

R.D. 11
Ashhurst
Via Palmerston North.

Dear _____

H.M.A. Elections 1973

I am confident that I will be the least known candidate in this election. This letter is a way, therefore, of introducing myself to you and hopefully in the future a more personal introduction will be possible.

I was born in a small village in North Wales in 1942, and started beekeeping with 2 hives given to me by my grandfather when I was ten years old. Bees became my major recreation while at school, and grew to become quite a prosperous business by the time I went up to university. I continued my beekeeping while a student and expanded into the area around the university as well. During the long vacation of my first year at college, I worked at the Bee Division of Rothamsted Research Station under Dr. Free and it was there that my interest in pollination was aroused.

On obtaining my degree in 1964, I went to Uganda, first to a research post and later to a teaching post in the Agriculture Faculty at Makerere University. During this period I again started keeping bees - the notorious African ones this time - and became involved in studies of their performance in various types of hive, and under different levels of management. I also conducted research into the pollination of Cotton, Coffee and Sunflowers. In 1967 I obtained a research grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to expand my beekeeping research and to undertake a survey of the Beekeeping industry for the Government, and to prepare a report on the National Development of the industry. In 1970 I presented this report to the Government and resigned my post at Makerere to take up my present position as Lecturer in Agronomy at Massey University.

Between leaving Uganda and arriving in New Zealand, I spent some weeks in the U.K. and during this time I sat for the British National Diploma in Beekeeping, which I obtained.

I started keeping bees again here in 1971 and after feeling my way in the first year particularly with regards to seasons, have now built up to some 50 odd hives. Also this season I will be starting a pollination study on several oil seed crops.

During the past three years in New Zealand, I have been greatly perturbed by the divisions and suspicions that exists between various parts of the industry, which regularly manifest themselves at the N.B.A. conference. I am sure that the proposals outlined by the N.B.A. President in his report at Nelson would form a sure basis for the development of a united industry and if elected would support these proposals within the H. M.A.

With regards to the limitation on payout imposed by the government, I have mixed views. I believe that it is prudent to accumulate a reserve in good years to tide us over lean years. However I also have the firm conviction that a 20cent average payout will not permit the industry to undertake the investment necessary to take advantage of the high prices by increasing production. I would, therefore, add my voice to those urging the minister to review this decision and to increase the payout. I must make it clear however, that I would regard accumulated reserves as being in trust against reduced export prices and not available to increase the authorities' power to trade on the local market by the acquisition of further packing units.

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It may be thought that I am too young for this position. However I have found training in the industry and experience on three continents. If it is necessary to serve a long apprenticeship in New Zealand and to cultivate votes in order to be elected to the authority, then this may well explain many of the problems that have plagued the industry. Perhaps being young, and a newcomer with no axe to grind, would be an advantage in an authority member.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Roberts
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