

N.Z. HONEY EXPORT CONTROL

HOW IT OPERATES

“ More Government in business and less
business in Government ”

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" Governments can render a measure of assistance, but the real basis must come from the producers themselves. Do not let Governments come in and run your marketing for you. I say it deliberately that that can only end in disaster."

This warning was uttered by the Prime Minister (Mr. Bruce), amid great cheering, at the luncheon attended by delegates to the Farmers' and Settlers' Conference at Sydney.

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In May, 1922, Mr. W. J. Jordan, the representative of the Honey Producers Association, addressed a meeting of beekeepers in the Totara Hall at Ross. He promised an advance of 5d. per lb. on our honey, adding that we should get at least another 3d. lb. bonus. The following day he examined a portion of my 70 cases and after tasting the contents of several tins confirmed his previous verbal guarantee of an advance of 5d. lb. with a bonus of 3d. On the strength of this, I was induced to take shares in the Honey Producers Association and I shipped on May 24th. to Wellington, 50 cases and to Auckland 20 cases. The Manager of the Honey Producers Association repudiated the promises of their representative, offering me 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. lb. which I refused to accept. Eventually I got a re-grade which increased the price to 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. lb., but the bonus I have never seen nor will I ever see it.

These sharp practices so disgusted me that I decided to export my honey direct to our Agent in London.

After consultation with Messrs Renton & Co. of Hokitika, I contracted or arranged with London Agents, Messrs Mounstephen Speed & Co., to ship the next three seasons' honey direct to them and if satisfactory prices were obtained we would renew the arrangement.

The first shipment to Messrs Mounstephen Speed & Co. (60 cases), averaged 68/6 cwt., being approximately 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. lb., and as the marketing charges from Wellington to London averaged 9/10 per case against the Control Board's average of 21/7 per case, this shipment left me nearly 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. nett per. lb.

Although I have a License to export and a Registered Brand, the following year when I wanted to ship to our own Agents, I was refused by the Chairman of the Honey Control Board, who said I had to ship to A. J. Mills & Co. I gave the Control Board a trial and found that I had to pay 1d. per lb. for so called advertising and 5% commission, which brought up the average of marketing a case of honey to 21/7 case. The Honey Export Control Act, Section 20, distinctly states, "there shall be payable by the producers by way of levy on all honey intended for export, such charges as may from time to time be prescribed in that behalf by regulations under this Act, not exceeding a levy of one farthing a pound."

When I drew the attention of the Minister of Industries and Commerce, Hon. A. D. McLeod, to the charge of one penny per lb. for so-called advertising, he only used one word—dastardly. The Control Board now intimate a reduction to a levy of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. which is also illegal. The Control Board also refuse to allow honey to be exported to any other firm than A. J. Mills & Co., who are the agents of the Honey Producers Association. There is no authority in the Act to warrant the Board's refusal to allow export of honey to other than A. J. Mills & Co. I claim that according to Section 15 of this Act, that I have a bona-fide contract or arrangement with Mounstephen Speed & Co., London, for the purchase and sale of my honey which was made before the passing of this Act. Sufficient proof of this claim lies in the fact that the first years honey was sent to Messrs Mounstephen Speed & Co., London, before the passing of this Act.

Further proof is confirmed in a cable from Mounstephen Speed & Co., which reads:—London via Pacific, October 6th., 1924. Sold honey 68/6, if you can offer 100 cases for delivery, London, December or January, good white grade, should secure much better prices, cable reply.

Unfortunately the Honey Control Board is run by the same men as the Honey Producers Association, the Chairman admits that the average export of honey outside the Honey Producers Assosiation is less than 20 tons a year. Why the expense of a Control Board for the paltry opposition of 20 tons a year. The Control Board should be able to say to all producers "If you can do better than we are doing for you, try it."

Last season's export was 360 tons and they had some on hand when this season's crop estimated at 1200 tons or more went into grade store. If the next four season's are like this seasons (as Clement Wragge has foretold us), there will require to be a change in the management of the Board or else the Industry is doomed.

I have on hand waiting for export 50 cases of white honey which will grade 91' to 93' and all that I require is a permit to export to Mounstephen Speed & Co., and to be allowed to conduct my own business without the assistance (?) of the Honey Export Control Board.

Agents of London firms are offering 6½d. per lb. for good white honey, F.O.B. main ports in New Zealand and I want to know why I am prohibited from selling to any reputable London firm.

