

9 APR 1937

MEMORANDUM Form-

The Hon. the Minister of Agriculture.

I attach hereto copy of notes taken when a deputation representing the Bee-Keepers of West Otago and Eastern Districts waited upon me with a request for Government assistance toward eradication of foul brood in bees.

I also attach additional notes taken at Winton when Mr. Erwin, President of the Southland Branch of the National Bee-Keepers Association saw me on the same matter.

I trust you will give this matter your full and careful consideration.

Encl. ✓

(SGD.) D. G. SULLIVAN

in file

DESPATCHED
9 APR 1937

REFERRED to
to Hon. the MINISTER
7 APR 1937

At Invercargill.
5th March, 1937.

At Gore on the 3.3.37 Mr. D. McDougall, M.P., introduced to the Hon. D.G. Sullivan, Minister of Industries and Commerce, a deputation representing the Bee-keepers of West Otago and Eastern districts, who made a request for

Government assistance toward eradication
of fowl brood in bees.

MR. HERRON said it had been proved beyond doubt that it was possible to eradicate this disease under proper management and supervision. Fowl brood was fairly widespread throughout the Dominion and they considered that it was an impossible task for the few inspectors the Department employed to properly supervise bee farms. This disease was greatly retarding the industry. Some years ago a scheme had been in operation whereby experienced apiarists assisted the Department in inspecting work but this scheme has been cut out as an economy measure by the past Government. The present Instructor, stationed at Dunedin, had all Otago and Southland to cover. It was quite impossible for one officer to do the work efficiently. The deputation solicited the Minister's assistance in having a sum of at least £2,000 placed on the Estimates to assist in a closer inspection of the hives. The industry was valuable to the country in other directions than the producing of the honey. There were several factories in the Dominion employing quite a considerable amount of labour in the manufacturing of hives and equipment for bee-keepers; also the fruitgrowing industry would be at a loss without the bees for pollination purposes. Our New Zealand honey had a very good name in the Old Country and at the present time it had at least 10s. premium on any other honey imported into England. The "Imperial Bee" honey was a very valuable asset for advertising this Dominion. The small sum they considered should be placed on the Estimates would be something to go on with in the meantime until something wider in scope was considered by the Department. The National Bee-keepers' Conference would not be held until later when they would not be in time to have an amount placed on the Estimates, and at the moment the bee-keepers were becoming alarmed at the position.

THE MINISTER. Is it general throughout the country or confined to your own district?

MR. HERRON answered that there were sections where commercial bee-keeping was carried on which were comparatively clean but sometimes bees were brought into these sections and sold which caused contamination.

MR. SWANSON explained how he had started commercial bee-keeping with about 30 hives. The first year he had kept $\frac{1}{2}$ ton of honey in the combs and the following spring he had opened up the hives to discover that half of his bees were dead with foul brood, the disease being caught from a neighbour's hive that was invested with it. He therefore had to destroy his half ton of honey. For the time it had crippled him and he had had to go out shearing to enable him to carry on. He knew sufficient now to keep the disease in check but it was frequently the man with a few hives who was the trouble, as he probably kept bees for a hobby and not for a living. He considered that more efficient inspection was necessary. He himself had spent 4 years inspecting the West Otago district and during that period foul brood was under control, but since he had stopped this work it he sprung up in 12 different places that were clean previously. The industry was a worthwhile one as it brought in a revenue to the country of £400,000 a year.

MR. G. STEELE stated that when supervision had ceased foul brood had crept in again. The large district the present Inspector had to attend to made it impossible to give the attention necessary. He wished to explain that the deputation were not trying to get in ahead of the National Bee-keepers' Association - they were merely trying to boost the matter along.

THE MINISTER said he had listened with intense interest to what he had heard in regard to this disease and its possible effect upon the industry. He did not know what the position was in this regard throughout the Dominion but he could ascertain that. This matter was actually under the control of the Minister of Agriculture and he would therefore make it his business to confer with Mr. Lee Martin on his return to Wellington and to place their

representations before him. He was sure the Minister would be very concerned to know that the situation was as the deputation had represented it to be, because it was a very valuable industry and there was a possibility of making it a still more valuable one. The members of the deputation could rest assured that he appreciated the importance of their statements, and he would lose no time in discussing the position with the Minister concerned.

The Hon. Mr. Lee Martin,

Referred.

The Secretary,
Department of Industries & Commerce,

5.5.37.

Referred.

D.G.S.

5.5.37.

Office of the Minister of Industries and
Commerce.
(Board of Trade).

WELLINGTON.

18th March, 1937.

AT WINTON -

Notes to be added to those concerning deputation at Gore on foul brood
in bees.

MR IRWIN. President of the Southland Branch of the National Bee-keepers' Association, Members of the Executive, and Director of New Zealand Honey Ltd.

His organisation has made representations through the Minister of Marketing and Sir Francis Frazer has all particulars in regard to a suggestion that the Co-operative organisation which is working throughout New Zealand should come under Government control and that it be directed by the Marketing Department.

Mr. Irwin stated that he, with others had already waited upon the Hon. Mr. Nash, and had explained the wishes of his organisation, as stated above. He sought the Minister's sympathy and help should the matter come before Cabinet at any time.

Mr. Irwin also brought under the Minister's notice the seriousness of foul brood and he earnestly supported the representations which had been made at Gore. He suggested that the method that had been adopted prior to the depression of appointing beekeepers as assistant Inspectors and of paying these men should be reinstated. He sought the Minister's assistance in this regard. He pointed out that as far as he himself was concerned he had lost in the last three years £150 as a direct result of this disease.

THE MINISTER promised that he would remember his representations when the matter came before him.

The Secretary.

Referred.

D.G.S.

18. 3. 37.