

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION  
in the Fountain Plaza, SCONE at 2 p.m.  
on Thursday, 30th OCTOBER, 1986

PRESENT: Messrs. W.T. Aitken, A.J. Allan, J.H. Barr, G.S. Brass, D. Maxwell, J.P. Deuchar, R. Doig, D.H. Lindsay, P. Miller, J.L. Milne, T. McClung, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, J.M. Swinton and A.S. Whitehead, with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

The President, Mr. K.A. McKenzie, took the Chair and welcomed those present to the meeting.

APOLOGIES: The Secretary intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. J.E. Cook, J.G.H. Fenton, P. Moffat and J.O. Robertson.

MINUTES: The Minute of Meeting of Council in Scone on 4th September, 1986 previously copied to each Member of Council was taken as read. For clarification, the Secretary proposed insertion of "accumulated" before "Revenue Funds" at the end of para. 3 of the report of the Chairman's Committee on page 3. Council agreed this change and formally approved the Minute, which was duly signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS  
ARISING:

(a) Quota Sales - The Chairman read out a further Association letter (composed by Messrs. McArthur and Robertson) and Mr. Sprigge's (PMB) reply. Mr. Blackmore reported Mr. Robertson's subsequent misgivings on the possible outcome of achieving the change being sought. After discussion it was decided Messrs. McArthur and Robertson should write the PMB again with a specific Quota Sale example, the matter being followed up thereafter if necessary at the next meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee.

(b) Membership - The Secretary reported notification of applications for P.M.B. Ware Merchant Licences by A.J.C. Shepherd, Esq., Stonehaven; H.R. Munro, Esq., Kinross; Grampian Potato Preparation Services (proprietor: Ian Crampshee, Esq.), Aberdeen; for a Seed Licence by Messrs. John Reid, Forfar and for Seed and Ware Licence by Messrs. S. Thompson & Sons, Alyth. Council raised no objections to these applications and instructed the Secretariat to report the results in due course.

(c) Merchant Licence criteria - The Chairman confirmed that the Association's proposals have been placed on the Agenda for discussion at the next meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium.

(d) N.I.P.M.A. - The Secretary reported that the Northern Ireland Potato Marketing Association Ltd. have still to follow up their approach on Conditions of Purchase. He also reported receipt of a letter from them suggesting exchange of Items for News Letters. After brief discussion Council declined this suggestion.

(e) Chemicals/Labels - In reply to the Secretary, Council agreed to forward the Member's suggestion that notice of any chemical treatment should be included on the official label to DAFS, for discussion at the next meeting of the Seed Potato Consultative Panel.

S.S.P.D.C.:

In reply to the Chair, Mr. McArthur reported on the most recent meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council. In respect of the apparent discrepancy between the tonnage of seed labels issued by DAFS and seed tonnage movements reported by the PMB, it now seemed that far more farmer-to-farmer trading occurs than had been anticipated. He also explained that Pension Contributions shown in the SSPDC accounts were in respect of "compensation" negotiated as part of the Chief Executive's short term appointment.

The Chairman reported that Mr. J.M. Swinton had consented to his name/

name being put forward as one of the six Association representatives on the SSPDC, following Mr. J.H. Barr's resignation from his appointment to that body. Council approved the proposal with Messrs. Brass and Lindsay's names being added as alternatives for the Secretary of State's consideration. Mr. McArthur further reported SSPDC's sincere appreciation of Mr. Barr's valued work on that Council and genuine regret at his departure from it.

The Chairman reported that during the course of a telephone call from Mr. Gordon Lyall (DAFS), the Association view on extending the lifetime of the SSPDC beyond December, 1987 was sought. Council's first reaction was to maintain the same position adopted prior to the previous extension (i.e. to require a poll of levy payers before an extension of more than three years is granted), but fuller discussion voiced fears of increased levies (to £15, or possibly even £20 per ha.) as well as the possibility that an adverse poll result could terminate the SSPDC just when it was getting somewhere. This possibility was also considered against other (currently confidential) initiatives. Council agreed the response to Mr. Lyall be as indicated in today's discussion.

SEED TRADE  
COMMITTEE:

The Chairman, supported by Mr. Brass, reported on the meeting of the (NFUS/SPTA/SSPDC) Seed Trade Committee with the PMB which they had attended in Edinburgh on 13th October, 1986. The meeting had been very workmanlike and from their point by point verbal report it was clear the three-part total package enjoyed distinct PMB interest. Proposed seed-planting Quotas were seen as a stumbling block among Scots when the 20% reduction in seed area already this year has not helped matters. The PMB had undertaken to look into the legal implications of the proposed package and the meeting had agreed the representatives should seek their constituent organisations' approval to continue the discussions further. Mr. Brass reported his support for the proposals and his surprise at the PMB's willingness and strong desire to tackle problems in Scotland. He felt the opposition to Quotas is less significant now since commercial considerations have already reduced plantings considerably.

From each Council Member's reply to the Chair in turn, there was broad support for the proposals and continued discussion. There were some reservations expressed on particular aspects (riddle size control, quota may not be the best way, transfer of Basic Area from England to Scotland, beware the 'flesh on the bones' result, etc.) but unanimous agreement that details should not be released unless by an agreed joint announcement to the media, as soon as convenient but not until it becomes an absolute "must".

D.A.F.S.:

Council noted the (pre-circulated copies of the) Report on a meeting with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland in Edinburgh on 16th September, 1986 to discuss Industry Funding of R. & D., Ministerial Adviser's visit, 100% Tuber Inspections, charges for statutory plant health work and veinal necrosis in Elite Class. In reply, the Chairman enlarged on specific points.

JOINT  
LIAISON  
COMMITTEE:

Council also noted (pre-circulated copies of) Reports of two meetings of the Joint (NASPM/SPTA) Liaison Committee in Edinburgh on 15th October, 1986. Discussions had covered Retail Seed quality, the Seed Potato Regulations, illegal seed, Product Liability Insurance and P.M.B. Merchant Licences criteria. During subsequent discussion, difficulties of proof of illegal seed trading were recognised, which led on to renewed call for a ban on planting of uncertified seed in Scotland. The Secretary also read out a letter from the Stewart Wrightson Group reporting on operation of the Association's Product Liability Insurance Scheme. Following consideration it was felt that a fresh approach should be made to Stewart Wrightson to try to reduce the present minimum premium and £1,000 "excess" limitations, in preparation for a renewed drive to increase "take up" among Members.

SCOTTISH  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

Council considered Mr. Moffat's pre-circulated Report on the meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee held in Edinburgh on 16th October, 1986. Commenting on that meeting (which he had also attended) Mr. Brass stated no new information had been presented and no serious discussion had taken place, apart from movements of uncertified seed.

SEED POTATO  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Brass also spoke to his tabled Report on the meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Committee held in Edinburgh on 16th October, 1986. In respect of the item therein regarding MAFF's proposed charges for statutory import and export plant health work (which Mr. Brass stressed would not apply in Scotland where separate proposals by DAFS are imminent), the Chairman referred to a PMB letter seeking support for its opposition to MAFF's proposals. Council agreed the Association should write MAFF recording opposition to its proposals.

ENTERTAINMENTS  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Miller reported on a meeting of the Entertainments Committee held in Perth on 27th October, 1986. In respect of the Association's Annual Dinner/Dance, the Committee had confirmed this is to take place on Friday, 16th January, 1987 and had decided to dispense with the usual raffle in favour of horse race play with cash prizes. Mr. McArthur enlarged on this innovation, with full details being circularised to the whole Membership shortly.

Arrangements for the first leg of the Annual Curling Match were also confirmed for Tuesday, 16th December, 1986 at the Murrayfield Ice Rink in Edinburgh, the Secretariat to be writing the Skips as usual in due course.

In respect of the 1987 Golf Outing Mr. Lindsay reported the outcome of an approach he had made as requested to the Secretary of the Blairgowrie Golf Club. A booking for Thursday, 21st May, 1987 had already been provisionally diarised over the Lansdowne Course from 8 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. No advance booking deposit will be necessary, finalisation of numbers is required fourteen days before the event. An Invoice for all Golf and Catering charges will be rendered on the day for settlement "within days". The Secretariat was instructed to write for confirmation of these arrangements as soon as possible. Mr. Lindsay accepted Mr. Miller's invitation to be co-opted to the Entertainments Committee for Golf Outing matters.

"CONDITIONS"  
SUB-COMMITTEE:

Mr. Hunter reported on the meeting of the Association's "Conditions" sub-Committee held in Perth on 27th October, 1986. Essentially of an exploratory review nature the meeting had inclined towards the possibility of devising a single set of Conditions for both the purchase and sale of seed potatoes. No decisions had been reached or recommendations formulated, but a further meeting is to be held fairly soon. The Chairman invited all Council Members to let Mr. Hunter have their views or comments and in reply to his proposal, Mr. Barr accepted co-option to the sub-Committee.

CHAIRMAN'S  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Hunter also reported briefly on the meeting of the Chairman's Committee held earlier today. Principally concerned with a review of the draft Association Accounts the Committee had recommended these be finalised and submitted to Audit as soon as possible. Council duly endorsed this recommendation.

Council also endorsed the Committee's recommendation to hold the Annual General Meeting of Members in Perth on Friday, 16th January, 1987 preceding the annual Dinner/Dance on that day.

There was brief discussion of the choice of a Guest Speaker for the Annual General Meeting and Council again endorsed the Committee's recommendation to approach Mr. John Hay, with Mr. John McLaren as alternative.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Representation on P.M.B Committees - In reply to a letter from the PMB calling for nominations, Council instructed that no changes be/

be made at this time.

(b) Unauthorised use of Association's Conditions - The Secretary reported having been informed that Messrs. Lind, (Ellon) are breaching the copyright of SPTA Conditions. A letter had been sent on 3rd October, 1986 requiring immediate cessation of such breach but no reply with the written undertaking asked for has been received. Council instructed a further letter be sent by recorded delivery immediately, requiring that undertaking to be provided within seven days.

(c) PMB visits abroad - Mr. Brass stated he has Reports on visits arranged by the Board. Copies of these Reports are available on request.

(d) Date of next meeting - Council agreed its next meeting will take place in Edinburgh in the morning of Tuesday, 16th December, 1986 (prior to the first leg of the annual Curling Match there in the afternoon). Mr. McArthur undertook to enquire whether the meeting could be held in the SSPDC Offices, the Secretariat to liaise accordingly.

The meeting then closed with a Vote of Thanks<sup>4</sup> to the Chair.

*W. McArthur*