

recreation for the ladies during the business hours of Conference, and for the very enjoyable social and film evenings.

In acknowledging tributes to his fairness in conducting the business of Conference, the President expressed his grateful thanks to members of the H.M.A., officers of the Department of Agriculture and to members of the Executive for their help and support during the year, and wished everyone a safe and happy return home. Conference concluded at 1.30 p.m. on Friday, July 23.

National President's Report to Congress

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to present to you the Annual Report of your Association. This past year has been a busy year, a formative year, one where a new approach has been made to our financial problems and a new General Secretary has been appointed. Progress must be maintained and the Executive has striven to achieve this.

Three Executive meetings were held during the year, the first to decide on the General Secretary's resignation, the second to appoint a new secretary and deal with current business, while the last meeting was primarily to consider and formulate an acceptable scheme to finance the Association. Other business of the year included deputations to the Minister of Agriculture and to the Minister of Industries and Commerce; attendance at a specially convened meeting to discuss known facts relating to the Tutu problem; attending, on invitation, the October meeting of the Honey Marketing Authority and interviewing applicants for the position of General Secretary. Whenever possible members of the Executive have visited branch meetings and attended field days. It has been our aim to keep all members well informed and to attend to all problems as they arise.

PRODUCTION AND RESEARCH:

Once again it has been the lot of the beekeeper to find that after all his strenuous efforts to get his bees into the best possible condition ready for the honey flow, weather conditions have foiled him. This past season will go down on record as being one of poor returns. This is most frustrating to the beekeeper who prides himself on his skill, but we cannot account for nature. Some districts report complete crop failure while over-all the returns will be very much below average. However, with that optimism inherent in all beekeepers, we will look to the future and hope that next season will be better.

In looking to the future, what do we see? Can we expect to continue to produce economic returns? This question must cause grave concern to us all. The changing pattern of farming, the heavier stocking of pasture lands, the clearing away of the pollen sources, does this leave us with a bright future? Perhaps at first sight it appears not to be so, but let us look at this situation more closely. Are we overstocking what has been in the past good honey producing country? Are we trying to operate too many hives with the labour force available, with the result that the hives go into the honey gathering season in poor condition? If we are at fault, then we should rectify this before it is too late.

The Association, in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, conducted a Seminar at Timaru last spring. This Seminar was well attended, and proved to be an outstanding success.

A similar function will be repeated at Hamilton in the North Island this coming spring.

It has always been the aim of the Association to secure adequate research facilities for industry. We are now in the fortunate position that the Wallaceville Animal Research Centre has sufficient staff to carry out a more comprehensive programme of research. This can only benefit the industry.

An Amendment to the Apiaries Act, based on the decisions made at the combined meeting concerning the Bacillus Larvae problem, is now before Parliament. This Bill not only gives more scope for the control of the disease but the responsibility for the inspection of the hives for the disease is now placed with the beekeeper, where it rightly belongs. We expect, however, that Departmental Officers will pursue this problem with continued vigour.

ILLEGAL QUEEN ENTRY:

It has come to our notice that a queen bee has been brought into New Zealand without authority. This is disturbing information, and is something which should not be treated lightly. Rumours of other importations have also been heard. Is this not the time to look more closely at the question of queen bees being imported under strict supervision and quarantine? To be indifferent to this attitude leaves us with the danger of more unauthorised importations, thereby introducing undesirable races of bees and, even more important, diseases which could spell disaster to us all. Therefore, we must take a realistic attitude to this and, if possible, thoroughly investigate the possibility of importing queens in a manner which would not expose the industry to any danger.

TUTU PROBLEMS:

In October last year the Government called together a meeting of a committee on which this Association was represented, to discuss the known facts concerning the Tutu problem, and the production of toxic substances. This meeting revealed a great deal of new information which sustained previous opinions. However, the meeting could not offer any immediate solution and until some means of controlling the passion vine hopper is found, each beekeeper must be responsible for his own product. It is expected that all producers in the suspect areas will exercise great care when extracting the crop, identifying each extraction, and harvesting all honey as early as possible.

It was revealed to the Committee that the investigation of biological control could be put forward a year if sufficient money was available to send a research officer to Australia the following summer. The Honey Marketing Authority subsequently made a sum of money available, and for this we are indebted to them.

A report of this meeting has been made available to all branches in the suspect area. It is in their own interest to study this report and learn to live with this problem until a solution is found.

DECONTROL OF HONEY PRICES:

Even though efforts have been made by members of the Association to persuade the Executive to agree to the retention of Price Control, it has spared no effort to secure complete freedom of marketing for the industry by releasing honey prices from control. The outlook of the Association must be consistent, and at no time will the Executive obey the dictates of the minority unless, of course, circumstances prove them correct. By doing so we would lose the strength of purpose built up over the past years, and as on this occasion there is no evidence that the opinion of the industry has changed, the Executive will continue their efforts towards de-control.

The Government's attitude to this question has become intolerable after years of evasive replies. The industry has the right to a definite answer to this vital aspect of its economy and demands one.

The Executive has succeeded in securing increases in the Price Order to take care of increased costs as they occur, and they will continue to watch the interests of the industry in this matter.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY:

It is with deep regret that we record the resignation of Mr R. A. Fraser, General Secretary to the Association. He served the industry faithfully and wisely as did his late father, Mr G. V. Fraser, before him, and in times of emergency with vigour and the resources at his command. It was largely due to his ability and foresight that the industry is held in such high regard, and may we remember this when extending to him our sincere thanks.

Following the acceptance of Mr Fraser's resignation, the position was advertised, selected applicants interviewed, and Mr Moody was appointed at an administration fee of £750.

FINANCE:

The Association's financial position is clearly set out in the Balance Sheet, and the General Secretary will elaborate on the financial statement in due course. I would, however, draw your attention to the fact that our income is barely sufficient to meet our day to day expenses. We must record that the H.M.A. has assisted the Association by meeting half the publication costs of the "N.Z. Bee-keeper". Their contribution in this matter exceeded £300. But for this, the Association affairs would have shown a serious deficit for the year. This arrangement with the H.M.A. is to continue for a further year, but a solution must be found to ensure financial stability for the Association. Proposals in line with the principle approved at last Conference will be placed before you later during this Conference. The Association is not able to be really effective until it is able to make a contribution to the development of the industry. This it can only do if it has the financial resources available.

TRAVEL BURSARY:

So far, it has not been possible to establish a satisfactory liaison with the industry in Canada. Although there has been an exchange of correspondence we still require full details of the itinerary for the bursar, and every effort will be made to have the negotiations finalised so that the project can come to fruition in 1966.

RECOGNITION:

Each Conference we elect our officers for the following year and then spare little thought for the work done by them in our service. This past year has presented us with some unique problems and I would have you know of the grand support given to me by the Vice-President, who has ever been ready to assist in any way possible. Your members of the Executive have given of their experience and knowledge at all times willingly.

On the Agricultural Chemicals Board our Association is worthily represented by Mr T. Pearson. His work on our behalf is particularly worthy of recognition, for the benefit of it cannot always be readily seen.

APPRECIATION:

The work of the Agricultural Dept. Apiary Section staff, ably guided by the Director, Mr A. M. W. Greig, strives to assist the industry as a whole, and we record with appreciation our thanks for the work done by them all.

During the year invaluable help in many ways has been forthcoming from the H.M.A. and we are indeed indebted to them.

I have been pleased to have had the opportunity to meet many members and take part in some of the activities of the Branches, and thank all members for the courtesies extended to me

H. CLOAKE, Dominion President.