

RESIGN EN BLOC. HONEY BOARD.

AUCKLAND RUMOUR.

STATE CONTROL PLAN.

DISSATISFIED PRODUCERS.

The resignation of all the members of the Honey Control Board is currently rumoured in Auckland. Official confirmation is lacking, and the chairman of the board, Mr. J. R. Butland, said this morning that he could neither confirm nor deny the report.

RESIGN EN BLOC.

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It is rumoured among producers, however, that the Government, in taking control of honey through the Internal Marketing Department, has clashed with the board. The report has it that the board's rights under the Honey Control Act of 1924 were infringed, and that all the members sent in their resignations. It is thought that these have not yet been accepted by the Government, but a statement is expected shortly.

The members of the board are Mr. J. R. Butland, chairman and Government representative, and Messrs. W. Watson and P. A. Hillary, producers' representatives.

Government's Scheme.

Last month the Government scheme to process, pack and distribute honey was put into operation. The assets of an Auckland firm, New Zealand Honey, Limited, were bought out, and at their former headquarters in Stanley Street the Internal Marketing Department honey section was set up.

The Minister of Marketing, the Hon. W. Nash, stated that the Internal Marketing Department had been devising a scheme to give a measure of security to commercial beekeepers, and it was now proposed that the Department would offer an advance of 4½d a lb pro rata, according to grade. Suppliers wishing to obtain this advance could send supplies to grading stores at New Plymouth, Wellington, Lyttelton, Smithfield, Dunedin, Bluff and Auckland, or to the premises formerly occupied by New Zealand Honey, Limited, at Auckland.

In a statement to the Press the Minister gave an assurance that the present system of distribution would not be interfered with.

Commenting on the Government scheme as expounded by Mr. Nash, the president of the Dominion Beekeepers' Association, Mr. Y. H. Benton, said that the outlook for honey producers was anything but bright. Strong protests had been made, he said, by many producers against the application of State-controlled marketing methods to the industry.

Control Board's Position.

The Government's scheme to regulate honey marketing through the Marketing Department apparently cut across the board's policy.

Since February, 1933, the Honey Control Board has managed the business of export and marketing overseas of New Zealand's honey. The board took over when the honey export industry was in a very low state. Since then it has built up the industry by organisation and advertisement till now New Zealand honey is recognised as the best in the world and realises a premium over all other honey.

In a recent statement issued by the board its past policy was outlined. It had been, in addition to securing the maximum return for producers, to increase initial advances, as finances permit, obviating the necessity of producers accepting low prices on the local market to enable financing between the time of shipment from New Zealand and realisation in London. Progress in this direction enabled the board's advance last season to reach the high figure of 4d flat rate, equivalent to 4½d pro rata.

A review of payouts since the board took over marketing in 1933 is as follows (per lb pro rata):—1933, 5½d; 1934, 6½d; 1935, 6d; 1936, 6½d; 1937, 7d.

In addition to the above payouts, taking into consideration the provision made for the payment of a further £1500 due in June, £6100 has been paid to the Government in redemption of a loan of £10.000 granted to the board for the purchase of Imperial Bee brand and adjustments in settlement of the liquidation of the Honey Producers' Association, Limited.