

REPORT OF COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
for the year to 31st October, 1981
to the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF MEMBERS held in the Station Hotel,
PERTH at 2.15 p.m. on Thursday
14th JANUARY, 1982.

(a) ACCOUNTS

The audited Association Accounts for the year to 31st October, 1981 circulated to each member show Subscriptions (£8,055) were almost 29% higher than the previous year. This follows the resolution of last year's A.G.M. to increase subscriptions by a "rounded" one third "across the board". Contrary to former years, Members' changing their tonnage brackets showed a recognisable downward trend.

Investment Income was unchanged from the previous year but, reflecting lower rates, interest on monies deposited with the Bank was reduced by £111 (i.e. 29%) from the previous year.

On the left-hand (Expenditure) side of the Account you will see that Expenses of Meetings was £514 against £635 in 1980. This latter figure included an adjustment for tax reasons, however, and the "real" reduction under this heading was thus £41 (8%).

The £83 increase in General expenditure is almost exactly equal to the cost of making the printing block of the Conditions of Sale, all other changes under this heading otherwise cancelling each other out. Tight control over Duplicating costs and Postages and Telephones kept these items at their 1980 levels, but known costs increases in them all will make it impossible to repeat this achievement during this current year.

The reduction of almost £250 in Travelling Expenses was welcome relief indeed, although I must point out that the 1980 figure (£851) itself was a "one-off" reflection of two or three unusual items. The Secretarial Salary, of course, reflects the position reported to the last Annual General Meeting and itself accounts for almost all the increase in total expenditure. The end result of the year's transactions was that total Expenditure exceeded total Income by £100 as shown, (compared with £66 in the previous year) and this sum is carried down to the left-hand side of the Balance Sheet below.

The first comment on the Balance Sheet however must be the contribution to N.A.S.P.M.'s expenses in connection with the joint revision of the Conditions of Sale./

Sale. Council decided this item be borne out of Capital and the deduction under Original Funds gives effect to this decision. In view of the depressed values of the Association's Investments which persisted throughout the year, however, a compensatory Investment sale could not be made without incurring a loss on realisation. While this has the temporary effect of apparently financing this contribution with the accumulated Revenue Surplus (£483.59), this position will be restored as soon as circumstances permit. Meantime the Revenue Surplus (which will exceed £500 once the 1980/81 Corporation Tax repayment is received) may be regarded as forming its proportionate part of the cost of the ^{unchanged} Association's Investments (£5,351.29 on the right hand side of the Balance Sheet).

Finally, a word about the Cash Balance shown. At £587.39, the V.A.T. recoverable was £136 higher than the preceding year, an "overdraft" situation for a period of three or four weeks only which, as usual, is financed from Secretarial resources. The remaining "shortfall" (of £95) is similarly financed until the 1981-82 Subscriptions start to come in.

(b) MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Roll at 31st October, 1980 totalled 125 Members and one new Member was enjoined with effect from the following day. During the year under review, four members ceased to trade (one of whom had already paid the 1980/81 Subscription), three Members formally resigned and two Members were suspended for non-payment of their 1980/81 Subscriptions. One further new Member was enjoined during the year so that, overall, the Roll was reduced by 8, to total 118 Members at 31st October, 1981.

Thus the long term trend of declining Membership has continued. Given the several currently adverse factors involved, together with one very significant change impending, the prospects for even halting this decline are poor indeed. This is a most worrisome feature for several reasons and no doubt will demand urgent attention during this current year.

(c) MEETINGS

The number of attendances by Association representatives, both at the Association's own internal meetings and at external meetings of (and with) other Organisations, again increased. This very time-consuming and quite voluntary workload necessarily falls almost exclusively on Members of Council in addition to their/

their individual business and personal commitments. Further (and again largely out of necessity), by far the largest part of this burden is borne by the Association's Office Bearers.

The advent of the new statutory Development Council must entail a marked surge in the work of safeguarding the interests of the whole Association Membership during the current year.

(d) CIRCULARS

Although, as already pointed out, duplication and postage costs were contained within the previous year's totals, this required constant vigilance. It may have disguised the facts that postal rates were increased during last year and that, while the number of circulars sent was only marginally greater (by one), a higher proportion of them (as well as all the Weekly Market Prices Bulletins) were sent by first class mail. With a further increase in postal rates imminent it is inevitable that the cost of maintaining the best possible contact with all Members must also rise during the current year.

(e) 1982 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Having concluded Council's formal Report, the next Item on the Agenda is determination of the rates of Membership Subscriptions for the current year to 31st October, 1982. In this respect Council has given its most careful consideration both to the audited Accounts already before you and to the Estimates for the current year.

Following its studies Council recommends that today's Annual General Meeting of Members should make no change to the existing tonnage brackets. Council further recommends that the Subscriptions in those brackets should be increased by (a "rounded") 15% "across the board" as follows:-

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 0 - 2,000 tonnes | from | £35 | by | £5 | to | £40 |
| 2,001 - 6,000 tonnes | | £70 | | £10 | | £80 |
| 6,001 - 10,000 tonnes | | £90 | | £15 | | £105 |
| 10,000 - 14,000 tonnes | | £110 | | £20 | | £130 |
| 14,000 - 18,000 tonnes | | £130 | | £20 | | £150 |
| + over 18,000 | | £160 | | £25 | | £185 |

plus V.A.T. @ 15% in each case