

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION held
in the Ice Rink, PERTH at 11 a.m. on
Friday, 9th MARCH, 1984.

PRESENT:

Messrs. A.J. Allan, J.H. Barr, G.S. Brass, J.G.H. Fenton,
J. Henderson, D.H. Lindsay, J. Logan Milne, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie
and J.O. Robertson, with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore
(Assistant) in attendance.

The Vice President (Mr. K.A. McKenzie) took the Chair.

APOLOGIES:

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs.
J.E. Cook (President), J.P. Deuchar, R. Doig, B. Fulton, D. Maxwell,
P. Miller, P. Moffat, W.E. Muirhead, T. McClung and G. Smillie.

It was reported that Mr. P. Miller was now returned home following
surgical treatment in hospital. The Secretariat was instructed to write
him there, conveying Council's sincere best wishes for his full and
speedy recovery.

MINUTES:

The Minute of Meeting of Council in Perth on 12th January, 1984
(of which each Member of Council had received a copy beforehand) was
taken as read. It was formally approved, and signed to this effect by
the Chairman.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Membership and Subscriptions - Council took note of a pre-circulated
statement. It recorded the resignation of John Henderson, Esq. (Dumfries)
the liquidation of R.A. McLean Potato Merchants Ltd. and David Fraser
(Potatoes) Ltd. and the appointment of a Receiver to Glendale Potato
Co. Ltd. Council instructed the Secretariat to press collection of the
33 outstanding annual subscriptions, but declined to suspend any Member
whose subscription remained three months overdue.

(b) Conditions of Purchase

(c) Product Liability Insurance

(d) Press Material

Consideration of these Items was
deferred.

(e) Entertainments Committee (i) Dinner Dance; (ii) Curling Match;
(iii) Golf Outing:-

The Secretary reported briefly on these three Items and, in
respect of (iv) Proposed 1984 Study Tour to Portugal, he announced that
the whole Association Membership had indicated interest in only 8 places.
Council agreed the proposed Study Tour should be cancelled.

SCOTTISH
SEED POTATO
DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL:

The Secretary reported that without any full Council Meetings
having taken place, no further precis of Council meetings had been
received.

"OPEN"
MEETING OF
COUNCIL:

Following a brief discussion of the special "Open" Meeting of
Council held in the Station Hotel, Perth on 2nd February, 1984 Council
agreed that the (pre-circulated) formal Report thereon should not be
formally approved and signed.

BRITISH
POTATO
TRADES
CONSORTIUM:

Council noted the pre-circulated Report on the meeting of the
Consortium in London on the morning of 6th February, 1984 and authorised
payment of the SPTA share of Consortium expenditure (£262.77 against a
budgeted sum of £373.59) when invoiced in due course. Mr. Robertson
queried whether Mr. Hughes (referred to in para.2(a) of the Report) was
a misprint. Mr. Barr explained the Report was inaccurate in this
respect in any event.

JOINT/

JOINT
CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE

Council also noted the pre-circulated PMB Report on the J.C.C. meeting in London in the afternoon of 6th February, 1984 as elaborated upon by Mr. McKenzie, who had attended with Mr. Cook on behalf of SPTA. In reply to Mr. McArthur's query on the last sentence of para.4 of the PMB Report, Mr. McKenzie explained that supplies from Cyprus and Egypt had been heavier in the winter of 1983 and lighter in the Spring of 1984 than had been expected. Mr. Fenton reported and rejected the current "ring rot from Egypt" rumour, which Mr. Henderson explained stemmed from Egyptian imports of Kennebec seed from Canada.

In reply to Mr. Lindsay, in respect of his enquiry regarding para.7 of the PMB Report, Mr. McKenzie also explained regarding supplies under the "Great Brits" Scheme.

SEED TRADE
COMMITTEE:

Messrs. McKenzie and McArthur enlarged on the pre-circulated Report on the meeting of the Seed Trade Committee which they had attended with Mr. Cook in Edinburgh on 8th February, 1984. In particular, Council discussed the matter of limitation of the number of VTSC Raisers and, while recognising there appeared to be no legal basis for limitation, confirmed its support for DAFS' disciplinary action. Mr. McArthur also spoke on the proposed Higher Voluntary Standard for seed which Council felt should not be supported. Discussion of formation of a Chemicals Committee and random sampling for chemicals was deferred until the Consultative Panel meeting Report(below).

N.F.U.S.:

Council noted the pre-circulated Report on the further meeting between NFUS and SPTA in Edinburgh on 8th February in respect of proposed changes in the Potato Marketing Board Scheme.

SEED POTATO
CONSULTATIVE
PANEL:

Council discussed the pre-circulated Report on the meeting of the Consultative Panel attended by Messrs. Cook, McKenzie and McArthur in Edinburgh on 10th February, 1984. Mr. McKenzie reported that firm evidence is now available that cereal aphids do spread Virus Y and Veinal Necrosis. In reply to Mr. Barr's earlier point, Mr. Blackmore explained that in response to earlier SPTA pressure to set up a Chemicals Committee, DAFS had placed formation of a (Colleges' co-ordinating/advisory) "Technical Group" (excluding "industry" representation) earlier on the Agenda and subsequently proposed that chemical matters be referred to that Group. The Secretary read Mr. McIntosh's letter of 15th February, 1984 which the Chairman felt should be followed up and with Council's agreement the Secretariat was instructed accordingly.

In respect of revised Seed Potato Regulations Mr. Fenton drew attention to changed scab tolerance and queried how this had been slipped in. Council's discussion of this point was inconclusive.

N.S.D.O.
CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Barr's pre-circulated Report on the meeting he had attended with NSDO in London on 15th February, 1984 was taken as read. He spoke in enlargement and explained that Mr. Greenwood's retirement is imminent. He felt SPTA should continue to participate in this Committee and Council confirmed its continuing support for the present (area-based) system of collection of Plant Royalties.

SPECIAL
MEETINGS:

- (1) British Potato Trades Consortium in London on 5th March, 1984.
- (2) Joint Consultative Committee -do- -do-
- (3) Scottish Advisory Committee -do- 6th March, 1984.
- (4) Seed Potato Advisory Committee -do- -do-

all principally in connection with proposed changes to the Potato Marketing Scheme.

The Chairman explained he had not been present at the Consortium meeting. In respect of (2) above, the representation is predominantly non-voting non-producers and he would combine his reports on (2) and (3). The latter had learned that 1984 planting intentions had been revised/

revised to 162,000 hectares (i.e. 1,000 more than target).

The circulated proposals embodied a review, not a withdrawal, after five years operation and grant aid to ensure a build up of a reserve of £4m. per annum during that period. The Trade had insisted that sales to processors must be via trade channels but Mr. Pooley had stated this would only occur if it did not increase costs. The proposals would not apply to Northern Ireland. Messrs. Hitchcock and Pooley had explained that write-off of the 1983 loan of £5.9m. from Government was dependant upon acceptance of the proposals and the industry's own support of the first 200,000 tonnes. More Government funds will be available over the next five years than previously, reducing (but not withdrawn) on review at the end of that time. There would be no support for earlies unless deducted from grant aid.

Meeting (3) above had been very "fuzzy" indeed, Messrs. Hitchcock and Pooley being present during the first half only. Planting intention figures were repeated. It was disclosed that Northern Ireland receives one-eighth of all deficiency payments and that the Board is delighted with the proposals. In respect of imports, it was "hoped" that old legislation could enable U.K. standards to be applied. If the industry pressed to support only the first 150,000 tonnes, the proposals would be pruned by Treasury.

Mr. Brass reported his impression that the PMB is sympathetic to the Trade view on supplies to processors, instancing that processors are to be required to prove how they have been disadvantaged by PMB activities. He had also gained the impression that prospects for support of earlies were not bright, Mr. McKenzie adding that there had been much ill-defined talk about potatoes marketed before 1st July each year (there being no Direct Intervention Support before that date). Mr. Pooley had suggested the early levy should be based on the level of support (i.e. publicity, etc.) provided.

It had been stated that no "leaks" of market releases had been discovered and that future releases would be as and when required, not at pre-determined dates. The Trade had fully supported the NFU's call to forbid Board Members and staff to deal in the Potatoes Futures markets. It had been announced it was intended to change the Poll qualifying date from 12th April to 12th May. Council's discussion covered the position of grower dealers, PMB standard of purchases for processors (opposed by NFU), calculation of "trigger" price (nobody knows), want of commercial realism in the Board's dealings (believed becoming much more apparent to the Board) and the lack of control over the Board's administrative expenditure. Council also decided to defer seeking a meeting with Mr. Pooley and not to circularise the Board's Paper SPD/645 to all Association Members.

In respect of (4) above Mr. McArthur explained the meeting had devoted its first half hour to election of the Committee's Chairman and Vice Chairman. Messrs. Hitchcock, Sinclair and Pooley had been in and out throughout the meeting. All points covered had already been adequately reported to Council (above) except the amended Poll requirements. Mr. McArthur explained the dangers, which had arisen as a result of acreage reductions since the Board was formed.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Press Matters: Mr. McKenzie read out an item from the "Press and Journal" of 8th March, 1984 regarding the so called "Action Group". He also read out the draft of an SPTA Press Release he had prepared which Council approved.

(b) Date of Next Meeting: It was decided to hold Council's next meeting in the Station Hotel, Perth on Thursday, 10th May, 1984 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

Mr. Lindsay proposed a special vote of thanks to the Association's Office/

Office Bearers, in recognition of their recent extraordinary pressure of meetings. Council unanimously supported this proposal.

The meeting then closed with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. W. C.", followed by a period.