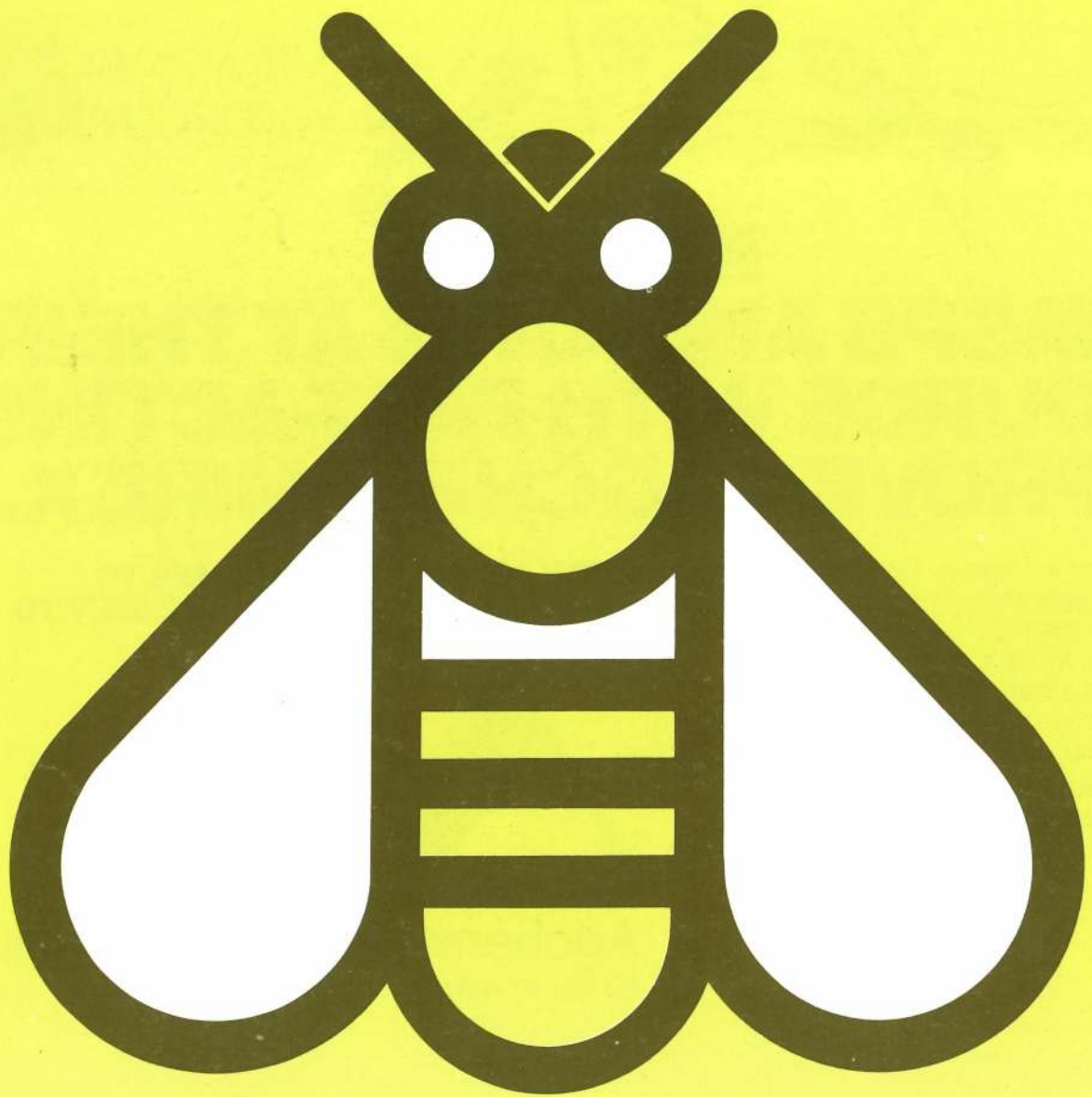


BAY OF PLENTY  
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THE NEW ZEALAND  
**beekeeper**



SEPTEMBER 1979

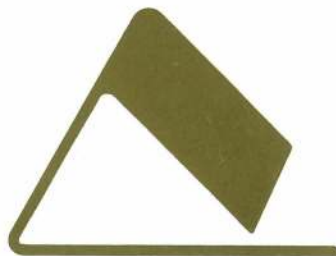


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# THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

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## One out of the bag . . .

THERE'S NO doubt about it, this year's National Beekeepers' Conference and annual general meeting was one out of the bag.

Under the expert guidance of former president Mike Stucky, delegates managed to discuss the crucial issues surrounding the restructuring of the HMA in such a way that a number of issues were resolved clearly and without too much recrimination. The vote of thanks to Mike at the end of the conference was obviously sincere: His chairmanship had performed well under pressure.

Nevertheless, this performance in the chair was not sufficient to save his presidency from the wrath of those HMA suppliers who wanted to cane the private packer members of the Honey Marketing Authority. As a private packer HMA member himself, and also up for re-election this month, Mike stood little chance.

Looking into the industry from the outside, it is difficult to explain the reasons for the deep mistrust held by many beekeepers for their elected represent-

atives. And while no-one came to blows at this year's conference, the atmosphere of distrust permeated some issues.

Anger is a normal reaction in many industries after a bad year and it falls to the industry politicians to carry the can. But in the beekeeping industry, the ill-feeling runs deeper. Anger is one thing and mistrust another.

With so many vital decisions being made this year with regard to the authority, it is fortunate that the new presidency has no marketing taint whatsoever. Also, Paul Marshall's background as departmental advisory officer and beekeeper gives him a deeper understanding of the politics and structures of the industry than other possible presidents.

It is to be hoped that all beekeepers will approach the issues of the next year with the same open-minded attitude with which Paul Marshall is fortunately endowed. Without trust and a willingness to accept compromise, progress — whatever direction it takes — will be impossible to achieve.

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of a subscription of the NZ Beekeeper.

# Librarian honoured with life membership

CHRIS DAWSON'S elevation to life membership of the National Beekeepers Association was a very popular move. As honorary librarian for the association since the establishment of the library some 15 years ago, he had become known and respected by beekeepers throughout the country. In moving that Mr Dawson should be so elevated, Mr Mervyn Cloake said that he had known Mr Dawson ever since he was a small child when Chris used to come out to his grandfather's place and talk bees.

"Ever since then Chris has had a great interest in the future of the industry. He has had a special interest in hobbyist beekeepers, but also been tremendously helpful to the commercial sector. He is forever experimenting with new techniques and the results of these experiments have saved us thousands and thousands of hours of experimentation on our part.

"Most beekeepers will not have known Chris in this capacity, they will only have known him as librarian. He has been in this capacity ever since the library was started in 1962. As such he has been an excellent person to work with and his judgement is very accurate. He has an efficient system going in the library and I hope this system will continue."

Ivan Dickinson seconded the motion that Chris Dawson should be a life member. He said that on many occasions Chris had contributed to the Southland and Otago annual convention, bringing big cases of books to these occasions and assisting with technical queries which arose from time to time.

Harry Cloake said he felt it would be incorrect if he did not add his contribution towards the presentation of the life membership award. He said he did not think anyone living outside South Canterbury would be aware of the experimental work that Chris had done for the industry as a whole.

"It is quite remarkable that a hobbyist should have given so much assistance to the commercial sector. I do remember when Chris quite cunningly got the finance for a library to be established. That it is now one of the best beekeeping libraries in the world, is testimony to his success."

In accepting the accolade, Mr Dawson said that his work as a librarian had been a work of love and that it had given him great pleasure. It has been so successful, he said, that his reports to

each year's conference had become quite boring: Each report saying that a few more books had been borrowed, a few more bought and the finances were sounder than the year before.

"I accept the honour on behalf of all those who have made the library possible — the foundation life members and those who have donated books.

"That the association has chosen to

have honoured a hobbyist should not go unnoticed by the hobbyist section." Mr Dawson said that though he was handing over to John Heineman he would be continuing with the establishment of cassette library. He said that he thought that Mr Heineman was highly suited for the job, with a wife with library experience and with his personal experience as a successful beekeeper.

## Export standards tougher

from Timaru Herald, June 1979.

IMPORTERS OF New Zealand honey had tightened up entry requirements and it was essential that these were met by beekeepers, a honey quality expert, Mr Colin Rope, said in Timaru recently.

A Ministry of Agriculture apiarist advisory officer (quality standard) and a senior grader, Auckland-based Mr Rope was addressing the South Canterbury branch of the New Zealand Beekeepers Association.

He said that 2000 tonnes of honey from the annual crop of about 6000 tonnes was exported. Prices were high and increased production and future trading prospects were bright.

"It is therefore essential that the beekeepers take care with their product to ensure the various importing requirements are met," he said.

Mr Rope said that New Zealand honey was exported to many countries and the emphasis on quality characteristics varied from one nation to another.

"West Germany, for example, insists on a high level of natural enzymes being present in honey, that the microscopic pollen grains are representative

of the flower source of the honey and that no impurities are present.

"Honey not meeting these criteria may be classified 'industrial', used in the baking trade only and priced very low.

### Residue tests

"Japan is particularly concerned about honey sugar composition, and some honey sent there has been tested for agricultural chemical residues. Fortunately none was found.

Mr Rope said that France, Italy and Queensland required certification that the hives from which the honey was produced had a high standard of health.

It had been established that most New Zealand honey met the various importing requirements. It is generally of a very high quality.

"It is during the extracting and straining process that care must be taken not to impair quality," Mr Rope said. "Honey extracting plant must be designed so that the honey is finely strained without being overheated.

"Heat is the main culprit of early ageing in honey. It destroys the natural enzymes, causes sugar changes and makes the honey go dark and produces chemical changes which impair its often delicate flavour."

Mr Rope said that he had inspected several South Canterbury honey plants and found some to be already of a high standard necessary for extracting honey in large quantities without affecting its natural qualities. Others required some modification.

Mr Rope is working with MAF beekeeping advisers throughout New Zealand to assist the industry to maintain the standards of New Zealand honey which is already fetching premium prices overseas.

### Newly-appointed librarian

Mr Heineman has now taken over as Honorary Librarian for the N.B.A. Mr Dawson will continue with the cassette library. The address for the library is:

Mr M.J. Heineman,  
Box 112,  
Milton, Otago.  
Phone 4613 (Res.) 4614 (Bus.)

# THE GREAT RESTR

## 1. What the HMA told hive levy payers

THE FOLLOWING is a slightly abridged version of a paper entitled, "The honey industry and the future of the Honey Marketing Authority", which was distributed to all hive levy payers in the first week of July.

The future functions and operations of the New Zealand Honey Marketing Authority were considered by the board at a recent authority meeting. A discussion paper was prepared, and after deliberations, six options were set.

The discussion paper is summarised as follows:

- The authority's financial requirements coupled with inflation, are of ongoing concern.
- The time has come to review the authority's present operations to ensure that it continues on a viable course.
- Traditionally, the authority has operated as an industry organisation, buying in all extracted honey offered to it, and reserving to itself the sole right of exporting extracted honey. This function, coupled with the base price stabilisation scheme, meant that the authority could act as a buffer against years of either unduly high or low domestic production, by smoothing out returns from its marketing operations.
- The basis of this role is founded on the following prerequisites:
  - ★ A funding system borne by the industry as a whole and/or
  - ★ Complete control over exports

It is not possible for the authority to continue carrying out its industry stabilisation functions i.e. acting as a buyer of last resort and accepting all honey offered unless it is

supported by one or other of these two requirements, and clearly its ability to so operate would be enhanced if it were founded on both.

- The abolition of the seals levy did away with the first requisite, while the increasing move towards private exports is undermining the second. These two developments, coupled with continued inflation, have brought the authority to a point where it can no longer carry out its industry responsibilities, unless some changes are made.
- The traditional operations of the authority require working capital of up to about \$1.5 million. The minister of finance has indicated that he is prepared to match the authority's own capital by a similar amount of Reserve Bank overdraft, but that there will be no long term assistance at a greater level than this.
- In other words, if the authority's equity is \$500,000 then a maximum advance of \$500,000 would be available from the Reserve Bank. The authority's equity at last Balance date was under \$600,000 and it is only because our equity was previously higher that we have continued to enjoy an overdraft limit of \$700,000.
- Temporary extensions above this limit have been granted in the past, but the minister of finance has made it clear that no further extensions will be given for the purpose of enabling the authority to carry out its industry-wide functions, unless the authority's equity is increased, and he has suggested that this is the responsibility of the whole industry.
- With continued inflation, the authority's own working capital requirements will continue to increase. If throughput

turn to page 8

## 2. What the chairman then had to say

The Authority circular dated July 3 referred to a "discussion paper" which was summarised. The paper was a set of urgent submissions made by the government representative for the consideration of the board. This point was not made clear in the circular.

The position may be best clarified by quoting the last three of the 20 points set out in the paper by Mr Hayman:

18. I have laid these points out before members fairly fully because they are of great importance, especially having regard to the government's financial stake in the authority, and the resultant responsibility on the government to ensure that the authority's operations remain tenable and viable, or else that suitable alternative arrangements are made.

19. I would ask that authority

members give these matters their earnest consideration as we will need to determine where to proceed from here. It seems to me that conference should be given the chance to consider the options and alternatives available, and that either the next authority elections, or else a referendum, determine the future direction of the industry.

20. In this regard the question of voting strength at authority elections arises, and it is essential that the fairest possible voting system should be used to test the industry's feelings on what is perhaps the most important issue for the industry since the 1950's.

The board agrees that the matters raised are of great importance.

From my own involvement in the marketing field I feel very optimistic about

the value of markets available. The industry is now strong enough and has enough marketing ability among its producers to enable it to operate successfully in any marketing direction it chooses to take.

The industry should be able to make clear decisions. We are choosing nothing more than systems of selling. These should serve the needs of the country and yield value to the producers.

I believe that both in our decision making and in our marketing, government involvement should be minimal. Government appears to support that view.

Let us hope that our decisions will be profitable for the beekeepers of New Zealand.

July 11, 1979

Percy Berry,  
Chairman  
NZ Honey Marketing Authority

# UCTURING DEBATE

## 3. What the industry conference decided

THE HONEY Marketing Authority will never be the same again. Removed of its obligation to accept honey from all comers and with a strong mandate to end the present stabilisation scheme, the HMA looks set for a year of major change.

The precise nature of the changes and how they will be decided, is a matter for the HMA board to determine. But since the 1979 industry conference, the authority has only had a clear mandate to operate in two areas: As a marketing outlet for its regular suppliers and as a regulator of honey exports.

The restructuring debate at the 1979 conference began with the tabling of three notices of motion – one each from the Waikato, South Canterbury and Bay of Plenty branches. But after a general discussion on each of these notices of motion the chairman, Mr Stuckey, ruled that the conference should discuss a number of broad principles relating to stabilisation and marketing.

The conclusions the conference reached on these matters

would not be binding because they had not been discussed at branch level, he said, but they would be useful in assisting the HMA board and the industry to come to grips with the issues that confronted it.

In the event, however, most of the decisions made by the conference were so clear-cut that there is little doubt that they will be taken as an accurate guide to producer thinking by both the government and the authority.

The debate was prompted by a paper posted to all hive levy payers in early July by the HMA. This paper, which was circulated too late for its content to be discussed by branch remit meetings, gave notice of major decisions which would have to be made by the HMA board during the following year.

The government representative on the HMA, Mr Don Hayman, told the conference that it was necessary for the board and the government that the conference gave them its thinking on a fundamental series of questions. The first of these was:

### Does the industry want any form of import control?

**Robin Jansen:** "Let's give it a go with no export regulations. A board costs money and most people are sick of over-regulation."

**Ray Robinson:** "It would be very foolish to have no controls at all. I don't know what Mr Jansen is complaining about, he's totally free to export now – the only restriction on him is a minimum price."

Mr Robinson said that he agreed there was a need to restructure the HMA, but that there was not a need to do away with everything – the result would be chaos.

After Mr Jansen had made another comment, Mr Stuckey told the conference that he was looking for the fullest possible debate on the matter, so that the industry would know where it was going.

**Mr Hayman:** "We need to have some indication of what is going to happen for the rest of the year. I think the authority will have to be released from its obligation to accept all honey offered. This will be essential if the conference is not willing to endorse a hive levy to finance the authority's operations."

*Mr Stuckey then said the export control question had to be resolved*

*first. He put it to the vote and all except two persons present were in favour of having some form of export controls in force.*

### The second question was whether the industry should continue to have an income stabilisation scheme.

The debate on the stabilisation scheme was kicked off by a question from one member who wished to know what would happen to stabilisation funds in the future – would they become the property of the HMA?

**Mr Hayman** said it was for the industry to decide whether they wanted a stabilisation scheme. The government scheme was imposed in 1975 when prices sky-rocketed, but that if the industry did not want a scheme, he said he was sure the government would look at it.

There would be many methods of running a stabilisation scheme, said Mr Hayman who went ahead and outlined a possible scenario:

"There could be a Honey Export Control Board which would decide what the minimum export price for honey would be in any given year. This board would need a government member to ensure the interests of the consumer were protected.

"The board would also settle upon a trigger price, a figure above which 50 per cent of returns would be creamed off. These funds would be set aside for stabilising upward those export prices which did not reach a board-set base price.

"There would probably be requests for individual producer accounts, into which and from which small amounts would go each year. We could operate these accounts on an individual basis, but I can't see the advantage of them – we would look into them if required.

"Comb honey and honey dew would only come into the stabilisation scheme if they wanted to. They may well be happy to take the good prices with the bad.

"The board would be funded by a hive levy, but its costs of operation would be a good deal less than the HMA."

One speaker immediately set out to explain that stabilisation funds were a bad investment because, at present rates of inflation they were eroding at a minimum of 14 per cent a year.

Mr Hayman then explained that doing away with the stabilisation scheme meant doing away with the HMA guaranteed minimum price – that there was no way of funding this without control over exports or an industry-wide levy.

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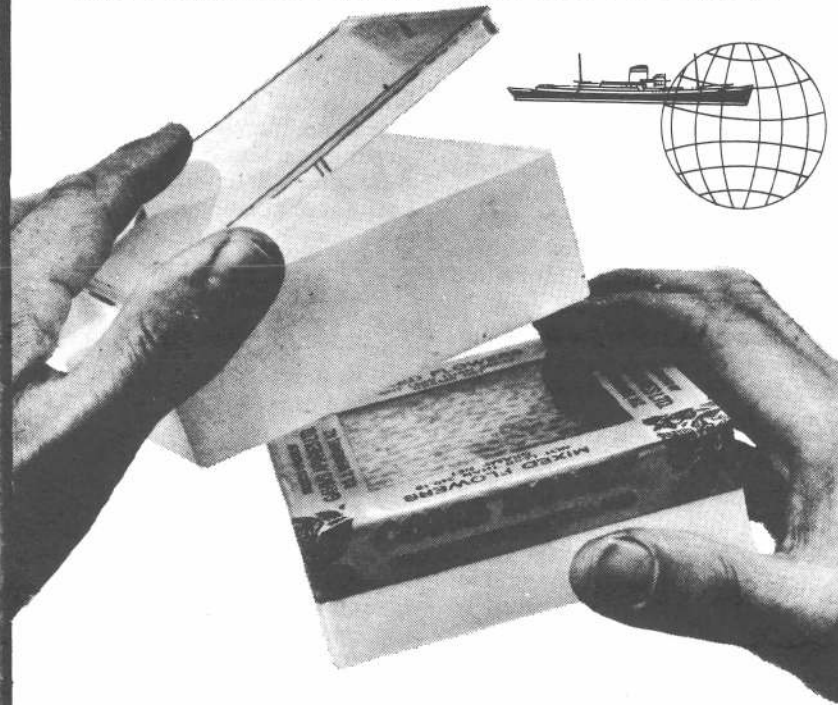
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After further discussion about inflationary losses on stabilisation funds, **Harry Cloake** raised the question of the Australian minimum pricing system which had run into trouble when it had set an unrealistically high minimum on a falling market – that by the time the Australian Board had revised the price downward, many exporters had lost the opportunity to sell at prices which were quite reasonable.

**Keith Herron** said that he didn't believe in stabilising export prices because a minimum only became a maximum and stabilised prices down hill.

**Percy Berry**: "Mr Cloake reminded me of the Australian experience. The Australians had a very real problem setting a price on a falling market. Unfortunately, they let everyone know what their minimum price was – that's where their problems came from."

**Mr McKenzie** said that he didn't think the conference should get hung up on the precise function of the Export Control Board. "Let's not go so far as to assume that the board will set minimum prices – it might just be an advisory board for exporters."

**Mervyn Cloake** said that in some situations stabilisation was a good idea but in other areas it was not. "In the present concept, stabilisation is a good thing, but if we go to the other extreme with strong individual exporters, it would be more than likely that we would not want a stabilisation scheme because the boom profits would be best invested in the individual exporting companies."

**Fred Bartrum**: "I oppose a stabilisation scheme. Any money from a good sales year is better off in my bank. I also feel we don't need a guaranteed price. I'm prepared to take the ups and the downs – I feel there'll be less government interference if we're running our own ship."

**Robin Jansen**: "It's a golden opportunity to throw off the shackles of government. Our industry is incredibly small and I don't think we need any government interference at any level."

**Bruce White (NSW Dept of Ag)**: "The Australian Department of Agriculture brought in export price controls because price cutting between beekeepers was threatening the export market. They had no experience in this sort of exercise and at first they set the price level ridiculously high. They also originally set the price on £ sterling which meant that movements in currency values distorted its value in \$ Australian. You could say

they came unstuck – though they've sorted it out now.

"In Australia there is also a levy for promotion, paid by all private packers. The local levy is higher than the export levy – at .1c/kg for export and .4c/kg for local market honey.

"There is no stabilisation fund whatsoever."

*The chairman then put the matter to the vote. All except one member present were against a stabilisation scheme for honey prices.*

**The third question was whether the industry was happy that the authority should determine what honey it should accept.**

**Mr Hayman** said it was necessary that the HMA, if it was not going to be supported by a levy or a total control on exports, should relinquish its responsibility as buyer of last resort. This meant, he explained, that it should be free to refuse troublesome honey from producers who were not regular suppliers.

This, he said, would leave the authority free to buy honey from anyone it wanted, but only obliged to accept troublesome honey if it was getting a producer's whole crop.

"The HMA," said Mr Hayman, "has accepted all honey only because it has a monopoly on exports. Now that it is deprived of that monopoly it can't continue as a buyer of last resort."

In reply to a question, Mr Hayman said the role of gate-sales and their relationship to a producer's throughput was difficult to determine. But the principle was that the authority must get the best honeys produced by its suppliers if it was to get good results on the export market.

**Mr Bushby** asked whether the HMA would put export restrictions on a supplier if it had refused to buy part of his crop. **Mr Hayman** replied that this would be a matter for the board to decide. "But if the board has the power to approve exports, it wouldn't be fair to set a high minimum price if the honey couldn't be sold locally."

**Mr Jansen** said it was his belief that there was no such thing as a troublesome honey. It was all a matter of how well a product was marketed.

**Mr Winslade** asked why it would not be possible for the board to accept problem honeys on behalf of a producer. **Mr Wicht** said he could not see any problems with this approach.

**Mr Jeffrey** also agreed that problem honeys could be handled on a straight

purchase basis – especially small lines.

There was some discussion at this point about the affect of this decision on the producers of the West Coast, with **Harry Cloake** inferring that this was the origin of most of the problem honey. **Mr Wicht** later explained that although most of the 300 tonnes of problem honey came from the West Coast, some of it has been carried over from the year before.

HMA chairman **Percy Berry** then told the meeting that there was no panic with regard to the future of the authority's operations, so long as things were taken carefully. "The question of a new building in Auckland is not one which will be taken lightly. We have also bought 12½ acres at Pleasant Point. There is no way the Health Department is going to push us around to suit their time-table."

*Mr Stuckey put the issue to the vote and it was unanimously agreed by the meeting that the authority should have the right to determine what honey it should accept.*

**The final question was whether the industry wanted the HMA to continue with:**

- The sole right to export?
- With a hive levy to finance its operations?
- With a production levy?
- With a capital levy?

The debate on this final question was the least conclusive part of the restructuring debate. Partly, because the future role of the HMA was no longer clear and partly because the issues were more complex.

**Mr Herron** led the debate by suggesting that the first alternative really meant total acquisition of the honey crop.

**Mr Jeffrey** said he thought the present system of exporting was the best, but with a levy to fund administration. "At least this way it would show competitiveness – where the better prices are."

**Percy Berry** said it was not possible to have a levy on exports; that it was normal practice to in fact encourage exports with tax incentives. "It's not as if the authority cannot carry on. If the government liked to be reasonable, the authority is not in an impossible position – nevertheless, if its throughput continues to decline, it could find itself in a very unprofitable position. "In general, the more expenses there are between the producer and the consumer, the more difficult it is for the producer. The more direct the line, the more profitable it is for the producer."

**Mr Stuckey:** "If there is no sole right to export and no levy on production, there must be a levy on suppliers. This would be very expensive for suppliers. It has also been suggested by Mervyn Cloake that there should be a one-off \$1 a hive capital finding levy for two years."

**Mr Cloake:** "There is no way we could go back to the situation which used to pertain where the HMA is an industry body, available to anyone who wished to use it at any time. A capital fund envisages loaning the authority working capital. This is not a stabilisation fund. You thus become a mortgagor of the authority and you get your money back when you leave."

**Mr Belin:** A lot of comb honey producers would not be happy with a big levy. They have accepted the existing levy in the interests of industry unity.

**Mr Cloake** said the details could be worked out, but **Mr Jansen** said it was his view that **Mr Hayman** was determined to have producers pay a levy.

**Mr Hayman** replied saying that if the industry wanted private enterprise and a relaxation of controls, it would be in tune with the mood of the present

government – "but if you want controls and regulations, then you will need a levy tax or finance to fund it."

**Mr Jansen** retorted that a levy regardless of its name was a levy. He said he was against another levy backed by compulsion to fund an organisation which its chairman had already said was inefficient.

**Mr Bartrum** said he was against levies in general, but he could be persuaded by a capital levy which was a 'oncer'.

**Mr Stuckey** said that there would be no need for a levy if the conditions of supply were altered. In a good year, he explained, it might be necessary to restrict advance payment to (say) only 20c a kg until returns from export were realised. "It will have to be a condition of supply, that over a certain quantity, the initial payout would have to be reduced."

**Mr Percy Berry** said that the authority could go on forever as it was now – the only question was the level of profitability that its suppliers would accept. "There's no cut-off date, there's no cut-off price. No amount of levies can hide the real price you get for your honey – that's the only issue and there's no panic."

"The HMA can survive without any government money – but it will mean that suppliers will be later getting their money. This year we won't be saying in our conditions of supply that you will get 50c/kg as soon as your full drums arrive at our depot."

**Mr Hayman** said that **Mr Berry's** explanation was not quite correct. "Because of inflation, the value of the authority's working capital would reduce. Payments to producers would get smaller and smaller and later and later. As a result, the number of suppliers would fall off and the authority would finally grind to a halt."

*The question was put to the vote:*

- (a) *Sole right to export: Four in favour, rest against.*
- (b) *Levy based on production: None in favour.*
- (c) *Levy on hives (75c/hive/year): None in favour.*
- (d) *Capital funding levy to provide additional working capital (say, \$750 000): 31 in favour, 32 against.*

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## NO TO DISEASE-FREE BEES

Dear Sir,

In a letter to the Editor in the June issue of "The New Zealand Beekeeper", Mr C.A. Stratford of Comvita Apiaries, Te Puke, claims he has a strain of disease-resistant bees. He describes how in 1975 he collected two colonies of bees from the Pongakawa district, the descendants of which have apparently never shown disease. As evidence of this disease-resistance Mr Stratford reports how in 1976 he introduced one of his queens to a colony supposedly infected with American Brood Disease and that within three months this colony was completely free of bee disease.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries totally refutes Mr Stratford's claim of disease-resistant bees; a claim that is misleading and irresponsible.

Mr Stratford's isolated account of "proving" disease resistance is uncorroborated and without any scientific basis. Even assuming that a desirable disease-resistant colony was discovered, existing queen rearing/breeding methods employed in New Zealand would rapidly result in outcrossing and a swamping of the genetic character trait.

Mr Stratford's account of experimenting with American Brood Disease and his shifting of diseased hives is in apparent conflict with his obligations under the Apiaries Act 1969. Beekeepers are required to report "forthwith" all cases of American Brood Disease to the Ministry's apiary inspectors. The movement of diseased hives is prohibited without an inspector's approval. Mr Stratford's "statement of hive inspection" furnished to the Ministry in 1976 indicated that he had detected no American Brood Disease.

If Mr Stratford's letter to the Editor is true in substance, it indicates a flagrant disregard for the law of the land and the welfare of fellow beekeepers. The disease control measures contained in the Apiaries Act 1969 were adopted in full consultation with the National Beekeepers' Association.

At this late stage the Ministry is taking steps to verify the incidents as quoted

by Mr Stratford, and if justified the Ministry will take appropriate action.

Yours,

**G.M. Walton,**  
Advisory Services Division,  
Wellington.

## HONEY INDUSTRY AND ITS FUTURE

Dear Sir,

It can be reasonably assumed that the overwhelming conference rejection of government proposals to establish an industry levy on hives or honey, to enable the Honey Marketing Authority to continue its trading operations, will necessitate alternative arrangements to ensure an orderly transition to another form or forms of marketing, aimed at maintaining industry control over its own industry.

By advocating control of our own industry, I mean just that. We must ensure that with the restructuring of the H.M.A., we don't encourage entrepreneurs, such as, one major Auckland food processing company, which is currently expressing interest in honey packing and export.

As an advocate of free enterprise, I don't believe we should attempt to legislate or regulate our industry with the aim of precluding outside participation in our industry. Instead we should aim to do the job ourselves in a more efficient and businesslike manner than has been achieved in the past.

The current demise or difficulty being experienced by the H.M.A. has, in my opinion, been brought about by its inability over many years to function efficiently while sheltering behind the protective wall of its regulatory powers, instead of purely on a basis of efficiency and profitability.

The present dilemma facing the H.M.A. with the need to engage in major upgrading of its packaging facilities, needs to be approached with a great degree of caution. The H.M.A. should not allow itself to be stampeded by the demands of the health authorities and pressure groups etc.

I support, in principle, the establishment of a new factory and processing plant in the South Island. This would allow the Authority to carry out

an orderly transition to a producer controlled organisation, responsible to its suppliers, while having no jurisdiction over the other sections of the Industry.

While I see a need for such a packing plant or plants in the South Island, due to production exceeding local market requirements, a totally different situation applies in the North Island.

In establishing new packing facilities in the South Island, I believe close co-operation should be sought from potential and existing suppliers, to ensure its suitability, and future continuity before any final commitments are made.

The proposal to sell the Authority's building in Auckland has much merit, as I see it to be an increasing liability to the Industry. However, the current proposal to build a new factory in East Tamaki will, I believe, prove to be a disaster of the first magnitude. The knowledge I have of the proposal, leads me to believe the all up cost will exceed \$400,000.

The above figure is an estimate only to provide a basis for arriving at some reasonable conclusions: The throughput would obviously need to be in the vicinity of 1000-1500 tonnes to cover overheads. The average throughput of packed honey related to the existing H.M.A. Auckland factory is in the vicinity of 400 tonnes.

In the North Island, there will be increasing competition for supplies between packer and packer, and packer and H.M.A., with the freeing up of bulk and private exports. The new facility could well find itself, as in past years, having little honey available and in a totally unviable situation.

Notice must be taken of the fact that there is a reasonable balance between production and local consumption in the North Island, leaving little need for further major facilities as proposed above. Emphasis should be placed on exporting New Zealand surplus direct from the South Island. In the short term while the Authority continues to trade, an unprofitable Auckland packing facility as proposed will need to be subsidised by the lowercost, high through-put unit planned for Pleasant Point.

To meet the requirement of the fewer

traditional North Island H.M.A. suppliers, no doubt a much scaled down facility could be established in Auckland that would at least have potential to be eventually taken over by a co-operative.

It would then follow that a regulatory board would be set up with powers limited to fixing minimum export prices, and providing advisory services, a minimum levy on exports to finance above services. Any other services to individual exporters should be charged for.

My ambition is to ensure a great reduction of regulation taking place within our Industry, to facilitate a climate in which individual ambition and creativity can once again provide the impetus needed to get our Industry back onto a sound footing.

I have no ambition to impose my ideas or beliefs on others in an arbitrary form as happens in government or statutory board control, but I will continue to strive for the right to manage my own business with the absolute minimum of regulations that are deemed necessary to afford the protection of individual rights and a system of orderly export marketing.

Yours,

**Robin L. Jansen,**  
General Manager,  
Taupo Honey Centre.

### AMERICAN LOOKING FOR SUMMER JOB

Dear Sir,

This letter is to inform you of my interest and wish to work with one or more beekeepers in New Zealand. I will be available for work in New Zealand between September and January.

Recently, I graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in commercial beekeeping. Presently I am working as a regional bee inspector for the state of Indiana and working with my own bee business.

I have specialised in queen production and plan to be a commercial beekeeper in the United States. I have worked in queen production and honey production and have worked for the largest beekeeper in Scotland.

It would be interesting to work with one or more people from your country who are involved with bees. The educational experiences that this would provide would be great and the opportunity to visit and travel in your country would also be exciting. On the other hand, I believe that with my experience and concentrated training in commercial beekeeping that I

possibly would have something to offer someone in your country too.

If you can help with a contact in any way I sure would appreciate this. I am enthusiastic about working with bees and would like to have the opportunity to work with a beekeeper in New Zealand.

Yours,

**Bruce C. Otte,**  
2634 California Street,  
Columbus, Indiana 47201,  
U.S.A.

### THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT

Dear Sir,

I would like to thank, through your column, all those who supported me in the recent NBA elections.

I look forward to representing all beekeepers during my term on the National Executive.

Yours,

**Steve Lyttle**  
South Canterbury.

### NO LONGER A WHITEMAN

Dear Sir,

I am no longer associated with Whiteline Queens and would appreciate your making this fact public through the 'NZ Beekeeper'.

I believe it is in the interests of the beekeepers with whom I have been associated in the last 2 years as manager of Whiteline Queens to be informed of this.

My part, though short, in servicing the beekeeping fraternity has been most enjoyable.

To avoid having mail readdressed would you please also note that my address is now 30 Meadowpark Crescent, Tikipunga, Whangarei.

Yours,

**Don Gibbons**  
Whangarei.

### EXPORTS OF BULK HONEY

Dear Sir,

It has been drawn to the attention of the Executive Secretary that the text in the paragraph under the heading "Exports of Honey by Commercial Members" was not strictly correct.

The comment on bulk honey should have read that the support given by the 1977 Conference was not greater – in fact less support was forthcoming at the 1978 Conference than had been given at the 1977 Conference.

Yours,

**G.A. Beard,**  
Executive Secretary,  
National Beekeepers Association.

### DISEASE-FREE QUEEN

Dear Sir,

Mr Stratford in his letter to the June "Beekeeper" claims to have proved that he has a strain of bees resistant to foul brood.

However, the fact that one infected hive was found to be disease-free after the introduction of a new queen does not prove the existence of a disease resistant strain, but only a single resistant queen.

How this desirable genetic combination is maintained when subject to the chances of natural mating he does not say, and no mention is made of artificial insemination or isolated mating areas to keep his reputed resistant strain pure. Without control over mating, each generation would have to be checked to see if resistance had been inherited by deliberately infecting a hive with disease!

I believe that selective breeding of bees for disease resistance or tolerance to be worthwhile, especially to widespread and insidious diseases such as Nosema. However, I doubt that any individual N.Z. beekeeper has the required thousands of hives from which to select breeding stock, a good understanding of genetics, skill at queen breeding and plenty of spare time for record keeping.

Would it be asking too much to suggest that a group of interested beekeepers and the M.A.F. could co-operate in this area to benefit the whole industry.

Yours,

**Derek Bettsworth**  
Opononi

### STICKING BY STUCKEY

Dear Sir,

The recent Christchurch conference had some very disturbing facets.

It seems many South Island and some North Island beekeepers have developed a 'lemming like' attitude to the future of the N.Z. honey industry.

A few negative industry politicians have united many beekeepers by using fear of what might happen to the H.M.A. if non-supplier members are not removed. These beekeepers now believe the non-supplier members are deliberately promoting policies to bring the H.M.A. down, for their own advantage.

Let us look at the past year of the present board's administration: They have gained new markets for our honey at record prices. All the honey taken in this year has been sold, plus honey carried over from the previous year.

They have resisted attempts by a very

unhelpful government to get them to spend a lot of money on advertising in N.Z. to sell honey cheaply on an already depressed domestic market.

The Minister of Finance refused Reserve Bank credit which the H.M.A. needed to pay for the honey intake, and this caused severe problems in payments to suppliers, many of whom had to wait three months for their first payment. During this time every endeavour was made to arrange alternative finance. Eventually arrangements were made with a merchant bank, but by this time payments had been made out of income.

In spite of all the difficulties faced by the board, a record payout of 85 cents per kilo is to be made – a remarkable outcome from a board suspected of wanting to bring the H.M.A. to its knees.

Some think the ministers and their departments lost faith in the H.M.A. because they knew it was now dominated by non-suppliers. I believe if there was any loss of faith, it was because some people who did not want the H.M.A. changed in any way, wrote many letters of doom to the ministers.

There is no real evidence that the three non-supplier members are working against the suppliers' interests. In my opinion, they are bending over backwards to make the H.M.A. a profitable venture; to make it a price maker instead of a price taker.

The South Island produces the best white clover honey in the world and I would like to see every kilo of it packed there and exported to world markets at the highest prices obtainable.

The problem I believe lies in the North Island. The Auckland operation hangs like a lead balloon over the industry with the wrong building on the wrong site and a packing plant needing thousands spent on it. Big changes will have to be made here with considerable study of alternatives to better suit the North Island needs with, I hope, less capital investment.

The coming H.M.A. elections will probably be the most important in its history.

Mr Stuckey is seeking re-election and Mr Cloake is seeking to regain supplier control.

In a letter to The Apiarist, he suggested more honey should have been sold on the local market to help the H.M.A.'s liquidity position. With honey specialising on the Auckland Province markets at 69 cents per 500 grams or 59 cents with an advertising coupon, one wonders whose liquidity would be solved.

Table drawn from the 1978 H.M.A. voting roll

| Voting groups | No. of people | Votes | % of total |
|---------------|---------------|-------|------------|
| 100           | 5             | 500   | 7.97       |
| 90+           | 0             | 0     | 0.00       |
| 80+           | 3             | 241   | 3.84       |
| 70+           | 3             | 222   | 3.54       |
| 60+           | 9             | 556   | 8.87       |
| 50+           | 8             | 428   | 6.82       |
| 40+           | 27            | 1160  | 18.50      |
| 30+           | 21            | 690   | 11.00      |
| 20+           | 39            | 931   | 14.85      |
| 10+           | 61            | 896   | 14.29      |
| 10-           | 129           | 647   | 10.30      |

### VOTING ROW JUST EMOTION

Dear Sir,

There has been a great deal of fuss over the voting capacity of the large packers as the industry and the Minister now knows. The basis of the desire to change the voting is we understand, that the current system is inequitable to the smaller producer.

This is not so.

From this table you can see the following:

There are only five with a voting capacity of 100 votes each.

To out vote the 'BIG FIVE' a poll of only 8.67 per cent of the other votes need be cast.

For the BIG beekeepers to rule the roost, the largest 55 beekeepers (i.e. those having 1000 or more hives and 40 votes or more each) would have to block vote (Actually they would still

need assistance from a couple of 32 voters i.e. 800 hive men).

If 500 hives is the minimum for an income solely derived from beekeeping and 1500 plus hives, is BIG TIME, then the block 500 up to but not including 1500 hives (i.e. the 20 to 59 vote block) can out vote the 1500 plus hiveholders by 3209 to 1519 or 2.11 to 1.

The current system is clearly equitable. The entire charade has been based on ignorance and emotion.

We suggest there is no need for a change in the voting system and that the status quo gives equitable representation.

Yours,

**Robert Hale,**  
Tauranga

**Bryan E. Mitchell,**  
Hamilton

With all due respect to Mr Cloake, I will be very disappointed if the industry's only solution to the changes needed in the N.Z. Honey Marketing Authority to meet future financial and marketing problems and the challenges of the 1980's, is to bring an administrator of the 1960's with no modern overseas marketing experience, out of his semi-retirement to displace Mr Stuckey.

Mr Stuckey is trying to bring financial reward to suppliers to an H.M.A. which before non-supplier members were elected, showed every sign of lessening viability.

My vote will be for Mr Stuckey and I would urge voters to think carefully when voting. A vote for producer control could well mean a return to a payout in the 70/80 cents per kilo region.

Yours,

**Ray Robinson**  
Waihau

### CUSTOMWOOD GUINEAS

Dear Sir,

In reference to the article in the March 1979 Beekeeper entitled "A day in the life of a guinea pig or how Customwood killed my bees", it seems to me that the bees were the guinea pigs, not the beekeeper. The beekeeper experienced only an economic loss, the result of an expensive experiment in trying to cut costs; the result for the worker bees was suffering and death, perhaps more than we are able to know. A better title for the article might be "How I lost guineas trying to make guinea pigs out of bees"!

The article states that the beekeeper "was quite prepared to be a guinea pig". I wonder whether the bees were! The slant of the article seems to beg sympathy for the beekeeper. It is probably unnecessary to say where my sympathies lie!

Yours,

**Wendy MacPherson**  
Kataia

from page 4

remains constant and all other things remain equal, the rate of increase required will be similar to the rate of inflation.

As the increase in amounts available from the Reserve Bank will be limited, at least \$100,000 per year will need to be found by the authority.

- Unless the industry is prepared to assist in funding the authority's operations this amount would have to be held back from payout. To raise \$100,000 from 2000 tonnes throughput would require \$50 tonne or 5c kg, meaning that suppliers could be faced with permanently receiving 5c per kg less than realisations, while those supplying private packers or exporting direct receive their full amount.

- Clearly, suppliers to the authority cannot continue funding the authority to the extent required for it to be able to carry on performing its traditional functions. The present operations of the authority are, therefore, becoming untenable.

While there may be alternatives or variations, it is considered that the industry is faced with a choice of the following options:-

#### Option 1

The Honey Marketing Authority continues its present stabilising functions, which are:-

- ★ Buying all honey offered
- ★ Operating the guaranteed Base Price scheme
- ★ Operating the Stabilisation Reserve Fund.

This stabilisation role to depend upon an industry production or sales levy of 2c a kg or an increase in the Hive Levy of 55c a hive, to 72.5c.

#### Option 2

The Honey Marketing Authority continues its present stabilisation function as above, but without any levies, and with total control over honey exports, i.e. no private exports.

#### Option 3

District producer organisations or perhaps even a national producer organisation would be established by those beekeepers who wished to buy the Honey Marketing Authority's existing trading operations. These producer organisations would continue the HMA's present trading operations but would have no industry responsibilities and no guaranteed Base Price or Stabilisation Scheme.

Instead, the Honey Marketing Authority would operate an

industry wide export stabilisation scheme and export control functions.

#### Option 4

District producer organisations or a national producer organisation, would be established as in Option 3, with a Honey Export Control Authority but without any industry stabilisation scheme.

#### Option 5

District producer organisations or a national producer organisation would be established as in Option 3, but without any controls over the export of honey and no industry stabilisation scheme. The Honey Marketing Authority would be dissolved and its assets held in a fund administered by the Public Trustee who would act on the advice of the National Beekeepers' Association from time to time.

#### Option 6

The Honey Marketing Authority sells its existing operations, as is, where is, on the open market, and is then wound up and the funds administered as in Option 5.

#### Discussion

Unless a majority, as expressed through the ballot box, is prepared to grant the authority the right to levy the industry or to have the sole right of export, it is not reasonable or fair for regular suppliers, if they form less than half of the total number of commercial beekeepers, to enforce on the rest of the industry, either a levy or export controls, when the rest of the industry does not want these and is prepared to do without the authority's industry wide stabilisation functions.

If producer organisations do take over from the authority, the present guaranteed base price and stabilisation scheme will have to be discontinued, as it would clearly be unfair to require one sector only of the industry to have its income stabilised. The government considers that in this event an industry wide stabilisation scheme should be established, in line with its policy in respect of other primary industries.

This, however, is a matter for the industry itself to determine and the government should be hesitant to impose a stabilisation scheme on the whole industry against the majority's wishes, unless market realisations were threatening to soar to unprecedented levels as was the case in 1972/73.

2 July 1979  
Auckland

Curtis Wicht,  
General Manager,  
NZ Honey Marketing Authority

## BEEKEEPERS TECHNICAL LIBRARY

P.O. Box 423, Timaru  
Chris Dawson, Hon. Librarian

At Annual Conference, Mr John Heineman of P.O. Box 112, Milton, Otago was elected Honorary Librarian.

It is expected that the library will be relocated and working by the time this issue is published.

I recommend John to our members and hope he derives as much pleasure from his work as I have over the last 15 years.

May I express my thanks to those who have written and stated their appreciation. I am continuing the cassette tape library in the meantime.

Chris Dawson.

## MAORI AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

### *New development*

### Taupo Region

Development will commence shortly on 1200 ha in the Tihoi district, west of Lake Taupo. Parties interested in locating beehives on this Scheme should write to the District Officer, Department of Maori Affairs, Private Bag, Rotorua — with reference to the "Te Kohatu Scheme".

# Frank White, queen breeder par excellence

by Pippa Roberts

SIXTY-FOUR-year-old Frank White of Kamo has devoted most of his life to bees. Described as New Zealand's leading queen bee breeder, Frank sold his business two years ago and left behind a long and satisfied list of customers that had slowly been built up over many years.

Bees are in Frank's blood, and after 49 years of interest in them it wasn't that easy to suddenly just give them up. So he kept a few.

Frank says he still has a lot to learn about the little creatures, and in his retirement hopes he will have more time to think up ways of breeding even better bees.

There's a lot of things about the business that even Frank hasn't discovered and he's eager to know the solution to his unanswered questions.

The alliance between Frank White and bees started when he was just a 15-year-old boy at Whangarei Boys' High School. His interest took him to various beekeeping field days and he never hesitated at bringing home any bee swarms he might stumble across in his travels.

His parents had a lot to put up with in those early days. Like the time his father was kept an unwilling prisoner in the pig sty for several hours by an angry swarm.

But nothing deterred Frank who continued to foster his interest.

He left school during the depression. He had hoped to start a carpentering apprenticeship, but times were hard and instead he went straight into the serious business of beekeeping. He hawked off honey to various people to make a bit of money and then in 1935 started selling his product to local shops. That was the foot in the door Frank needed and he never turned back.

Twelve years later he started dabbling in queen bee rearing. Competition was making it increasingly hard to sell honey and Frank knew there was a market for queen bees as he had tried to buy some himself.

The business was slow to get off the ground. "After all," Frank explained, "the queens are the keepers' bread and butter. They're bound to be suspicious of a new person starting out."

It was hard work while Frank continued to work the honey and rear

queens at the same time. But they say that behind every good man, there's a woman, and in Frank's case that couldn't be more correct.

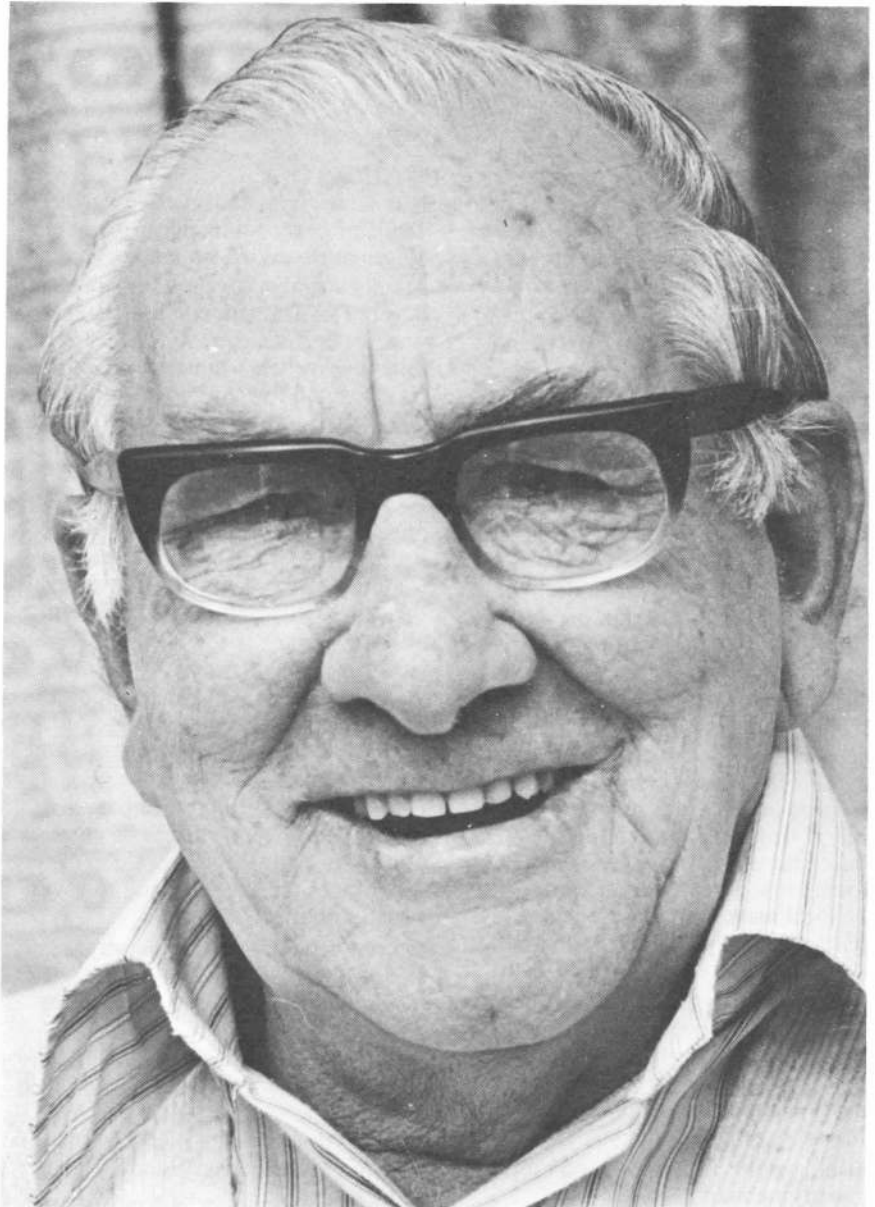
It took Thelma, his wife, several years to overcome the terrified feeling she had around the bees. But once she got used to them she shared the workload.

In the beginning the couple would work all day collecting honey, and then in the evening settle down to tacking gauze onto queen cages by hand in readiness for sending out orders.

And on top of that the Whites were raising a family. But they would always put the customer first and that entailed working till 11 p.m. some nights.

In the early stages of Frank's queen rearing, he would send out about 25 queens a day. By the time he sold his business in 1977 that figure was up to 250.

Frank was obviously reluctant to give away his secret to success, but he freely admitted it had taken him ten years to reach a stage where he no



*Mr Frank White.*

longer had to wear protective gear and could handle the bees without the fear of being stung.

To encourage this quiet strain of Italian bees, Frank had had to continually remove the savage bees but at the same time make sure he was retaining a high level of productivity.

Frank had about 1000 hives when he was on honey. He dropped back a little, and later built up about 2000 mating hives with 40 bigger hives for rearing the queen bee cells. He made his own queen cages and boxes.

Queen bee rearing was a seven day a week job from the end of August to the end of April, Frank said, and at no

“Everything has to be right,” he said. “You can’t go against the nature of the bee. It is very precise work that needs your heart and soul in it. If you’re going to take short cuts you won’t get results.”

Frank said he thought a person would be foolish to start queen rearing without producing honey at the same time.

Rearing had to be taken cautiously, he said. There was a lot of information that couldn’t be found within the covers of a book and would only come with experience.

Frank has sent orders all over New

Zealand from the Far North to the Far South. But he has never exported in a big way. He had set out to produce queens for the New Zealand market. There was enough demand for them and while that existed he did not believe it was right to send bees overseas.

Frank said he did not support the idea of using artificial insemination with bees. They could look alright on the comb, he said, but the keeper could unwittingly end up rearing from the weak bees. It was nature’s way to sort them out, he said, and he could not see how artificial insemination would work.



## BETWEEN THE COMBS

### WEST COAST

Apart from beekeepers checking up on gear in anticipation of a good season coming up, and trying to prevent as many hives as possible from starving, there is little activity.

Weatherwise the winter has been milder than it might have been, which is not necessarily an advantage to the beekeeper because the mild weather coaxes the bees out for a forage flight. If there is no nectar they use up energy then consume precious stores to replace it.

However, in some areas the red rata vines that failed in the autumn, decided to flower through the winter so that not all the forage flights have been unrewarding on the warm sunny winter days.

There are those on the “Coast” that are concerned for the future disposal of their honey crop if private sales overseas become too popular. Hopefully if this method of marketing is as successful as its advocates predict, it will cause a depletion of stocks for the local market and create conditions that will make the normally less easily sold honey more acceptable.

If the West Coast beekeepers make a lively effort to promote their honey by advertising, both locally and further afield, the popularity of our honey should be greatly enhanced, thus increasing demand.

Wishing all beekeepers a good crop and a satisfying market.

Peter Lucas

### WAIKATO

It is with regret that we report the death of one of our oldest members, Mr Allan Bates of Matamata.

Allan started on his own at Kaponga in South Taranaki prior to the 1914-18 war, leaving 300 hives in the care of other beekeepers while he was overseas. He continued at Kaponga until the mid 40’s, during which time he served on the executive and was president of the NBA for a term.

He retired to Katikati to run a small queen breeding venture, but soon shifted to Matamata and became a leading queen breeder, making available the very good strain he had developed at Kaponga.

However, the profitability of bulk honey, and the loss of spring sources saw the end of queen raising and expansion of hives for Waiotapu and Waikite valley at Rotorua.

One of Mr Bates’ ambitions took a long time to be a reality as he always hoped to see his hives produce over 100 tonnes for a season, and this was a reality in his 91st year.

A keen fisherman, he was always ready to spend an hour or two doing what he liked best beside a stream or lake, with good results.

In 1960, Mr Bates was made a life member of the Association. At branch meetings he always had some little thing to show or experience to share, and for a while enjoyed the local gadget shield.

Cliff Bird

### FAR NORTH

We have had an extremely wet winter in the Far North with the wettest June ever having been recorded. August was ushered in on a peak flood and so we can only hope for a drier spring ahead.

A meeting had been arranged for August with the Mangonui A. and P. Show committee to set up classes for beekeepers to enter exhibits in next year’s show.

We are attempting to involve farmers, government departments, Forest and Bird Societies and nurserymen, etc. in a project on large scale planting of nectar and pollen source trees. We realise that, to interest these other groups, the trees often need to be dual purpose trees.

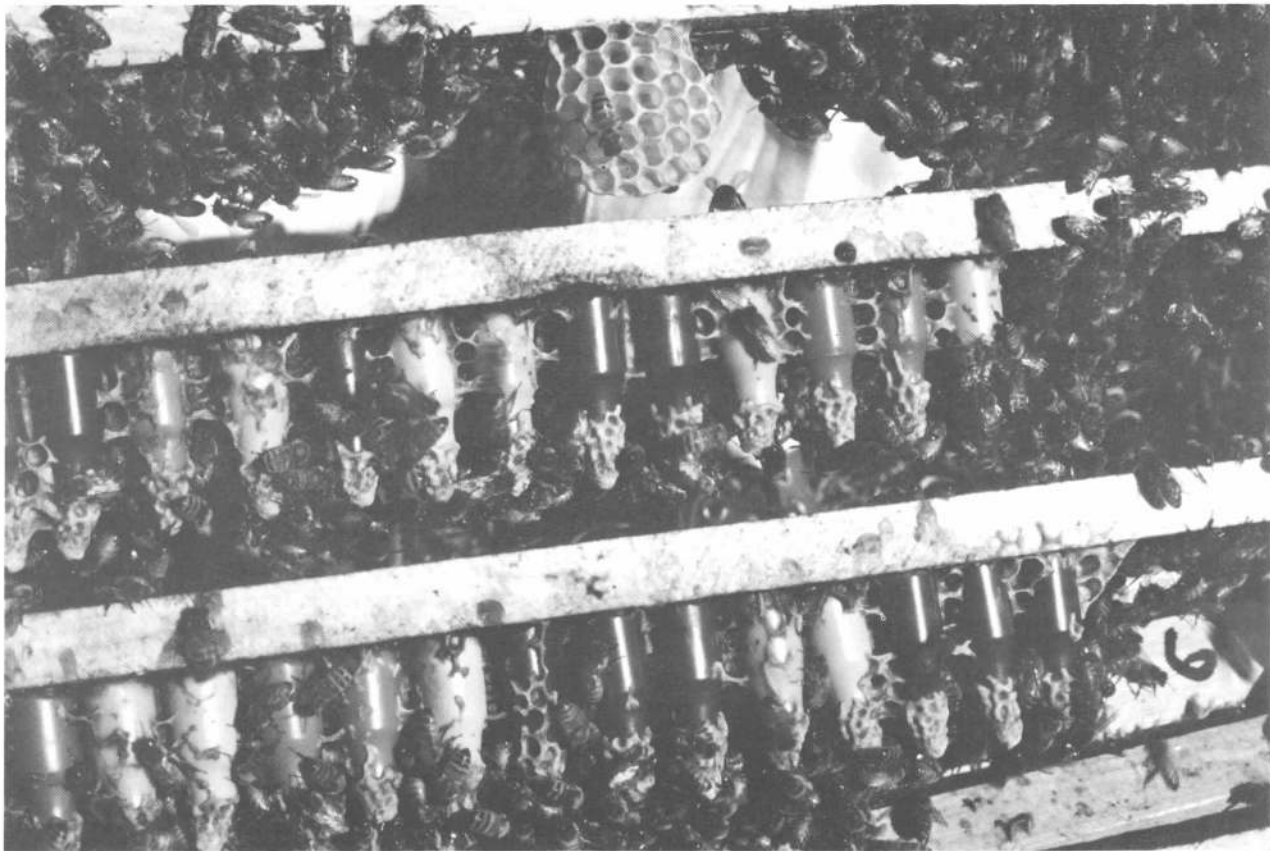
At the July meeting of the club all members pooled as much information as could be gathered on both existing and possible nectar sources and recorded these on charts divided into monthly sections. We intend to carry on with this research and then to arrange discussions with the various organisations mentioned with the view to interesting them in supporting large scale plantings.

If any branch or member in New Zealand can help us with furthering this scheme, particularly in the way of providing more information about nectar and pollen sources that would grow in the Far North, we would be very grateful.

Wendy Macpherson



# Requeening honeybee colonies without dequeening using protected queen cells



*A frame of queen cells in plastic cell cups ready to go into queenright colonies.*

**By Murray Reid, Apicultural Advisory Officer, Hamilton**

A LOT of interest is still being shown, by beekeepers, in this method of requeening and this article is a result of numerous requests to put pen to paper.

I gave a paper on this subject to the Apimondia Congress in Adelaide in 1977, which was duly published in their proceedings of the Congress. Here, I would like to concentrate more on the method used, the results achieved and variations on the theme practised by New Zealand beekeepers.

Most beekeepers appreciate the value of a young vigorous queen in the colony, especially if she is from proven and selected stock. But requeening is an expensive, frustrating, time consuming and often difficult chore. Yet any progressive beekeeper can't afford to neglect this part of colony management.

In an attempt to overcome most of the big problems in requeening hives, John Smith, Apiary Instructor, Christchurch, and I resurrected the old technique of

using queen cells. We carried out some preliminary trials in the 1968/69 and the 1972/73 seasons. We got down to serious recording in the 1973/74 and 1974/75 seasons.

The method was simplicity itself – one of our prime requirements.

It also had to be cheap and have a relatively high success rate. We simply took a ripe queen cell that was one to two days from emerging and placed it in a length of plastic water hose pipe until the tip of the cell was just emerging. The 17 mm diameter hose pipe acted as a cell protector preventing attack through the side walls of the cell, as it is at this point that queen cells are torn down.

Our queen cells were produced in plastic cell cups but ordinary wax queen cells attached to wooden blocks or cut straight off the bar could be suspended inside the hose pipe just as easily.

Some beekeepers have made protectors from coils of copper wire while others

have used one or two layers of masking tape. I like the masking tape idea – it saves having to collect up the pieces of hose pipe at a later date.

The protected cells were placed between two frames in the centre of the brood nest, which was in the upper box of two box, over-wintered hives. We put the cells out in the first week of October; 94 cells were placed in 1973/74 and 76 cells in 1974/75.

We wanted young queens early in the season to give us good brood production before the clover flow and we also wanted a measure of swarm control. No attempt was made to locate the old queen or manipulate the colony at this stage.

Several weeks before placing the cells, brood was roughly equalised and all colonies were feed nine litres of white sugar syrup and about 5 kg of raw sugar in top feeders. This was the normal practice of the beekeeper who owned the hives.

The hives were checked two to four

weeks later, and any queenless ones were "patched up" with a nucleus or brood. These hives were then eliminated from the trial.

All queens were colour coded with car lacquer paint. We evaluated the success rate in early autumn when the honey crop was taken off.

I'll summarise our results in chart form, see Table 1 and 11, but the points to note are that two year old queens are a lot easier to replace than one year old queens; about a 75 per cent success rate if the queenless colonies were eliminated. Also a percentage of hives ended up totally queenless and again there were more of these with one year old queens than two year old queens.

We don't know whether the new virgin and hive queen killed each other in their royal battle or whether the virgin was triumphant and then became lost on her mating flight. Whatever, a number of nuclei need to be run to make up these "losses".

It is difficult to find reasons why the technique appears to work. We were trying to anticipate any natural move-

|                            | 1973/1974         | 1974/75           |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Number cells placed        | 94                | 76                |
| Hives with 2 yr old queens | 3 out of 72 (4%)  | 7 out of 48 (15%) |
| Hives with 1 yr old queens | 7 out of 22 (32%) | 7 out of 28 (25%) |

|   | 1973/74            | 1974/75            |   |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|---|
| No of cells evaluated                     | 84                 | 62                 | Tot. old queens & young queens replaced |
| 2 yr old queens replaced                  | 51 out of 69 (74%) | 31 out of 41 (76%) | 82 out of 110 (75%)                     |
| 1 yr old queens replaced                  | 8 out of 15 (53%)  | 13 out of 21 (62%) | 21 out of 36 (58%)                      |
| Tot. queens replaced in 1973/74 & 1974/75 | 59 out of 84 (70%) | 44 out of 62 (71%) |   |

ment by the colonies to supersede their queens.

It would seem that any conditions which affect the quantity of pheromones produced by the queen, or the quantity received by the workers, could lead to supersedure. Such conditions include: Advancing age or ill health of the queen; an expanding population of workers; erratic food supplies, especially pollen; presence of nosema disease.

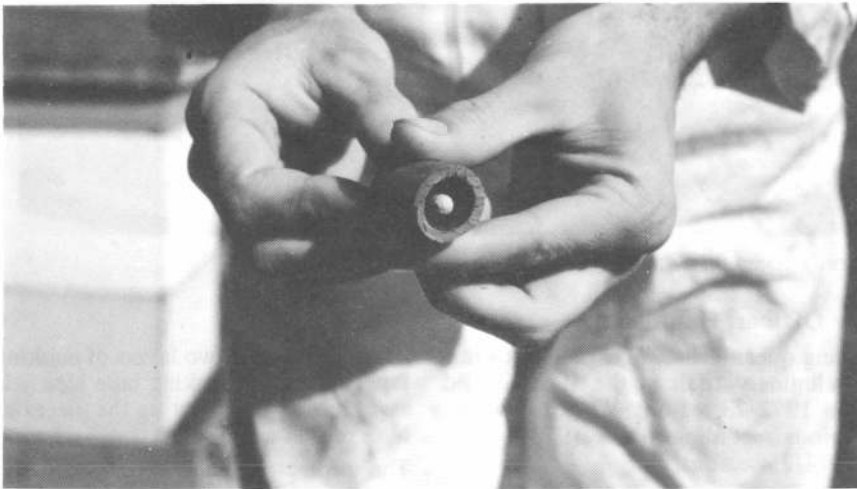
Most of these conditions apply in the early spring. They also apply when the flow just begins. A Canadian beekeeper, Don Peer places his queen cells out in this period - equivalent to early January. He places the cells in the top honey supers where the emerging virgin is well separated from the parent queen. He claims an 80 per cent successful requeening rate.

#### The advantages

- Queen cells are relatively easy and cheap to produce compared with mated queens.
- It is very quick and easy to insert a protected queen cell into the brood nest of a queenright colony. No more hunting for the queen or disturbing colonies when they should be left alone.
- If the virgin is not accepted then in most cases the parent queen carries on as before. In a large number of our test hives we found two queens happily co-existing.

#### The disadvantages

- Virgins may be lost on mating flights and queens may become drone layers, but these are common to any queen producing system.



Above: The queen cell is pushed into a length of plastic hose pipe. Below: The protected queen cell inserted into the top brood box of a 2 storey hive.

- This system is best suited to outfits managed on an extensive rather than an intensive basis. It requires a changed mental attitude towards requeening to accommodate the lower success rate. Over a number of years, the beekeeper will lose track of the age of queens in his hives. The age or condition of the queen would be a "guesstimate" based on her performance. It could happen that a cell would be put into a colony already headed by a young supersedure queen raised on the bees own brood.

- A number of nuclei would need to be maintained to make up any hives that went queenless.

- Queens are mated in out apiaries and this may not be acceptable in some areas dominated by undesirable drone stocks.

Like all systems there are many variations on the theme. In most of these no attempt is made to find the old queen but a degree of comb and super manipulation is needed. Some of the variations include:

1. Splitting the colony into nuclei with one or more division boards without looking for the old queen. Nuclei can also be made up in special four or five frame nuclei boxes. A cell is placed in each division. The division with the parent queen in it may, or may not be requeened, but the cost of a cell is a lot less than the time spent in looking for the parent queen.

2. Creating a nucleus above a queen excluder by raising up two combs of brood and two of pollen and honey. This can either be in the second or third position depending on the strength of the colony. In each case, all the bees are shaken off the combs and allowed to come up through the excluder onto the brood again. A queen cell is put between the brood frames. An "upper" entrance is provided by raising the top super above the excluder on two twigs of wood or a notch can be cut in the excluder rim.

Another method is to cut thin wedges to raise the sides up by five to six mm above the excluder with small strips along the front so an entrance of 25-30 mm is left. If too large a gap is left along the front, the bees pull away from the brood, become temperamental and may eventually abandon the top super and retreat down through the excluder.

With this method no parent queens are lost. The colonies that end up with two queens can be left that way throughout the season and will out-produce any other hive; they are in fact two queen colonies. When all the honey is taken off, the "nuc" above the excluder will be very honey bound.

Several options are available now: If the parent half is queenless simply remove the excluder and you have a very strong, well stocked queenright hive again.

If both queens are still alive you can remove one or the other of the units to a new stand and make increase. Or one of the units can be united onto another hive.

3. As mentioned before, protected cells can be placed in honey supers in the middle of the main honey flow.

4. Beekeepers often ask if the requeening method will work in autumn. In short I don't know. I suspect not. I have put out some spare cells in the late summer without marking the queens, and I didn't notice any great degree of success.

5. Ripe queen cells within one to two days of emerging are generally used, but cells can be used two days after grafting - at this stage the larvae are not too heavy and will stand reasonably rough treatment without falling out of the queen cups. The cells don't need protecting by a cell protector at this stage either. There is a saving back in the queen raising yard too, doing

things this way, as no cell finishing hives are needed.

### Summary

The true technique of requeening without dequeening should work provided healthy queen cells are placed in colonies headed by old queens, fresh nectar or sugar syrup is available, the colony has reared several cycles of brood so most of the adult bee force consists of relatively young bees, and mature drones must be available, as must suitable weather to allow the virgin queens to mate.

Interestingly enough, some beekeepers report that queenright hives with a cell put in them do not swarm. They have adopted this technique primarily as a swarm control measure and accept any requeening as a bonus!

### Further reading

Forester, I.W. 1972 *Requeening honey bee colonies without dequeening*. N.Z. J. Agric. Res. 15(2):413-419. Reid, G. M. 1977 *Requeening without dequeening using protected queen cells*. Proceedings XXVI International Congress Apimondia. :249-252. Peer, D. 1977 *Requeening with queen cells*. Canadian Beekeeping. 6(8):89.

## Members may carry their votes to conference

THE ANNUAL General Meeting of the NBA overwhelmingly supported a rule change which will allow members present at the Annual Conference to hold their votes until a remit is actually voted on.

However, the members who do this must attend the branch remit meeting at which the remit was discussed. To exercise his right to withhold his votes until conference, the member must also be personally present to cast his vote.

In exercising his voting rights on a poll, a delegate shall record for and against the remit the number of affirmative and negative votes cast when his branch voted on it. He may also exercise any additional votes made available to him by members who were undecided on the issue at the branch remit meeting.

However the delegate has the right to use his discretion at the conference, and after considering all matters put forward at the conference, may cast these votes in the manner he thinks fit. In contrast, votes which are withheld by members personally present at the conference, may only be cast by the delegate in the manner in which the member directs.

The president, Mr Stuckey, said that

these amendments were an attempt by the executive to meet the wishes of members as expressed at the 1978 conference.

"They will enable more activity and participation by individual members at conference. And they will also enable members undecided on an issue at the branch level to make an educated vote at conference," he said.

When put to the vote the amendments were endorsed with a vote of 4974 in favour to 80 against.

### EXECUTIVE ELECTION - SOUTH ISLAND

The 1979 election for the one South Island vacancy on the N.B.A. executive attracted three nominations. The election result was:

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| Mr S.J. Lyttle    | 2412 votes |
| Mr K. McC. Herron | 1743 votes |
| Mr G.L. Jeffrey   | 768 votes  |
| Invalid votes     | 22         |

Mr S.J. Lyttle was duly declared elected.

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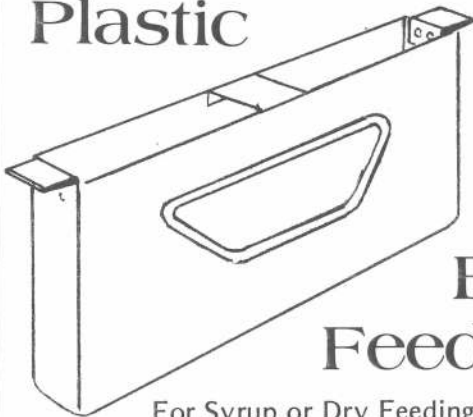
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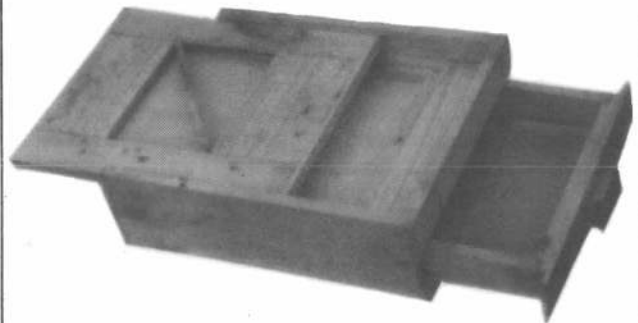
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# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

THE HONEY Marketing Authority elections this year have been delayed one month at the instigation of the under-secretary to the minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Mr R.L.G. Talbot. Government, in doing so, wanted an indication from our industry, via conference, on the future of the authority. This was to be based on the six proposals as sent to hive levy payers in early July (and republished in this issue on page 4) in the form of a discussion paper.

Unfortunately the timing in presenting this paper to the industry restricted some branches in giving full consideration to its contents within the time allowed. As a result, no clear industry point of view was established at conference.

This situation places an importance on these elections not realised in recent years. Inflation, and its eroding effect on the authority's equity, as well as the demands from some beekeepers for more active participation on the export market, has motivated government to ask our industry to

rethink the priorities expected from the Honey Marketing Authority.

As from Friday September 21, until the poll closes at midday October 12, you are provided with the opportunity to vote for the candidate of your choice whom you consider has the right formula on the authority's future role within the industry. I cannot stress strongly enough the importance of studying and questioning the policies of all the candidates who put themselves forward for these elections.

It will be these, and the way you vote, that will influence the government on deciding what advice it should accept from both the HMA and NBA on its future support for the industry.

Time for procrastination is over for all who are connected with honey production. It is important to give a strong indication, by way of your vote, as to the direction that you, the producer, feel the industry should follow.

PAUL MARSHALL,  
NAPIER.

## Ivan Dickinson . . .

THIS INDUSTRY has a need for such an organisation as the authority and for the present areas of concern to be resolved within the present organisation. However, this does not say that the present functions and regulations of the authority may need revision in the light of present day requirements of the industry.

The authority must endeavour to be both viable and competitive in the purchase and selling of honeys. It must not be weakened by its competitors gaining the majority of board membership. Suppliers to the authority must protect their marketing organisation by positive action through the ballot box, and thereby show that they do have a need for the authority to work on their behalf.

Producers in New Zealand have, in the main, experienced two poor seasons in the last three and, coupled with this, have sustained a base price on the same level for two years running. For this reason alone, I do not believe that the industry has the financial resources to establish the so called "producer organisations" or cooperatives as has been suggested.

This industry has the funding of its marketing organisation on very attractive rates of interest, and I cannot see why this should be abandoned when sound business reasoning can, and will,

carry the authority through its difficult times as any other marketing organisation has had to do.

The authority has to look at new ways of purchasing suppliers' honey crop. Selling on the owner's account has been considered before, but I believe that the time is right now for this to be looked at very seriously.

I am certain that here is an avenue which can assist greatly the financial aspect of the authority but also the producer. Along with the present pool system and straight purchase scheme, the above would give the producer more options to meet his own needs and at the same time attract more honey through the authority.

The authority must continue its programme of rebuilding and expansion in both areas. The export market future is in packed lines and the expansion must be in this area.

New Zealand honey must be retailed overseas under a New Zealand brand name.

There have been some who feel that there is no future in an Auckland operation, but I have found no other avenue or already established plant within the industry that can handle the honeys at present being supplied to Auckland. To close this plant down will inevitably force this honey onto an already oversupplied local

market and thereby lessen returns to the producer.

The present call for private enterprise to take over the authority's operations is an open invitation to existing food companies in New Zealand to make an irreversible move into the industry. The industry will suffer as some other small horticulture industries can verify. The honey producer must keep control of his industry at all cost.

The authority has, over the past months, had a provision for private exports of bulk honey. As there has been very little interest in this area and the future in export is in packed honey, I see no point in continuing this provision.

In the meantime, the authority does not have the capacity to extend its output of packed lines, and the present provision for private exports of packed lines can be continued under the authority's control.

I appeal to all producers to consider carefully the ramifications of a fragmented and disorderly market place. Without an organisation as the authority — that is what we will get. As the only supplier member of the board at present, I appeal to all producer suppliers to the authority — it is in your hands to support those who will see that your interests are brought to the board table.

## Mike Stuckey ...

I HAVE once again been asked to put my name forward for election to the Honey Marketing Authority Board. The following summary of achievements during the last three years during which I was a member of the board, and of the aims I have for the coming three years will be of help to voters in the coming elections.

Let us first examine the payout, starting in 1975 with the Honey Marketing Authority under supplier control: 1975 increase over 1974 DECREASE 2 per cent to 54.11 cents/kilo. 1976 Mr Berry joins HMA. Increase 10 per cent to 59.75/kilo. 1977 I am elected to HMA. Increase 20 per cent to 73.72/kilo. 1978 no election. Increase 8 per cent to 79.15/kilo. 1979 Mr Berry re-elected, Mr Bray elected. Increase 8 per cent to approximately 85 cents/kilo.

From this it can be seen that members with marketing experience can help to achieve excellent results.

Your present board has made the following decisions:

- Land has been bought to rebuild

the Pleasant Point packing branch. This will be on line for the 1980 season.

- The purchasing arrangements for hard to sell honeys have been reviewed, with the result that the buying of these honeys will no longer lower the payout of our better honeys.

- The unsatisfactory situation as regards drums has been resolved.

- The sale of the Auckland branch and arrangements for an alternative will be completed by the time this is printed.

- The present board refused to lower the payout at government's request and in the final analysis have been proved right.

- The present board have cleared the large backlog of honey from the record production year of 1978, at satisfactory prices.

- Three members of the present board, myself included, believe that the future of this industry is vitally linked with exporting as much packed honey as possible, and are working to this end.

If re-elected to the board of the Honey Marketing Authority, I will undertake to continue with the sound marketing decisions which have been made over the past three years.

I believe that all beekeepers have the right to sell their honey to whom they wish, with the proviso that on the export market, they meet a minimum price.

Any applications to sell bulk honey overseas will be treated carefully and on their merits, although I believe this is not the form in which our honey should be sold. I will endeavour to see that no large quantities of bulk honey are sold overseas privately, and in the long term, by the authority. Any rush to sell bulk overseas privately, could adversely affect the authority's vulnerability.

I believe that there is a real need for a packing plant in the South Island either run by the authority or as a producer organisation.

I believe that there is a need for a packing plant in Auckland at present, although I am not convinced that this will always be so.

## Harry Cloake ...

THE INDUSTRY is now at a cross-road; every beekeeper who votes at this Honey Marketing Authority election must accept the responsibility of determining the future of the New Zealand Honey Marketing Authority, for it is the successful candidates who will be influencing future policies.

At the recent annual conference of the National Beekeepers Association, those attending showed quite clearly by a very substantial majority that some form of organised industry body to stabilise the marketing of honey on the local and export market was necessary and wanted. The Honey Marketing Authority properly administered can fulfil this role.

In accepting nomination as a candidate for the producer representative on the authority, I can assure all members of the industry I support the principle of the Honey Marketing Authority.

If elected, my prime object is to restore industry confidence in the authority, to have it recognized as an organisation working for the whole of the industry, not one section only, and

to put an end to the negative attitude of those present members who see no future for the Honey Marketing Authority.

I would endeavour: To have the operations of the Honey Marketing Authority restructured to meet present day requirements; to establish a costing formula to apply to all operations; to negotiate a permanent agreement with the minister of finance regarding the financing of the authority; and that the manager be freer to develop local and export markets as he sees fit within a broad policy aimed at total retail container sales.

I can bring to the authority initiative and drive so necessary to make the Honey Marketing Authority a strong viable industry body. This would be a benefit to the whole of the industry and I believe it should be administered by those who support the principle for which it stands.

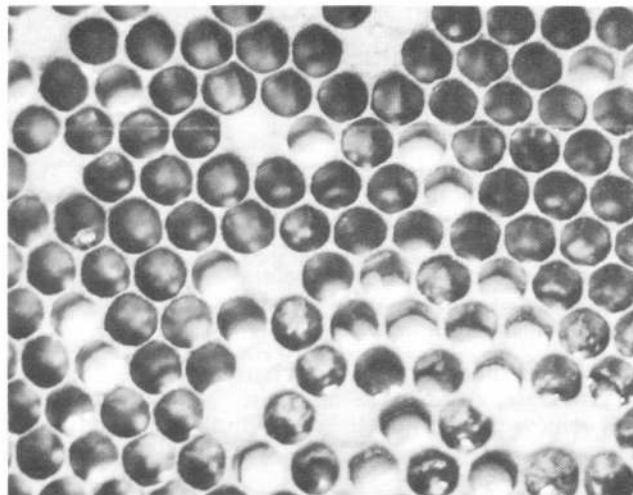
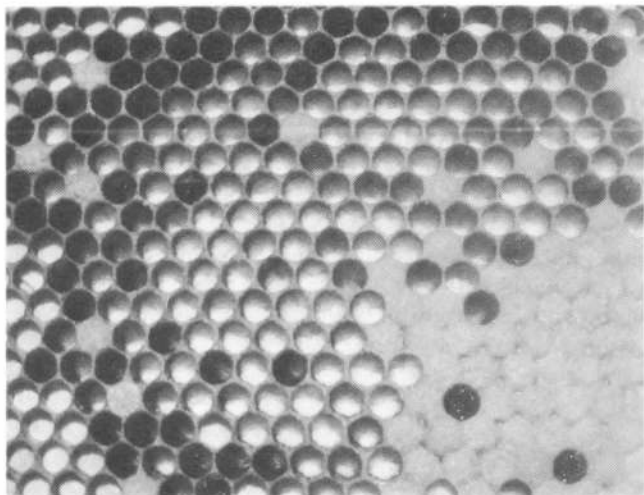
I have previously served six years as a member of the authority giving me the knowledge and experience so necessary to a successful future.

### APIARIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MR DON BARROW, of Tauranga, has recently retired from the Apiaries Advisory Committee after 10 years valuable service. This committee advises the Minister of Agriculture regarding the use of the beekeeping "Restricted Areas" in the Bay of Plenty and Coromandel. Don was association president when he was appointed by the minister in 1969 to the first AAC meeting. A replacement appointment is expected shortly.

# Australian disease not wanted

by Trevor Walton



Left: Healthy brood. Cappings are convex. Larvae are C-shaped and pearly-white. Right: signs of diseased brood are perforated or sunken cappings, yellowish larvae in unnatural attitudes and areas of unfilled cells—“patchy brood”.

THE BEEKEEPING industry in South Eastern Australia has been rocked back onto its economic heels by an infection known as European brood disease. It has put beekeepers out of business, broken up families and devastated the economics of beekeeping in South Australia, Victoria and parts of New South Wales.

News of the disease and methods to control it were brought to New Zealand by Mr John White, an Australian Apiary advisor. Mr White is employed by the New South Wales Department of Agriculture and is in charge of enforcing regulations controlling the disease in south New South Wales.

Speaking at the MAF seminar held at the NBA conference in Christchurch, he said that the progress of the disease through Australia had divided beekeepers and resulted in a lot of resentment.

The disease was initially known as Victorian brood disease. In certain areas of the Northern part of that state, a brood disease had been endemic for years. It came and went with the seasons, and until beekeepers started to use antibiotics for control, it was not thought to be much more than a local problem. Today the disease is rampant in South Australia, Victoria, and below a quarantine line drawn across southern New South Wales.

Those states which do not have the

disease have established rigid controls against the import of bee and honey products and appliances from other states. In those areas of New South Wales outside the quarantine area, those apiaries which are detected as having the disease are burnt to the ground.

Unlike the situation which would pertain in New Zealand in the event of an outbreak of the disease, compensation is payable to those beekeepers who have their hives destroyed. Australian beekeepers pay a levy each year into the consolidated account which enables the government to pay compensation at the rate of two-thirds of the value of the components of an infected hive.

According to Mr White, all New South Wales beekeepers north of the quarantine line are waiting for this spring—the time of the year when outbreaks are most likely to occur. Until beekeepers there are sure that control measures have succeeded, there is unlikely to be much investment in the industry.

The gremlin at the heart of the European brood disease problem is a bacteria known as *Streptococcus pluton*. This bacteria infects the larvae in a hive and, depending on the level of infection, results in death within a few days or the growth of stunted adults who live to spread the disease further.

An infected hive is most likely to show patchy brood areas. This is the result of the death and subsequent ejection of the larvae by the worker bees. Of those larvae which do survive, some

die at the pupal stage while others go on to lead a life as stunted adults.

Because an infected pupa is susceptible to secondary infection, it often proves difficult to diagnose the original course of the breakdown of a hive. “We have found European brood disease, American brood disease, Sacbrood and virus diseases all in one hive,” said Mr White.

Unlike other brood diseases, Mr White said, it was common to see apiaries with every hive effected by the disease. Although the level of infection would vary from hive to hive, the most noticeable economic effect for the beekeeper would be a very slow build up of hives before a honey flow. Often, he said, between 80 per cent and 90 per cent of larvae would be infected.

Also unlike other bee diseases, European brood disease can spread by water. If a bee dies while flying across a body of water from which other hives are drawing their requirements, the infection can be spread in this manner. With hives in hot climates drawing up to one gallon of water per hive a day, it is easy to see how the spread of the disease can be very rapid.

Other major causes for the spread of the disease are bee drift, especially from migratory bee keeping operations, the sale of infected honey, the feeding of pollen and frame honey, and the mixing of supers as occurs with central extraction.

“There is a great temptation for beekeepers to stick their tools into anything that looks odd,” said Mr White.

Photos courtesy:  
“The Agricultural Gazette of N.S.W.”

"I don't blame them for this, but it seems that modern beekeeping practices are a major cause of the rapid spread of the disease."

Beekeepers looking for the signs of the disease should first look at any suspicious case of patchy brood. Drones are particularly susceptible to the disease and all infected larvae tend to assume unnatural poses.

The infected larvae are nearly always found at the bottom of the cells though in some cases they may even be curled around on one side. Watched closely they appear slightly yellow and sometimes move as if looking for food and unable to find it.

Unlike larvae infected with American brood disease, these larvae are quite easily removed with a match.

In order to assist beekeepers to detect the spread of the disease, the New South Wales Department of Agriculture has set up an expensive sampling system. Although it is a hit and miss method—"if you pick the wrong larvae you won't get a positive result"—Mr White said that it was the best alternative open to the industry.

A beekeeper participating in the programme is given special glass microscope slides upon which he mashes three larvae he suspects of being infected. The surplus larvae pulp is smeared off the slide back into the hive, and the smeared slide returned to the diagnostic centre.

There, the slide is stained with a special preparation and inspected under a microscope for evidence of bacterial infection.

Honey which has been infected with the disease can be purified by being heated to 60 deg C. for eight hours or to hotter temperatures for shorter periods. This means that in some honey houses where the honey is kept at a relatively high temperature for a relatively long time, there is little risk that this area of management will result in cross-infection of hives.

Surprisingly, European brood disease infection is not as resilient as that for American brood disease. It only survives on combs or away from bees for about three years. This, however, is of little recompense to the beekeepers in South Australia and Victoria.

In these areas and below the line in New South Wales, the government is allowing beekeepers to feed their hives with antibiotics as a control measure against the disease.

"In these areas we didn't have the right to burn the whole industry," said Mr White.

"Because we had not diagnosed the disease for so many years, and thereby allowed it to spread, we have been forced into allowing beekeepers to feed their hives with antibiotics.

"I am pleased to see that antibiotics are banned in New Zealand. They result in all sorts of problems. The most important of these is that some beekeepers will inevitably end up breeding an antibiotic-resistant bacteria as a result of feeding below the recommended rates of the antibiotic.

"The antibiotic also adds to the cost of bulk production. There is a minimum cost of 19 cents a hive per treatment and this does not include the cost of opening up the hive and putting the treatment inside.

"There is also the problem of people eating honey which has been contaminated with antibiotics.

"And if that is not enough, you also have the problem that the antibiotic masks the spread of both this disease and American brood disease. This means that although the disease is masked while the antibiotic is being fed, it is nevertheless present and active within the hive and acting as a potent source of infection of those apiaries where the antibiotic is not being fed.

"Feeding antibiotics is just a short term expedient," said Mr White. "It doesn't solve any problems and this is something which our industry has to come to terms with sooner or later."

In the meantime some beekeepers are so angry they are taking the New South Wales Department of Agricul-

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ture to the Supreme Court of Australia for stopping their infected hives from migrating north of the quarantine line. With 60 000 hives already infected in Australia, desperation looks like winning over all sweet reason in the meantime.

From the point of view of the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, detection of European brood disease would inevitably result in a burn policy. Ministry chief advisory officer Grahame Walton said the ministry valued New Zealand's position as the most disease-free country in the world.

For this reason, the Apiary Act had been amended last year to include honey and bee products. This meant that pollen and royal jelly could now only be imported in a form which was suitable solely for human consumption. Bulk pollen imports would now be a thing of the past.

Nevertheless, Mr Walton warned beekeepers that through ignorance or wilful disregard for others, there would always be a handful of New Zealand beekeepers who might try to bring bees into New Zealand and

it was up to beekeepers to police this. Mr Walton also said that if beekeepers wanted compensation for hives destroyed in an eradication programme, they should put pressure on the government to have European brood disease put into the first schedule of the Apiaries Act. Currently the only disease for which include both the brood diseases mentioned plus chalk brood, bee louse and varroa, are not eligible for compensation.

Beekeepers suspecting the disease are advised to contact their apiary advisory officer to have a sample sent to Wallaceville. However, Mr Clinch from the Wallaceville Research Centre said that it was quite alright for beekeepers to send samples themselves so long as they let their local apiary adviser know about it.

"We have had a policy in the past," said Mr Clinch, "that samples should only be sent by advisory officers. It is important that the advisers are aware of what is going on in their district." Nevertheless Mr Clinch would recognise the importance of getting samples to the laboratories as soon as problems were detected

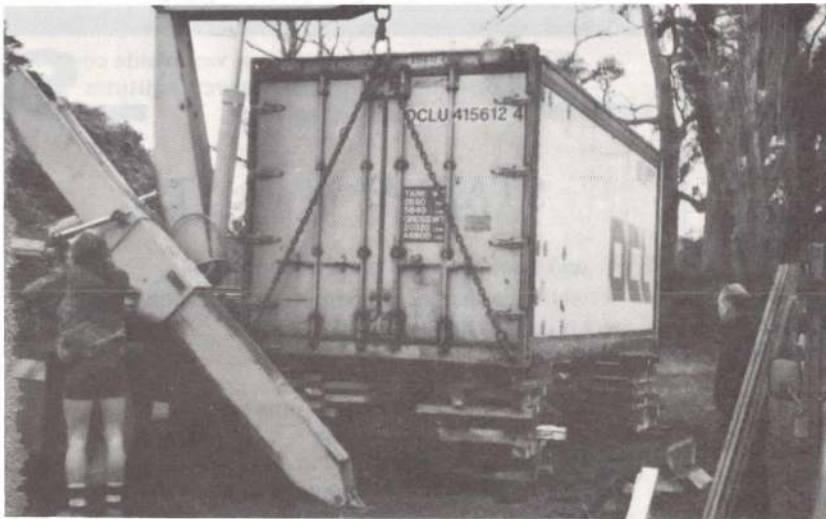
and this was not always possible because of the busy work schedule of the apiary advisers.

Infection if it comes to New Zealand is most likely to come as a result of carelessness or by the deliberate importation of bees. Mr Walton pointed out that there was no way of being 100 per cent certain that the quarantine on the import of honey bee products to New Zealand was foolproof. There would always be those who would circumvent the regulations either through ignorance or subterfuge, and the only real safeguard was vigilance on the part of beekeepers.

It may be some small consolation, however, that the disease is unlikely to be spread to New Zealand by wind currents. Mr White told the beekeepers in Christchurch that *Streptococcus pluton* bacteria are not spread by air whereas a virus is.

With 60 000 hives already infected in Australia — a number representing all the hives in the South Island north of Oamaru — European brood disease is a problem with which New Zealand beekeepers could well do without.

## Container loading on the farm not child's play



MANY HMA suppliers would have grudgingly accepted the freight bill for their honey this year and consider they had little alternative.

Not so Peter Pegram. A resourceful fellow from the Wild East Coast of the North Island, Mr Pegram decided to prune a few freight and packing charges by loading his honey into a container on the farm.

"We couldn't load the container at other than the point of manufacture," said Mr Pegram. "Otherwise we would

have had union trouble. So they brought the container and the container loader out to Wairoa.

"The loader was a fantastic thing. I had not seen one before. It could lift up a whole 20 tonne container and shake it like a rat."

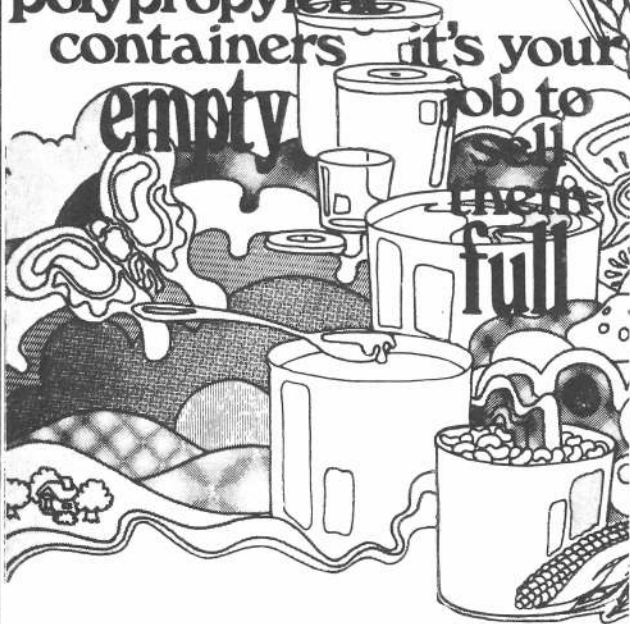
The aim of the exercise was to save six cents per kilogram on freight — this being the first year that freight had not been paid by the HMA.

Saying that the loading had caused a hell of a stir in the district, Mr Pegram

said he was sure that he would do it again if the HMA agreed.

From the photographs it can be seen that the job was not an easy one. The container had to be jacked up to enable it to be easily loaded and when it came to putting in the top layer, it was discovered that the top of the container which should have been moveable, would not budge. However, with a bit of back country ingenuity and a few sore backs, the job was completed without too much trouble.

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# Presidential Address

by Mike Stuckey, president, National Beekeepers Association of New Zealand.

IF YOU look back over the past President's speeches, you will find that they have been gradually changing from being reports of the Association's activities for the past year to a pure address. It is my intention to carry this trend further. If you want a report of the Association's activities, it is in the Annual Report prepared by the General Secretary. It is my intention in this address to look not at the past but at the future.

In spite of the clouds of gloom and despondency forecast by some of our members, I see a bright future. As an indication of this, we should look at the results being achieved by producers and exporters of honeydew. We should look at the excellent prices the Authority is now receiving and we should look at the continuing excellent results being achieved by the Comb Honey Producers. Another indication is the trend in private exports of packed lines.

As I said, there are indications of an excellent future, however, we will have to work at it. The first thing we must realise is that we live in a changing world and the correct way of doing things yesterday may not be right today, and almost certainly will not be right by tomorrow.

I see a trend in the industry to stick with that we know and to try and patch it up somehow. I see also a reluctance in some areas to even consider that there may be an alternative. As in any venture there are two directions, either we advance or we go under.

The only alternative is that we may be able to vary the rate at which we sink. Looking to the future, I believe the time is ripe now for the industry to have a long hard look at itself and its hopes and ambitions.

There are rumours of, and indeed requests for, a production levy on all honeys to help prop up the H.M.A. I don't believe a temporary measure such as this is in the best long or short term interests of the industry.

Surely it is time to stop arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. If the Authority cannot make a go of it in the commercial world, and this is not yet proven, then it is time to look at The first move is to ascertain whether or not the Authority is doing as poorly

as the Annual Report for the year ending August 1978 appears to show. To achieve this, I would strongly recommend that the H.M.A. should employ an independent accountant or business consultant to examine the workings of the Authority in some depth and to prepare a report on its past performance with recommendations for its future. This to be done as a matter of extreme urgency.



*1978/79 President, Mike Stuckey: First-class performance in the conference chair could not save him from those who wanted to cane the private packers on the authority. He was demoted to vice-president at the conference-end.*

If this report indicates that the result of the poor showing was caused by the variations in the opening and closing stocks, and that honey was not sold at lower than base price as stated on page two of the 1978 Annual Report, then suppliers to the Authority in that year were almost certainly underpaid and suppliers in 1979 will be overpaid and this aspect will need to be examined.

However if, as I believe it will, the report indicates that change is necessary, then I feel the industry would be well advised to look outside its own fund of knowledge and ask advice from leaders of other industries. This could be done at both local and national levels. After this has been done and not before a decision could be made on which option or options the industry requires. This would be best done by poll.

The industry has many options open

to it. The main ones have been presented to us in a news sheet based on a paper prepared by the government representatives on the H.M.A. It is my hope that the industry will consider these options seriously. The consequences of not doing so could be rather drastic and final and will among other things mean the likely end of the Authority.

One interesting aspect of these options is that the solution for the South Island could well be different from the solution for the North Island. The problems of the two Islands are very different. The North Island consumes its total production while the South Island produces about 1000 tonnes surplus. It could well be that the South Island needs the Authority and the North Island doesn't. This difference should be taken into account if and when the poll is taken.

In my opening remarks, I mentioned the trend in private exports of packed lines. There has been some criticism of the Authority's allowing private exports of packed lines at the industries request. I imagine there will be a renewed call for a halt, especially in view of the fact that these exports have shown up the inability of the Authority to compete in paying the producer the best price.

The indications are that private packers will be buying an extra 400 tonnes this year to service the export market.

An increase in two years from nothing to 400 tonnes is very significant, especially when the Authority has only just reached last years export totals with 10 months of the year gone.

At this rate there will be a shortage of honey in this country in the very near future. Any extra bought by the private packer is purchased in competition with the Authority, and it is normal practice for the private packer to pay more to obtain the honey.

This extra honey also brings about a reduction in the bulk exports of the Authority and is part of the reason for the Authority's present problems. Those asking for a halt in the private exports have argued that this reduction causes increased costs in the Authority, however, I believe that this is not the case, at least, to any significant degree.

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## 1979 NBA CONFERENCE

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Where the problem arises is that the Authority does not have sufficient bulk export honey to subsidise the local market. I imagine that Mr Berry will expand further on this in his report to you later.

The point is are we going to say no to these higher prices and stick with what we have or are we going to endeavour to make these higher prices available to all producers. The former choice is commonly called cutting off your nose to spite your face.

In part the problems we are suffering at present are of our own doing and

are caused by our inability to work together, and our distrust of each others motives. Once again this could be caused by the different problems peculiar to each Island.

Yet we are all beekeepers striving for the same ultimate goal. Surely we would be happier if the H.M.A. Suppliers supplied and controlled their own organisation or co-op and the private packers were not controlled by them, but that both parties were controlled by a separate export control body.

I believe we will have to change; the

political climate indicates this; the economic difficulties indicate this, and the marketing results indicate this. If we are to have change let us be the authors of this change.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the general secretary and his staff in Wellington. I would like to thank the Ministry staff both personally and on behalf of all beekeepers. I would like to thank the members of the Executive for their support over the year, especially Mr Dickinson and Mr Berry, both of whom held the office of president and both of whom are retiring from the N.B.A. Executive.

## Wallaceville report

Presented by Pat Clinch, leader, apiculture section, Wallaceville Animal Research Centre

### Azinphos-methyl and kiwifruit

During the 1973-74 season, the apiculture section monitored the effect on honey bees of applying azinphos-methyl to kiwifruit vines prior to blossom. As a result of this investigation, it was recommended that pre-blossom applications of this compound should be made before the first flowers open. Further observations were carried out in the Tauranga district during the 1978-79 season. Results confirmed the previous findings.

Laboratory tests, to determine the efficacy of pesticides fed in sugar syrup to infested honey bees, have concluded. Any future work will be confined to the field.

Assessment of the toxicity to honey bees of insecticides and herbicides has continued.

### Kiwifruit

In the 1973-74 and 1974-75 seasons the apiculture section investigated the pollination of kiwifruit in the Tauranga and Te Puke districts. It was shown

that honey bees are the major pollinators of this crop. However, it was also observed that the kiwifruit flower does not secrete nectar and produces a dry pollen, and as a result, honey bees are attracted to flowers of other plants. Because almost 100 per cent pollination of kiwifruit flowers is required, it was recommended that a high density of colonies (eight per hectare) be placed in plantations over the flowering period.

Since then, experience has shown that, in some seasons, pollination in certain plantations has been inadequate. In the 1978-79 season, observations were therefore made to compare the densities and subsequent pollination in a range of plantations, near Tauranga. Results showed that there were large differences between plantations. Pollen traps placed on colonies in a plantation at Te Puna, confirmed that many honey bees were visiting plants with flowers producing both nectar and pollen, in preference to kiwifruit.

### Oilseed rape

The investigation of the role of the honey bee in the pollination of oilseed rape has continued. Work has been confined to the laboratory where plants from field experiments have been examined to determine their seed content and percentage pollination. Results from an experiment in which cages were erected over a crop to exclude honey bees and larger insects, suggest that honey bees are not important pollinators of the Tower variety of oilseed rape.

### Toxic honey

Testing of samples from experimental hives in the restricted areas has continued.

### Performance of honey bee colonies

Differences in the yield of honey from colonies at Wallaceville were less this season than in the previous one. No evidence has yet been found to indicate that the differences between colonies were the result of diseases.

### Diagnosis of brood diseases

The diagnostic procedure introduced by the Apiary Section ASD and Apiculture Section after the confirmation of European brood disease in Australia, has been maintained. Samples from colonies showing any unusual brood disease have been examined microscopically, the sub-samples sent overseas for confirmatory examination. By this action, there was a chance that if EBD was confirmed in this country before it came widespread, then it might be eradicated. So far the disease has not been discovered here.

## New ceiling put on voting strength of big beekeepers

IN A controversial move, the NBA annual general meeting has endorsed a suggestion made by the minister of agriculture, Mr MacIntyre, that the voting power of large beekeepers should be restricted.

Mr MacIntyre had suggested that the previous system was undemocratic.

The new rule for conference and annual general meeting voting states

that a commercial beekeeper will have one vote for each 100 hives or part thereof on which hive levy for the current year has been paid, with a maximum of 12 votes.

This matter had been extensively debated in the conference, and was put to the vote after little debate.

There were 2995 votes in favour of the rule change and 1943 against.

## Ministerial address

FROM A production point of view 1978 was a record year for the New Zealand honey industry. 8,279 tonnes of honey was produced and this volume directly reflected the more favourable climatic conditions experienced generally throughout the country.

It represented a 36 per cent increase over 1977's level of production of 6,078 tonnes. To a degree, however, it also reflected an increase in the number of beekeepers and in the number of hives being worked.

In 1975 there were 3,280 beekeepers in New Zealand working 204,000 hives. Last year there were 4,092 – an increase of nearly 400 over the 1977 number of 3,709. And the number of hives reached just under 211,000.

To anyone looking no further than the statistics, these figures would suggest that your industry is thriving, that in economic terms you are in good heart, and that the past year will have helped set you on the road to a good year this season. While from a production point of view this may be correct, the fact is that as an organised industry you have worked yourselves into a situation where some crunch decisions must be taken if you are to continue to exist as an industry.

The point that I want to make right from the very outset is that it is your industry. You are the people who have the greatest financial stake in the industry, and you are the people who we can logically expect to want to do what is best for the future of the honey industry both in the short and long terms.

So what I have to say to you stems from my parliamentary responsibility for your industry and is not the result of any responsibility to the various producer factions within the honey industry.

You will be aware of the various concerns that have been expressed by suppliers of the Honey Marketing Authority since the last elections to the Authority. These elections resulted in representatives of private packer competitors to the Authority filling three of the five places on the board, one of which is, of course, a government representative.

The present financing and operation of the Authority has reached the point where a number of fundamental de-

isions on its future structure and functions must be made. The Authority has, until now, stood ready to buy all honey offered to it and to make a guaranteed payment equal to the base price or above, depending on marketing realisations.

Because of the considerable fluctuations in crop from year to year and the variations in export prices, the Authorities continued operations rest on either of the following two requisites: Either a funding levy borne by the whole industry, and I stress the word whole, or the Authority must have complete control over exports.

To me the thought of the Authority having complete control over exports



*R.L.G. Talbot, undersecretary to the Minister of Agriculture: "The thought of the authority having complete control over exports is not an overly appealing one."*

is not an overly appealing one. However, unless the Authority is supported by one or other of these two requisites, it cannot continue to act as a stabilising influence by buying honey surpluses till overseas prices improve.

Your industry has always been reluctant to assist in funding the Authority through an industry-wide levy and I suspect that the idea of such a levy would still be opposed by many of the nation's beekeepers. By the same token moves towards greater freedom to export privately is undermining the Authority's ability to carry out its traditional functions.

The Authority's present working capital requirements are now in the

vicinity of one to one and a half million dollars. This capital is needed to hold a buffer stock of honey and to buy and hold onto honey during the intake season and sell it gradually throughout the year on local and overseas markets.

Over half of the Authority's present working capital is provided by the Reserve Bank at concessionary rates of interest – 1 per cent up to \$180 000, 5½ per cent from \$180 000 to \$700 000, and the Minister of Finance is anxious that the Authority's dependence on this accommodation should be reduced.

Over the next few years then, the larger proportion of the Authority's increased requirements will need to be found from the honey industry, and if the industry is not prepared to share in a levy, then the 2 000 tonne annual intake of the Authority must produce the required amount. If the Authority has a requirement to increase its working capital by 10 per cent a year – \$100 000 – then to do so from 2 000 tonnes would require a levy of five cents a kilogram.

In other words, whatever realisations the Authority obtains for its honey, suppliers are faced with receiving five cents per kilogram less permanently while those supplying private packers or exporting direct receive the full amount.

An untenable situation is thus facing the Authority, and the industry as a whole will have to decide whether they want to continue with a stabilising Authority by getting in behind it financially, or whether the Authority's stabilisation role should be discontinued and its operations be carried on for the benefit of its regular suppliers only in the form of an independent producer/supplier co-op.

As I have already mentioned, part and parcel of the Authority's stabilising role has been its power of control over certain sized export packages.

Regular suppliers to the Authority see the industry benefitting if the Authority continues as it is, but with complete control over exports i.e., no private exports unless there is an industry-wide levy. Those who supply private packers and wish to export direct themselves, and those who supply the Authority with only the

## 1979 NBA CONFERENCE

difficult parts of their crop see much less of a need for the Authority's stabilisation function.

The people in this latter group may pay lip service to the need for stabilisation, but they appear to be unprepared to give the Authority the power to operate effectively by paying a levy to fund it or by restoring to it complete control over exports. The time has therefore come for the industry to face up to this problem, as the Authority's operations have now been squeezed to such a point that it can no longer continue as it has.

In view of the government's present financial stake in and obligations to the Authority, it has to ensure that the Authority's operations remain tenable and viable or else that suitable arrangements are made for its trading functions to be transferred to a supplier-run co-operative. It is therefore essential that the industry, your industry, take the opportunity to express clearly its intentions with regard to the Authority's future, through a voting system which is as fair as possible.

My predecessor, Jim Bolger, wrote to your Association and to the Authority, suggesting certain changes to the weighing of votes at Authority elections and also the addition of a further representative to the board. I share Mr Bolger's concern that the present weighted voting system unduly favours the large producer.

While it is acceptable for hobbyists and part-timers to have a lesser voting strength, it seems to me that a situation where the big producer has three times the voting strength of the one man operator, but who is, nevertheless, a full-time commercial beekeeper, is somewhat unfair.

Some industries have a system whereby the large producers have, say, 50 per cent more voting strength, and this I feel would be better and more equitable than your present system. Clearly it is a curious situation to say the least where four of the five members of the Honey Marketing Authority do not supply the Authority with their produce.

I have approved a one month delay to the next Authority elections so that

any decisions you may make can be implemented in time for this election. I would urge you to give Mr Bolger's proposal careful consideration.

I have no definite views on the question of an extra member on the board — a proposal made in order to avoid the government representative having, on occasions, to give a casting vote. However, if your industry clearly resolves its future such a change may not be necessary.

Having, no doubt, stirred up a thorough bees nest I now want to turn to the question of honeydew.

Beech honeydew honey is produced from the mountain, black, red and hard beech forests in the northern half of the South Island. This region of production lies to the north of Mount Somers on the eastern side of the Southern Alps and it also occurs in Westland and Nelson, from the Grey River valley northwards.

Beech honeydew is a honey product by foraging honey bees from the exudations of scale insects living within the bark of beech trees and feeding off the sap.

Since the early days of commercial beekeeping in Canterbury, beech honeydew honey has been used to feed honeybee colonies outside the honeyflow period. However, only in the last ten years has beech honeydew been promoted as an exportable food commodity.

In the span of just a few years the production of honeydew honey has expanded, until today we have in excess of 7 000 beehives in honeydew areas producing some 300 tonnes of beech honeydew annually, with a total F.O.B. value of approximately \$330 000.

Despite the rapid progress made by the beekeeping industry in expanding honeydew production, there has been a realisation by honeydew producers, and by M.A.F. that an even larger untapped potential existed for producing and exporting honeydew honey.

Last year honeydew producers approached government seeking assistance with the development of the honeydew industry.

In order to clearly determine its potential and provide some basis for future planning, Jim Bolger last year requested the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to make a full investigation of the beech honeydew resource. This comprehensive survey has just been completed by the ministry, assisted by staff of the New Zealand Forest Service, other groups, and by individual beekeepers.

The major conclusion of this report

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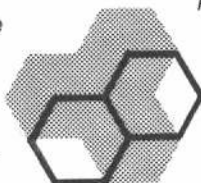
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is that there exists a potential for at least 60 000 beehives producing in excess of 3 000 tonnes of beech honeydew honey, with a current export value of \$5 million. These are astonishing figures when we consider that New Zealand's total annual honey production averages just over 6 000 tonnes and that less than \$2 million is realised through honey exports. Furthermore the assessed potential for beech honeydew is a tenfold increase on present hive numbers and honeydew yields.

Although these are astonishing figures they are realistic, attainable, and are certainly not pies in the sky.

Several beech forest areas stand out as having a very high potential. The north branch of the Selwyn River; the Okuku, Townshend, Torlesse and Mount Hutt areas all have high exudation levels of honeydew, but are not presently stocked with bees to any great extent.

It is immediately apparent from the results of the ministry's study that the areas where the greatest utilisation of honeydew has occurred in recent years, Mount Thomas and Alford Beech Forest areas are those areas where in fact some of the lowest densities of scale insect occur. It is also quite apparent that this vast potential is there for the taking, right now; in areas where roading exists, and where apiary sites could be established. It will be up to you, as beekeepers, to harness this potential.

Government, and government departments, have been of some considerable help to beekeepers, and particularly to honeydew producers, and I only need to cite the export taxation incentive on honeydew and some other honey products, the rural export suspensory loan, and the recent investigation into the honeydew resource, the results of which will be published by the ministry in abridged form shortly. In essence the aim of government assistance is to help yourselves and is not designed to do your work for you.

At present all honey, including honeydew and comb honey, is subject to the approval of the Authority before it can be exported. As far as comb honey and honeydew are concerned, the Authority has given its general consent to the export of these products and no specific approvals are required. The Honeydew Producers Association has asked that the minister's delegation to the Authority of his power to approve exports of honey, be withdrawn insofar as it relates to honeydew.

I have made some harsh comments to you in my address today, not because I derive any pleasure from doing so, but because the time has come when a number of critical questions must be answered.

I am quite sure that whatever decisions you reach the honey industry will continue to be a valuable and important one in the years to come.

What I have been talking to you about is what form your industry will take in the future.

There is a considerable human resource involved in the honey industry with, as I said at the start of my address, more than 4 600 beekeepers in the country. Working together as a unified industry group much can be achieved to the benefit not only of the industry as a whole but also to the benefit of all the individuals involved.

Without pointing fingers or making accusations I most sincerely urge you to set aside whatever sectional interests you hold and look honestly and objectively at the problems facing this industry, and to try and resolve them in a manner that will encourage greater unanimity and strength within your sector.

I don't claim to have all the answers but my door is always open to you or anyone in your industry who can help sort out the problems.

It is something of a well worn phrase but I'm sure if you defined your areas of agreement and built on your strengths rather than concentrating on internal differences much would be achieved.

I thank you for the opportunity to address you today and I have appreciated the courtesies you have shown me as I have pointed out where I see some of the weaknesses of your industry. It now gives me much pleasure to declare open what I trust will be a constructive and rewarding conference for you all, out of which will come a more dynamic and stronger New Zealand honey industry.

## MAF advisory report

Presented by Grahame Walton, chief advisory officer (apiculture),  
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

### Qualified apicultural advisers

In my last two reports to your Annual Conference I discussed the changing role and reorganisation of the apiary section. The most noticeable change has been the phasing out of the apiary instruction group as apiary instructors either qualify as advisory officers or are replaced on retirement by advisory officers holding appropriate university degrees.

Five officers, Messrs D.A. Briscoe, T.G. Bryant, V.A. Cook, J.E. Rodie and C.G. Rope, have met the criteria set by the State Services Commission and are now redesignated as apicultural advisory officers at their former locations. The two officers remaining in the apiary instruction group, Messrs B.M. Milnes, and J. Smith, have the opportunity to translate upon completion of the National diploma in

Apiculture.

A new officer, Mr K.W. Simpson, was appointed in January and has recently been transferred to Palmerston North.

### Sinking-lid policy

You would be well aware of the fiscal and staffing restraints that have been placed by government on the public service. The total funding allocated to agriculture this year is less than last year.

The so-called sinking lid policy, whereby government departments are required to make a one and half per cent reduction per annum in staff numbers, continues in operation.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries must necessarily and continually review its responsibilities and its input into all sectors that make up our farming, horticultural and fishing

industries. Bearing in mind these restraints and the priorities that must be established in servicing all agricultural sectors, I believe that the beekeeping industry is well provided for by existing staff within the advisory services division. There is no foreseeable prospect that the division could employ more full-time staff within the apiary section.

### The honeycrop

The honeycrop for the 1978-79 honey season was 6474 tonnes, 388 tonnes above the 10-year national average. Above average crops were obtained in the Hamilton, Christchurch and Oamaru apiary districts and below average crops were gathered in the Nelson and Gore apiary districts. The honey yield was so low in parts of the Gore apiary district that special relief measures were announced by the

Rural Banking and Finance Corporation for beekeepers facing financial difficulty.

For the year ending August 31, 1978, 2441 tonnes of bulk extracted honey were submitted for government grading at the five receiving depots of the New Zealand Honey Marketing Authority.

Private exporters exported 39 tonnes of retail pack honey and two tonnes of bulk honey. 225 tonnes of honeydew and 222 tonnes of comb honey were exported.

### American brood disease

The level of American Brood Disease (*Bacillus larvae*) as reported continues to increase throughout the country. During the 1978/79 season 712 apiaries (3.9 per cent) and 1809 hives (0.80 per cent) were found to be infected with American Brood Disease.

Most beekeepers are meeting their obligations under the Apiaries Act 1969 in reporting and controlling American Brood Disease. Over 72 per cent of the diseased hives were detected by beekeepers in the past year. In the same period the ministry has stepped up its deployment of staff, including field officers and livestock officers in check inspections.

It is apparent that a few individual beekeepers maintain an unacceptably high level of disease within their enterprises. It is also apparent that the major problem lies with commercial beekeepers, and not with hobbyists. European Brood Disease has not been positively identified in New Zealand. It is a disease we certainly can do without. Another serious disease, Varroa, is the cause of some concern throughout Europe, Asia, Northern Africa and South America. It has not been detected in Australasia.

It is highly probably that New Zealand has fewer bee diseases and pests than any other beekeeping country in the world; a position which should be maintained and safeguarded. Beekeepers themselves are New Zealand's first line of defence. Any suspicious disease, pest or other condition within a hive should be reported promptly to the ministry.

To further protect the beekeeping industry from the importation of bee diseases and pests an amendment to the Apiaries Act 1969 was made last year.

This amendment prohibits the importation of honey and other bee products without the prior approval of the Minister of Agriculture.

### Beekeeping potential

During the past year, a detailed

## Beekeepers, apiaries and hives

AS AT MAY 31, 1979 there was a total of 4,607 beekeepers maintaining 18,438 registered apiaries and owning 226,870 hives.

| Category                   | Beekeepers | Apiaries | Hives  |
|----------------------------|------------|----------|--------|
| Owning 1 – 50 hives        | 4212       | 5895     | 23865  |
| Owning 51 – 500 hives      | 274        | 4222     | 59849  |
| Owning more than 500 hives | 121        | 8321     | 143516 |
| Totals                     | 4607       | 18438    | 226870 |

Last year I reported the upsurge in interest in hobbyist and side-line beekeeping. This interest has continued this past year and is reflected by a 13 per cent increase in the number of registered beekeepers owing up to 50 hives each.

Although small-scale beekeeping has boomed over the last decade (a 48 per cent increase since 1969) there has been negligible growth in the number of commercial and semi-commercial beekeepers (in 1969 there were 393 beekeepers owning more than 50 hives each; today there are 395 beekeepers in this category).

Investigation of the beech honeydew resource has been carried out by advisory services division staff assisted by the New Zealand Forest Service. The parliamentary under-secretary of agriculture, Mr R.L.G. Talbot, in opening this annual conference referred to the potential for at least 60,000 beehives to produce in excess of 3000 tonnes of beech honeydew honey.

The rapid expansion of the kiwifruit industry presents beekeepers with considerable opportunities and challenges. Approximately 4000 beehives were used this current season to pollinate 13,700 tonnes of exported kiwifruit. By 1985 and 1990 the respective export projections for kiwifruit are 40,000 and 81,000 tonnes. Within 10 years, 20,000 colonies of bees may be required to provide a pollination service for this crop, in districts stretching from Northland to North Westland, but with major concentrations in the Bay of Plenty.

The ministry has previously indicated that it sees considerable potential in most New Zealand districts for increased production of blossom honey, pollen, queen bees and other bee products.

### The grading of honey

A draft of the proposed revision of the Honey Export Regulations 1950 was sent to beekeeping organisations for their comments late last year. This revision gives due emphasis to the general honey requirements of importing countries; in particular the purity, wholesomeness and nature of honey. An amendment to the definition of honey under the Apiaries Act 1969 will be required to facilitate the introduction of the proposed Honey Export Regulations.

With increasing frequency, importing countries are requesting specific documents in addition to the Export

Grade Certificate supplied by the ministry. The additional information required by importing countries relates to bee diseases in the vicinity of honey-producing apiaries, honeyhouse hygiene and honey chemistry. The ministry is prepared to provide the necessary certificates provided that the requirements of importing countries have been clearly determined, that these requirements are relevant, and that they could be accurately verified within the limitations imposed by staff, facilities, cost and time.

A number of requirements contained in the existing Honey Export Regulations (1950) have not been included in the revised draft. Such aspects as grading honey for colour and flavour categories and the specifying of container sizes are matters now considered to be more appropriately the domain for the buyers and sellers of honey and not matters for export control.

The ministry has also reviewed its servicing of the Honey Marketing Authority. The ministry has advised the H.M.A. that it will cease grading of intake honey by the end of the 1980 season. The grading of H.M.A. honey intended for export will continue.

### Advisory activities

In addition to normal advisory activities, including individual advice, arranging and attending meetings, published articles, ministry staff have carried out the following advisory activities: Beech Honeydew Seminar (Mr J. Smith); Seminar on the Production of Queen Bees and Artificial Insemination (G.M. Reid and J. Smith); a series of meetings and visits in association with Dr T.S.K. Johansson (U.S.A.); hosted other overseas visitors; and a recent Hamilton meeting to discuss the Coromandel beekeeping Restricted Area.



# Marketing address

Presented by Percy Berry, chairman, N.Z. Honey Marketing Authority.

I THANK the Association for its invitation to address conference on Honey Marketing Authority matters — I have pleasure in placing before you those particulars of the Authority's operations which I think are likely to be of most interest and of most help to conference.

My prepared address is fairly concise. After that, the examination of facts and figures I have prepared may take some time.

As you are aware, the Board is made up of five members, one of whom is appointed by government and four who are elected by producers. Currently, three of the producer members are not suppliers to the Authority, but are experienced in selling both on the domestic and export markets. I have been Chairman of the Board since last October.

At that time the Authority held substantial stocks of honey in a rising market. Our bankers, the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, continued to press for a reduction in the amount of overdraft used by the Authority. Government was determined to lend us less. It was also determined to force our base price down from 81 cents to 77 cents per kg. For instance, on July 28 last, while this Association was at its Annual Conference in Hastings, the Minister of Finance, Mr Muldoon, signed a letter from which I quote three consecutive paragraphs: "An immediate start should be made on subsidised retailer advertising and discounting as an alternative to the media advertising originally envisaged. Total expenditure should be not less than \$8 000. A report on the results of this promotional campaign should be supplied to the Treasury after three months.

The new basic price formula could be subject to variation in exceptional circumstances. This implies agreement by the Minister of Agriculture that circumstances at any time are exceptional.

I must insist, however, on a reduction of 5 per cent in the basic price for the

1978/79 season as a condition of the increased overdraft limit. Provision of a government-guaranteed overdraft at the level necessary at present I regard as a temporary requirement. There appears to be no disagreement between us on that. But I consider it essential that the industry be taking clear and positive steps to underwrite its own stabilisation measures and not rely on its government-guaranteed overdraft to carry it through lean periods, to nearly the same extent." The Minister was clearly making three demands:



*HMA chairman Percy Berry: In the firing line.*

1. That we discount the already low priced honey on the local market — this in Export Year and apparently in direct contravention of government's own declared policy of financial assistance to exporters.
2. That the base price for this year 1978/79 be reduced from 81 cents to 77 cents per kg or keep the overdraft lower.
3. That the industry underwrite its own stabilisation measures. We are now told, by the government representative, Mr Hayman, that this stabilising role, to use his own words, requires, "a funding levy borne by the

whole industry, or complete control over exports."

The Authority did not give in to the first demand.

The Authority did not give in to the second demand.

The Authority thinks we should not give in to the third demand.

But it places this issue before the industry for its consideration and decision.

In the short term, it was necessary to stand firm against the government's demands that we discount our honey on the local market and that we lower the base price.

The government kept the pressure on the Authority financially and at the first meeting of the new Authority in October 1978 a branch manager of a trading bank was invited to attend. His bank examined our invitation to make suitable overdraft facilities available to the Authority. The bank declined, so I went to the bank's head office in Wellington to ask the reasons. They argued it was a question of security.

Subsequently an arrangement was made with a merchant bank to make a substantial amount of additional funds available against sales. But by the time the arrangement was made and approved by government the Authority did in fact have no need for the merchant bank facility.

For much of the year, suppliers did not receive payment in accordance with the contract as set out in the conditions of supply. However, as set out in my newsletter of November last, available funds within the reduced overdraft limits were made available by the general manager in the manner calculated to minimise inconvenience to suppliers.

Currently the payments to suppliers are at the same level as they were at this time last year — 50 cents per kg. Last year no further progress payment was possible before the final payment and part of that was delayed.

This year we are in a better position. A

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## 1979 NBA CONFERENCE

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progress payment of 20 cents per kg is being mailed to suppliers this week. The final payout is expected to be about the trigger price of 85 cents per kg — the highest payout ever to be made by the Authority.

I am not suggesting that it is a satisfactory price — it is not. There is unlikely to be any substantial contributions to reserves. Last years payout of 81 cents per kg was made by taking a substantial amount from reserves.

For many years the Authority has repeatedly and almost continuously been placed under pressure by government through the Reserve Bank.

However, we have now found an additional source of finance. There are no doubt others. Also we have now cleared most of the carry-over stocks from last year's very high production and intake. This means the Authority is in a stronger position to operate within what I regard as the limits of the government's piggy-bank mentality.

With honey values consistently more stable than money values, there has been little chance that selling without panic would prove anything but helpful to the producer and to the country.

In my view the government has not acted wisely or reasonably in the matter of overdraft against stock after a year of very high production.

Many of our honey producers would not wish to be too closely involved in detailed selling and sales finance, but I feel they need to be more closely associated with those they choose to sell for them. I feel that some producers are at present far too remote from the operations which determine the price they will receive for their product.

Throughout New Zealand, honey production development and population movement have brought about a situation where the surplus production is largely in the southern part of the South Island, and the selling operations are centred in Auckland. Auckland is no closer to Dunedin than is San Francisco to Vancouver, London to Madrid, or London to Berlin.

Members of the Honey Marketing Authority are currently spread about as evenly as they could be throughout the length of the country, but I feel there is merit in the thinking of many of the South Island suppliers. They visualise a beekeepers' organisation centred at Pleasant Point and set up by those producers who wish to be involved. The Board has been advised that there would be a minimum throughput of 1500 tonnes. The total average Honey Marketing Authority throughput from both

Islands is about 2000 tonnes and private exports are increasing.

On that basis, it should be comparatively easy to make an orderly transition to marketing procedures which will enable all producers to be closer to the selling centre for their product. This could be very sensible, very profitable and more harmonious. The industry and government are now considering the merits of the voting systems used in our elections. The present system whatever its weaknesses or strengths has not made for rapid change.

For instance, in 1975 I was elected on clearly defined policies against which the four other Board members voted. In 1976 Mr Stuckey was elected with similar policies to mine. In 1977 there was no election so the balance of voting on the major issues of change during 1976 and 1977 was two producer representatives for and two against and the government representative against. In 1978 Mr Bray was elected and as I was re-elected we then had, for the first time three producer representatives voting for change.

Careful orderly change was what the industry wanted. It took the industry a long time to make that decision under a voting system which may not be perfect, may not even be good in a democratic sense. That is a matter of opinion.

But gradually it has brought to the service of our marketing authority men who are experienced in marketing. If, as some written reports suggest, we are not men of integrity then the industry is in very serious trouble.

If we elect men to the Authority who are lacking in either ability or integrity we are in trouble. I believe that if we elect governments lacking in ability then we get New Zealand the way we've got it. But I also believe that if our existing parliament could produce one strong person of immense integrity to lead it, then we might have a very good government indeed.

Whoever you elect to market your produce and under whatever system you elect them, if they are not men of integrity we're all bound to be in trouble.

We read that "The accusation has been made that private packers dominating the Honey Marketing Authority are intent on driving it into the ground." If any man wants to say that about me well let him join that club and enjoy the company he keeps. He will still have to account.

But while I am Chairman of this Authority if anyone publishes a

statement of that kind about any member of the Board he will be called upon to justify the statement. I begrudge the time and the cost but hopefully we would only need to do the job once.

Clearly there is a belief among some beekeepers that things have recently changed for the worse in the Honey Marketing Authority operations. There is no factual foundation whatever for that belief. The facts and figures show conclusively that things have changed for the better.

There is also a belief among some beekeepers that the Honey Marketing Authority as it has operated in the past is helpful to the industry. We will examine the validity of that thinking. I think we will find that on one hand some were fearing a problem that does not exist, while on the other hand, some may be only vaguely aware of a serious problem that does exist in the trading operations of the Authority.

But we have another even more serious problem which calls for immediate attention. It is increasingly clear that the bitterness in the politics of a small disruptive element in our industry is the greatest retarding factor both in its economy and in its ability to achieve harmony. Far too often and for far too long these standards of political morality have denied the industry the services of persons well qualified to serve.

Various verbal and written statements have been used, sometimes illegally, fostering standards beneath contempt. These scurrilous attacks must be stopped — at whatever the cost.

I am sure there are now enough beekeepers who are sufficiently concerned and who are in a strong enough position to clean up our politics, in the supreme court if necessary — hopefully once and for all.

The industry and the country are entitled to something better. It is the responsibility of every member of this Association and every branch of this Association to see that we get something better — much better.

Before closing this address and moving to the study of the Authority's accounts, I wish to take the opportunity to thank all who have used their best endeavours, in the light of their own beliefs, to improve the financial rewards for all honey producers.

Ten months ago the industry entrusted to me a fairly tough assignment. With the help of those around me both at home and from throughout the industry, much progress has been made. To all who have helped I extend my sincere thanks.

# REMITTS CONSIDERED BY THE 1979 CONFERENCE

## DON'T LICENSE APIARY SITES

### Remit 1

Nelson

*That NBA approach Standards Association of N.Z. to replace their existing model standard by-law concerning the keeping of bees in built-up areas with one that does not require licensing of apiary sites by local authorities but simply gives them power to deal with nuisances on the basis of specific sustained written complaints.*

Note: The by-laws are made up by Standards Association and we feel it would be more reasonable to change it to one reading "power to deal etc." as they do with poultry in boroughs.

Ellis/Boskett

In proposing the remit Mr Ellis said that he felt the Standards Association would be well-advised to adopt the same sort of standard by-law that is adopted for fowls. He said he felt boroughs should have the right to deal with nuisances, but that all apiarists should not be charged licence fees and so on and get no service in return.

After Ian Berry had quoted a standard by-law which met the requirements of the remit, the debate became somewhat confused. However, Mr Jeffrey made the point that the association should keep close watch on what the standard by-law situation is, because of a growing tendency of local authorities to licence apiary sites as a source of income while providing no service in return.

The remit was carried 12 votes to 2.

## HIVES MAKE GOOD LOAN SECURITY'

### Remit 2

South Western Districts

*That this conference strongly urge the Rural Bank to advance money on beehives as a security.*

Note: This Branch thinks that a beehive has value even if dead.

Rowe/Brommell

In proposing the remit Mr Rowe said that his branch was very disappointed at the outcome of the association's approach to the Rural Bank to have advances secured on beehives. He asked where else a beekeeper could get finance at reasonable rates of interest. He said there was no worry about loss of security because the Rural Bank carefully screens all loan applicants. Mr Penrose also spoke in support of the remit. He quoted excerpts from a paper by MAF apiary instructor John Smith, which referred to the reasons for the bank's attitude. These were:

1. That a hive could be destroyed by Bacillus larvae.
2. That hives if not cared for could rapidly depreciate.
3. That hives were portable.
4. That apiarist's incomes were often too low to service the debt on the hives.

Mr Penrose countered these arguments by saying that the standard 50 per cent lending margin on the value of a security left a large margin of safety for the bank; that annual inspections of apiary sites would soon clear up any misgivings about depreciation; that BL infection was a minute percentage of hives and that the question of low income years could be covered by the standard bank practice for sheep farmers, which was to suspend interest payments in low income years.

After Mervyn Cloake had pointed out the executive had explored all channels open to it; that it would require two Acts to be changed and that many beekeepers were already getting finance from the bank secured by informal floating debentures over all their assets, it would seem to be a waste of time to continue lobbying the bank. Mr Brommell, the seconder of the remit, said the branch was only asking the executive to have another go, that unless the bank was continually pestered there was no way that any progress

was going to be made.

The remit was carried 9 votes to 5.

## NO SUPPORT FOR CONFERENCE BANKROLL

### Remit 3

Waikato

*That the full return air travel and accomodation (including meals) expenses to conference of one delegate from each branch attending be paid by executive.*

Note: Because of the high cost of travel and accommodation to have branch representation at conference, branch funds will not cover costs and the delegate chosen has to contribute from his own pocket which is unfair.

Mitchell/R. Berry

In proposing the remit, Mr Mitchell said that the high costs of a conference were exemplified by the scale of charges in the Russley Hotel where the conference was held. Despite an unsuccessful amendment by Mr Stanley to have only the full return air fare paid and not accommodation and expenses, the mood of the conference was that costs should be covered by their branches.

The remit was lost 13 votes to 1.

## PROMPTER BRANCH MEETINGS

### Remit 4

Mr R. Davidson

*That it is recommended that all branches of the National Beekeepers Association hold branch meetings within at least one month after each national executive meeting.*

Bartrum/H. Cloake

In proposing the remit, Mr Bartrum said that the reason for this move was because some branches were extremely late in holding a post conference meeting last year. He said it was not always possible for a meeting to be held in the first month but that this was the desirable target. Mr Jansen spoke against the remit if it meant that he had to travel to more branch meetings. After the president explained that one branch did not have a meeting until the year after the conference, the remit was put and lost 6 votes to 8.

## NO SUPPORT FOR N.B.A. BOARD CONCEPT

### Remit 5

North Otago

*That conference give consideration to the executive being replaced by a board, consisting of one delegate from each branch meeting in a central area, as required — meetings to consist of one day only.*

Winslade/O'Neill

Mr Winslade said that the aim of this remit was to get a more democratic representation on the industry organisations. He said the situation could arise at the moment where two branches — one in the North Island and one in the South could end up with all the members of the executive. He said that a few hundred dollars extra would not matter if it resulted in a new efficiency.

An example of this was the keffuffal at conference which could be eliminated by having the executive meeting just before conference and ironing out minor matters before hand. Mr Bushby spoke against the remit. He said many delegates would end up spending three days travelling for only one day of meetings. Mr Penrose said he strongly opposed the proposal. He said he could never remember an executive meeting taking less than two days and could not see any advantages. Steve Lyttle said that as a newly elected executive member he would attempt to get to every branch meeting possible.

The remit was lost 11 votes to 3.

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## MORE TREE PLANTING

### Remit 6

Nelson

*That NBA branches approach local bodies with a request that they encourage the planting of nectar and pollen producing trees in their areas.*

Ellis/Bushby

Mr Stuckey said that the executive had done a considerable amount in trying to achieve the goal set out in this remit. He said he felt that most progress would be made if branches carried out further planting and publicity programmes in their own local areas, which was where the greatest results were always achieved.

The remit was carried 14 votes to 0.

## HIVE LEVY DATE UNCHANGED

### Remit 7

Hawkes Bay

*That conference requests that the date for Hive Levy payment be changed from February 20 to April 20 and the penalty date be amended from March 31 to May 31.*

Ian Berry/Marshall

Note: Mr Beard explained to the conference, after this issue had been debated for a short time, that it was not a simple exercise of just moving back a month. He said there had to be time to allow the levy to be paid, the rolls compiled and elections held. He said that beekeepers could get a delay in the payment of the levy if they were in financial difficulties, just by writing to the executive and stating their case.

The remit was lost 11 votes to 2.

## VOTE FOR ANY NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

### Remit 8

Canterbury

*That this conference request the executive committee to vary its instruction in regard to the voting for candidates to the national executive to enable a person to vote for any number of candidates up to the number required for the position.*

Note: Under the present voting system, where there have been more candidates nominated than there are positions to fill, a voter must vote for the total number of candidates required for the position. It is felt that this voting system does not represent the true wish of the voter.

The instruction could be amended to enable a voter to vote for any number of candidates up to the total required for the positions — e.g. say three persons are nominated for two national executive positions, then the voter would have to vote for two persons. A voter however may not wish to vote for two of the persons nominated, but to make his vote for the remaining person valid, he must vote for one person he would not wish to have voted for.

Penrose/Jeffrey

Mr Penrose said it should be the democratic right of voters to use or withdraw their vote as they thought fit. He said there was an important principle involved and nobody should be forced to vote for someone for whom they did not wish to give their support. Mr Bartrum asked the executive members present why the remit had not been implemented following the last conference at which it had been endorsed. Mervyn Cloake an executive member, said the matter had been discussed and he promised to investigate why nothing had happened.

The remit was carried 14 votes to 0.

## EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES

### Remit 9

Nelson

*That the N.B.A. initiate discussion with the Department of Labour creating an award for employee apiarists.*

Boskett/Bennett

Note: Employee beekeepers in this area who are also beekeepers themselves are concerned that they are not covered by any industrial agreement which we feel could be set to form a minimum.

The mover of this remit said that there was no particular award applicable to beekeepers. This he said, put employees

in an unfortunate position because they could not negotiate for their salary or conditions of employment. This in practice meant that they either had to put up or shut up. If an official award was not going to be set up at least the NBA could come up with a guideline award, he said. It would also help inexperienced employers in setting conditions.

Mr Penrose spoke against the detail of the remit but said that the principle should not be thrown out. He said many workers and employers lived in isolated situations and they had nothing to compare conditions with. Mr Mitchell said that a strict award could reduce job opportunities for beekeeping employees and could also set a ceiling on the development of some beekeeping firms. Mr Mitchell suggested that the remit should be amended to read: "That the NBA issue guidelines to commercial apiarists on wages and conditions applying in the industry."

The amendment was seconded by Mr Stanley who said he had been instructed to vote against the remit, but now would change in favour of it.

The amendment was carried unanimously, as was the amended remit.

## RESURFACING HONEY DRUMS

**Remit 10** **Waikato**  
*That the MAF make enquiries into the availability of a suitable material that beekeepers could use themselves for resurfacing the insides of 44 gallon honey drums, extractors and tanks.*

Mitchell/Robinson

This remit was carried unanimously with no discussion.

## MIDNIGHT SESSIONS KNOCKED

**Remit 11** **Otago**  
*That conference express its strongest disapproval at the way legislation affecting beekeepers was processed through parliament.*

Note: The legislation was put through late last night. There were no reporters in the house and worse, no Hansard typist on duty. There is no record of what was said.

Dickinson/Berry Jnr.

Mr Dickinson said his branch was very concerned that legislation of any kind should be carried out in the middle of the night without due consideration. To have beekeeping legislation included in this was degrading, especially since some of the amendments were apparently carried with a certain degree of hilarity.

The remit was carried 13 votes to 1, with Ian Berry dissenting on behalf of Hawkes Bay.

## LIFT THE BASE PRICE

**Remit 12** **Southland**  
*That this conference strongly object to the Base Price being kept at 81 cents by the Minister of Agriculture for the 1978/79 season. In view of across-the-board increases in costs each year, honey prices must be reviewed upwards each year to keep beekeeping viable.*

Booth/Bartrum

Mr Booth said that all beekeepers realised that costs were rising each year and the base honey price was not. For them to survive financially the base price had to be raised.

This remit was carried 10 votes to 2.

## BETTER HMA COMMUNICATION WANTED

**Remit 13** **South Canterbury**  
*That the HMA provide more information to the industry regarding present and future policies and especially regarding its present financial position.*

Mervyn Cloake/Bushby

Mr Cloake said there was a lot of concern in the South Island and parts of the North Island because of the slowness of payment by the authority to producers last season. This was particularly resented he said, because no reasons for this were given.

"Now I know why and want to know what will happen in the future. We want to be kept informed," he said. Mr Bushby echoed this complaint. He said he did not mind having no money from the authority so long as he knew what the reasons were and when the money would arrive. That way he could plan.

Harry Cloake said that there had been a small number of circulars sent to suppliers by this authority. He said he also tried to get the chairman down to meetings on two occasions and was unsuccessful. This, he said, was where the unrest was. Two-thirds of the honey supplied to the authority came from the South Island, and the chairman had failed in his duty in not telling South Islanders what was going on.

The chairman of the authority, Percy Berry, told the conference that he had had a legal opinion about statements that Mr Cloake had had published in a Balclutha newspaper and that Mr Cloake was creating further difficulties for himself unless he was able to justify statements he had had published. Mr Cloake left to his feet then and demanded that Mr Berry withdraw his statement that "I published". "I did not," said Mr Cloake, "I don't know where the paper got the story from. But I certainly did not have it published."

Mr Berry then quoted a phrase from a letter from his solicitor which said that the statement that had appeared in the "Otago Farmer" attributable to Mr Cloake was actionable. Mr Stuckey the president and chairman, then terminated the discussion and said the point of dispute was a matter for the individuals involved.

Mr Penrose, speaking in support of the remit, said that the remit dealt with a vital matter of public relations. Once public relations breaks down, he said, the industry breaks down. One reason why many people did not supply the authority last year he said, was because they did not know what was going on. Mr Robinson confirmed this, saying that successive branch meetings had said that they were not getting enough information.

Mr Berry then said he wished to make a personal statement. He said he could put up a card refuting suggestions that there had been a decline in confidence in the authority. He said that supply to the authority in poor years averaged at about 1750 tonnes. The previous year's supply had been 2141 tonnes, the year before 1771 tonnes and the year before that 1720 tonnes.

"So there is no apparent lack of confidence among suppliers from these figures," he said. "When the returns came out, surely they convinced the doubters that there is no need for a lack of confidence. The four newsletters we have put out this year were probably more than had ever been put out before. Sure, some read like telexes, but that's how they leave my desk. I couldn't have made my explanations any better.

"I work day and night trying to secure the future of the industry. The problems of finding money for the authority have to be solved in Auckland and Wellington. They can not be solved in the South Island." Mr Berry then read out his letters to Mr Cloake. The letters were, in the view of the editor, courteous, acknowledging problems in the industry and saying what Mr Berry was doing in great detail. In one paragraph Mr Berry said that because he was flat out, he would be willing to pay half the cost of sending a South Island delegate up to the North Island to discuss and iron out any difficulties which might have arisen.

Steve Lyttle said there was no way South Canterbury producers could have accepted an Arataki cheque in part payment of expenses incurred on HMA business.

Mr Mitchell criticised the lack of information from the HMA, especially the lack of letters acknowledging the financial difficulties in which the authority had found itself. If these letters had been sent out as a matter of course to all suppliers it would have saved many of them financial embarrassment with their bank managers.

Mr Berry said that sometimes it was difficult to put out a newsletter, "Because when you are in the middle of searching for answers, whatever you say will be out-of-date in a few days."

Mr Dickinson spoke in favour of the remit. He said there was a lack of supplier confidence and he had said this often at HMA meetings. Mr Dickinson said it wasn't so much the lack of a newsletter which was in dispute, but the sort of information that was included in them. Producers need nitty gritty information, he said. They want to know about the delays in their gradings. They want to know about when and how much they are going to be paid.

In his right of reply, Mervyn Cloake said that the debate had shown that there was more concern about the matter than he had anticipated. He also pointed out that the Southland Field Day, an annual affair involving Southland and Otago beekeepers was the biggest they had ever held. At that meeting he said Ivan Dickinson had unfortunately copped a lot of the flack which was intended for the authority.

By way of explanation, Percy Berry said that he had wanted to go down to that field day but it had become a question of priorities for him.

The remit was carried unanimously.

### NO PANIC ON DRUM STORAGE

**Remit 14** **South Canterbury**  
*That all-weather storage facilities be provided for all honey containers at Pleasant Point and Hornby.*

Note: At present hundreds of drums are stored out in the open and very quickly deteriorate — an expense that the industry can well do without.

Bartrum/Cloake

Mr Bartrum said there were hundreds of drums rusting away at Pleasant Point and Hornby and that since that they were worth \$20 each, it was an asset that the authority could not afford to waste. Mr Jeffrey said that the rust seemed to be far less on the blue drums than those with the aluminium coating. He suggested the matter needed looking at from aspects rather than just that of building a big barn. Mr Wicht, the general manager of the authority, said that the aluminium drum coverings were sub-standard. He said they didn't need sand blasting but nevertheless would require painting with different paint later this year. He said the drums were spray painted if necessary before they went overseas, but that the main reason drums were rejected for export use was because of deterioration of the inner lining, not rust from the outside. He said that there was a need for better storage, but at the same time there was the question of how long the authority was going to remain involved in the industry in its present capacity.

The remit was lost 7 votes to 4.

### BETTER HMA RECEIPTING NEEDED

**Remit 15** **Bay of Plenty**  
*That the HMA be approached and requested to send out an acknowledgement of the receipt of consignments of honey from suppliers and at the same time give some indication as to when the grading certificate and first payment can be expected.*

Note: This could be in the form of a pre-printed postcard as follows:

Dear . . . . .

Your consignment of . . . cans/drums of honey was received on . . . We anticipate that you will receive your certificate of grading and initial payment by . . . Signed Manager HMA.

Stanley/Mitchell

Mr Wicht said that the authority was changing its system to the kalamazoo method which gave four copies of all delivery dockets. One would go to the supplier, one would go to the office, one to the MAF, and one would stay with the drum. He said this one document would do all things. The only other paper work required was the delivery receipt docket which should be given to all drivers when they left drums at HMA depots.

The remit had 6 votes in favour and 6 against.

**Remit 16**

**South Canterbury**

*That the HMA investigate the use of bulk tanks for the transport and storage of honey.*

Note: We are far behind other industries in our methods of handling our product in bulk.

Mervyn Cloake/Bartrum

Mervyn Cloake said that he estimated that the authority spent thousands each year on drums for honey and that bulk tanks would be more convenient from both the supply and receiving point of view. Mr Wicht said that the HMA had looked into bulk methods, because they realised they lost \$20 every time they exported a drum. But the HMA had found difficulties which they were still trying to solve. The remit was carried 7 votes to 6.

### SENT CURT OVERSEAS!

**Remit 17**

**Hawkes Bay**

*That conference reaffirms its 1978 remit which urged the HMA to use its best endeavours to maximise exports of New Zealand honey.*

Ian Berry/Marshall

This remit was immediately subject to an amendment by Messrs Dickinson and Bartrum who asked that the words, "but not at the expense of local sales" be tagged to the remit. Mr Dickinson said that his branch felt quite strongly that the HMA should not forsake its local market sales. He said they would be happier to support the remit if the amendment was carried. He said he remembered the days when export sales were not good and that authority suppliers depended on local market sales for their income.

Mr Robinson said that he didn't feel local market sales should be abandoned, but he said in the Auckland province the market had been depressed by specialling of Kintail honey at 59 cents for a 500g container. Much better prices were available overseas, he said.

Mr Morris said he felt that the export market should be taken advantage of when it was well priced, leaving the local market to private enterprise. Mr Jansen said he was against the remit and its amendment. He said it tied the hands of the HMA whose policy should always be to market honey in the best possible way.

Percy Berry said that he had suggested at a board meeting that the pressing problems for the authority were in New Zealand. He said he had wanted to go overseas, as he had wanted to go to the South Island, but because the problems were local, his bike had stayed at home.

Mr Mitchell said that he supported the remit because of a lack of marketing aggressiveness on the part of the authority other than the activities of the present chairman. He said that he thought the lack of trips overseas by the general manager was reflected in the dismal performance of the authority. Ian Berry disputed that the performance of the authority was dismal. He said that in the last year there had been a massive increase in the amount of honey exported by the authority at good prices.

Mr Penrose said that he was getting longer in the tooth and he felt that the marketing had to be looked at as a long-term venture. He said he could remember days when local market price was the most lucrative. He said that it concerned him that the authority had lost 500 tonnes of the 1000 tonnes local market it had 10 years ago.

In his right of reply Mr Dickinson said there had been the inference raised that the HMA was price cutting on the local market. He said that in fact there was no difficulty in moving honey on the local market, though it was a lot easier to move out of the market than to move in. He said the profitability of the local market had been a topic of intense questioning at the board table, especially because some local market pricing had been below-cost in the past because of the role of price control.

Percy Berry said that this year there had been 856 tonnes of honey sold on the local market and that this was not an erosion of the authority's share of the local market at all. *The amendment was put to the vote and lost 8 votes to 6.*

Mr Jansen said he wished to speak against the remit. He said that surely the authority was the best body to run the industry, "do we want regulation on regulation on regulation," he asked.

Mr Penrose said it was not regulation, but a recommendation. He said he understood that a request made by some board members for the general manager to visit Apimondia had been refused. He said that when he had been at the Apimondia conference in Australia he had seen the great number of buyers who had descended on the conference from all around the world. "It is vital that a general manager meets the people he deals with on telex every week," he said.

He then moved an amendment which gained immediate support of the meeting, it read "and that the general manager be sent overseas to examine market opportunities more frequently."

The amendment was carried 11 votes to 3.

The amended remit was then put to the vote and carried unanimously.

### HMA COSTINGS PRIVATE

Remit 18

Waikato

*That the HMA price fixing formula for its retail packaging be submitted to the industry for evaluation.*

Mitchell/Robinson

Mr Mitchell said it was important to find more detail on the financial viability of the HMA packing operation. Mr Jansen said he agreed with this. He said he found the NZ Glass pack in Singapore selling at half the price of the US equivalent. "I feel there is a weakness in the HMA pricing of its retail packs. Certainly they seem to be able to sell them overseas at less than my costs of production."

Mr Cloake said that he was against this remit because it sounded somewhat like commercial espionage. He often wondered why people wanted the HMA figures to be released to its competitors and suggested that cost accounting was a complex professional field and that no one at the conference had a right to stand up and speak because they were amateurs. Mr Jansen then rose to a point of explanation, explaining that an expert who was willing to analyse the pricing was independent and a senior executive of the Development Finance Corporation.

There was more debate on the issue, with speakers of both viewpoints having a say. Mr Wicht finished the debate by saying that all the board's operations are regularly audited but nevertheless he was aware that there was a lot of concern about some apparent discrepancy which had crept into the recent accounts. He said that while he was sure in his own heart that the authority was not making a loss on its packed lines, the matter would be fully investigated.

The remit was put to the vote and lost 5 votes to 9.

### SENT MORE PACKED LINES OVERSEAS

Remit 19

Hawkes Bay

*That conference requests the Honey Marketing Authority to use their maximum effort to increase the percentage of packed honey sold on the export market in relation to bulk honey sold on that market.*

This remit was carried without any discussion.

### FREIGHT COSTS BELONG TO PRODUCER

Remit 20

Waikato

*That the HMA be charged with the responsibility of gradually building its reserves to a level which enables the authority to make prompt advance payments to producers once the honey is received into store.*

This remit was withdrawn.

### HAYMAN SHOULD JOIN T & I

Remit 21

South Western Districts

*That the HMA pay all reasonable freight costs of honey supplied to them by their suppliers.*

Note: This would spread the burden of high freight costs of those who live furthest from a depot.

Rowe/Bromwell

Mr Rowe said that in his area it cost producers up to six cents a kilogram to transport their honey to the authority. Speaking against the remit Mr Jeffrey said that beekeepers were free to choose the districts where they operated. It was therefore the responsibility of the beekeeper to meet his own freight costs.

Mr Wicht said that the authority had traditionally paid freight bills but this had become an increasing high cost burden to suppliers. He said he felt concerned, but questioned the value of setting up national depots as had been suggested by Mr Jeffrey. Whatever way one chose to freight the honey out of the honey house, the freight still had to be paid.

Russell Berry said he was against subsidies for locality because they only encouraged inefficiency.

The remit was lost 10 votes to 3.

### KEEP STATISTICS ANONYMOUS

Remit 22

Hawkes Bay

*That conference believes it would be in the best interest of our export marketing if the government representative on the HMA was an officer from the Department of Trade and Industry and being one who has overseas experience with New Zealand embassies, particularly those in countries which appear to be our best potential honey markets.*

Ian Berry/Marshall

Mr Berry said there was no personal factor involved in this remit whatsoever. He said that if the current MAF officer on the HMA joined the other department he would be quite happy. He said it was just a question of logic of having a representative of a production ministry on a marketing board. He said the main government department which could be of assistance to the authority was Trade and Industry.

Mr Bartrum said he was against the remit, describing Mr Hayman as a first class man who should be kept in the job. He said there was a lot of reorganising to do in the industry and Mr Hayman would have a big role to play.

Harry Cloake said he could not see the logic of the remit. He said the authority had a manager whom the conference had endorsed should be going overseas more to sell honey — that Trade and Industry was not needed for this task.

The remit was put to the vote and lost 5 votes to 8.

### PRIVATE PACKERS EXPORTS ENDORSED

Remit 23

Waikato

*That the details of exported honey by private packers or suppliers which are provided for processing by the HMA do not include such information as would disclose the name of the buyer or their representatives nor information which could lead to their identification.*

Mitchell/Robinson

Mr Mitchell said that this remit was to ensure that the HMA was not given information which would enable it to be accused of under cutting its private exporting competitors in international markets. He said that this practice was not happening but the chance was there. Mr Wicht said he had complete sympathy with the intent of the motion and he said the authority only needed to be able to identify the shipment and the fact that it had exceeded the minimum price.

The remit was carried 8 votes to 0.

### VOTING CHANGES ENDORSED

Remit 24

Waikato

*That conference express its support of the principle of the private exporting of retail packed lines.*

Mitchell/Morris

This remit was carried 11 votes to 1 after little discussion.

Remit 25

Canterbury

*That there be no change in the present constitution and voting system of the Honey Marketing Authority.*

(President's Note:) It is proposed to take this remit as the motion — Remits 26 and 27 are directly linked with Remit 25.

Ian Berry/Bushby

This remit was taken after remit 28 and therefore was not the subject of an intensive debate. It was lost 3140 votes to 1720.

#### Remit 26

Hawkes Bay

*That conference is opposed to the proposed change in the present system of allocating votes for the HMA elections and requests the present system of allocation be retained.*

This remit was withdrawn.

#### Remit 27

Waikato

*That this conference is opposed to any suggested rule changes in voting at the NBA and HMA elections.*

Jansen/Bushby

This remit was also discussed after remit 28 and after being drawn on a delegate vote 6 votes to 6, was lost on a poll vote of 1941 to 2917.

#### Remit 28

Southland

*That voting be changed to one vote per each hundred hives or part thereof with a maximum of 12 votes for 1200 hives or over.*

Booth/Clissold

Mr Booth said that he felt that the present voting system unduly penalised the smaller beekeeper. This view was strongly rebuffed by Ian Berry who asked why the subject had come up on the order paper again when a similar remit asking for a referendum on the voting system had been rejected at last year's conference. He said that Arakati honey had currently no more votes than three beekeepers each with 2500 hives, and yet if the one-man one-vote principle was to be applied to the industry and each of the 18 beekeepers who worked for the firm had a vote, Arakati would be a lot better off than it was now.

Mr Jeffrey spoke in favour of the remit even though it had created a lot of divided opinion within the industry. He suggested that 1200 hives was an economical unit and a reasonable level for the maximum number of votes. That some people chose to have 2000 or even 10 000 hives was a result of their choice as individuals. Regardless of the size of one's operation, said Mr Jeffrey, decisions made at an HMA board meeting or NBA executive meeting affected the livelihood of all beekeepers equally.

Mr Jansen spoke against the remit and Stephen Lyttle spoke in its favour. Mr Penrose said that the present voting set up was the result of an extreme swing at a conference some years ago against the undue effluence that small beekeepers had at that time. He said he thought that the present proposal would swing the pendulum back to the middle where it belonged.

An apiary worker, Mr Berry jnr, spoke saying that he only owned 50 hives. Nevertheless he said that he felt that because HMA decisions affected everyone who worked for his company, it was important that the company had extra votes to protect the interests of all the livelihoods it had in its hands.

Mr Bray pointed out that 77 voters, or 8 per cent of the total membership of the association, held 50 per cent of the votes in the present situation. Mervyn Cloake said that he believed the rights of the employees were best covered by unions rather than by extra votes to big employers.

Russell Berry said that firstly the industry should object to Mr MacIntyre's suggestion as an undue interference in the industry. Secondly, he asked why people who join in a company should have fewer votes than people who have chosen to operate as partners in common.

The remit was then put to a poll vote.

|                              | For         | Against     |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Far North                    | 0           | 93          |
| Northland                    | 44          | 71          |
| Waikato                      | 295         | 477         |
| Bay of Plenty                | 0           | 184         |
| Hawkes Bay                   | 106         | 186         |
| Central and South Hawkes Bay | 0           | 130         |
| South Western Districts      | 0           | 280         |
| Nelson                       | 0           | 28          |
| West Coast                   | 141         | 23          |
| Canterbury                   | 590         | 246         |
| South Canterbury             | 497         | 80          |
| North Otago                  | 164         | 76          |
| Otago                        | 455         | 2           |
| Southland                    | 453         | 97          |
|                              | <b>2745</b> | <b>2073</b> |

After these poll votes had been counted, Bruce Stanley, the delegate from the Bay of Plenty, indicated that he had voted in error in the opposite way to that which he had intended.

### HMA MEMBERSHIP UNCHANGED

#### Remit 29

Southland

*That the membership of the HMA Board be increased by one from four to five members.*

Booth/Bartrum

Mr Booth said the only reason for this remit was to ensure that HMA suppliers had at least one member to look after their interests on the HMA Board.

Mr Jeffrey questioned the word major and asked its meaning. An amendment was then moved by Hindeman and Morris deleting those words which followed "five members". This amendment was carried 11 votes to 2, but the amended remit was lost on a poll vote of 1477 votes to 3278 votes.

### EXTRACTOR PLANS PLEASE

#### Remit 30

North Otago

*That the NBA request the MAF to provide the industry with detailed information on honey extraction plants, suitable for handling honey which will meet with the entry requirements of importing countries.*

Winslade/O'Neill

This remit was carried unanimously after no discussion.

### NO PANIC NEED ON B.L.

#### Remit 31

Bay of Plenty

*That in view of the apparent increase in the incidence of Bacillus Larvae more stringent rules be laid down to restrict the movement of bees from disease prone areas into other areas.*

Bennett/Braid

Mr Russell Berry spoke strongly against this remit. Otherwise there was little debate on the matter.

The remit was defeated 11 votes to 2.

### MORE DISEASE CONTROL OFFICERS

#### Remit 32

Canterbury

*That the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries be requested to appoint apiary instructors for the purpose of disease control.*

Note: Typical of many facets of government service, much of the present apiary instructor's time is involved with the dealings of other branches of the public service such as Rural Banking etc., leaving very little time for the original purpose of the apiary instructor which was disease control and instruction to the beekeeper. With higher hive concentrations as well as greater hive movement, disease control is becoming more important not only for hobbyist apiarists but also commercial apiarists.

It is essential that substantial numbers of hives are in-



spected systematically to ensure that beekeepers are in fact carrying out their obligations in respect of disease. The part-time system, although filling a need, does not in fact do enough especially in the commercial field where disease can be spread quickly and over a wide area. It has now become very urgent where extremely high hive concentrations are found on honeydew with serious robbing problems at certain times of the year.

Jeffrey/Bartrum

Mr Jeffrey said that there was a need for the check inspection system to be intensified. He said there was a potential for much more infection to take place in honeydew areas in particular, where the density of hives was very high. He said it was not enough for the apiary instructor to burn the hives once an infection had been found. Rather, it was necessary for him to have the time to find the source of the disease. Mr Bartrum said that in his view apiary instructors with university training were not the sort of people to seek out a disease. Mr Jeffrey rose to the bait and said that as he was the first apiary instructor with a degree he felt competent to say that he didn't think his degree was a hindrance when seeking out disease.

Mr Bartrum, nevertheless, said there was a need for practical men and it was a retrograde step that these people were no longer being employed by the ministry.

At this point, Mr John Smith the Christchurch apiary instructor, rose to defend himself, interpreting the remit as being an attack on his efficiency. Mr Penrose rose to this point and pointed out that Mr Smith's competence was not in question, rather the matter of principle.

Mr Grahame Walton said that if the air needed clearing, the fact that Canterbury had the lowest rate of BL in New Zealand must be regarded as a feather in Mr Smith's cap. The remit was carried 11 votes to 2.

### TOUGH PENALTIES FOR IMPORTS

**Remit 33** **Bay of Plenty**  
*The conference urges that the penalties be \$1000 per queen bee for the unauthorised importation of queen bees and also that substantial publicity be given to the need for this safeguard.*

Note: This branch feels that a \$200 fine for the importation of queens is totally inadequate as a penalty.

Stanley/Robinson

Mr Stanley said that he knew for certain that a certain individual had imported queen bees and that he had passed this information on to the appropriate party. He said there was a great need to penalise severely those people who were importing queen bees and that these penalties should receive a lot of publicity.

Although Mr Jansen asked why there was an emphasis only on queen bees, when other hive products could be equally dangerous from a disease causing point of view, the remit was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**Remit 34** **Waikato**  
*That conference request the MAF to collect information on world mechanisation in the beekeeping industry and make it available to the N.Z. Beekeeper for publication.*

Note: While worldwide theoretical knowledge on bees is easily obtained, information on mechanisation is not. Care will have to be taken with copyright regulations when it comes to printing anything in the journal.

Mitchell/Russell Berry

Mr Penrose spoke against this remit. He said that Mr Eckroyd of Alliance Bee Supplies was an astute businessman and if there was anything worthwhile for sale around the world he was willing to stock it. Mr Penrose said that Mr Eckroyd had just recently been elected to the mechanical equipment standing committee of Apimondia which was a reflection of his high standing in the eyes of the international bee world. "I think it is over to the beekeeper himself to use his own sources of information or to ask Mr Eckroyd if he has a need for mechanical aids."

Mr Berry said that he was in the manufacturing business and knew how difficult it was to find the technical informa-

tion often required. He said there was a need for one pool of information from which all beekeepers could draw.

Mr Clissold said that this remit was just another case of passing off a task to someone else to do on the industry's behalf. He said that six months after publication any pamphlet would be out of date. Mervyn Cloake said that New Zealand was the most mechanised beekeeping country in the world and there was only a limited amount we could learn from overseas. Mr Jansen was against the remit. Mr Grahame Walton asked whether the advisory service division of the MAF didn't already do this sort of thing. He said certainly his officers tried to pool, for everybody's benefit, those ideas which were being used in New Zealand. The remit was lost 6 votes to 4.

### BAN ALL APIARY IMPORTS

**Remit 35** **Bay of Plenty**  
*That the importation of pollen be prohibited.*  
Note: Pollen can carry chalk brood disease.

Stanley/Robinson

After a somewhat untidy debate during which the remit was broadened from covering just pollen to all known bee disease carrying products, Mr Walton pointed out that the remit was similar to one last year which had resulted in a change in the Apiaries Act. Mr Walton asked whether this meant that the movers of the remit wanted a total ban on all products. Mr Stanley confirmed this and the remit was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**Remit 36** **Waikato**  
*That the question of honey house effluent be made a subject for a seminar by MAF to be held prior to a conference.*

This remit was withdrawn.

### TREE BULLETINS NEEDED

**Remit 37** **Mr E.S. Adamson**  
*That the NBA recommend and assist the N.Z. Nurserymen's Association to produce two bulletins of trees and shrubs for bees in the spring. Also that the NZNA tell NBA branches what is available where.*

Adamson/Dickinson

Mr Adamson pointed out that there was not enough readily available information to farmers or beekeepers about suitable trees and shrubs which could be planted for bees in the spring. Mr Ian Berry agreed and said that these brochures would be ideal if they were given out to farmers with the site honey.

The remit was carried unanimously.

### PLACE WANTED ON AG-CHEM BOARD

**Remit 38** **Canterbury**  
*That conference re-affirm its policy that the association retain its membership on the Agricultural Chemicals Board.*  
Note: This conference is concerned that the association may lose its representative on the Agricultural Chemicals Board and opposes any such move.

Penrose/Clissold

Mr Penrose said that this remit was a hardy annual, but nevertheless it was essential that the conference reaffirmed its desire that the association should retain its membership in an era of extensive use of agricultural chemicals.

The remit was carried unanimously.

### NO BAN ON 245-T WANTED

**Remit 39** **Otago**  
*That in view of the general concern at the continued use of 245T the government place a total ban on its use without waiting for any further reports.*

Skrivener/Heineman

Mr Foote asked the conference to endorse a ban on 245T. He said that it presented a danger to unborn children similar to that presented by DDT and Dieldrin. He said that

these two chemicals had been said to be safe and indispensable, but following their ban, it had been clearly demonstrated that there were safe chemicals which could be used in their stead. He said that the day 245T was found in honey it would be too late, adding that he had already smelt it in a hive. At that point the conference went into committee.

When it came out of committee the remit was lost 14 votes to 0.

### TELL PARISHES OF BEE BENEFITS

#### Remit 40

Nelson

*That NBA approach territorial local body councils with by-laws restricting beekeeping, pointing out the benefits of bees in their area and requesting that administration fees be abolished.*

Note: A local council near Nelson has passed a by-law on the keeping of bees and is charging a \$5 administration fee per year and we hear Nelson City is thinking of the same. Ellis/Boskett

Mr Ellis said he didn't want the association to approach those local bodies that weren't charging a fee in case it put the idea into their minds, but he felt that those bodies which were setting a fee needed to be told how good bees were. Mr Boskett pointed out that while most local bodies had a standard by-law which allowed them to charge for apiary sites, they did not bother to enforce it.

The remit was carried 7 votes to 6.

### NO SUPPORT FOR HEALTH CHANGES

#### Remit 41

Mr C.W. Foote

*That an invitation be made to other beekeeping organisations to form a committee with NBA members to submit proposals to the minister of health with a view to having amendments made to the new Health Department regulations.*

Note: It would appear that these regulations are going well beyond the need, in fact infringing on the people's freedom e.g. a farmer is still allowed to kill and sell or barter beef and mutton etc. without a registered killing house.

Skrivener/Heineman

Mr Skrivener said that a person keeping one hive could be required to process his honey in a registered honey house if he was going to use it for trade or sale, according to his local health department official. He said it concerned him that the NBA which once used to represent all beekeepers now only seem to be concerned with the commercial minority. Mr Penrose said he was against the remit, although he sympathised with its intention. "Farmers are not allowed to kill and sell their own produce," he emphasised. Mr Jansen said that it was unfortunate that smaller beekeepers had to be regulated, but it was none of the conference's business if they were.

Mr Ian Berry said that the law was not administered with regard to small operators unless there was a complaint. Mr Walton said that he was sure that the Health Department would welcome favourably any submissions made by amateur beekeepers regarding an improvement in the regulations.

The remit was lost 13 votes to 1.

### CLEAR FELLING BETTER

#### Remit 42

Hawkes Bay

*That conference endorses the action of the Forest Service in selective logging in some areas as against clear felling.*

Leadley/Marshall

Mr Leadley said that he has become a supporter of the Forest Services selective logging policy. "Previously when they were clear felling, they removed all the rewa rewa and five finger and I was up in arms. Now they are selective logging, putting tracks in and metalling roads." Mr Leadley said that the Forest Service had supported him in his use of selectively logged areas for beekeeping purposes and in fact had assisted him with the building of a landing strip and a

grassed area for his operations. He got ten tonnes of honey out of 100 hives in one rewa rewa area as a result.

Mr Jansen said that there was little native forest left and that the Forest Service needed no encouragement from the beekeepers to chop down more. Mr Ellis agreed with Mr Jansen. He said that he had seen some selective logging where they had selected every log and the result was little different to clear felling.

The remit was carried 11 votes to 3.

### MAKE UP-GRADING DEDUCTABLE

#### Remit 43

Bay of Plenty

*That the expenses incurred in the upgrading of honey houses be 100 per cent tax deductible in the year in which the upgrading takes place.*

Note: At present dairy farmers are granted 100 per cent tax deduction for upgrading the cowshed and/or for new buildings due to Health Regulations.

Stanley/Steven Lyttle

This remit was referred to the Executive.

### NOTICES OF MOTION

#### No. 1

*That this conference accept the offer of the Bay of Plenty to host the 1980 conference at Tauranga.*

Stanley/Mitchell

Mr Mitchell said that the branch wished to follow up on its performance of 14 years ago when it last hosted a conference. He said it would be particularly nice for Doug Briscoe, the district apiary instructor, who would be retiring soon.

The motion was carried unanimously.

#### No. 2

*That the Executive look into possibly setting up a fund to cover the possibility of compensation if or when European Brood Disease arrived in New Zealand.*

This motion was withdrawn following objections from Mr Gavin and Ian Berry.

#### No. 3

*That the NBA employ an independent accountant or business consultant to analyse the HMA to produce a new financial structure so that the HMA can be a viable stabilising influence on New Zealand honey marketing.*

This notice of motion had been first discussed as part of the restructuring debate which had taken place during the annual meeting. Mr Hayman pointed out that this notice of motion was not really relevant as there was now a new ball game as a result of the decisions made the day before at the annual meeting. Mr Bartrum was also against the motion, because it represented money down the drain. He said that the authority had an accountant who was based in Auckland and all that needed to be done was for the facts to be given to the accountant and he would come out with the relevant figures.

Mr Mitchell was in favour of the notice of motion. He said that the Small Business Agency had undertaken to do the work for nothing. He said the Small Business Agency was willing to investigate businesses employing fewer than 50 people for no charge; the HMA fitted well into this category.

It was then moved (Penrose/Bray) that all notices of motion from the annual meeting relating to the restructuring of the HMA should be withdrawn.

Mr Penrose said that delegates and the executive staff knew the state of the play and the feeling of the industry already. He said "woe betide them" if no action had taken place by the next conference.

The motion that both remits be withdrawn was carried unanimously.

## SPRING NUCLEI

ONE WAY to sub-divide in the spring, if you have to, is to form a 3-frame nuc from an existing hive by simply taking that number of frames with adhering bees, making sure you have:

- larvae of the correct age, nice milky little ones
- plenty of stores
- and have left the queen behind; and put them in a new brood chamber.

It is preferable to remove this to another location completely but, if this is not possible, it is essential that there be plenty of young bees on the combs (which there almost certainly will be if the frames contain unsealed larvae) and that the entrance be plugged with grass.

The bees will raise their own queen but do not expect them to build up to full strength that season and do not rely on the removal of three frames to eliminate swarming in the original hive.

Do *not* remove the queen and leave the main colony to requeen. That is sure to give you swarming.

Do *not* attempt this at any other time of the year.

Do *not* over-interfere with nucs. Many a nuc has been harried to extinction by concerned amateurs.

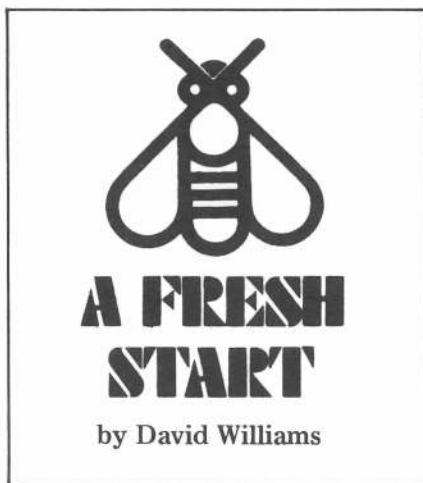
The change from a minimum of four to three-frame spring nuc is because this is a time of increasing nectar and pollen availability, and also a time of natural increase; a time when robbing and danger from wasps and other predators is at a minimum, and when nucs are not under the same stress conditions as at other seasons. Once again, success depends upon sufficient bees and over-sufficient stores.

Crude though this method is, it does have the enormous virtue of being independent of the weather once done — the bees look after themselves, the virgin takes her own time about the mating flight, there is no need to examine or disturb, and success or failure is unalterable once the process has started. Just make up the nuc, and then leave well alone — a one step job.

## HIVE SPLITTING

Positive requeening, by which is meant the active participation of the beekeeper in either the purchase and introduction, or raising and introduction, has the virtue of being controllable.

There are those who recommend some variation of splitting the hive in early spring by use of a separator board (so-called in preference to 'division board' which applies to a vertical division of



the brood chamber).

The method involves either:

- finding the queen, putting her in the bottom box with one frame of brood, adhering bees, and ample stores, and putting all remaining brood and bees in the second brood chamber, separated from the first by a hardboard rimmed cover with a restricted entrance to the rear in the top rim, again with ample stores, or
- as for one but putting the queen in the top half with half the brood, or
- not finding the queen but merely separating the two brood chambers with the board.

The theory is that the queen goes on happily laying in her half while a new queen eventually emerges in the second half, mates, and starts to lay.

Six weeks after the division, the two halves are united by removing the separator board and using newspaper in the approved manner. The new queen kills the old, the bees accustomed to



*The queen, God bless her.*

an upper rear entrance soon find the bottom front, and everything in the garden is beautiful.

I tried it myself for a couple of seasons, and still have the separator boards if anyone would like to borrow them.

It just didn't work out like that. The two halves were never in balance, requeening was chancy, swarms were not totally eliminated, inspection difficult, food supplies not always adequate when I thought they were. The method cannot be recommended; you need one that is 99 per cent effective, not 75 per cent.

## STERILISATION BY BOILING

WHEN PROFESSOR Tage Johansson was over here earlier in the year, I asked him about sterilisation of equipment and he has now very kindly sent me a list of references.

The reason for my enquiry was that there are times when it would be nice to be sure that equipment or tools are free of foul brood.

Foul brood is a bacillus and is spread by spores. There have been many methods recommended for sterilisation, including steam treatment under pressure, or boiling in paraffin wax or a caustic solution.

Such methods may be all very routine for the commercial apiarist, but the amateur is unlikely to have such equipment or chemicals available and would probably prefer not to use them if he had.

On the other hand it may be quite easy for him to boil the articles in question or to use steam. The question then is — how long?

Well, it turns out the little beggars are surprisingly resistant to heat. You or I would come out as soup long before the last spore gives up the ghost.

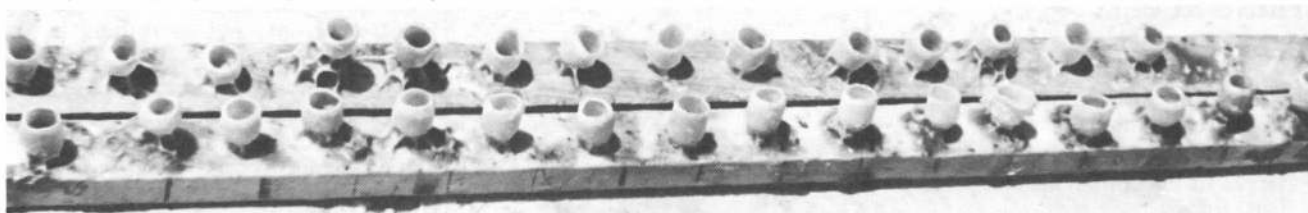
The best (most practical for us amateurs) reference was that of C.E. Burnside in the *Journal of Economic Entomology* for April, 1940 (33.2: 399-408). If you want the full article, please write in.

He found that both boiling water and live steam killed all spores after eight hours but that after seven hours approximately five per cent of the cultures still showed growth.

So there you are — it takes longer than you think.

There is one problem with this, and that is that boiled or steamed wood ware becomes much weaker, more likely to snap under impact, and also turns an unattractive brown colour caused by chemical changes in wood components.

However, they will at least be pure!



## Pt. 5: Queen rearing for amateurs

by David Williams, our hobbyist advisor. Photos by Alan Warren.

THE GRAFTING process is where larvae are removed from their own cells and placed in prepared cell cups.

To prepare these cups, you will require:

- A small jar with melted beeswax in the bottom,
- A small jar full of cold water,
- A government-provided HB pencil, slightly rounded at the blunt end (any other pencil will do but a gov't HB works best of all).

### The Wax

This should be melted down from pale comb – if you use old stuff you get larval cases, resins, honey and all sorts of debris in. Don't overheat the wax as the bees like the smell of scorched wax no more than we do so it is better to melt the wax in a double boiler, put a container of wax in a container of hot water on a hot-plate.

The wax can be melted directly on the hot-plate but, if you have too much previously melted and set wax solid in the bottom, you may crack the jar and have a real fire. If this happens, put earth or sand on it – if you try to use water, the burning wax spreads on top of it very nicely.

Also remember that wax takes a while to melt properly, so leave plenty of time to do this.

### The Pencil

This needs to be new, full length with the original end at both ends. If it is of the correct quality, it will have the blunt end rounded and lacquered and a six-sided body.

Leave the rounded bottom, and gently sand off the edges of corners at the bottom – just a slight touch of sandpaper will do.

You now have your cell-cup template.

### The Cups

You now have your wax, water, and pencil. Dip the pencil in the water and then into the wax – this allows an H<sub>2</sub>O barrier between wood and wax so the cells slide off easily. Repeat this three times – water, wax, water, wax, water, wax, and after the third put back into the water and hold it there

for a few seconds. If long enough the wax is surprisingly hard and the cup will come off without crushing.

Do not have the wax too hot and do not dip in more than a few millimetres, say 6-7mm. In many ways, the shallower the cup, the better, it is easier for the bees to work and easier to put the larva in.

Fasten the cups on wood grommets, or straight onto bars, in the frame prepared as for strips, using a dab of molten wax.

Put the frame in the hive for a day or so to allow the bees to work them to suit themselves; it warms them up, and gets them smelling all nice and normal.

There is little point in the amateur investing in plastic cell cups (but if you do, buy the more expensive of the two grades offered – the others are not good), or in formal, expensive grafting equipment.

### Preparation

Exactly the same as for strips, and I will just run through the sequence again, quickly:

- Prepare cell cups on bars and place in any hive overnight
- At this time prepare the hive to take the cells:

Remove queen on one frame (or kill her off).

Remove all unsealed brood (purists remove all brood) either sub-divide hive into queenright portion with all unsealed brood and part stores and queenless with sealed brood, stores, empty comb and space for cell frame OR remove all brood, shaking all bees off on entrance ramp.

Put brood frames onto other hives.

- Check through your breeder hive for a good frame with eggs surrounded by larvae, freshly hatched – this means the eggs will hatch overnight and be perfect the next day.

- Put this frame in top centre of brood chamber where you may remove it easily.

You are now all set to proceed.

### Procedure

The next day, at your own convenience,

pre-warm your operations room and have everything handy – grafting tool, damp cloth, good light.

Remove the cell frame, shake off the bees, and bring into the operations room; keep warm.

Go to the breeder hive and remove the selected frame; – one gentle shake will remove most of the bees – don't be too vigorous or you'll damage the larvae. Brush off the rest with a clean paint brush.

Rush into the operations room and remove a few of the larvae and discard. Put a dab of milky fluid they were sitting in in each cell cup – I use an eye dropper for this and when you put the larva in, it should sit on, not in the fluid or it will drown. The fluid is as much to prevent the larva drying out as for sustenance.

Then, with a good light shining down into the cells, and tilting the frame so it is, pick up the very smallest larva and gently transfer them, one by one per cup, until each has one. The experts use a sable brush (Chris Dawson uses 00, Bruce Stanley a no.1) by simply inserting it alongside the larvae, giving a slight twist, lifting back, and the larva comes up on it, then do the reverse into the cell cup.

If using a grafting splinter – a small wedge of veneer whittled to a flat point at one end and fitting comfortably in the hand, – break down the cell wall to get to the bottom, making it easy to pick the little beastie up with the tip. Lower the tip into the cell cup, press slightly into the wax, and roll gently to rotate the larva off.

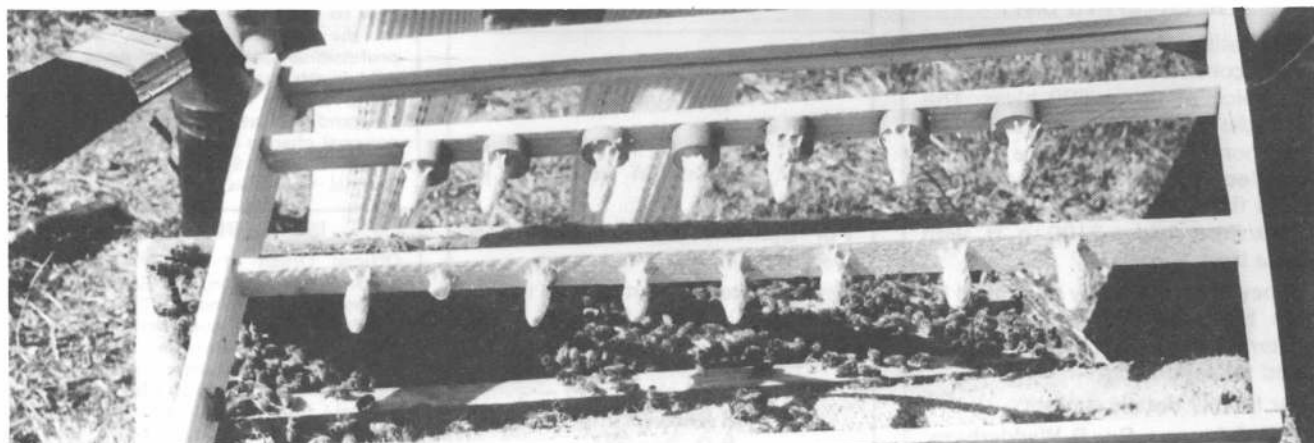
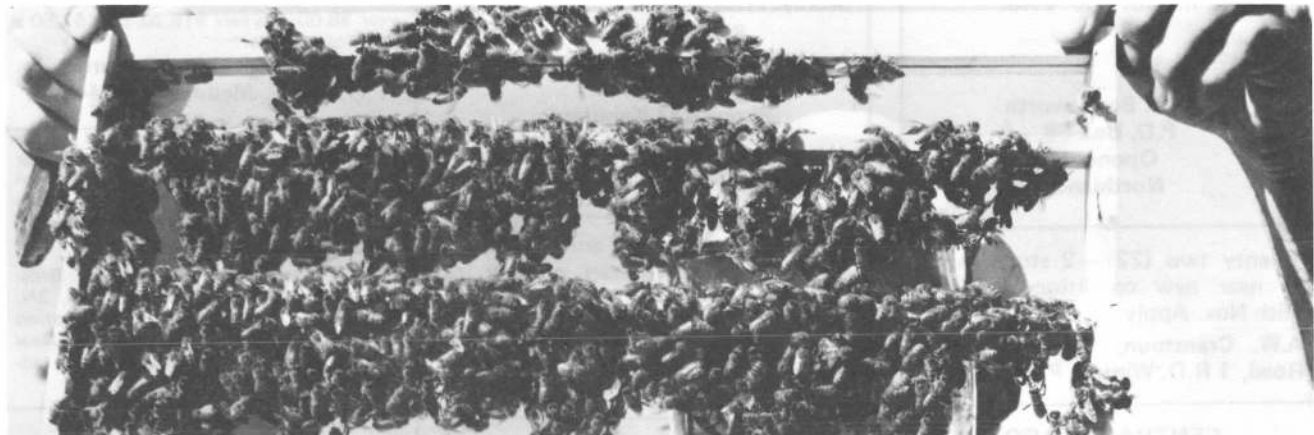
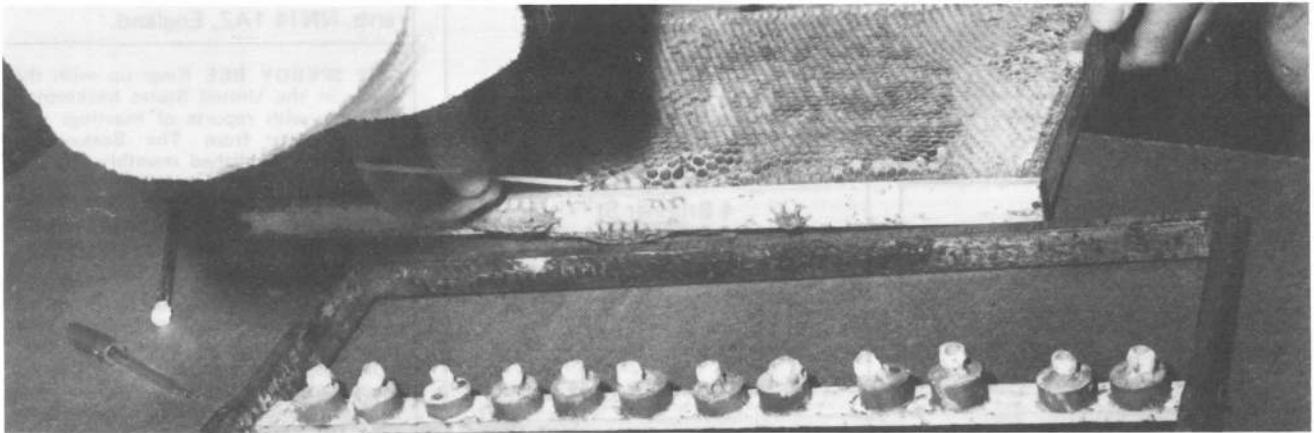
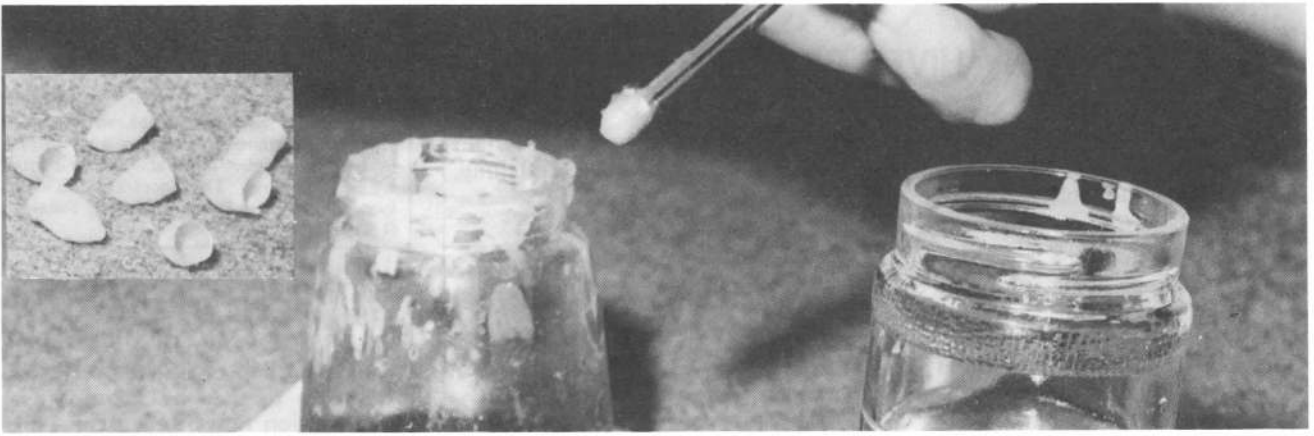
Do the whole lot in this way.

Swivel the bars to face the bottom and race out to the prepared hive with the prepared frame and insert quickly with the minimum of smoke, if any at all, and close the hive down.

Replace the breeder frame in its own hive and, again, hope for the best.

Remember the three essentials: Warmth; gentleness; speed.

And don't worry too much about any failures – you did your best.



Photos from top: 1. Water, wax, water, wax, and – hey, presto! Cell cups. 2. Removing larva with my grafting splinter. 3. Frame of cells as taken from hive. Do not shake – instead, gently brush bees off. 4. Frame of cells with bases (top) or without (bottom) after bees brushed off.

## HOW MANY HIVES PER HECTARE?

IF YOU have ever wondered how many hives it takes to pollinate certain crops, you are in good company. So to eliminate some of the brain scratching, MAF advisor John Smith decided to do a little research.

Here is what he found:

|               |       |                 |       |
|---------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| Almonds       | 5/ha  | Gerkins         | 6/ha  |
| Apples        | 2/ha  | Blackcurrents   | 5/ha  |
| Advocates     | 56/ha | Lavender        | 2/ha  |
| Blackberry    | 2/ha  | Mac             | 4/ha  |
| Blueberry     | 2/ha  | Onion seed      | 30/ha |
| Buckwheat     | 4/ha  | Peach           | 2/ha  |
| Cherries      | 2/ha  | Plus and prunes | 5/ha  |
| Kiwifruit     | 8/ha  | Pecans          | 2/ha  |
| Cranberries — |       | Raspberry       | 4/ha  |
| up to         | 20/ha | Sunflowers      | 2/ha  |

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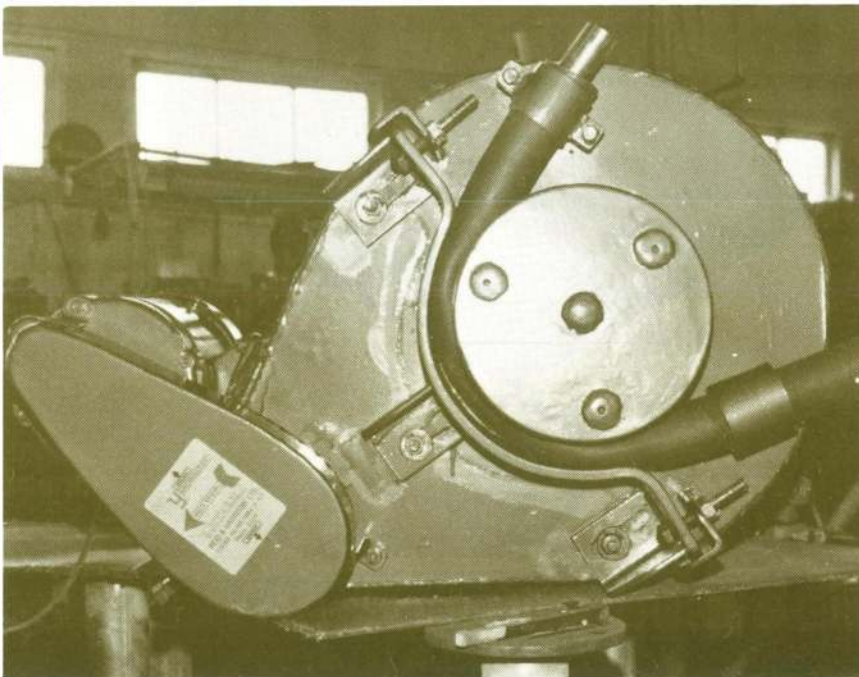
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