

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION held
in the Station Hotel, PERTH at 2 p.m.
on Thursday, 30th OCTOBER, 1980.

PRESENT: Messrs. A.J. Allan, J.H. Barr, J.P. Deuchar, J.G.H. Fenton, B. Fulton, J. George, J. Henderson, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, T. McClung, K.A. McKenzie and G. Smillie, with D. Blackmore (Assistant Secretary) in attendance.

The President, Mr. D. Hendry Lindsay, occupied the Chair.

APOLOGIES: Mr. Blackmore intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. J.E. Cook, R. Doig, W. Gordon, J.R. McArthur and J.O. Robertson and for late attendance on behalf of Messrs. G. Brass, J. Fordyce, J. Waddell and R. David Hunter (Secretary).

MINUTES: The Minute of Meeting of Council in Perth on 2nd October, 1980 (copies of which had been sent to each Member of Council), taken as read, was formally approved and signed.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Membership - Mr. Blackmore reported receipt of a formal application for Association Membership from Peter C. Grewar (Potatoes) Ltd. Council accepted this, effective 1st November, 1980. He also reported a telephoned application from Mr. D.S.M. Scott (now of F.F. MacKenzie & Co., Rothes). Subject to clarification, Council agreed this company be invited to make formal application. In respect of notifications of applications for PMB Merchants Licences, Council deferred that of John F. Armstrong, Glenfarg for further enquiries and (on Mr. J.P. Deuchar's information) decided not to invite W.M. Hosie, Turriff to join the Association.

(b) Elections to Council - Giving brief details of the postal Ballot which closed at noon on 24th October, Mr. Blackmore reported that (in addition to Mr. W. Gordon returned un-opposed) Messrs. J.E. Cook, J. Fordyce and J. Henderson had been re-elected and Messrs. J. Logan Milne and R.G. Ramsay had been elected, to fill the six vacancies in Council.

Council gave unanimous support to the Chairman's warm tribute to and appreciation of Mr. George's helpful, wise and most valued service to the Association over his many years membership of Council from which he retires tomorrow. In reply, Mr. George recorded the pleasure his service had given him.

Council instructed immediate circularisation of the Election result to all Association members.

(c) N.S.D.O. Export Development proposals - Reporting developments including discussion by the Joint Liaison Committee to be dealt with later today, the Chairman pointed out that NSDO is not to change its timetable or provide the further information requested. Incorporating proposals by Northern Ireland and NASPM, Council's discussion raised doubts that N.S.D.O had power to devolve any of its executive power and also voiced a belief that present "consultations" are a "whitewash exercise", N.S.D.O already being on the verge of concluding "fait-accompli" export development agreements. Council agreed Mr. Barr should attend the next meeting with N.S.D.O on 18th November prepared to consider proposals only if they include appointment of a Trade "watchdog" body.

(d) Potato Futures - Mr. Blackmore reported a telephoned provisional engagement of Mr. Alan Harper to address the Association's A.G.M. in Perth on Thursday 15th January, 1981. Council instructed the necessary arrangements be completed.

WARE
POTATO
IMPORTS
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:/

Council considered Mr. Lindsay's pre-circulated Report on the first meeting/

meeting of this new Committee in London on 13th October, 1980. In the following discussion it was agreed that the excellence of the P.M.B's U.K. market intelligence and statistical records is far superior to generally "guestimated" information likely to be reciprocated by any other E.E.C Country. In this way it was felt this Committee's "advisory" function would provide a one way flow of commercially valuable information to the U.K potato industry's foreign competitors. The Secretariat was instructed to submit these views to the P.M.B for comment.

JOINT
LIAISON
COMMITTEE:

The pre-circulated secretariat's Report on this Committee's morning meeting in Edinburgh on 15th October, 1980 was taken as read. Opening discussion of NASPM's views of the copyright of the recently revised Conditions of Sale, the Chairman fully explained the background to the difficulty that exists. Concerned to establish it ownership of this copyright, NASPM requires SPTA to pay a Licence Fee of £500 for use of that copyright in its own version of those Conditions of Sale. Council's discussion covered the many aspects of the matter without deciding on the principle of ownership and the dependant question of payment. The matter was deferred until Council's next meeting, in readiness for this Committee's next meeting in London on 4th December, 1980, without reply to Mr. Kevin Burke's letter of 3rd October meantime.

Summarising the salient points of this Committee's afternoon meeting with D.A.F.S., the Chairman highlighted the scientific view that haulm chopping aided the spread of Blackleg and Mr. Todd's remarks on possible changes in the Inspection Scheme and on "down-labelling" (his more hopeful view of the latter being emphatically countered by the Inspection Service representatives).

SCOTTISH
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Mr. Fenton explained that the Meeting of this Committee in Edinburgh on 16th October, 1980 covered essentially the same matters as the subsequent Seed Potato Advisory Committee Meeting on which he was to report later today. The first meeting had learned that the P.M.B. were discussing a stockfeed programme with MAFF, detailed indications of which had been given at the later meeting, official announcement of finalised details being imminent.

ENTERTAIN-
MENTS
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Lindsay reported briefly on meetings of this Committee in Perth on 24th and 28th October to deal with Curling Match and 1980 Dinner-Dance matters. Council endorsed these arrangements and approved the circulation of the latter to the whole membership.

SEED
POTATO
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:

Reporting on the meeting of this Committee in London on 28th October 1980 Mr. Fenton provided extensive details from Mr. Craig Davie (PMB)'s comprehensive estimates of the seed out-turn from the 1980 crop. (5% - 10% of the Scottish crop remaining to be harvested). On 35 mm x 55 mm riddle, these indicated availability for exports of some 50,000 tonnes with 213,000 tonnes for despatch to England and Wales. Despite indicated reductions from 1979 figures it was Mr. Davie's view that these tonnages could still be difficult to achieve. Mr. Alex Sinclair (PMB) had also submitted a very full survey of export markets and prospects, along with the more optimistic view that 1979/80 export tonnages would be exceeded in the current season.

EXPORT
DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE

Mr. Deuchar reported on the meeting of this Committee in London the previous day (29th October, 1980) at which Mr. Sinclair's report referred to above had again been presented. Quoting excerpts, Mr. Deuchar recommended it as having great interest for Exporting Members of S.P.T.A., Council instructed the next News Letter include an invitation to these Members to apply to the Secretary for copies.

Mr. Kerslake had stated that on movement of some 2m. tonnes (including 130,000 tonnes into processing the previous week) to date, the average ware price was £34.43 per tonne compared with £57.51 at the same time last year (Mr. Fenton added that 30% - 35% of the English crop remained/

remained to be harvested at 25th October, 1980). Mr. Deuchar ended his Report by stressing that the P.M.B.'s promotional efforts should not be undervalued.

ANNUAL
ACCOUNTS:

Council considered a pre-circulated draft of the Association's Accounts to 31st October, 1980 to which Mr. Blackmore spoke in detail. Scope for provision against un-invoiced expenditure being very limited, Council gave interim approval to the Accounts as drafted but instructed the Secretary to incorporate a suitable retention before submitting them for authentication to the Association's Auditor.

OTHER
COMPETENT
BUSINESS:

(a) Seed Trade Committee - Following a short discussion of various difficulties Council instructed the Secretariat to arrange to hold the next meeting of the joint Seed Trade Committee in the City Mills Hotel, Perth at 2.30 p.m on Thursday, 13th November, 1980.

(b) Below-grader soil sampling for P.C.E - Mr. Blackmore tabled a DAFS request for SPTA co-operation in a second (current season) survey. Accepting that to decline would lead to DAFS Inspectors taking their own samples during normal "in-store" visits Council agreed, with some reluctance, to comply with the request on the same anonymous basis as last year.

(c) P.M.B Producer-costs survey - Mr. Blackmore further reported a telephoned enquiry from the Board's Inspector in Perth regarding rates of SPTA Membership Subscriptions. While being aware of the superior accuracy of the Board's "tonnage handled" information, Council authorised release of details of SPTA tonnage brackets and relative subscription rates for the year to 31st October, 1980 to the Board's Inspector.

(d) Press Reports - The Chairman drew attention to current press reports on Mr. John Forbes' Chairman's address to the Royal Highland Society on the dangerous of current economic conditions in all sectors (including potatoes) of the Agricultural Industry. The press today reported NFUS support for his views. Council agreed SPTA should provide back-up support for Mr. Forbes' views and his representations to the Minister of State for Agriculture (Lord Mansfield) and as a first step authorised the general terms of a suitable Press Release for immediate issue.

(e) Date of next Meeting - After brief discussion Council instructed the Secretariat to arrange to hold the next meeting of Council in the Station Hotel, Perth at 11.30 a.m on Friday, 21st November, 1980. It was also agreed to invite British Rail's representatives to join Council for the late lunch at 1.30 p.m preparatory to meeting (non-Curling) Members of Council for discussions thereafter.

The Meeting concluded with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

D. Alexander Lindsay