

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION  
Held in the Hydro Hotel, DUNBLANE at  
2.45pm. WEDNESDAY 23rd FEBRUARY, 1977

PRESENT: Messrs. J. O. Robertson, A. J. Allan, I. Barr, R. Doig, J. G. H. Fenton, B. Fulton, J. George, W. Gordon, Jas. Henderson Senr., J. R. McArthur, D. Maxwell, J. Waddell, J. Wardlaw and A. D. Williamson, with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore in attendance.

Also present were J. & A. Henderson Ltd. (Mr. A. Henderson), Messrs. David A. Lawson (Thrums) (Mr. D. A. Lawson), McGugan Bros. Ltd. (Mr. G. McGugan) and Robertson of Perth Ltd. (Messrs. B. McDiarmid and D. Stewart).

Mr. J. O. Robertson, the President, occupied the Chair.

APOLOGIES: The Secretary reported having received apologies from Messrs. J. Aitken, J. P. Deuchar, D. H. Lindsay, T. McClung and P. McDougall.

MINUTES: The Minute of Meeting of Council held on 20th December, 1976 (copies of which had been circulated previously to each Member of Council) was taken as read. It was formally approved, and duly signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING: (a) Association Visit Mr. Barr reported briefly on the visit of the party of Members to Denmark from 7th - 12th February. The complete success of the event had undoubtedly been assured by the efforts of the Danish co-operative SAJYKA, and in particular by their Director, Mr. Sten Jorgensen. Much had been learned - though the Danish potato industry is several years behind the Scots a very marked community of problems, views and outlook became apparent in the most openly frank and hospitable discussions.

(b) N.S.D.O. and P.R.B. These items, forming parts of the Agenda for today's Meeting, were deferred meantime.

(c) RUCIP Inspectors In respect of the need to update the Association's list of Inspectors under the R.U.C.I.P. Rules it was agreed that all present Council Members would act in this capacity.

(d) Imports from Cyprus Mr. Robertson reported this matter now overtaken by events, it having been agreed that U.K. imports form part of the import quota from Cyprus into the E.E.C.

(e) P.M.B. Licences The Secretary reported notification of applications by David Moscrop, Eyemouth and Pickerton Potatoes Ltd. Forfar for P.M.B. Licence Council agreed no cause to object to these applications. To overcome difficulties of timeous submission of all such notifications to meeting of Council it was agreed not to form a "vetting" sub-committee, but that the Secretary/

Secretary consult the President and Vice President for instructions on each future occasion.

(f) Seed Promotion Association Consideration of this Item was deferred until later (Item 6) in today's Agenda.

ASSOCIATION  
COMMITTEES:

The Secretary explained that annual consideration of appointment of Association representatives had not been completed. After discussion it was agreed as follows:

(a) Joint Liaison Committee - The President and Vice President (ex-officio) with Messrs. A. J. Allan, James Henderson, D. H. Lindsay and T. McClung all re-appointed.

(b) Seed Potato Working Party - The President and Vice President (ex-officio) with Messrs. J. Henderson and D. H. Lindsay were re-appointed.

(c) Entertainments Committee - Messrs. P. Morris and P. Peebles having resigned from this Committee, Mr. Barr nominated and Mr. Fordyce seconded the appointment of Mr. J. R. McArthur. Council further agreed that this Committee have power to co-opt one member to fill the other vacancy.

(d) Secretary/Treasurer - Council agreed to re-appoint Mr. R. David Hunter to this office.

N.S.D.O.  
& P.R.B.:

(a) Meeting with Ministry 28/1/77 Mr. Barr reported briefly on the meeting with Mr. Foxlee of the Ministry in Edinburgh. Essentially of a fact finding nature, Mr. Foxlee had taken careful note of a very fair hearing. No Report on the Meeting was expected, similar separate meetings also taking place with N.A.S.P.M. and Northern Ireland representatives; Results of these meetings, if any, would be awaited.

(b) Joint Meeting 17/1/77 Mr. Barr also reported fully on the meeting held in Edinburgh with representatives of N.A.S.P.M., Northern Ireland and the V.T.S.C. Growers. Arising from this, Mr. Barr explained his intention to press at the forthcoming meeting with N.S.D.O. Board Members for N.S.D.O. to lay down "ground rules" for future offers to develop and market new varieties. In the following general discussion Mr. Lawson stated there was much interest in this matter in the trade. Preparation of unsuccessful offers for "Croft" had proved to be a complete waste of the extensive time and effort involved and fools had thus been made of those who had submitted such offers. In reply to Mr. McDiarmid, Messrs. Barr and Hunter explained N.S.D.O. reasons why the former system (Department allocation of half-ton lots) had been changed/

changed. Messrs. Henderson and George agreed N.S.D.O. should lay down its requirements and conditions which should then be the basis of public auction, while Mr. Williamson pressed for all offers to be submitted sealed to the N.S.D.O. Board direct, without intervention of the N.S.D.O. Executive.

(c) P.R.B. The Secretary reported he was still awaiting the views of the Bureau's Solicitors on the Association's proposed amendments to the Licence Agreement.

SCOTTISH  
SEED POTATO  
PROMOTION  
ASSOCIATION:

The Secretary explained his Report of the meeting with this Group on 21st January had been circulated to all Council Members while the bulk of the Report on the second meeting, held in Edinburgh on 16th February, had been repeated during the address to the Annual General Meeting by representatives of the Group earlier today. Mr. Barr felt that the Association should support the Group and his proposal seconded by Mr. George, was unanimously adopted by those present. It was further resolved that Messrs. R. Doig and J. G. H. Fenton be appointed to represent this Association in that Group.

BRITISH  
POTATO  
TRADE  
CONSORTIUM:

Mr. Robertson reported on the Meeting of the Consortium which he had attended in London on 7th February, 1977. He gave interesting information of a recent Arbitration case under RUCIP Rules involving three Arbiters in the South. Explaining that conciliation must first be tried, Arbiters may take written and/or verbal evidence and objections to findings must be found on admitted evidence only. Cost for the half day had been about £700 including Inspectors fees of £17 per visit basic plus travelling expenses and £3.50 per hour for Inspector's time. The Consortium had arranged a half day Seminar on Inspection procedures and as many members as possible were urged to attend.

The Consortium meeting had also received a Report on a Meeting of the European Union Committee with the E.E.C. Commission in Brussels on 19th January, 1977. Discussion of present and future crop and production figures had revealed that only the Dutch and the U.K. could provide accurate statistics, all other countries having provided most unreliable "guesstimates", leaving the Commission lacking in this vital aspect. Consumption and prices (on "unit of account" basis) were also discussed the latter/

the latter being believed unreliable by inclusion of unknown variables. Planting intentions appeared to be up to, or slightly above, 1976 levels. In respect of the Draft Potato Regulation six countries were now in favour as a good basis for discussion. Germany and Holland sought more liberal application to production and quality control, while the U.K. sought to retain a more flexible, P.M.B. type, arrangement. The Commission, though inflexible on intervention could be flexible on producer groups in the longer term. The Union disapproved of a producer groups/proposed Management Committee of Civil Servants System preferring an advisory Committee of Potato Trade Delegates. The Commission stated that an Advisory Committee of Trade Delegates could be set up later and could give no date for acceptance of the proposals.

The Consortium meeting had continued with the Chairman reporting his meeting with the Ministry on the high retail price of Seed Potatoes and with a discussion of the U.K. Crop reports and supply prospects. Plenty of poorer quality Dutch were available, with poor supplies of 'scabby' U.K. produce and ample imports. It had also been provisionally intimated that the 1977 European Congress would be held 13 June in the Loire Valley in France.

JOINT  
CONSULTATIVE  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Robertson continued by reporting on the subsequent (afternoon) meeting of this Committee on 7th February, 1977. It had first been reported that unless it is known that potatoes are destined for prepack, one-lot, retail sale there is no legal requirement to state content weights of consignments on invoices and / or sale or delivery notes. On the basis that weight marking (and probably variety marking, too) must come as an E.E.C. requirement anyway, the Board would continue working towards these ends. Council discussed variety marking, Mr. Williamson pressing for classification rather than variety marking. In reply to Mr. McDiarmid it was stated that Variety marking would not apply to imports and Mr. Barr, highlighting extreme problems created in Scottish grading warehouses (especially with early crops), proposed the Association should write the Board resisting the introduction of compulsory Variety marking in 1977. With Council's agreement the Secretary was instructed accordingly.

The Joint Consultative Committee had also received reports on the supply situation (generally felt that poor presentation not price was depressing the/

the movement of potatoes into human consumption) dressing inspections and visits, processing and marketing, and the 1977 Ware Standards. In this latter respect Council noted the proposed reduction of the Scab Tolerance from 50% to 25% of tuber surface area. Mr. Williamson regarded this as a large reduction without prior consultation Mr. Fordyce adding that incidence was largely dependant upon conditions in particular growing seasons. It was agreed the Secretary should write the Board with these views and at the same time support the Board's proposals for distinctive labelling of potatoes intended for manufacture.

ANY OTHER  
COMPETENT  
BUSINESS:

(a) Spastics Appeal The Secretary reported a request from the Scottish Spastics Appeal to circularise Association members in connection with the new centre in Perth. Following discussion Council agreed that the Secretary should write in reply declining the request.

(b) Export of N.S.D.O. varieties Mr. Henderson raised the matter of exclusive Agreements entered into by N.S.D.O. with sole importers in certain countries abroad. Council felt strongly about the far-reaching effect this would have on existing and long standing trade connections, Mr. Barr adding that, he had intended raising this very point when Association representatives meet members of the N.S.D.O. Board on 28th February.

(c) Curling Match The Secretary reminded Council Members that the second leg of the Association's North & South Curling Match will take place in Perth on Friday 4th March, 1977.

(d) Golf Outing The Secretary further reported that arrangements to hold the 1977 Golf Outing at Gleneagles on Thursday 19th May were proceeding and details will be circularised to all members in due course.

(e) Date of next meeting It was provisionally arranged that the next meeting of Council will be held at Dunblane on Wednesday, 30th March, 1977.

The Meeting then terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

