Mr. BYRNES. 244 million, 242 million, and the average of 246 million, but our domestic production has fallen from 266.7 million to 251.1 million to 254.5 million. You had a little increase in 1966, and then a big drop in 1967 to 223 million.

Mr. WILLSON. The honey industry, sir, recognizes that these figures are true. We recognize that we have to do something about it.

We have before Congress, introduced by Congressman Quie of Minnesota, a bill which would be an enabling Act to allow us to raise money from within our own industry for honey promotion and research.

We are hopeful that we can do that, to bring consumption of honey back on the increase, rather than on the decrease.

Mr. BYRNES. There was a large decline in consumption in 1967, but you can't analyze the causes of this big dropoff from the six-year average?

Mr. WILLSON. We know that where honey is sold, it is in the main in the supermarkets, we have got lots of competition there with marmalades and jams and jellies and everything else, frequently at lower prices than a one-pound jar of honey, for example. We have plenty of competition.

Mr. BYRNES. But you had that in 1966, in 1965 and in 1964. All of a sudden, though, you have a drop from 242 million pounds to 228 million pounds.

That seems to me to be quite a drop from a level that was rather constant. You are in the business of analyzing the market, and I thought maybe you had some idea as to what has happened to that market.

Did the price go up considerably?

Mr. WILLSON. No. I think we should allow maybe five percent or six percent for what is known in the scientific world as a scientific error in the making up of these figures.

Mr. BYRNES. Oh, you are suggesting that the figures aren't particularly accurate; is that it?

Mr. WILLSON. I think that there is a good chance for there to be inaccurate figures within at least 5 percent; yes, sir.

Mr. BRYNES. But that margin of error would also exist in the other years, it would seem to me. The margin of error is always there.

That is all, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. Chairman, could I ask a question?

Mr. BURKE. Mr. Curtis.

Mr. CURTIS. What is the physical situation with respect to storability of honey? Can you store it? Can you have honey stored and last a year, or is it a product that has to be sold pretty quickly?

Mr. WILLSON. Honey is generally considered, sir, to be a product that can be stored almost indefinitely at room temperature.

If the honey to begin with is a sound product, well ripened by the bees, in other words, of a relatively low moisture content, it can be good for a year or two or three.

What happens to make it a little bit less valuable, as far as the market is concerned, is that it darkens somewhat in color, and that depreciates its price, and there is a certain loss through evaportion of those things which give honey its flavor, which is essential oils, esters, alcohols, that just jump out into space and are lost.