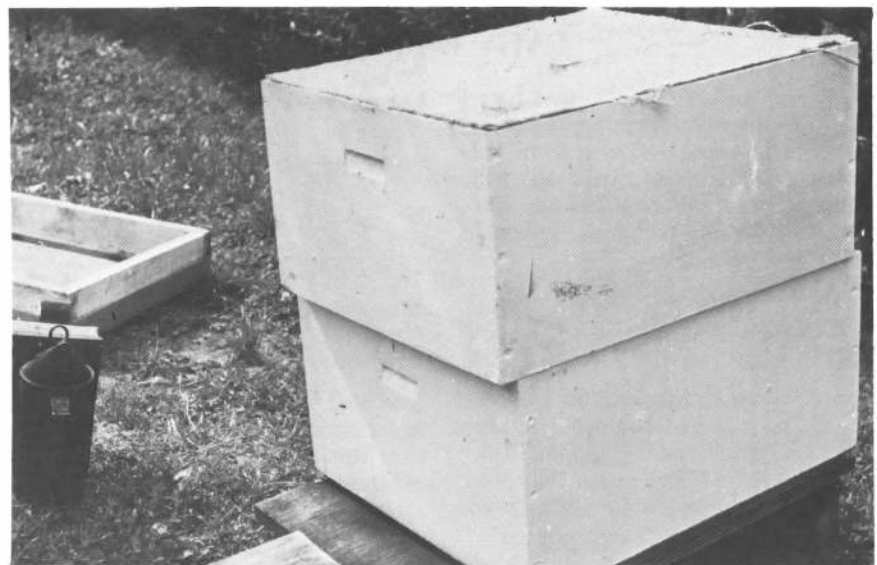
Note that we earlier recommended the use of queen excluders and stated that the bees will preferentially store honey below this.

This is true *but* it is only true if you have carried out your pre-honey-flow arrangement of the brood chambers, once again putting all brood and the queen down to the bottom box and leaving any spare frame space above.

If you do not do this and the brood is crammed to the top of the second box, the bees may



Queen cell check. Two good puffs in entrance



Slide second brood chamber slightly forward ...



Tilt up and examine ...



Readers' queries

David Williams, our resident hobbyist adviser, is willing to answer readers' queries about problems they have with their hives. "My articles are designed to be both practical and provocative," he says. "There may be many points amateurs would wish to raise and would do so if told to write in. I would be happy to provide answers to the best of my limited ability and can always call on the literature or the experts for the really tricky ones."

Mail your questions to: "A Fresh Start", 26 Otonga Road, Rotorua. They will be answered by Mr Williams personally and suitable ones submitted for publication.

Dear Mr Williams,

Being an amateur (only five hives) I thought I would try trapping pollen this coming season. What type of trap is best, is six weeks too long for trapping over the trap period. Also, how do I dry the pollen out and what agents purchase it.

Yours,
F. Hickinbotham,
Auckland.

I see Ecroyds no longer quote pollen traps, but a recent circular from: Auckland Beekeeper's Supplies, 889, Mt. Eden Rd, Mt Eden, says they are available, but they do not state a price.

However, your query was not on pollen traps, so I assure you are fixed up. If not, and you would like to make your own, I have a sketch plan, courtesy of a Rotorua beekeeper, that you may have.

I am sorry that I cannot recommend any period for your pollen tramping. It depends so much on the area you are in that you will have to find out for yourself by trial and error.

Here, in Rotorua, the pollen situation is such that any attempt at trapping immediately stops brood rearing, while down at the coast they do so quite successfully.

You do ask what type of trap is best. Basically a trap is made of mesh that the bees have to crawl through and scrape the pollen bundles off into mesh baskets below. Any design is good as long as it does this and as long as it allows a current of air around the pollen collection and as long as it allows drones to exit and enter. Cer-

tainly any trap you buy will have these features.

As for drying the pollen, Guelph University recommends either deep freezing and using immediately after removal from the freezer or drying at 80 deg F in shallow trays for at least two days and then storing in air-tight containers in a cool, dry place.

As for who buys dried pollen, I only know firms that market their own. Perhaps a small advert in the NZ Beekeeper might bring you customers.

Yours,
David Williams

Dear Mr Williams,

Thank you for your letter with the information on the phenomenon of "queenless supersedure."

The hive I had this trouble with has been through a fair amount of trauma over the last 10 months, which may be responsible for our upset in the normal pheromones.

Last autumn, just before I settled it down for the winter after a successful season despite the weather, it went queenless. I was due to go overseas in a couple of weeks, so all I could do was put a frame of brood and eggs in and hope for the best. When I opened the hive late last August it was it was still queenless, and there were laying workers on the go. I crowded the hive down to one super — it was still strong in numbers — and put in brood and eggs. A queen cell was started and a queen hatched out. She turned out a drone layer, because I suspect there were insufficient drones around, and the weather after she had hatched was foul for about three weeks. I knocked her off, put brood in, and after two to three weeks removed all queen cells, and introduced the queen I bought from Hanes.

Since this queen disappeared I have got the colony to hatch out a queen from eggs and brood I put in and the

queen has been laying healthy brood for about three weeks now.

Yours,
Duncan Ingram,
Khandallah,
Wellington.

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well prefer to ignore any space below this and store all honey above, leaving you the task of supplying winter feed, and probably at a time unpropitious for it.

Everything must be done decently and in order for any beekeeping routine to be a success. Omit or delay one step in the sequence and it is no longer a routine, but a liability.

And I cannot close without a few words on the smoke/sting syndrome.

A few words on stings

A lot of nonsense has been talked about the effect of smoking on bee behaviour. A few puffs of smoke, the theory goes, and the bees immediately spring to the conclusion that they are about to be engulfed by a forest fire, so they dash off and eat honey.

Would you go and eat honey in those circumstances? You would not.

You would gather your family about you and take off as fast and as far as possible. Why consider that the bee's reactions should be substantially different? If this is an emergency for them, then logically one would expect them to chivvy the queen out and away so that she might live to found a new colony. Nature is ruthless and the brood would be abandoned. Does this happen? It does not.

No, the whole object of smoking at a hive entrance and during operations is not to stock the bees up with honey.

It is to present the bees with a crisis situation that cannot be solved by stinging.

Smoke cannot be stung, ergo they will worry about it without stinging about it.

In these circumstances they will only sting you if you overcome their non-sting conditioning by some overt act of hostility or clumsiness. The skill is in avoiding this.

It has been observed that bees alerted to danger will bare their stings and exude a drop of clear venom. The scent of this will, in

turn, alert other bees and a stinging situation is brought into being, to be totally released when the first bee strikes. It will be noticed that other bees head for exactly the same area, the first sting acting as a locating beacon. Scrape the sting out and smoke the spot where it was and the bees will ignore it.

Nor does the myth of smoke driving bees to eat honey have any foundation, to coin a pun. Smoke and open up the hive and you will certainly see some bees, a few, eating honey. After all, we all have to eat sometime, but the vast majority will be sitting quietly on the combs minding their own business.

Smoke those sitting and they will move away, as who would not, but not to gorge. Try it for yourself.

So smoking works, but not in terms of forest fires and a rush to the honey pot.

And a final thought on smoking. Never smoke just the top of the hive. This creates an imbalance of temper between bees top and bottom, does nothing to disarm the more aggressive guards, while smoking the more docile insects in the bowels of the hive, and can turn the whole hive against you.

Even if you are only going to handle the third box up, give a couple of puffs in the entrance, wait a few seconds, give another light puff and then go in the top, smoking lightly as you go and never using more smoke than you have to. This is the trouble-free way.

Fear

Never be afraid. Remember these are your bees even if they don't consider themselves such, and they await your convenience.

Certainly the sequence of timing must complement their own rhythm of the year, but you can also sway their judgement a little there too.

Naturally the ritual varies person to person. I have five hives. I would not think or write as I do were my holding 50 hives, or 500,

or 5000, each level of which would call for different thinking and different operation, but the basis would still be the same, the pattern of thought and pattern of beekeeping a firm foundation on which to build a responsible and trouble-free apiary relationship. If my timetable does not suit you, make out your own, write it down in large letters, and *stick to it*. But more on this at a later date.

I have heard it said that the good beekeeper thinks like a bee. And although I know very few who actually say to themselves "What would I do if I were a bee?" it is certainly true that there are those who have less trouble with their bees, who manage to avoid drama, who routinely clear a good crop of honey every year without troubling the bees or themselves overmuch.

I don't quite know whether they have trained the bees or the bees have trained them, but suspect the latter!

And, as in small things, so in big. Perhaps the main requirement is not to think like a bee, but merely to think.

It is essential to think through what has to be done, step by step and year by year, until it becomes routine, the routine being clarified and codified in the light of continuing experience.

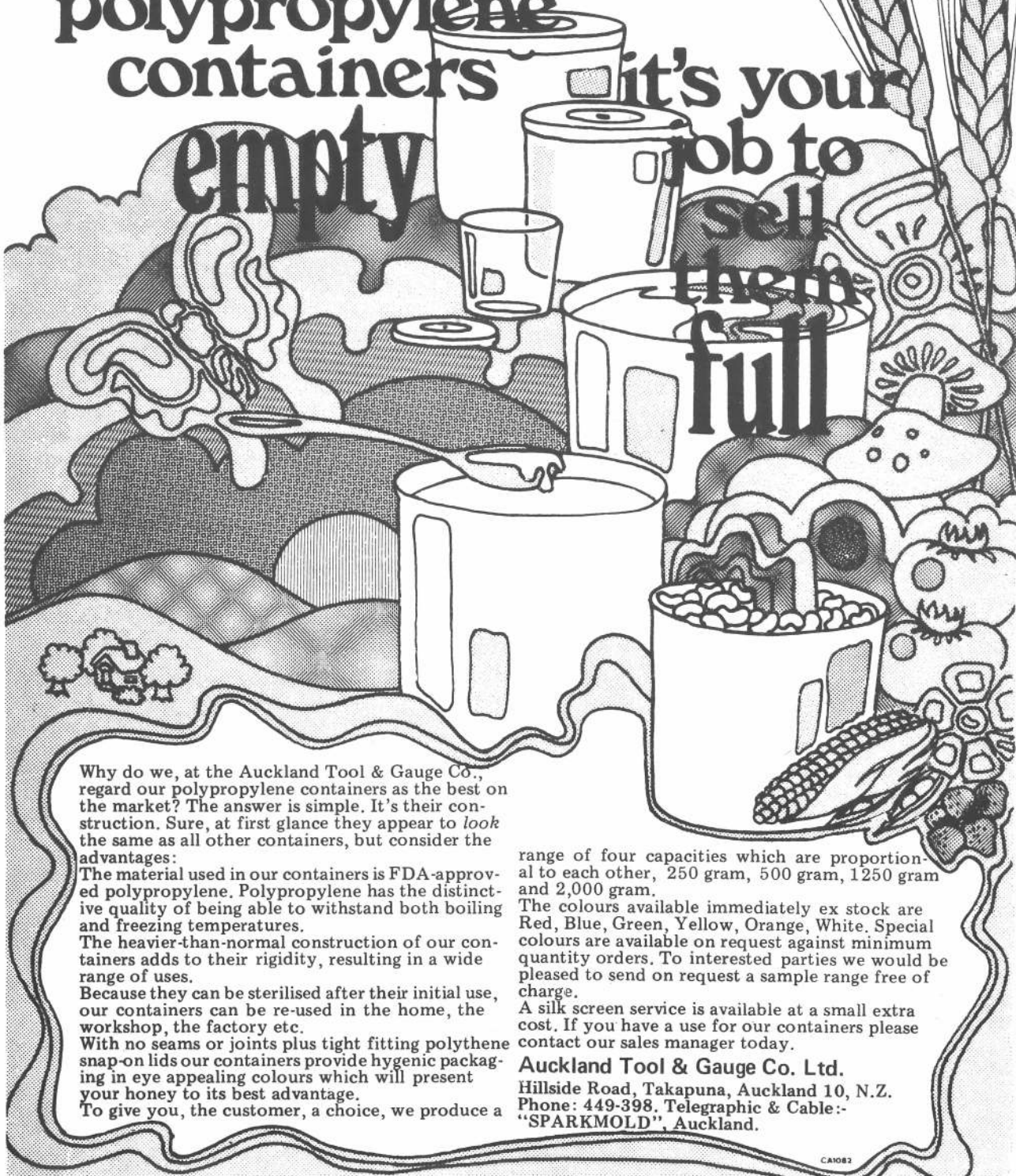
Thus it should never be a question of "We have trouble. What are we going to do about it?" but rather "If we don't do this, or that, at the proper time, we will have trouble, so we will do this, or that".



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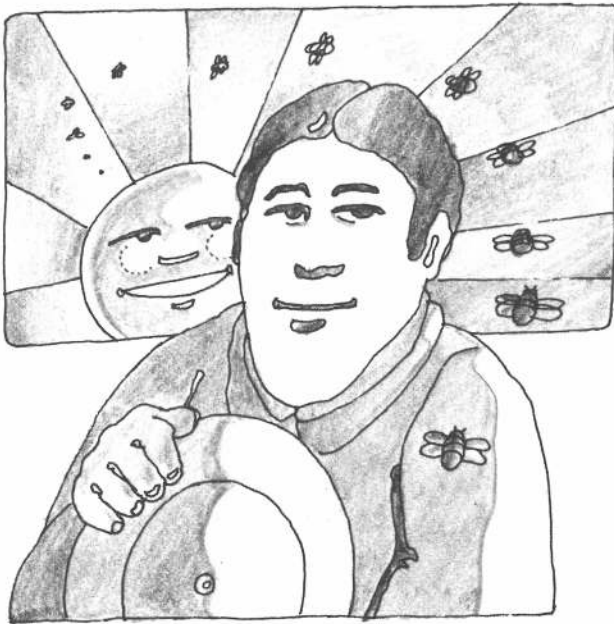
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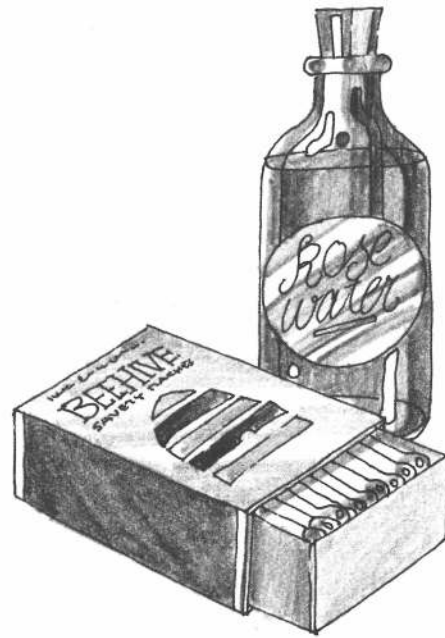
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"The grader acknowledges an error and the payment has been rectified."



Matches for the B.L.; Rose water for the B.O.

A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still

by Colin Rope, Honey Grader,
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Auckland

ONLY ONE person in four is motivated by reason. The other three people, respond to their feelings, such as anger, disappointment, greed, love, kindness etc. or to what they observe happening about them or by intuition. An intuitive person acts without thinking, yet is sometimes "right" since his actions are based on past experiences. The most popular person might be an incoming prime minister, yet did he get all the votes in the election?

The following anecdotes are excerpts from the files of the honey grader, covering a period of 20 years. Due to the limitations of space in this journal, they have been drastically abridged. Consequently not all are verbatim.

Similar letters have been received from several beekeepers, including Messrs. Cloake, Blair, Spence and others: "I keep samples of the different lots of honey we produce in identical glass containers. I disagree with the grading of Lot No.... in respect of colour."

Manager: The grader acknowledges an error in the grading of Lot.... and the payment has been rectified.

Beekeeper: *I am very angry the grader has knocked 5 points off the condition of my honey. I know the strainer overflowed once and wax went into the tank of honey, but I have always had 100 points in the past and so I should have it again. I want my honey regraded.*

Grader: ?

Beekeeper (Mrs): *I enjoyed your recent article on Bacillus larvae. Alas, I have since acquired the dreaded B.L. and my friends tell me I am also prone to B.O. Any advice on how to dispose of either or both of these complaints would be gratefully received.*

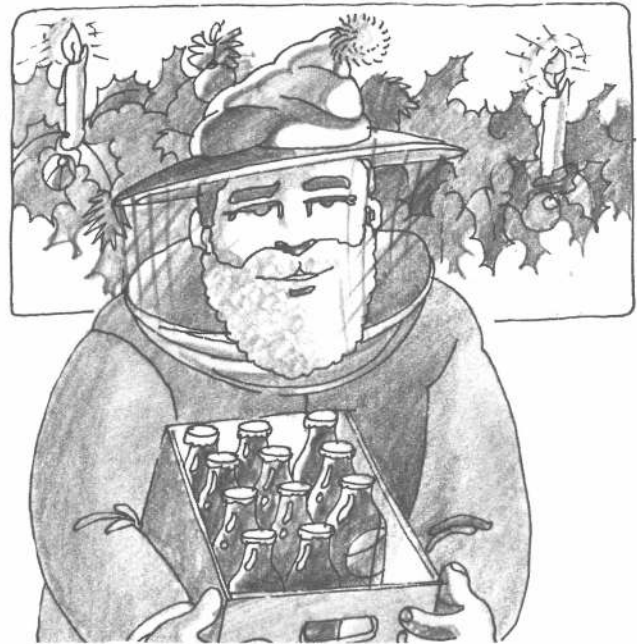
Grader: I have enclosed a box of matches for the B.L. and a bottle of Rose Water for the B.O.

Grader: *I notice your Lot numbers are 1,2,3, and B.L. Do the letters B.L. have any significance in this case?*

Beekeeper: None whatever.



"I object strongly that my neighbour received more grade points than I."



"Here is a carton of beer for the boys ..."

Beekeeper: *I can't understand why you have graded our honey as "Delicate" then say it is "sourish".*

Grader: A good question. The honey is pure clover and would normally grade "Extra delicate". However, this lot contains 19.6 per cent moisture, which is much too much. The honey will soon ferment; indeed sourness has already set in. Hence it was necessary to down grade the honey by one class at this time.

Beekeeper: *I object strongly to the fact my neighbour received more grade points than I. He uses his tank for "other purposes" during the winter.*

Grader: His honey is blackberry, and yours is privet.

Grader: But would you or anybody else, ever get another order? The value of the grading service to beekeepers depends upon its acceptance by buyers. Unless they are confident of the quality of the goods they are buying, they will not pay top prices.

Beekeeper (J. Lowe): *I disagree with your grading of my honey. The honey is NOT tawari. The grade points are O.K.*

Grader: Thank you for your letter. I acknowledge my error and appreciate your interest.

Beekeeper: *Will you please change the grade certificate for my comb honey to read "Clover and Mixed Flowers" instead of ".....". I could then get a much higher price and we are very short of money.*

Beekeeper: *I protest most strongly at remarks of any kind being put on my grade notes by the honey grader. I want them left off!*

Same person, following year: I protest most strongly at the downgrading of my honey and the grader did not even tell me why!

Beekeeper (First year): *I would like to see more advisory work carried out in conjunction with honey grading to help the beekeepers.*

Same person (Second year): *How dare you suggest a visit from the*

apiary instructor. If he comes round here he will get the boot!

Beekeeper (H. Knibb): *I am concerned your colour gradings are becoming more lenient year by year. The prices may fall overseas if the quality standards are not maintained.*

Grader: The same brand of colour grading machine (Pfund) has been used throughout, and there is no variation in the colour glasses used (old or new). It must be the quality of your honey which has improved year by year. Congratulations!

Beekeeper (S. Broadhead): *Here is a carton of beer "for the boys" for Christmas. I have not included a bottle for the grader in case he might consider it a bribe?!*

Beekeeper: *I know there are dark specks in my honey, as you say, but if you don't change the condition grading from 95 points to 100 points within seven days, I will take the honey away.*

(The beekeeper took it away and brought back a clean lot!)



"I want the grader sacked, he doesn't know his job ..."



"If you don't change the grading from 95 to 100, I will take the honey away."

Beekeeper "X" to Minister: *I want the grader sacked. He doesn't know his job. He says my honey has a carbolic taint and I forbid the use of the stuff by my staff.*

Another Beekeeper (Several years later): *When I worked for Beekeeper "X" I borrowed some acid boards from a neighbour as I wished to try out the stuff. You were right about the Carbolic taint, but I would have got the sack if I had let on. Sorry I could say nothing until now.*

Beekeeper: *On the strength of your gradings of our thyme honey, we cannot recover our costs or production and make a profit.*

Grader: *You must find a way to cut your costs; or go broke. Selling honey is like selling a second-hand car. The market of supply and demand largely sets the climate for prices; that has nothing to do with what it costs you to produce it, now does it?*

Beekeeper: *Why does a mixture of clover and thyme grade as thyme mixture? Does it depend on what you had for breakfast?*

Grader: *The grader is required (by law, and not by what he had for breakfast) to state the predominating flavour and also the strength of that flavour and whether there is a taint in the flavour, be that from chemical, mechanical or floral source.*

Beekeeper: *The grader seems to have a strong prejudice against thyme honey. There seems to be no such thing as slight thyme flavour. It is either all or nothing.*

Grader. *If the thyme honey was upgraded as suggested, and included in a parcel of mild or medium honeys, then that consignment would be downgraded by overseas buyers and graders to the detriment of the other New Zealand beekeepers.*

The more delicate the honey, the more prominent is the taint of thyme since there is no counter-acting flavour in delicate honey; conversely when thyme is mixed with strong flavours such as kamahi, there is a tendency for one flavour to counter the other.

First impressions of thyme flavour make it compare favourably with other full-flavoured honeys. Yet its persistence on the palate for hours afterwards;

its harsh dry taste (honey should be sweet, not dry) which is essence-like in character and even in small amounts masks the sweetness of other honeys and overpowers the entire flavour of a blend, does render it inferior to all other New Zealand honeys.

Not only has thyme honey proved difficult to sell, but those who buy it seldom re-order.

Thyme honey is marketable to Japanese sugar refineries which de-nature the honey to remove taste and smell and convert it into invert sugar. This limits its commercial value in that outlet to that of raw sugar.

In 1976 an importer who purchased honey knowing it to be graded "Extra Strong Thyme" subsequently asked to be released from his contract after he had endeavoured to blend the honey. Such events support and demonstrate the correctness of my assessment of this honey.

In conclusion, beekeepers are free to sell to whom they choose in New Zealand and if MAF gradings are harsh and unrealistic, one wonders why these goods are not sold for a better price elsewhere?



"Anyone who receives less than 100 condition points can blame no-one but himself."

Does the grading depend on what you had for breakfast?

Beekeeper: *(Complete letter): I want to send some. Please tell me if I can, if you can.*

Beekeeper: *Will the final payment for my 100 point clover honey be reduced if the thyme honey producers get the price they want?*

Grader: *Yes, unless the NZHMA make other provisions.*

Grade Certificate Reads: *Bees, wasps, ants, a moth, fruit flies, dark specks and wax particles found in honey. Industrial Grade. Rejected for Export."*

Beekeeper: *It may please you to know the grade certificate you sent me has been put into a picture frame and is now displayed on our wall for all to see! How can I support an organisation which penalises its suppliers so severely?*

Grader: *Condition is the one aspect of grade over which every beekeeper can have total control. Anybody who receives less than 100 condition points can blame no-one but himself. Why not take up this matter with your apiary instructor? Even a coarse strainer could make a significant improvement.*

Importer: *We were greatly concerned to find ants in one can of honey (graded 100 points) in our last shipment. The buyer insists the whole consignment be replaced by a clean lot. We may be able to locate another buyer for the contaminated honey, but he will no doubt expect a discount of, say, 8%. We must also take cartage and transshipment into account. A sample is enclosed for the honey grader to see and we would appreciate an explanation from him.*

Beekeeper: *I wish to apply for a regrading of my honey, lot B. The grader has graded it down to 95 points because, he says, of specks.*

Grader: *Due to an oversight by the officer drawing samples from the... depot your honey was omitted from sampling and neither he nor the grader have ever seen your honey. Consequently, I must decline your request for*

a re-grading until such time as the honey has first been graded.

Agent for New Zealand Honey: *I can state without any hesitation at all that the careful grading by a department of your government of all your exported honey has contributed in no small measure to the high price we have been able to obtain for your honey. This careful grading has been a tremendous selling point with us and one which is being increasingly appreciated in this country.*

Beekeeper: *The grader has a personal prejudice against me and his grading of thyme honey is harsh and unfair. All my honey is graded thyme whether it is clover or not.*

Grader: *Reference to my files shows your clover honey free of thyme (and other sources) has always received top grade.*

MISSING ARTICLES

This issue of the NZ Beekeeper may well leave some readers disappointed. Limitations of space have precluded the publication of a profile of Tony Clissold, part two of the Southland economics story, the Wallaceville Research Report, a description of Brian Risk's tail-gate hive loader and a satirical article on health food nuts by David Williams. With luck, they'll make December!



HONEY DELIGHTS

by Angela Fussell

Puddings, desserts, afters

Pudding is a word that covers a multitude of dishes from a light fluffy dessert to a good, stout, body-warming pudding. It 'rounds off' a special occasion meal or completes a basic meal at the end of a long day.

Now that spring seems to be on its way, a lighter dessert is perhaps called for. Many people prefer a refreshing dessert after a meal that has been

creamy and rich in flavour, and of course, the easiest and perhaps the most delicious is the fresh fruit salad. But then, a cheesecake is just as popular, so keeping in mind that everyone is probably regretting all the winter steam puddings that they have eaten, the following desserts are both nutritious and easy to prepare. I far prefer desserts that can be prepared some time before a dinner so that last minute panics can be avoided.

FRUIT WITH YOGHURT SAUCE

Nuts, honey, and cinnamon flavour this sauce. The yoghurt is a relatively low-caloried substitute for sweet or sour cream.

1 cup plain yoghurt	½ t grated lemon rind
2 T honey	¼ cup finely chopped walnuts
¼ t cinnamon	fresh fruit of your choice

Combine yoghurt with honey, cinnamon, lemon rind, and walnuts in a small bowl until well blended. Chill before serving over the fruit.

Serves 4

HONEY CHEESECAKE

Rich in protein-rich cottage cheese and eggs.

225g (8oz) wheatmeal biscuits	125g (4oz) honey
55g (2oz) butter	2t raw sugar
340g (4oz) cottage cheese	2 eggs
	salt
	ground cinnamon

Crush biscuits and mix with melted butter. Press around the inside edge and over the bottom of an 10cm (8 inch) cheesecake tin. Chill until ready for use.

Beat cheese, eggs, honey, sugar and pinch of salt together until smooth. Put in biscuit crumb shell, sprinkle liberally with cinnamon.

Cook for 45 minutes at 300 — 325°F. When cold, cut in wedges.

Serves 8-12

HONEY BAKED APPLES

4 lge cooking apples	55g (2oz) raisins
2 thin-skinned oranges cut into small wedges	8 T honey

Remove a thin slice from the top of each apple, and carefully remove the centre core. Place in a slightly greased baking dish.

Bind the orange wedges and raisins with 2 tablespoons of the honey, and pile into the apple centres. Pour over the remaining honey, and bake at 375°F. for 30 to 40 minutes or until apples are tender when tested with a skewer.

Chill before serving with ice-cream or fresh cream. Serves 4

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The NZ Beekeeper is distributed free to all beekeepers owning more than 49 hives who, after paying their compulsory hive levy, automatically become members of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc.).

Beekeepers owning less than 50 hives and others who may wish to may not wish to join the association, will pay an annual subscription of \$7.50 which includes the cost of a subscription to the NZ Beekeeper.



FROM THE COLONIES

SOUTH CANTERBURY

To return home to cold wet conditions and mud everywhere after spending several weeks in gloriously warm sunny weather in northern New South Wales is a shock to the system, especially when you have watched bees coming in laden with nectar from the white box at Narrabri and narrow leaf ironbark outback in Queensland. However one must face the realities of winter and be thankful ample rain has fallen, the ground is well soaked and we will not have to worry about insufficient moisture in the soil for some time.

The high price of wax has been reflected in efforts by the locals to collect as much of this valuable product as possible. Excluders, hive mats and any other source of surplus wax has had a hiding, never were the hives so clear of surplus burr comb — a jolly good thing too as one tends to neglect this resulting in hives becoming untidy and difficult to work. These efforts highlight the necessity to have a good wax recovery plant. Fortunately all beekeepers in South Canterbury are well set up with good wax plants or have access to one. This is something more beekeepers should look at, a good press and an adequate steam boiler.

I hear rumbles locally, "Conference is no longer what it was — may as well stay at home — could take a postal vote on the remits — just cannot influence those present at Conference so do not think I will go again — just a waste of time." The next branch meeting will be interesting as this will be discussed no doubt. Times have changed though, nothing stands still.

Milton McKenzie has just returned from Papua — New Guinea, has spent several weeks visiting his brother, Gavin. He reports Gavin is making considerable progress with his assignment, is happy in his work and enjoying the challenge. We hope to hear more of this venture later.

As the hives of bees went down very heavy with stores in the autumn no one is in a hurry to open up for Spring inspection, so I — along with others — will put my feet up again and enjoy the fire.

Harry Cloake,
Timaru.

SOUTHERN HAWKES BAY

The winter in central southern Hawkes Bay has been wet, but not as cold as it began. Hives went into winter in fairly good shape, except some plains areas which didn't benefit by the autumn flows as well. Flowering the last two weeks has been encouraging — wattle and tree lucerne in most areas, and pussy willow in the warmer river beds near Waipukarau. Hives should be strong with young bees — some checked in July were still breeding — but with consequent feed and swarming worries. Beekeepers hoping for strong manuka flow, after two years in a row of near nothing. Strong hobbyist interest in the branch. We hope to hold a field day later in the summer, geared mostly for the beginner. Demonstrations of equipment and working of colonies should be of interest to novices and experienced alike.

Nick Wallingford,
Dannevirke.



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OTAGO

Well, friends, conference is behind us again and we must admit it has done the Otago Branch a lot of good to have it here at Dunedin. Things did not look very rosy for a while and it seemed somewhat doubtful if enough of our members could bring up enough interest to organise the event. However all worked out for the best after a team got moving. We have had a lot of fun together and gained experience and satisfaction. We must apologize for the kind of weather during conference, but that after all was not our doing. Blame Wellington. Thank you for coming along and for sharing business and pleasure with us here.

Most delegates have returned home wearing now the NBA badge and those not attending conference probably wish they could have one. Our Secretary has now a fair number in stock. Write to Mr John Garraway, 28 Main Road, Brighton together with \$5 and he will mail you your badge (under plain wrapper).

Financially, we are coming out on the right side as far as operation Conference is concerned. Thank goodness.

Winter is nearly over and we are looking forward to start the real job of beekeeping again hoping for better conditions than most of us have experienced over the last couple of years. The branch apiary will get a "do over" shortly. We also hope to find a way to have more and better contact with branch members too far away from town to be able to attend meetings. Thinking especially of Central Otago beekeepers who are much handicapped by distance.

John Heineman,
Milton.

SOUTH-WESTERN DISTRICTS

As I live in central Taranaki, my notes on the weather may not hold for the rest of our branch as it goes right down to Wellington and across to Masterton. As for prices, I am selling my honey as run into containers supplied by the customer at \$1.20 a kg and most others in Taranaki are the same. I know of two which are \$1.10 a kg. (50c a lb).

Our last meeting was the pre-conference meeting which was fairly well attended. We mainly chewed over the remits for conference and instructed our delegates which way to vote. Delegates were the president, Chris Bromel and secretary Trevor Rowe. We also arranged for our next meeting, which is to be held on Saturday, September 10, at Trevor Rowe's Honey House Eltham. It will take the form of a field day on cutting out hive parts and making up of same.

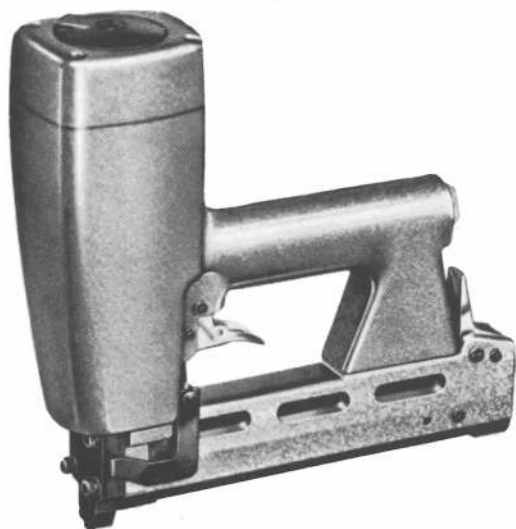
Trevor Rowe,
Taranaki.

NORTHLAND

Not much has been happening with the bees, as is usual for this time of year. However, from the hives I have seen recently, the bees are getting away very well, perhaps a little too well in some cases. Most of the hives seen have had three to four frames of brood and are well off in bee numbers.

The weather has been very showery and cool with a few reasonable frosts in between. The trees are flowering well though, particularly the wattles, the pussy willows are just coming out, and the weeping willows are just starting to show leaves. The pine trees are producing a lot of pollen as well at the moment. As long as we get reasonable weather the bees should do alright.

P.G. Smith,
Whangarei.



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WAIKATO

Two stalwarts of the Waikato pioneer beekeepers died recently. Tom Pearson life member died in his 90th year. He spent a lifetime as one of the foremost honey producers in the Waikato. He served in the war for three years 1916 to 1918 on the Somme attached to the Field Ambulance.

Tom founded the partnership of Pearson and Davies, foundation makers, and in company with his brother Albert, was the first to change from the horse and dray to trucks in the early days of this century.

Ernie Sage, a life member in his 90th year also passed away. A pioneer in the Honey Industry in New Zealand, member of the South Auckland Branch of the NBA throughout his life and a member of the original Honey Producers Association of New Zealand.

From a small enterprise, Ernie Sage became one of New Zealand's foremost honey producers, operating throughout the Waikato basin and the Rotorua-Galatea areas. Ernie lost his two sons during the last war.

Recently Alf Bennett retired from the position as apiary instructor held for the past 20 years. A presentation to mark this occasion was made by president Ray Robinson who wished Alf and Mrs Bennett a happy retirement.

At a following meeting, a welcome was accorded Murray Reid, Apicultural Advisory Officer from Christchurch. Bad luck Canterbury and good news for Waikato beekeepers.

Murray has the qualifications and it's to be hoped producers will avail themselves of the opportunity to advance their knowledge of the many facets of our honey industry.

The past season had brought smiles of satisfaction from many beekeepers in the Waikato. After the very poor crop of the previous year when one tonne per 100 hives was all we averaged, this season two full supers of high quality honey was common and there is an air of optimism abroad once again.

Reports of a heavy budding on the Rewa Rewa could induce beekeepers to exploit this source with a fair prospect of obtaining two to five supers per hive.

There have been no reports about Tawari, but this honey is due to yield. However the large scale destruction of our native sources particularly in the Kaumai and Mamaku ranges make it increasingly difficult to get a worthwhile return if the weather conditions are adverse.

Nodding thistle in the Matamata County is threatened by the introduction of a weevil which attacks the plant. There have been increasing quantities of this high quality honey produced throughout the region and it is to be hoped that producers are not unduly affected by the introduction of this parasite.

The opportunity to speak to farming groups on the subject of the inter-dependance of the farmer and beekeeper in relation to the effect of the use of weed sprays, especially during the clover flowering period, should be actively sought, and every encouragement given where pollen bearing trees can be established.

Dudley Lorimer,
Hamilton.



MARKETING NOTES

PROVIDED BY THE NZ HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

THE INTERNATIONAL market is reported dull. Quiet, very little activity. A distinct margin has developed between buyer's offer and producer's offering.

Following record production last year a poor to bad season is being reported from the Continent. However, last year's carry-over is still appearing.

United Kingdom

Buyers have bought forward to avoid the final tariff effective on all imports after July 1.

All continental markets are reporting that they intend holding existing goods as long as possible even if it means reducing ratio of white honeys for blending.

Canada/USA

Conflict on crop now coming to

hand. Reports cannot be evaluated until crop finished. USA report partially good to partially bad. Last unpaid offer US\$.50 c/lb F.O.B. but too many irregularities to be of much value.

China

Sales of Milkvetch and Acacia, reported down, other exports dearer but fewer.

Central America

Reported crops practically sold out, however, it is difficult to determine whether reports concern last year's or this year's production.

Argentine

Have increased price and many buyers report will wait and if necessary reduce portion of Argentine honey in blends.

Japan

This market so important to New Zealand adopting "sit and wait" policy to analyse results of new crop offers especially Canada, USA, China.

New Zealand

Has still small stocks specialty honey and are waiting with overseas buyers studying quantities, exchange rates and price movements.

Domestic Sales

In New Zealand have surprised many.

Shelves were bare at beginning of year and so too was pipe-line. Sales still good. Special promotion reported, but no price cutting. Sales future optimistic.



PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

“We have good reason to feel confident. . .”

by Percy Berry, president,
National Beekeepers' Association of N.Z. (Inc)

OUR ASSOCIATION has a history in which there has been much evidence of both political and financial instability. In recent years, including the one just past, much has changed for the better. More changes are necessary but our industry has demonstrated its willingness and its ability to cope with its problems. The decision making machinery is now more firmly and effectively in the hands of the individual members and our Association can move into the future with more confidence in its ability to serve the beekeeping industry.

For many years now one basic problem has plagued our country in general, and small industries such as ours in particular. Many of our difficulties stem from our country's hybridised democracy in which bureaucracy is the dominant genetic factor.

However, currently there is encouraging evidence to show that if we continue to put our own house in order, and if we present to government well-based industry representations, then they will receive appropriate support. I have in mind the government's recognition of our case for a greatly improved payout structure which it made available to the Honey Marketing Authority. This was the outcome of well-based industry representation.

In the matter of local market prices we have special circumstances brought about by the marketing improvement in the price available for New Zealand honey overseas. In my opinion this calls for a similar study by the industry, and representations to government.

I am satisfied that we have a sound case for a price rise on the local market that would bring prices into reasonable relationship with the world market value of our product. This will

require government acknowledgement that the present formula being used in justification of price movements is inadequate to meet the special circumstances of our case. It is also inadequate to meet government declared policy that, in the long term, primary producers will receive the world market value of their products. I can see no problem here, provided the industry prepares and presents its case. I believe this should be done without delay. I believe it should have been done last February.

At any given time the administration of our industry must make the best possible use of the machinery provided by resolution of the whole industry and by government. But it is increasingly important that we all keep alert to the possibilities for beneficial change. As one writer puts it 'the status quo is an ever increasing rate of change.'

In my view, producers who wish to be more directly involved in the marketing of their own products should be encouraged to do so. The operation can be of interest to them and of benefit to the industry as a whole. This has been adequately demonstrated by the direct export marketing carried out by comb honey producers for many years. It has proved to be the most progressive sector of the industry and exports are increasing both in volume and in comparative value. The demand for comb honey in one of the less wealthy of the Middle East countries is such that some limitation on imports of comb honey has recently been imposed by its government.

This requires some broadening of the base of our comb honey markets and producers are applying themselves to the necessary market research to that end. Their experiences in these matters

provides them with, what is to them, a fuller and more satisfying way of life than that provided by honey production alone. Their experience also provides this association with a membership which is better informed in matters of marketing.

I believe we should examine closely the possibility of financing beekeepers against their honey stocks when required through a system that incorporates the principles used by the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation in financing United States beekeepers. We should examine the possibility of government co-operating with the Honey Marketing Authority in a scheme of this type.

It may well be that the government's present provisions through the Honey Marketing Authority to finance the industry against stocks does in fact provide the Authority's greatest opportunity to serve the interests of the industry. Possibly this function of the authority should be further developed and improved to include loan finance against stocks on the producers' premises as is provided by the American Corporation. This is not a subject for hasty resolution but I have recently procured information on how the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation is structured and how it operates.

In the longer term, the normal packing and marketing operations of the authority should perhaps be replaced by more profitable marketing methods. At the moment the overseas operations of the Authority appear to be working satisfactorily but there has been too much evidence over the years that the wrong use of the present marketing machinery can have a devastating effect on the economy of the industry.

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Therefore we should always be seeking alternative methods which would more adequately safeguard the interests of the New Zealand honey producers. As mentioned in the Annual Report of the Association for the year ended 31st December, 1976, an attempt has been made since our last annual conference to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the National Beekeepers' Association and the Honey Marketing Authority being organised within a single industry body. Subsequently the branches of the association were advised that the executive has no recommendations to offer. The electors of the two bodies concerned have themselves brought about a degree of amalgamation. Three of the four producer representatives on the Honey Marketing Authority are also members of the executive of the National Bee-

keepers' Association. Provided there is adequate study by all the elected representatives of the industry along the lines I have earlier mentioned in relation to vital issues such as prices, there appears to be no need for early action on amalgamation. For the time being there could be some merit in keeping our options open.

On the 27th and 28th of last month I attended the Geneva Conference on the Development of World Apicultural Trade. The conference was organised by Apimondia and the International Trade Centre. It studied apicultural economy generally and there was considerable time devoted to the assistance needed by the developing countries to improve their beekeeping industries. A full report of the conference will be published and it is envisaged that some of the conclusions

reached will be presented as recommendations to the October Apimondia Conference in Adelaide. Personally I found the conference educational. The conference room in the WHO building provided adequate facilities and the international atmosphere of Geneva seemed both significant and appropriate.

The year has been one in which I have enjoyed working with my executive and with the secretary, Mr Graham Beard, and his staff. I wish to express my sincere thanks for their co-operation. During this period the Association has not been involved in any major structural changes. It has concerned itself with servicing the industry — and with examining our options for the future. A future in which we have good reason to feel confident.



MARKETING REPORT

Bulk exports our prerogative

by Russel Poole, chairman, Honey Marketing Authority

SHORTLY AFTER your 1976 Conference an authority election was held which resulted in your vice president, Mr Michael Stuckey and your immediate past president, Mr Ivan Dickinson, being elected to the authority.

The authority's accounts for the year ended August 31, 1976 have been sent to all hive levy payers, and show that our trading produced a surplus greater than the allowable payout of \$102,132, which was added to reserves. This amount is very nearly the same as the amount it was necessary to draw from reserves in 1975 in order to make a payout of the base price.

In July last year the general manager of the authority left New Zealand to visit the main honey buying countries of the world. On his return he gave a very full report to the authority, together with his recommendations of what actions should be taken in order to gain the maximum benefits for the

authority from the information he had received and contacts he had made.

In the course of visiting many countries and meeting numerous people connected with producing, packing, buying and selling honey, he made arrangements to receive regular market reports from sources independent of the buyers of New Zealand honey, and the reports so far received have helped us to negotiate selling prices higher than we might otherwise have obtained.

He also reported that, while Kimpton Bros. Ltd were obtaining very good prices for us in Britain, he felt that their market penetration in Europe was not as good as expected. He therefore recommended that we rescind the agency agreement with Kimptons, leaving us free to sell in Europe to other buyers. On the U.K. market however, Kimpton's performance was head and shoulders above anyone else,

and although we are no longer obliged to deal only with them, we have in fact continued to sell to no other buyer as no one else has been able to better Kimpton's prices.

Acting on a remit passed at last conference, the authority has formulated conditions under which private packers may export retail packs of honey. The authority still feels that bulk exports should remain its prerogative.

In setting the conditions of supply in October last year, some changes were made in the advance payments, and a schedule was incorporated showing the advances for all grades of honey. The newsletter accompanying the conditions of supply pointed out that the scheduled advances would only be made if the base price was set at 60c a kg or better, and if sufficient Reserve Bank finance was available. When the minister of agriculture

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subsequently set the base price, he imposed conditions which made it impossible for us to adhere to the schedule, and we had to revert to advance payments similar to the 1976 season, except that the initial amount was increased to 50c a kg.

At a meeting of the authority held on Monday of this week it was decided, after reviewing the financial position, to make a further advance payment to suppliers. This further advance will be 5 cents a kg for thyme, strong kamuhi, and niue island honey, and 10 cents per kg for all other honey. The cheques will be posted to suppliers in a few days time.

The hive levy has again proved to be a cause of friction between the authority and beekeepers. Despite my request at last conference for your executive to put some information in the December issue of the "Beekeeper" pointing out the requirements of the levy regulations, this was not done, neither was there a reminder in the March issue that March 31, was the final date for payment to avoid the late penalty of 10 per cent.

It is becoming obvious that some beekeepers are finding ways to avoid declaring all their hives for levy purposes, and others are putting the authority to a lot of trouble and expense to collect the levy due. Any assistance the executive can give to overcome these problems would be appreciated.

At a joint meeting, the authority and the NBA Executive formulated a base price proposal which was put to the

under secretary for agriculture, Mr J. Bolger by your president and myself. The proposal was amended by Mr Bolger and the price set in the form advised to you in a newsletter dated February 24, 1977. The main difference between this base price and previous ones is that no maximum has been imposed.

The unfortunate aspect of the base price being set by the government is that it also requires the base price to be used as the value for honey used in packing for the local market. The effect of this is that the high prices gained overseas by the authority are subsidising the NZ consumer and thereby reducing the amount of money available for the final payout.

Consideration was given during the year to the condition of the authority's buildings and plant. The packing plant in Auckland and the packing room and facilities at Pleasant Point are in need of either renovation or renewal and it is intended to attend to these requirements as finances permit.

The authority has decided to participate in Apimondia Congress in Adelaide later this year by displaying and selling honey. A New Zealand stand is being organised in conjunction with A. Ecroyd & Son Ltd and D.F. Penrose. Honey buyers from most countries of the world will be present and the congress should give us the opportunity to display our wares to the best advantage. Display material and NZ souvenirs are being organised all of which should help to bring New

Zealand apiary produce and equipment to the notice of all those attending the congress.

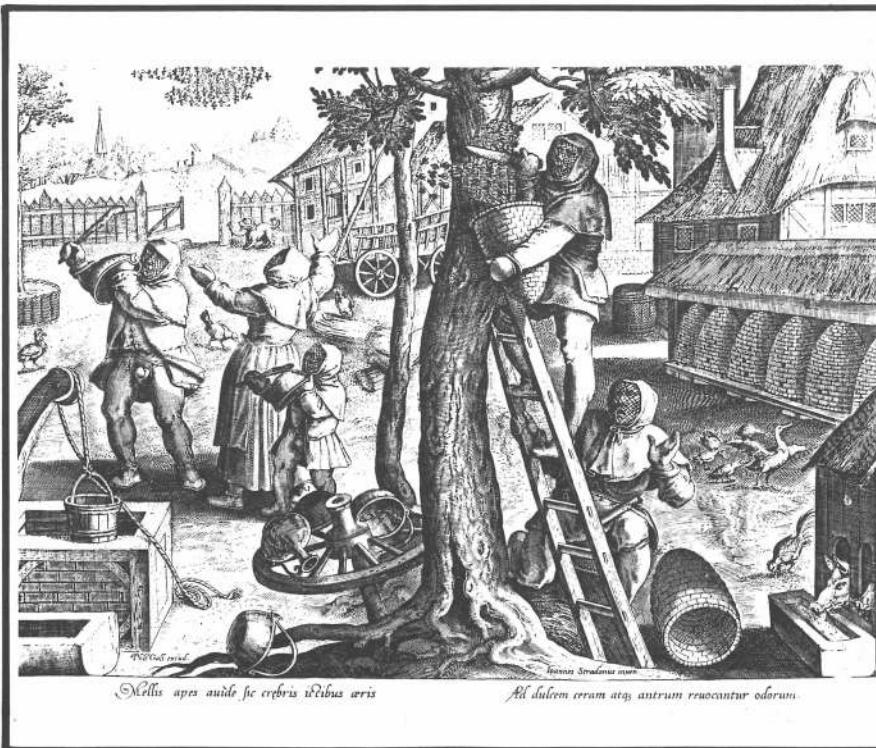
The authority's intake this season amounted to 1763 tonnes, which, although less than the 2000-odd tonnes average of the last seven years, is very satisfactory in view of the adverse season in many parts of the country.

It is pleasing to report that many producers are supplying their honey in drums pre-weighed to 305 kg. Drums supplied in this way save the authority much time both in the depots and in clerical work.

Some buyers of water white honey have been offering a premium price but have specified 20 litre cans instead of drums. In order to meet their requirements, it may be necessary to ask producers who usually supply this grade of honey to pack in cans in future.

During the year a number of newsletters were sent to suppliers to keep them informed of authority activities, and authority members addressed meetings and field days where possible.

I would like to thank my fellow authority members for their co-operation during the year, and on their behalf would like to acknowledge the time and effort expended by the general manager, Curtis Wicht and his staff in implementing authority decisions, and in the efficient and profitable manner in which they carried out the day to day functions of dealing with your honey.



This rare beekeeping woodcut depicts many fascinating aspects of early European beekeeping. Notice the straw skeps on the far right. The men on the ladder in their "bee suits" are hiving a swarm from the tree. Then, in the far left, notice the family trying to make a swarm alight by pounding on metal bowls with clubs. —American Bee Journal, January 1976.

"Your industry would be well advised to consult. . ."

by J. Elworthy, M.P., Oamaru

I WOULD LIKE to offer the apologies of my colleague, Jim Bolger, the associate minister of agriculture who could not be here today. Unfortunately it is the other hat he wears, that of the Minister of Fisheries, which has precluded him attending this conference. As you are probably aware he is currently overseas on the first leg of an eight-nation, fact-finding tour.

He has asked me to extend his personal best wishes to the association and trust you will have a constructive and rewarding conference.

Mr President, the industry you and your association members represent is a small one compared with New Zealand's major primary industries, but we are all aware that the size does not automatically denote importance. Without a doubt the value to the nation of a viable beekeeping industry is far more than the mere value of the products it produces.

It is impossible to calculate the worth of the free pollination service bees provide to the agricultural and horticultural sectors, but we do know that without natural pollination New Zealand's food-producing industries would be much smaller and in some cases would not exist at all. But of course, as far as beekeepers themselves are concerned, the most important function bees have is to produce honey and thereby give an income to your members.

As at May 31, 1977, there was a grant total of 3 577 beekeepers in New Zealand. These people owned 15 319 apiaries and nearly 200 000 hives. Honey production for the 1976/77 season has been assessed at 6 078 tonnes, which compares more than favourably with the 4 915 tonnes produced the year before and is in fact 300 tonnes more than the average production of the last six years. And while the honey production scene is in good heart it appears that from the marketing point of view the picture is equally bright.

There is a strong local demand and New Zealand honey has earned a high reputation overseas and it appears that any additional honey produced can be exported and at good prices. And while most of our exported honey is shipped in bulk, there is a growing demand for our comb honey on the world market.

Beeswax and south island beech honey dew are also selling well overseas.

The long term potential for beekeeping development is difficult to assess because there are so many variable factors involved such as climate, farming trends, and the availability of wild flowers and trees which produce nectar and pollen. But on the production side there is probably room for considerable development in many areas of the country.

Bearing in mind that honey that is not collected or gathered is a wasted resource, at a time when we cannot afford to waste anything, it follows that every effort should be made to see that the beekeeping industry's potential in this regard is fully realised. Although the great majority of hives are owned by commercial beekeepers, some 3 000 beekeepers with less than 50 hives each, collectively own more than 16 000 hives.

It is pleasing to see that the ranks of the smaller beekeepers are swelling, for it is from this group that many future commercial beekeepers will emerge. As I understand it, a hive of bees kept by a hobbyist or side-line beekeeper is, if properly managed, just as potentially productive as one owned by a large scale bee farmer.

And for this reason I am pleased to find that the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries' service in terms of advice, regulation and research, are provided for the benefit of all beekeepers, whether they own a few hives or several thousand.

I have been informed by the Ministry that it is their intention to improve their regulatory and advisory service to the beekeeping industry and will

institute a requirement that in future, people recruited as beekeeping advisors will have to hold appropriate university degrees.

The Ministry will be seeking the active co-operation of established beekeepers to enable newly appointed advisors to gain wide experience in the practical aspects of apiary management. I would urge you all to support any such training programme, for it is only with a unified, co-operative approach by the entire industry; scientist, adviser, and beekeeper, that will allow the industry to reach its full potential.

I am aware that in the areas of honey marketing and the financing of your associations operations, there have, over the years, been widely divergent views regarding the policies which should be adopted. Happily these matters have now been largely resolved. Speaking as it now does with a more united voice than was previously the case, your industry has probably never faced the future with a more positive attitude than it does today.

There is of course, always room for change as circumstances alter, and you will, I am sure, be most vigilant in recognising areas for improvement and trends which may threaten your industry's well being.

Since your last conference which was attended by Jim Bolger as the then under-secretary for agriculture, some important developments have occurred in the honey industry. The first was the substantial improvement in overseas prices for honey which resulted in a sizeable increase in the Honey Marketing Authority's payout this year.

The second development was the announcement of a new stabilisation scheme providing for a more flexible payout system than previously existed and which reflected more quickly market trends yet at the same time allowed for adequate contributions to reserves.

Your last conference requested an earlier announcement of the base

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price and Jim Bolger tells me that he was able to announce the payout for the present season last December. I know he holds every hope that such an early announcement will become an established practice.

I note from your conference remit paper that some interesting topics are up for discussion, particularly the suggestion that reserve funds be held in individual producer's names as is the case in the wool industry. My feeling is that government will not be too enthusiastic about this suggestion as in general, reserves are built up and held for the benefit of the industry as a whole. The wool industry action system is somewhat unusual and the particular system they now operate was the most practicable form of stabilisation for that industry.

In the case of other primary producing industries with stabilisation schemes, the reserves are held for the overall benefit of the industry, and not in individual accounts. I would also point out that the administration involved in operating an individual account system can be extremely expensive and unless substantial amounts of money from a large number of contributors are involved the benefits of such a scheme can be easily outweighed by the administrative cost factor.

I believe your industry would be well advised to consult with those involved in operating the wool scheme so as to ensure that any hoped for benefits from an individual account system would indeed be real and not just imaginary.

I also note a remit suggesting that the government representative on the authority should no longer represent the interests of consumers. I do not know whether the intention is that consumer interests should be ignored. I sincerely hope this is not the case.

It is the function of most government representatives on producer boards to look after the interests of the consumer irrespective of whether or not this responsibility is spelled out in the relevant legislation.

Members of marketing authorities appointed to represent the government must have an obligation to see that consumer interests are considered.

Last Friday a new potato growing industry bill was introduced into parliament and it did spell out the responsibility for the government representative. This does not mean that he must insist on prices being held at an uneconomically low level. It generally means that he co-operates with the producer members to ensure

that producer prices are fixed at a level that will make it economic for the efficient producer to stay in business, and, at the same time provide the consumer with a variety of different kinds of honey, in a variety of packs, at prices that will maintain steady sales.

This is not always easy. It often requires a degree of compromise, and this is where a non-producer member, with the interests of the consumer in mind, can be of great assistance.

I have spoken about a couple of the many remits you have before you at this conference. I note that many more of them, if adopted, will require some approach to ministers or the government as a whole and I hope you will not be slow to alert government of any assistance or action you may require to help you achieve your aims.

I can assure you that so long as you make your approach in a unified manner that represents the wishes to the majority of your association's members, any reasonable request will receive our close attention. Let me add my best wishes for a fruitful and rewarding conference to those of Jim Bolger's.

It now gives me much pleasure to declare this conference officially open.

Thank you.

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APIARY SECTION REPORT

Presented by Vince Cooke, chief advisory officer (beekeeping) designate, on behalf of Ian Forbes, assistant director, advisory services division, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

"The industry can expect an improved advisory service. . ."

AS REPORTED in the March 1977 issue of the 'New Zealand Beekeeper', a complete re-organisation of the apiary section is currently under way. During the last year Mr Eric Smaellie, superintendent (beekeeping), and Mr Alf Bennett, apiary instructor at Hamilton, both retired.

There will be a gradual phasing out of the designation "apiary instructor" as present instructors qualify as advisory officers or are replaced on retirement by advisory officers holding appropriate university degrees. This major policy change will place apiary section officers in the same occupational class as other advisory staff in the advisory services division. Career prospects for persons joining the section will be much wider than before, and the beekeeping industry can expect to receive an improved advisory service.

The country is divided into nine apiary districts. Each district will ultimately have a resident apicultural advisory officer who will be responsible for providing a comprehensive beekeeping advisory service, and for seeing that the various provisions of our beekeeping legislation are properly implemented.

The districts are based at Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Palmerston North (which is the base for two districts), Nelson, Christchurch, Oamaru and Gore.

The position of superintendent (beekeeping) at Wellington has been replaced with that of chief advisory officer (apiculture). Mr Vince Cook, who was for 16 years the apiary instructor at Oamaru, has been appointed to this position.

Mr Murray Reid has transferred from Christchurch to Hamilton and he is now established as the apicultural advisory officer in that district. With the imminent retirement of Mr Jack Varley, the apiary instructor at Nelson, vacancies will shortly exist for two apicultural advisory officers. Steps are being taken to fill these positions as soon as possible.

Historically the apiary section had an essentially regulatory role and indeed initially its main purpose was to control American foul brood disease. Many older beekeepers still refer to the local adviser as "apiary inspector". This concept has now changed with the emphasis being placed on advisory work.

Your association is well aware that a big potential exists for the development of beekeeping in many areas of New Zealand, not only for extracted honey production but also for the other hive products, comb honey, beeswax, pollen and propolis. Many more queen bees of the highest quality could also be produced.

Lucrative local and export markets seem assured for hive products and queen bees. It will be a continuing and increasingly important aspect of our work to actively encourage the development of the beekeeping industry to profitably reach its potential.

Our efforts will not be confined to merely giving technical advice as it is requested. It is our aim to develop a team of skilled extension workers able to give advice on all aspects of apiculture including business and financial management. Several members of the section have already moved into these fields and their services are being keenly sought by both established and new beekeepers.

The block course on beekeeping management at Telford Farm Training Institute last October, which was oversubscribed, took the form of a three day, in-depth discussion on planning and achieving beekeeping objectives. The 22 participants all contributed freely and everyone considered the course had been very helpful. We hope to be able to run a similar course in the North Island later this year.

The control of American foul brood and the ministry's other regulatory services to the industry will be fully maintained. Each apicultural advisory officer will have a supervising respon-

sibility but much of the work will be done by other ministry staff as part of their duties. Selected officers have already been trained to draw honey samples for grading by the Honey Grader, and to grade export comb honey.

While beekeepers are required, under the Apiaries Act 1969, to inspect their own hives for American foul brood, the ministry has the overall responsibility for supervising the control of the disease. Hive inspections will continue to be made and arrangements are being made for volunteers from the animal health and meat divisions as well as advisory services division, to be trained to assist with this work. The ministry will continue to employ experienced beekeepers as part-time apiary inspectors.

Mr John Smith, apiary instructor at Christchurch, is visiting Poland to study the latest developments in the artificial insemination of queen bees at the University of Warsaw under Professor Woyke who is a world authority in this field.

Mr Smith's study was made possible by a grant from your association. The ministry appreciates this mutual co-operation and hopes the industry will benefit from the information Mr Smith brings back. The results of the study will of course be made freely available to beekeepers throughout the country.

Both the ministry and your industry have recently become involved in assisting the government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with beekeeping projects under the bilateral aid programme.

Mr Percy Berry of Arataki Apiaries Ltd and Mr Allan Ward (Lecturer in Agricultural Economics) of Massey University visited Bangladesh in 1975 to assess the beekeeping situation there and, as a result of their findings, New Zealand will be giving beekeeping aid to that country.

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Last year Mr Grahame Walton, apicultural advisory officer at Palmerston North, attended a conference in London on Apiculture in Tropical Climates. The conference recognised the enormous potential for beekeeping in many developing tropical countries.

Mr Gavin McKenzie, a former executive member of your association, is in Papua New Guinea for two years as project manager of the Papua New Guinea/New Zealand Beekeeping Development Project. You will be pleased to know that Mr McKenzie and his wife and family have settled very well into the Papua New Guinea way of life, and that the project is progressing well. Mr Vince Cook, chief advisory officer (apiculture) is the project director.

It is commendable that our collective beekeeping expertise is being used to assist beekeeping development outside New Zealand.

Apimondia Congress

The ministry recognises the importance of this congress which will be held in Adelaide in October, and I am pleased to advise you that approval has been given for three apiary section officers to officially attend.

Pesticides

The problem of protecting honey bees when brassica and clover seed crops are sprayed is potentially serious each season. Fortunately, however, bees are rarely, if ever, poisoned because a continued extension, regulatory and research programme successfully deals with the problem.

The 1976/77 season saw this programme rigorously tested, as a new pest, the blue-green aphid (*acrythosiphon kondoi*) heavily infested crops of lucerne and white and red clover in the main seed growing (and beekeeping) areas of Canterbury and Otago.

It was impossible to foretell which plant species would be infested, the rate and length of infestation and the damage that would be caused. Chemical control was obviously warranted in some areas, and research was commenced to investigate the whole question and this work is continuing.

I am satisfied that, in view of the circumstances, the problem was dealt with sensibly and responsibly by all those concerned, viz: the ministry, farmers, beekeepers, and spray contractors.

The established programme withstood the test. From the evidence available it can only be concluded that bees were not poisoned and that there were no losses of honey production, or reduced pollination.

Metrication

An official ministry booklet, "Metrics for Beekeepers" is now available through all ministry offices free of charge.

Statistics

Beekeepers and hives

As at May 31 1977 there was a total of 3 577 beekeepers owning 15 319 registered apiaries and 191 757 hives.

Honey

Honey production for the 1976/77 season was assessed at 6078 tonnes. This compares with the 4915 tonne crop of last year and is 300 tonnes more than the average production of the past six years.

For the year ending August 31, 1976, 1700 tonnes of bulk extracted honey was submitted for grading. Of this 38 tonnes did not meet the export grade requirements.

One hundred and thirteen tonnes of comb honey was graded for export compared with the 154 tonnes graded the previous year.

No beekeepers applied to export any packed extracted honey.

American foul brood

At this time, the ministry is unable to give the percentages for diseased apiaries and hives for the 1976/77 season. As the figures have not been collated due to our staff situation.

In brief, however, the situation with American foul brood is that the incidence of the disease has for a number of years been held fairly constantly at 2.50 per cent diseased apiaries and 0.50 per cent diseased hives.

While at first glance these figures appear satisfactorily low, it must be emphasised that the disease is extremely widespread. It is clear that any relaxing of the control measures now in force could result in a serious spread of the disease.

Cawthron study

The Cawthron Institute at Nelson is presently testing a number of typical New Zealand honeys in relation to their storage and heating characteristics. These features, in particular the levels of diastase and hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF) in honey, are becoming increasingly important to the industry in terms of our international honey trade prospects. The present work, which will continue with further samples next year, is the first in-depth study of fresh unprocessed NZ honey.

The study has been financed from the Issac Hopkins Bequest, a grant from the Honey Marketing Authority, with assistance from the ministry.

REMITTS CONSIDERED BY THE CONFERENCE

VOTING ON HONEY SUPPLIED

Remit 1

That voting for Honey Marketing Authority members on the Authority revert to a similar basis as previously, with votes on hive holdings plus one vote for every tonne of honey supplied to the Authority.

Note: Suppliers to the Authority do not have a vote on the Packers Association or on the Comb Honey Producers Association. As suppliers to the Authority are financially dependent on decisions by the Authority it is only common sense that they should have additional votes.

The proposers of this remit didn't speak in its favour, however it attracted considerable opposition from Nelson, North Otago, and some other branches. Mr Cropp pointed out that anyone could join the Packers Association or Comb Honey Association and to go back to the old system could well split the industry.

Mr Morris said he opposed the remit because it dragged another skeleton out of the industry's cupboard. He said the remit should be treated with the contempt it deserved and be tossed out.

The remit was defeated 1635:2165

INDIVIDUAL STABILISATION ACCOUNTS

Remit 2

That the reserves of the Honey Marketing Authority be held in the individual producer's account, failing this adopt a system similar to the one operated by the Wool Board.

Mr Winslade said the industry was stuck with the stabilisation fund which it had to live with. However he felt the system could be bettered by adopting the stabilisation system used by the Wool Board. He said new growers could apply to draw on their individual funds in times of hardship or whenever they needed money for development.

Mr Holt said wool was sold in lots and could be easily identified and he couldn't see how individual lots of honey could be identified with an individual beekeeper.

Mr Stuckey said he didn't know where the private packers individual reserves would be created. He said that the only place a private packer could get reserves would be from exports which meant that they should be granted the right to export in bulk.

Mr Jansen said he was opposed to the remit and couldn't see any justification for it. He said reserve funds at present were used to support the prices of the whole industry. If this remit was carried he pointed out that only those who had contributed would benefit.

The remit was carried 2323:1645

SET A LIMIT TO RESERVES

Remit 3.

That the Honey Marketing Authority approach government to establish a ceiling to the Reserve Fund, say \$500 000, and any contribution thereafter be frozen in supplier's own name.

Mr Cropp said his branch liked the first part of the remit but couldn't see why the remainder of the funds should be frozen. Mr Holt said that if a reserve fund was established at say \$500 000 it would depreciate rapidly due to inflation. He said the HMA had a job to do and he couldn't see that the industry could dictate an arbitrary amount to them.

Mr Jansen said he saw little in favour of the remit. He said it was time the HMA and NBA retained from government the right to set reserves and pay out levels. He said it was time that the industry claimed the right to determine its own destiny. When Mr Moyle first took its rights away from the industry, it was in a complete uproar. Now, he said, everyone seemed to accept stabilisation without a whimper. The remit was lost 9:4

Remit 4

That the executive of the National Beekeepers' Association meet the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and request the appropriate regulations be amended to provide for the money held in the Industry Equalisation Reserve Fund be held in the name of each supplier who has contributed to the fund. That when such supplier retires from the industry, sells his business, or otherwise ceases to be a supplier through any other reason and will not again be a supplier, the money still held in his name be returned to that supplier. Should the role of the Honey Marketing Authority be changed so as not to require the fund or should the Authority cease to be, then, the money remaining in the fund be returned to those suppliers who have money in their accounts, after a sufficient period of time to ensure this fund will not again be required for the purpose it was established.

This remit was carried after little debate because it re-emphasised points covered in previous remits.

It was carried 2458:1373

DELAY LEVY PAYMENT DATE

Remit 5

That the hive levy final payment date be altered from 31 March to 30 April.

Note: Many beekeepers are finding that their first cheques of the season are needed for outstanding accounts and tax etc., and the extra month would ease the pressure.

While Mr Holt said it amazed him that some beekeepers were unable to organise their business sufficiently to meet smaller payments such as the hive levy, Mr Jansen disagreed. He said beekeepers' incomes were just starting to pick up again in the autumn and an extra month's breathing space could be helpful to many.

Mr Poole, the chairman of the Honey Marketing Association said that the regulations stated that payment of the hive levy should be effected by March 31. After that, he said, the Authority could charge a 10 per cent penalty. In practice, he said, if people ask for a month deferment they willingly deferred the penalty. If necessary, he said the

1977 NBA CONFERENCE

Authority could do that for everyone and this would be a lot easier than going to government and changing the relevant regulations. However he pointed out that only a couple of people had asked for this accommodation last year.

The remit was carried 2169:1679

DECEMBER PAYOUT ANNOUNCEMENT

Remit 7

That the Honey Marketing Authority announce by the first week in December the minimum payout price.

There was general agreement with the sentiments expressed by this remit and it was carried 13:nil.

LEVY INCREASE OPPOSED

Remit 8

That this conference strongly oppose any increase in the hive levy.

Note: The National Beekeepers' Association is becoming too expensive an organisation for the size of our industry and must learn to live within its already excessive income.

Proposing the remit Mr Steve Lyttle said that the branch felt that the executive was too free with the industry's money and he said that there was particular concern about the Association funding John Smith's trip to Poland. He then asked whether Mr Smith was the best qualified to go. The chairman replied that the government thought he was the best person to go.

Mr Jansen said it was an unfortunate remit because, while he didn't want to restrict executive spending, he also didn't want to give them a go-ahead to increase their spending. He said he supported the remit but he didn't intend it as a criticism of the executive policy.

Mr Winslade said he was opposed to the remit. He said there was no increase in hive levy sought and that the remit was a slight on the present executive. He said that if members didn't like the executive's policy they should vote them out. Mr Robinson said he was surprised that the branch (South Canterbury) which proposed the remit didn't put up a candidate in the recent executive elections.

The remit was lost 6:7

AMEND PRICE PROCEDURE

Remit 9

That this conference reaffirms its basic belief in a private enterprise oriented industry and requests that the government's policy of fixing the base price on honey handled by the Honey Marketing Authority be discontinued forthwith.

Mr Jansen said he had put the remit forward at branch level. He said beekeepers had long been recognised as individualists but he said there was no reason why they couldn't run their own industry collectively for their own benefit. He said he felt local market returns were the result of the influence of government price setting and he asked that in the future elected representatives should determine the future, not government decrees.

Mr Holt said that the remit couldn't be passed as it stood because the minister had the power to determine the base price. He said he had had an Opinion from a Queen's Counsel which stated that the minister controlled the HMA and that in effect any decision of the HMA could be read as a decision of the minister.

The debate on the remit then became confused with delegates questioning whether the first half of the remit relating

to private enterprise only confused the issue. Mr Stuckey and Mr Heineman then moved an amendment:

That this conference request that the HMA consult with the NBA and resolve on a body to be set up to determine the base price.

Mr Stuckey said that this amendment gave the conference the chance to adopt what the two executives were trying to do — to get the base price position out of political hands and into those of the industry.

In reply to a question from Mr Morris, Mr Stuckey confirmed that the intention of the remit was to enable the industry to set the base price within the existing formula.

The amendment was then carried unanimously and the amended motion was then put to a poll vote and carried 3743:88

HONEY PRICE LIST

Remit 11

That each season the National Beekeepers' Association publish a list of suggested prices for the selling of honey at the Honey House to branches only.

Proposing the remit Mr Steve Lyttle said he had noticed that Honey House door prices for honey in owners' containers could vary by up to 40 percent even in South Canterbury. He said it would be in the interests of all beekeepers that those selling honey at the Honey House were made aware of the going market prices.

Mr Stuckey asked the general manager of the HMA, Mr Wicht, whether backdoor prices should be published. Mr Wicht said he didn't think so though he thought a price list distributed around the branches could be advantageous.

Mr Morris said that you could lead a horse to water but you couldn't make him drink. He said it is one thing to make a list of current prices but it is another thing to get people to stick to it.

The remit was carried 13:0.

BULK EXPORTS REAFFIRMED

Remit 12

That this conference reaffirms remit 25 from last year's conference being "That conference supports the principle of exports of appropriate quantities of bulk extracted honey by exporters other than the HMA but subject to HMA control".

Mr Marshall said in seconding the remit that because beekeepers had expressed the wish to determine their own destiny that they should have the right to export.

Mr Jansen said that private exporters could, particularly with specialised types of honey, do better than the HMA insofar as getting good prices overseas were concerned. He said the HMA had trouble dealing with the darker honeys in particular but from his experience private exporters could obtain prices for them similar to those obtained by the Authority for white clover honey. Mr Jansen went on to say that he had no objection however to HMA control over bulk exports.

Mr Hayman, the government representative on the HMA, said the Authority would lose its powers of stabilisation and its role as a purchaser of last resort if it didn't handle most of the nation's honey bulk exports. In that event it would become little more than a co-operative of suppliers. He questioned whether this was what the industry wanted.

Mr Morris asked Mr Hayman when the HMA had in fact been a receiver of last resort. Mr Hayman replied that as

recently as 1975 the HMA doubled its normal intake of honey, thereby providing a service for many beekeepers who didn't normally supply it.

Mr Robinson said the Waikato was evenly divided on the matter and that discussion on this matter had taken up a lot of time at the meeting. He said that in his view the HMA must always remain the stabilising factor.

The remit was carried 9:5.

PRICE SMOOTHING FOR PRIVATE EXPORTS

Remit 13

That conference supports the principle of exports of appropriate quantities of bulk extracted honey by exporters other than the Honey Marketing Authority but subject to Honey Marketing Authority control and equal involvement in Honey Marketing Authority price smoothing.

There was little debate on this remit because most of its aspects had been covered in remit 12.

Remit was carried 10:3.

PUT CASE TO GOVERNMENT

Remit 14

That the Honey Marketing Authority combine to put our arguments to government that our internal honey price should be more closely related to overseas prices.

Note: Overseas prices have left our domestic prices way behind.

Mr Winslade said that he was against this remit. He questioned what would happen on this basis if there was a downturn in overseas prices. He said he thought the remit was dangerous in its present form.

Mr Robinson said the Waikato was optimistic. He said they thought prices would never fall. He said that given the change in honey marketing fortunes the industry shouldn't consider what would happen in the unlikely event that prices might fall.

The remit was carried 11:3.

QUEEN EXPORT INCENTIVES

Remit 15

That the executive approach the appropriate minister to request that producers of queen bees for export be included in the Schedule of the Export Incentive Scheme.

This remit was carried without much discussion 14:0.

INCENTIVES FOR PRIVATE EXPORTS

Remit 17

That the executive approach the appropriate minister to request that private exports of packed lines of honey for export be included in the Export Incentive Scheme.

Mr Heineman asked why the incentives should only apply to private exports. If there were incentives, he said, they should apply equally to the HMA. The president said that the HMA was not eligible for incentives as it was not a private profit-making organisation.

Mr Jansen said he thought this would be a worthwhile move. He cited precedents in other fields, such as the eligibility of garden seeds which receive incentives when exported in certain types of packs, whereas they weren't eligible when exported in bulk.

Remit was carried 14:0.

REVIEW GRADING STANDARDS

Remit 18

That this Association request a review of the very stringent standards of Honey Grading in New Zealand.

Note: The standard of honey grading in New Zealand is one of the highest in the world and is a deterrent to beekeepers supplying the Honey Marketing Authority. Overseas packers have intimated that they would prefer honey that was not fine strained, as it is necessary to have this honey heated to high temperatures.

Proposing the remit Mr Steve Lyttle said that many overseas buyers didn't want honey that had been fine strained and that it appeared that by turning out a product which was of too high a standard beekeepers were being penalised to no purpose.

The manager of HMA, Mr Wicht, commented that all the countries he visited praised the New Zealand honey grading system. Mr Poole said that it had to be realised the grading was done by MAF for export purposes — it wasn't done for the purpose of paying the producer, although the Authority did use it for this purpose.

Mr Poole said the payout system could be altered so that the HMA had its own grading for payout purposes. This, he said, would be far better than to change the MAF grading system which was most important to overseas buyers.

Mr Stuckey questioned whether in fact overseas buyers didn't want fine strained honey. He said they would pay more for it if it wasn't fine strained, but in practice this didn't happen.

Mr Lyttle then cited the case of a local producer whose honey received a low grade, and thus a low price. The producer later went to the honey factory and found that his produce had been packed for the local market.

Mr Robinson then moved an amendment to the remit that a relaxation of grading standards be related to packed lines of honey.

Mr Jansen said he could see a need for bulk honey to be graded, but he thought it was not entirely relevant to packed honey. He suggested that packed honey should be exempt from grading and that the packer should be put on bond to ensure he kept a high standard. He said export orders had to be expedited rapidly. Mr Jansen also said there was a precedent with exported section honey where no test was taken and where the inspection was only visual.

Mr Vince Cooke told the conference that the Honey Export Regulations 1950 were currently under review. He had hoped that they would be completed now, but when they were completed they would be sent to the various industry bodies for comment and that was the time when any changes should be made.

Mr Herron said he thought it would be to the detriment of the whole industry to allow a down-grading of the system for the benefit of the few producers who couldn't keep up to standard.

Mr Robinson's amendment was then put to the vote and lost 2:12. The original remit was then put to the vote and lost 4:10.

REVIEW SAFETY STANDARDS

Remit 19

That executive request that a standard of safety regulations, covering equipment (extractors, uncapping machines etc.) used by honey producers and packers be formulated by the apia section of the Department of Agriculture and be distributed to all commercial beekeepers and packers.

Mr Bromell, proposing the remit, said it had been prompted by a member who had had the Department of Labour inspector in his plant wanting things to be done. He said most of these inspectors were fairly ignorant of honey packing methods and that it would be far better if MAF inspectors, who had an understanding of the industry, could formulate the standards.

Mr Dawson warned the conference away from the idea. He said that if MAF had to prepare a standard it would cost the industry a fortune, because they would have to cover all contingencies. He said it was far better for beekeepers with problems in this area to contact the NBA and ask them to handle the matter.

Mr Mitchell said that the remit was irrelevant because the Department of Labour had to administer the legislation and was already formulating standards in co-operation with groups of beekeepers.

Mr Steve Lyttle said that the people who opposed the imposition of safety standards should look at some of the people who had been dragged into machines and mangled. Mr Mitchell replied to this by saying that he was not speaking out against safety factors but against the irrelevant nature of the remit which asked for MAF to get involved in something that was not its job.

Mr Cooke agreed that his ministry would not be involved in an exercise such as this.

Remit was lost 4:10.

MORE GRADING INFORMATION

Remit 20

That this association press the Department of Agriculture to show on the honey grade certificate the moisture content reading, and that the phurial colour reading be shown.

Note: Some dissatisfaction with the present system.

Mr Poole said the information requested was freely available and could be put on the grade certificates.

The remit was put to the vote and carried 13:0.

HAWKES BAY INSPECTOR

Remit 21

That the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries ensure an adequate apiary inspection service, preferably centred at Hastings, is available to the Hawkes Bay district.

Proposing the remit Mr Marshall said there was concern at branch level that there was only one apiary inspector having to cover the whole southern half of the North Island. He said there should be someone stationed in Hastings responsible for the Hawkes Bay. He said from his own experience you soon got to know what was going on in a district when you lived there.

The remit was carried 14:0.

HERBICIDE CONTROLS

Remit 24

That this conference calls for the same control of herbicides as there is on insecticides.

Note: Some herbicides are just as dangerous to life — human or insect — as insecticides.

Proposing the remit Mr Foote said herbicides could be spread anywhere, any time, on anything and in fact MAF recommended in its own publications that the best time to spray gorse and blackberry was during flowering. He said he recently visited a dairy farm where a helicopter had sprayed everything. He said pollen taken from a hive on the farm

reeked the following day of herbicide, and he said the industry must be as concerned about the people who ate honey and pollen as it was with the fate of bees which were infected by insecticides.

He said that this was one of the most important remits the industry had in front of it, because if irresponsible spraying was not stopped and people got to thinking honey was infected there would not be a conference next year.

Mr Clinch of Wallaceville Research Centre said that there was not much of a problem from honey being contaminated by insecticides because the bees involved didn't make it back to the hive. He said with pollen it was an entirely different matter and it was fortunate that pollen wasn't being collected for sale.

Mr Heineman said there was an urgent need for the matter of herbicide contamination of hives to be investigated.

Mr Cooke said that he had to emphasise that in cases like this it was critical to get it investigated as soon as possible. He said if beekeepers can't get hold of their apiary inspector they should put the bees, or whatever other evidence of contamination they had into plastic bags in a fridge or freezer. They should then contact Wallaceville immediately. Mr Clinch said that good evidence had to be investigated as soon as it became available or otherwise it just became hearsay.

The remit was carried 14:0.

ILLEGAL CHEMICAL USE

Remit 25

That, as what appears to be the excessive and illegal use of agricultural chemicals this past season to control aphids and other insect pests, especially the blue-green aphid, on seed and other crops, the executive of the National Beekeepers' Association request the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries to immediately have the matter thoroughly investigated and extensive educational and experimental work commenced.

Note: It is known Metasystox was used this season on flowering clover crops. It has been alleged that some officers of the Department of Agriculture did on some occasions recommend the use of the chemical on clover crops. This chemical was used extensively to control the blue-green aphid on lucerne crops which usually have flowering clover among the lucerne. It is alleged farmers sprayed their own crops with illegal chemicals after contracting operators had refused to do the job owing to the danger to bees.

As the beekeeping industry relies on the good relationship between the farmer and the beekeeper it is not possible to use direct evidence to state our case and the minister must be so informed but at the same time it must be emphasised the beekeeping industry views the situation with serious concern and he is expected to act on any information placed before him in a proper manner.

Circumstantial evidence is available that honey crops were lost through the illegal use and misuse of agricultural chemicals.

NBA's secretary, Graham Beard, explained that the executive had already done in essence what the remit asked. He also said trials were being conducted at Lincoln College to find out whether aphid spraying was worth while.

Mr Winslade said Otago was against the remit. He said the branch didn't like words like "allege". He said if the proposers had proof of their allegations they should have brought it forward. He said North Otago bordered on to South Canterbury and beekeepers there had recognised that

farmers had a crisis on their hands and that if they had been farmers too they would have sprayed. Mr Winslade said there was as much spraying in North Otago as anywhere else and that he hadn't heard of any complaint of loss of bees or production. He said that the executive should have done something to stop this remit because there was no evidence to back it up.

The proposer of the remit, Mr Steve Lyttle, said there had been great debate at the branch level about it and that he had personally disagreed with it. The Chairman admonished him and said that a branch should be careful about what it put forward in a remit.

Mr Cooke said, of the 50 000 hives in the area he had been asked to inspect only one and he found no evidence of such spray damage. Given this, he said he felt it was extremely unfortunate that such scanty evidence should be used to attack the integrity of the ministry.

Mr Cropp said Nelson opposed the remit. He said there was a lot of spraying in Nelson but he had no evidence of excessive use of sprays, because orchardists and so on were fully aware of the cost of chemicals and were loathe to waste them.

Mr Adamson said that there had been trouble in his area with metasytox but that beekeepers had got together with farmers and the spraying had been done in the evenings and no trouble had resulted.

The remit was lost 14:0.

INVESTIGATE AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS

Remit 26

That the executive of the National Beekeepers' Association approach the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries with a view to having investigations made into possible residual effects in pollen and honey from the use of agricultural chemical sprays on flowering broom, crops, gorse and other noxious weeds.

Note: It is believed there could be a residual effect on pollen and honey as a result of spraying flowering broom etc. If this is so, then the sale of pollen could be in jeopardy.

There was a long debate on this remit but it was held in committee.

The remit was carried 14:0.

BAN METASYSTOX

Remit 27

That the National Beekeepers' Association request the Agricultural Chemicals Board to place a total ban on the sale of Metasytox or similar types of sprays sold under different names.

Note: There was indiscriminate use by some aerial operators, farmers and ground operators during last season on flowering crops including white clover. Because Metasytox is slightly cheaper than alternative safer sprays these were widely used on crops with flowers on them.

Commenting on the remit Mr Clinch said the DSIR and MAF were doing trials with chemicals but it was felt that Metasytox was a very satisfactory aphicide. The problem with the chemical was that it was sometimes improperly used.

Mr Robinson said the remit was far too sweeping. It was defeated 13:1.

BETTER LABELLING

Remit 28

That this conference continues to press the manufacturers of toxic agricultural and horticultural sprays to make better use of the labels on containers as an excellent medium to communicate the danger to bees and the best methods of application and correct timing to minimise these dangers.

Note: Some large containers have only very small labels with small print — suggest larger print. Suggest that the control of drift and evening spraying be recommended to reduce fatalities.

Mr Dickinson said the industry had a representative on the Agricultural Chemicals Board and that any representation should be made directly to the Board.

Mr Mitchell said education was important and he felt a symbol could be created to put on chemical cans to make it quite clear that the product was dangerous to bees. He also suggested that if there were individual farmers who repeatedly misused chemicals, that beekeepers could get together and ban hives from the vicinity of their farms.

Remit was carried 14:0.

CONTRACTORS ONLY

Remit 29

That all chemicals other than domestic, toxic to bees (*apis Mellifera*), used for the control of insect pests be sold only to registered (licensed) spraying contractors on the showing of a permit issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr Cropp said he opposed the remit because it was impracticable. He said Federated Farmers would also oppose it because it meant every farmer would have to become a registered applicator or have to hire one - a sentiment shared by Mr Heinemann.

Mr Jansen said the key was to educate, not to regulate. He said he didn't want to put a straightjacket on orchardists any more than beekeepers would want one put on themselves. Mr Spence disagreed with this, stating there was nothing wrong with licences for deadly chemicals.

Mr Robinson said education was the answer and he felt the industry was well served by MAF in this respect. One speaker said the licensing of sprayers was coming anyway because of the danger to applicators and the public.

The remit was lost 11:3.

MORE WASP CONTROLS

Remit 30

That this conference continues to press for further efforts to control the European wasp.

There was general agreement on the need for further controls on wasps, with Mr Tweedale citing a Taihape beekeeper who lost one-third of his hives to wasps in a year. In the words of Mr Stanley, "Good seasons come and go but wasps go on forever".

The remit was carried 14:0.

OPEN RESTRICTED AREAS

Remit 31

That hives be allowed to remain on sites in restricted areas for the whole year, under special permits, to produce feed honey only.

Note: The removal of all the hives has created some bad overstocking problems in some areas.

Mr Robinson said that his area had been radically affected by the closure of the restricted district. He said the Restricted Area Committee met regularly and that the latest move was that certain areas in the district had been designated as pooling areas for hobbyists. He said nothing had been done for commercial producers but he had been through the district and he was staggered at the amount of tutu in certain areas.

Mr Jansen asked what would happen if feed honey was put into the packing process by mistake. He was told by Mr Robinson that MAF reports on the 50 or so poisonings which had taken place since the war had mostly come from comb honey — though there had been poisonings from extracted honey as well.

Mr Ashcroft didn't see how the remit could be policed — a viewpoint reinforced by Mr Cloake who said there was no guarantee that bees would keep feed honey in one section of the hive. The ultimate ramifications of this had to be considered he said, reminding delegates that the quality of export honey should be foremost in everyone's mind.

The remit was lost 4160:2248.

CHEAPER HOBBYIST SUPPLIES

Remit 32

That this conference urges beekeeping equipment suppliers to have small extractors etc. manufactured in New Zealand at a more realistic price than the ones from overseas.

Mr Bromell said the remit came from a group of hobbyists in the Wellington area who had great difficulty in obtaining extracting equipment.

Mr Jansen and Mr Mitchell spoke against the remit, saying that the conference was a forum for commercial beekeepers and that if it had been economic to make small extractors in New Zealand someone would have done so by now.

This attitude was dominant at the conference and the remit was lost 4:7.

HIGH SUGAR PRICES

Remit 33

That an immediate and thorough investigation be carried out by the Association to find out why New Zealand beekeepers are paying double world market prices for sugar and to have the situation rectified.

Mr Hutchison of the New Zealand Sugar Company was present at the conference and he explained the basis of New Zealand's sugar pricing arrangement. He said the vast majority of sugar sold in the world was sold in the countries of production or by contract at prearranged prices. The residual world market was therefore highly susceptible to small fluctuations in supply.

New Zealand, he said, buys most of its sugar on contract and only a little on the world market. He pointed out there had been no move in the local sugar price of 46 cents a kilogram since March 1975 and yet in that time the world market price had fluctuated from \$200 to \$1200 a tonne. Mr Hutchison said that he thought contractual buying was dangerous to New Zealand and he compared the stable price situation for sugar with that of coffee. He also warned delegates that the price quoted for raw sugar on the world market must also be considered with a mind for refining, transport and packaging costs.

In reply to a question from Mr Jansen as to whether beekeepers could feed raw sugar to their hives he said that raw sugar was 98 per cent cane sugar plus other organic materials. He said he could not advise on feeding raw sugar though

because it was specifically produced at an overseas mill under the best hygienic conditions for human consumption, and it was more costly than white sugar which was shipped to New Zealand as bulk industrial cargo. In reply to another question he said that the bulk raw sugar which came to New Zealand for refining would not be released for bee feeding by the company because it was always possible that some could end up being used for human consumption.

Given this lengthy explanation the remit was lost 14:0.

BECOME CONSERVATIONISTS

Remit 34

That the National Beekeepers' Association and beekeepers give support to Native Forest Action Council and Forest and Bird Society in saving our native bush as it is a very important source of honey which will not be there in the future if continued action is not taken and that the NBA seek representation at forest utilisation seminars.

Mr Jansen spoke in favour of the remit and said that he had heard that there were forest utilisation seminars being held up and down the country and that industry groups should seek representation at these seminars — a sentiment shared by Mr Mitchell who said that it was very important to beekeepers that the remaining forests were protected.

Mr Winslade said he was against the remit because there was ample opportunity for individuals to join conservation societies. It was a great mistake, he said, to endorse groups as a whole. While the industry agreed to conservation in principle, the membership of groups should be left to the individual member.

The remit was carried 13:1

SYMPATHY WITH MARUIA

Remit 35

This conference strongly supports any move to protect and preserve New Zealand native forests — e.g. In sympathy with the Maruia Declaration.

This remit was carried 12:1 with no debate.

RADIATION STERILISATION

Remit 36

That the DSIR look into ways of sterilising of B.L. contaminated equipment with radiation as used in medical centres.

Note: It is felt that a more efficient and cheaper way may be found by experimentation in this field in place of the present expensive and cumbersome unhygienic method.

Mr Foote, proposing the remit, said the industry was not making much progress with BL and if there was a way whereby material could be absolutely sterilised the industry would be making a big step forward.

The remit was carried 7:4

PLANTING BEE TREES

Remit 37

That this conference ask the government to give urgency to the development of a tree and shrub planting programme to take the place of nectar and pollen bearing species destroyed by the present Noxious Weed Extermination Policy.

This remit was amended after a short discussion to:

That this conference ask government to introduce an incentive scheme for planting trees and shrubs which supply nectar and pollen for bees.

The amendment was carried unanimously

CHOKING OF THE JOURNAL

Remit 38

That full minutes of Executive Meetings be circulated to members within New Zealand with the Beekeeper Journal.

There was a short discussion during which the secretary and others emphasised the cost, impracticality and questionable worth of the suggestion made in the remit.

It was defeated 13:1

HAWKES BAY CONFERENCE

Remit 39

That the 1978 conference of the Association be hosted by the Hawkes Bay branch.

This remit was carried without discussion.

SUGAR BEET BLUES

Additional Remit 1

That this industry request clarification of the decision of government in stopping investigations into the feasibility of establishing a sugar beet industry in Canterbury and strongly recommends a reappraisal of the position.

Proposing the remit, Mr S. Lyttle said some initial ground-work had been done on sugar beet but the government had stopped its investigations halfway through and nobody knew why.

Messrs Robinson and Stuckey argued that the main reason why a sugar beet industry was not being established was because the economics of it were questionable and because New Zealand had a moral and strategic obligation to support traditional sugar producers who normally lived in developing countries.

The remit was carried 8:5

NO MERGER PLANS

Additional Remit 2

That conference requests the NBA/HMA to jointly appoint a suitable person to receive submissions from all industry bodies and members and submit his findings and recommendations to the 1978 conference.

This remit was put up by the executive to test industry feeling about a proposed merger of the NBA and HMA. It was attacked by many speakers who felt that it should have been referred to the branches for discussion especially as the matter was so important.

Executive members Robinson and Stuckey explained that the executive had no recommendation to make on the matter and had expected a remit to come forward from the branches. For that reason they had put forward this additional remit to fulfil the guarantee they gave at the last year's conference that the matter would be discussed this year.

Delegates were generally unwilling to commit their branches on the matter and many were opposed to the concept of the merger.

The remit was lost 13:0

HIVE LEVY TO NBA

Additional Remit 3

That government be requested to proceed with legislation that would allow the NBA to collect and administer the hive levy.

There was some concern from delegates about this remit but this was allayed by the secretary and the chairman of the Marketing Board who told the conference that there were no difficulties involved and it would remove from the HMA the onerous task of collecting funds on behalf of the association. They said the government just wanted a clear indication from the conference that it approved of the NBA becoming the collection agency.

Mr Hayman endorsed these remarks and said the government had kept a space for legislation on the matter in the event that the industry approved of the move. He said that the HMA originally was made the collection agency out of short term legislative convenience and it was never intended to be a permanent arrangement.

The remit was carried 14:0

HIVE INSPECTION CHANGES

Additional Remit 4

That the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries be asked to amend the requirements of the annual hive inspection declaration form to cover only the number of colonies with disease and the apiaries in which they were located; the total number of colonies owned and any new sites not already registered.

Mr Haines said he spoke to Mr Watt some time ago and had felt for a long time that the change would give the MAF the information they required by reducing the amount of work involved for beekeepers.

Mr Cooke said he would personally receive such a remit very favourably, though whether the ministry would agree was another matter.

Remit carried 14:0

INVESTIGATE U.S. LOAN SCHEME

Additional Remit 5

That the government be asked to investigate how the USDA CCC loan scheme works.

Mr Stuckey said he didn't know much about the topic but felt this scheme could be a useful tool in the marketing of honey in New Zealand. He said he wanted approval for the executive to investigate the matter, which was just another form of marketing honey, and the industry should be looking at alternatives.

Mr Jansen said the scheme would oil the wheels of private exports and for that reason he supported it. Mr Robinson said that was not the intention of the scheme at all. The chairman said it might be the result of the scheme but he didn't know and thought the industry should be looking at alternatives.

Mr Ashcroft said he didn't know why the executive didn't go ahead and do the investigation. After all the executive was elected to look after the interests of the industry, he said.

The remit was carried 14:0



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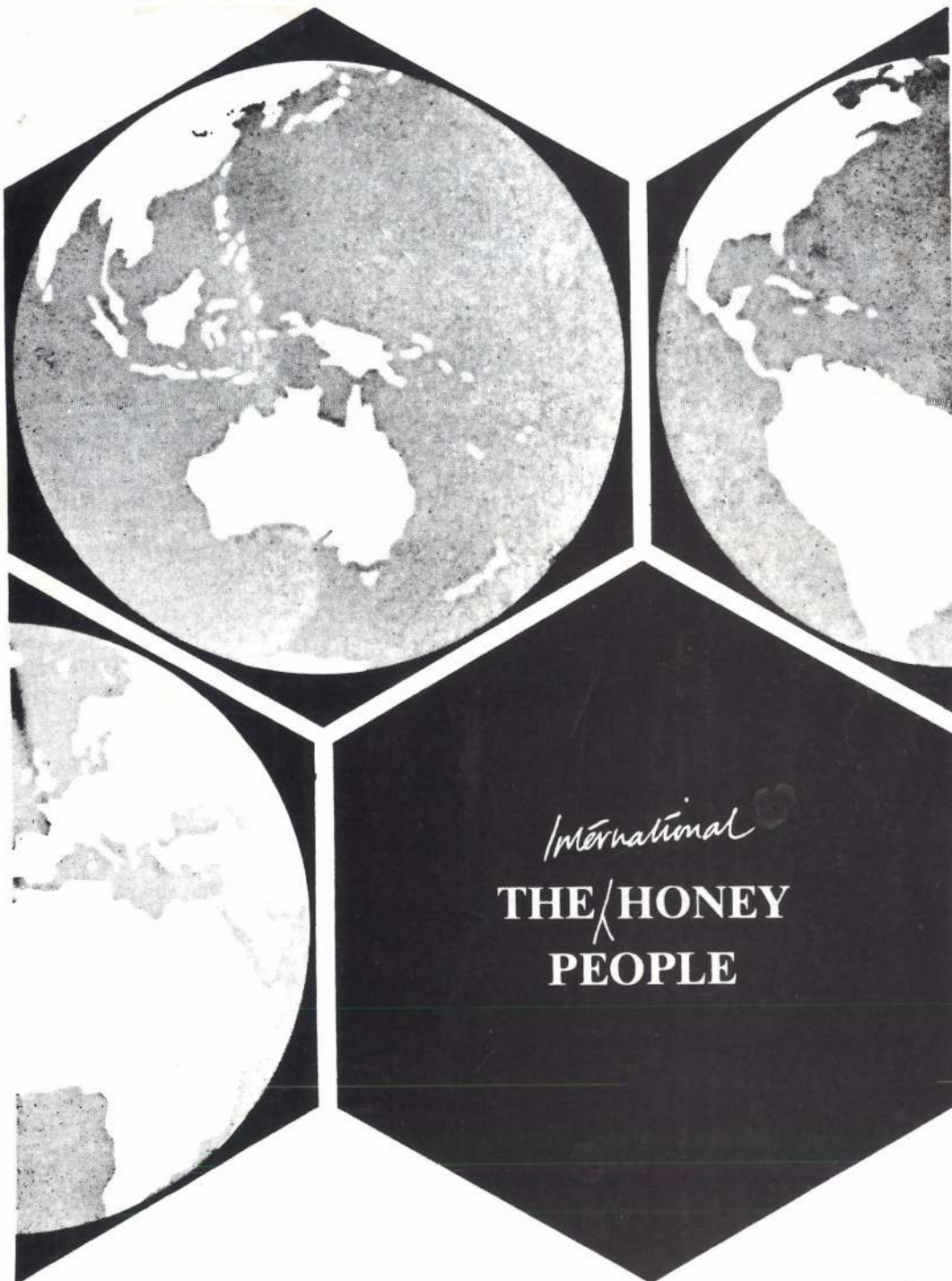
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