

MINUTE of MEETING of the
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
held in the Hydro Hotel, Dunblane at
12 noon on MONDAY, 7th APRIL, 1975.

PRESENT: Messrs. J. Fordyce, J. O. Robertson, I. Barr, D. H. Lindsay, A. D. Williamson, J. Aitken, along with Mr. R. David Hunter, the Secretary, with Mr. D. I. Blackmore in attendance.

APOLOGIES: The Secretary intimated that apologies for absence had been received from Messrs. T. McClung, D. Maxwell and M. K. Mathie.

MINUTES: The Minute of Meeting of the Administrative Council held on 29th November 1974 (copies of which had previously been circulated to all Council Members) was taken as read and was formally approved and signed by the President.

MATTERS
ARISING
(a) Metrication Mr. Robertson reported that the weight range of pre-packs had now been provisionally approved for internal U. K. use. In confirming that the prepack trade would adopt metrication at the same time as the rest of the potato trade (not with the fruit and vegetable trade) he expected arrangements would not be finalised until the autumn of this year. He undertook to update his Paper on metrication for the Ware Trade preparatory to consultation and subsequent membership circulation.

(b) Proposed Meeting with British Rail The Secretary explained he had not received a reply to his invitation to British Rail. Their Mr. Harries returned from holiday today and a reply would come to hand during this week. In reply to the Secretary, the President felt the whole Administrative Council should represent the Association at the proposed meeting.

(c) E.E.C. Potato Regulations The President explained that no progress had been made, the negotiations marking time pending the result of the U. K. Membership Referendum.

(d) Association visit to West Germany The Secretary reported briefly on the visit and the general agreement of all who took part/

part the visit had proved to be very worthwhile.

(e) Export Committees The Secretary reported that no further meetings of either the P.M.B. Export Development Committee or the Association's own Export Committee had taken place. He had still not received a report of the last meeting of the P.M.B. Committee and the Council accordingly formally authorised the Secretary to require this Association's delegates to furnish reports of future meetings.

(f) Association Membership The Secretary reported receipt of a letter from Robert Pow(Bo'ness) dated 18th March, 1975, relinquishing his Full Membership of the Ware Division and a telephoned request from N. B. Auckland Ltd., (Ceres), wishing to amend their present Full Ware and Associate Seed memberships to Associate Ware and Full Seed Memberships with effect from 1st December, 1975.

(g) Conditions of Sale and Conditions of Purchase The Council formally approved the amendment of the Conditions adopted by the Association by the substitution of "4%" in place of the present "4lbs per cwt." overall dressing tolerance. The Secretary was instructed to circularise this amendment to all members as also formally to advise the National Farmers Union of Scotland and the National Association of Seed Potato Merchants.

(h) Country of Origin marking of prepacks Following a short discussion of the present position the Secretary was instructed to circularise all Members advising them of the provisions for Shelf marking contained in the Regulations.

(a) Seed Potato Working Party The Secretary explained that, following the resignation of Mr. A. K. Powrie from the Seed Division Committee, a vacancy had arisen in the Association's representation on the Seed Potato Working Party. The Seed Division Committee had nominated Mr. D. H. Lindsay to fill this vacancy, he having indicated his willingness to serve. The Council formally ratified Mr. Lindsay's appointment and reaffirmed continuation of the appointments of Messrs. J. Fordyce, J. Robertson and I. Barr.

(b)/

OFFICE
BEARERS

(b) British Potato Trades Consortium The Council also reaffirmed continuation of Messrs. J. Fordyce and J. Robertson as the Association's delegates to the British Potato Trades Consortium.

(c) Seed Arbitration Panel The Council considered there was no impediment to the continued inclusion of Messrs. A. K. Powrie and P. Guthrie in the panel but, in view of the tabled resignation of Mr. G. Gyle from the Seed Division Committee (and his known intention to give up business in the Potato Trade) the Council instructed removal of his name from the Panel. Following the recent Elections, the Council instructed the addition of Messrs. A. J. Allan (Brechin) and J. Henderson (Dumfries) to the Panel.

The Secretary was instructed to convey to Mr. Gyle the Council's regret at his resignation and sincere appreciation of his efforts on behalf of the Association and particularly for the members in the Moray area during his term of office as member for that area on the Seed Division Committee.

(d) Auditor The Council formally approved the reappointment of Mr. Robert L. Peacock C.A. as the Association's Auditor.

(e) Secretary and Treasurer The Council also formally approved the reappointment of Mr. R. David Hunter as Secretary and Treasurer of the Association.

The Secretary reported that the separate Annual General Meetings of the respective Divisions had formally approved the duly audited Accounts of the Seed and Ware Divisions for the year to 30th November, 1974. The Administrative Council accordingly ratified these decisions and the duly Audited Association's Combined Account was formally adopted.

The Secretary was instructed to obtain his Stockbroker's review of the Association's Investments and on tabling a note of Account received from the British Potato Trades Consortium he was further instructed to settle the Association's 13% share of the expenditure (for the year to 31st December, 1974) amounting to £148.69.

ANNUAL
ACCOUNTS

ASSOCIATION
ORGANISATION /

ASSOCIATION
ORGANISATION

The Secretary explained that Mr. T. McClung had resigned from the Vice-Convenorship of the Ware Division and that it had not been possible to find an accepting nomination to fill the resulting vacancy. In reply to Mr. Barr, Mr. Robertson confirmed that Mr. McClung's resignation was undoubtedly motivated by Mr. McClung's business responsibilities precluding him from accepting Convenorship of the Ware Division Committee next year.

In the following very thoughtful discussion, Mr. Barr felt the Council must carefully consider administrative reforms. Undoubtedly the present structure gave rise to considerable duplication. The Secretary confirmed this to be so and draw attention to the effect of this on running costs. It was suggested that a single Administrative Council with Seed and Ware sub-committees (possibly proportional to the amount of Seed and Ware business) would provide an answer. It was pointed out that this would not, of itself, necessarily solve the problem of the burden on certain office bearers of representation of the Association on outside bodies. Clearly this burden was increased by the absolute necessity of maintaining continuity of representation and reporting back.

Mr. Aitken also felt bound to insist on maintenance of the link with the West of Scotland merchants which in turn led on to thoughts that a larger single Committee could delegate responsibility for each separate subject (e.g. transport, export, etc.) to individual Committee members. This was further expanded by a suggestion that such individual Committee members could have power to co-opt any Association member(s) with special interest in, knowledge of, that subject. This latter suggestion was also felt to have the merit of extending activities and responsibility more widely among the membership.

Mr. Lindsay moved that the Secretary write on behalf of the Council to all members of the Seed Division and Ware Division Committees explaining that the next meetings of both Committees be combined, on an experimental basis, to study these problems more/

more intently, preparatory to circularisation of the full Association Membership. Mr. Fordyce added the rider that the next News Letter should refer to the Council's concern over these problems and that active steps are being taken to overcome them. The motion and rider being carried without dissent, the Secretary was instructed accordingly.

In conclusion of the matter it was agreed the Secretary should try so to arrange the Agenda for the first Joint meeting as to give precedence to Ware Division Matters over Administrative Council matters and to defer Seed Division matters to the latter end of the Agenda. Finally, it was provisionally agreed to arrange for the first Joint meeting to be held at the Hydro Hotel, Dunblane at 12 noon on Tuesday 20th May, 1975.

ANY OTHER
COMPETENT
BUSINESS

(a) Market Prices Bulletin The Secretary tabled a letter from G. W. Porteous Ltd., (Bonnyrigg), criticising the accuracy and usefulness of the Weekly Bulletin in relation to its cost, together with his reply thereto. Mr. Williamson undertook to approach the Member to resolve the matter, on receipt of copies of the letters and relevant Bulletins.

(b) Plant Royalties The Secretary read a letter received from the National Seed Development Organisation intimating increase of Royalty payments from £5 to £6 per acre with effect from 1st December 1975. Mr. Fordyce followed with a report on the meeting between Potato Associations Presidents and the Plant Royalty Bureau which he had attended in London on 11th March, 1975, at which the Bureau had offered to meet Association representatives in September.

Mr. Williamson felt there was no call to increase Royalties on older established varieties. The Secretary explained that unlike the P.R.B. (a private, non-profit making organisation), the NSDO (a government-controlled organisation) do finance continuing research and development.

Mr. Barr restated his view that the increases were completely unacceptable./

unacceptable. He moved that the strongest protest be sent by the Association to both organisations with copies thereof to the N.F.U.S., D.O.A.S., and N.A.S.P.M. calling for support in our protest. The Secretary undertook to write accordingly.

(c) 8 point Memorandum The Council reconsidered the latest revised version of the proposed Memorandum, but could not overcome its objection to the persistent use therein of the expression "free enterprise" to be exclusion of the preferable expression "private enterprise", the same adjectives also altering the meanings of "trade" and "movement" throughout. The Council could not agree, therefore, to support the Memorandum in its present form.

On the motion of Mr. Williamson, a vote of thanks to the Chair concluded the meeting.

James Lodge