

REPORT on an informal MEETING  
between representatives of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION  
and the  
SCOTTISH SEED POTATO ASSOCIATION  
held in 8 Kinnoull Street, PERTH  
at 3.30 p.m. on Monday, 23rd MARCH,  
1981.

PRESENT: S.P.T.A. - Messrs. D. Hendry Lindsay (President), J.C.H. Fenton (Vice-President), J.R. McArthur (Deputy Vice President), R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D.I. Blackmore (Assistant Secretary).  
S.S.P.A. - Messrs. Andrew A. Arbuckle (Chairman) and R.A. Smith (Chief Executive).

DISCUSSIONS: Mr. Hunter opened the discussions by explaining that a recent meeting of Council of S.P.T.A. had re-affirmed that its withdrawal of opposition to S.S.P.A.'s application for formation of a Development Council had depended upon two primary points. These were (a) that S.P.T.A. and N.F.U.S. would each nominate one half of the seats on the proposed Development Council and (b) that the Development Council would be specifically excluded from engaging in trading activities. S.S.P.A. support for these two points had been given during the joint S.S.P.A./S.P.T.A. meeting of Councils in Perth on 23rd January, 1981.

Papers now circulated by D.A.F.S. to all producers, in connection with the fresh poll of support for formation of a Development Council currently being conducted do not make the two points crystal clear and this was giving rise to renewed disquiet within S.P.T.A. membership.

S.S.P.A. representatives re-affirmed support for these points and regretted they had not been incorporated into D.A.F.S. circularisation, although the original application had been (and was in process of being) amended and updated. S.S.P.A. believed direct trading by a Development Council is already prohibited by existing law, but S.S.P.A. pointed out that not providing a Development Council with power to trade at the outset was not the same thing as expressly precluding that power for all time coming.

The Meeting agreed that 50-50 representation could not be claimed for other than the 12 producers forming part of the proposed 17-strong Development Council. S.P.T.A. explained D.A.F.S.' circularised proposed wording of "12 producers of whom 6 shall hold P.M.B. licences to trade in seed potatoes" was not acceptable (many such licencees do not trade) and pressed for N.F.U.S. and S.P.T.A. representation to be specifically spelled out. S.S.P.A. accepted this point and agreed to support it.

In respect of the other five places on the proposed Development Council the meeting accepted that no influence could be exerted on the Minister's appointment of the independent Chairman, nor upon the "employees" representative which appointment would be jealously guarded by the Trades Unions. After discussion it was agreed N.F.U.S. and S.P.T.A. should submit nominations for the remaining three places (one independent member and two members having special knowledge of the products of the industry) to the Minister for his consideration.

It was accepted that the Minister's exercise of his discretion (even in selection from nominations) in appointing the proposed Development Council must preclude any guarantee that N.F.U.S. and S.P.T.A. representation will be one half each of the whole Council.

The Meeting agreed that in their separate submissions to the Minister in due course each organisation would include full support for the/

the foregoing agreed points.

In further discussions S.S.P.A. explained that D.A.F.S.' circularisation of a proposed maximum rate of levy of £15 and initially £10 per hectare was an amendment submitted by S.S.P.A. to take account of the levy not being imposed until the 1982 crop (initial application had envisaged introduction for the 1981 crop). In reply, S.S.P.A. confirmed that earlier suggestions of a tonnage-based levy had now been abandoned in favour of a classified-hectare based levy. It was also confirmed that the current poll by D.A.F.S. incorporates provision for both a head count and a hectares count of replies received. It was further stated that the Minister had declined to state a required minimum level of support before a Development Council would be formed.

S.P.T.A. representatives drew attention to recommendations recently issued by the Scottish Agricultural Colleges at the instance of S.S.P.A. While in the main commendable, grave exception was voiced to the advice that producers should include their own name and address slips inside each bag. S.S.P.A. explained this was intended to make growers more directly accountable for the standard of their dressing and apologised if this had suggested other possibilities which S.S.P.A. had not foreseen.

The Meeting was thereupon concluded.