

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION held
in the Ice Rink, PERTH at 11 a.m. on
Friday, 13th MARCH, 1981.

PRESENT:

Messrs. A.J. Allan, J.P. Deuchar, J.G.H. Fenton, B. Fulton, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, J. Logan Milne, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, R.G. Ramsay, J.O. Robertson and G. Smillie, with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

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

APOLOGIES:

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. J.H. Barr, J.E. Cook, J. Fordyce, W. Gordon, J. Henderson and T. McClung.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of Meetings of Council in Perth on 15th and 23rd January, 1981 (copies of which had been pre-circulated to each Member of Council) were taken as read. They were duly approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Subscriptions and Membership - Mr. Blackmore reported that of the total of 126 Members at the start of the current financial year, 97 (i.e. 77%) had replied to Subscription Notices (sent on 26th January, 1981). This included resignations from William Atkinson & Son (Potato Merchants) Ltd., Ayr; Angus Potato Export Ltd., Montrose and G.P. Matheson (Montrose) Ltd. and payment of 94 Subscriptions totalling £6,480. Of the 19 bracket changes that had occurred, 14 had been downwards which (combined with resignations) reduced subscription income by £370, out of the provision of £505 for all such changes incorporated into the 1980/81 Estimates.

As well as quoting the several Scottish entries in the recent list of amendments to the P.M.B. list of Merchants, Mr. Blackmore also reported notifications of applications for P.M.B. Ware Merchants' Licences by Clark & Sinclair Ltd., Dundee and by The Firm of James Barrie, Kirkliston. After consideration Council instructed that both applicants be invited to apply for Association Membership.

(b) Conditions of Sale - Mr. Hunter reported a request from a Member for formal approval to include his own additional provision when adopting the Association's copyright Conditions of Sale. After brief discussion Council agreed this request should not be granted.

Mr. Blackmore reported having remitted the sum of £500 to N.A.S.P.M. (as agreed) and to having received a Receipt describing the remittance as "an agreed contribution toward legal and other expenses incurred in joint revision of Conditions of Sale".

(c) Scottish Seed Potato Association - Mr. Hunter reminded Council of the two points essential to Council's withdrawal of opposition to the S.S.P.A. application for formation of a Development Council: that one half of the industry nominees must be S.P.T.A. Members and that a Development Council must be prohibited from engaging in trading activities. Discussion referred to the N.F.U.S.' A.G.M., Mr. Buchanan-Smith's published view that the Apple & Pear Development Council was non-comparable and the "Farmer's Weekly" report that the Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Food opposed any imposition of initiatives. It was agreed that a fresh poll of producers should incorporate a hectare basis and it was decided to arrange an urgent meeting with S.S.P.A. to discuss these points, before submitting them in writing to Mr. L.V. McEwan (D.A.F.S.) within the next seven days.

(d) D.A.F.S. "Spring Letter" to Producers - Introducing discussion the Chairman pointed out that changes proposed were "suggestions", not mandatory. Council felt this indicated an insurance against actual need. During discussion of P.C.E. matters the Chairman tabled soil-sample bags/

bags received from D.A.F.S. to repeat last year's research into "below-grader" incidence. Council agreed to co-operate again on a strictly confidential basis and the bags were distributed to be returned to the Secretary's Office, from where they are to be returned to D.A.F.S.

In conclusion it was agreed to discuss the Spring Letter within the Seed Trade Committee with a view to an early further meeting of the Seed Potato Consultative Panel. It was proposed that clarification should be required for over-riding the Panel's earlier strong, single-voiced recommendations and to urge flexibility in burning down arrangements, the mechanics of the policing of which had not been discussed.

BRITISH
POTATO
TRADES
CONSORTIUM:

Council noted Mr. Fenton's pre-circulated Report on the Meeting of the Consortium he had attended with Mr. Lindsay in London on 2nd February, 1981. Council raised no questions on what was agreed to be a fully comprehensive Report.

JOINT
CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE:

The Chairman reported briefly on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee which he had attended with Mr. Fenton in London on 2nd February, 1981 and Council also noted the pre-circulated "aide-memoire" prepared for that Committee by the P.M.B. During Council's short discussion, Mr. Lindsay also reported that the P.M.B. had spent £80,000 in its promotion campaign in support of early potatoes in 1980.

N.S.D.O.:

Council considered Mr. Barr's pre-circulated Report on the meeting of the N.S.D.O. "Potato Liaison" Committee which he had attended in London on 18th February, 1981. Application of an "Index-Linking" formula had indicated an increase of £9.50 (21%) per hectare in Royalties on N.S.D.O. varieties planted for the 1982 Crop. United and determined objections by the N.F.U., N.F.U.S. and S.P.T.A. representatives had succeeded in reducing this (by £3.25) to £6.25 per hectare. Noting this position Council commended Mr. Barr on the successful outcome he had achieved.

In respect of representations received from Members, Mr. Hunter reported having written to the Plant Royalty Bureau to request postponement of payment of 1980-crop Royalties. In reply, the Bureau has submitted the request to the Owners of the Rights, whose replies would be notified later.

EXPORT
DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE:

Council considered an informal Note (obtained from the P.M.B. and pre-circulated to Council) on the meeting of the Export Development Committee in London on 24th February, 1981 which the S.P.T.A. representative had been unable to attend. Following a brief discussion of seed export matters (including current season tonnages to date), Mr. Lindsay sought "briefing" for the forthcoming meeting of the Ware Imports Advisory Committee. During discussion it was stated there had been recent reports that both France and Holland were expected to have extra supplies of ware for export this year.

ANY OTHER
COMPETENT
BUSINESS:

(a) Conditions of Sale - The Secretary reported receipt of a letter from a Member drawing a possible disadvantage to Council's attention and seeking a solution. After prolonged discussion Council agreed no solution was possible and it was decided to defer the matter to consider whether any recommendations could be useful.

(b) Request for financial support - Mr. Blackmore reported receipt of a letter, with costed Statement, seeking support for a potato breeding research project at the Cambridge Plant Breeding Institute. Council agreed the applicant be advised to approach the P.M.B.

(c) Annual Golf Outing - Council approved announcement of the date of the Outing in the next News Letter and remitted the arrangements to the Entertainments Committee. It was agreed the Committee be asked to consider whether a Golf Trophy should be instituted.

(d) Future of the P.M.B. - Following enquiries from Ware Members, Mr. Fulton sought Council's views on the Board's future prospects. He explained/

explained that against current reports on Super-agricultural Marketing initiatives, Kentish early growers' application to the European Court and the Board's floundering in the ware maincrop imports situation, the Board's future was felt to be in jeopardy. Council agreed all these factors were currently too ill-defined to permit a realistic assessment and no conclusion was reached. In reply to Mr. Hunter it was stated that the revised arrangements for the Association's weekly Market Prices Bulletin seemed to be acceptable to its recipients.

(e) P.M.B. Stocks Census - In a brief discussion it was stated that analysis of the latest statistics indicates a discrepancy of some 300,000 tonnes within the Board's figures. It was pointed out that (i) a recent 10% check of Returns had revealed extensive understatements and (ii) against present very low stocks, processors had 250,000 tonnes in store last year. Offers under the Board's second Buying Programme had been very heavy.

(f) Date of next Meeting - It was agreed Council would meet again in the Station Hotel, Perth on Thursday, 14th May, 1981 the Secretariat being instructed to revert to the usual format when making the necessary arrangements.

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

D. H. R. 159,