

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
in the Station Hotel, PERTH at
11 a.m. on Friday, 6th MARCH, 1987.

PRESENT:

Messrs. W.T. Aitken, J.H. Barr, G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, R. Doig, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, J.L. Milne, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, J.O. Robertson and J.M. Swinton with D. Blackmore (Assistant Secretary) in attendance.

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

APOLOGIES:

Mr. Blackmore intimated apologies for absence received from Messrs. J.P. Deuchar, J.G.H. Fenton, I. Melrose, P. Miller, T. McClung, A.S. Whitehead and R. David Hunter (Secretary).

MINUTES:

The Minute of Meeting of Council in Perth on 16th January, 1987 (previously copied to each Member of Council) was taken as read. It was duly approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Quota Sales - Mr. McArthur reported having written to the PMB again and (following a reminder) an uninterested reply had been received from Mr. Pooley. Clearly, the Board will not accommodate the Scottish grower-merchant function. During discussion it was felt strongly that it should not be necessary to use various devices to circumvent the problem. The Chairman felt the matter to be obviously serious enough now, with numerous examples available, to be vigorously pursued. It was agreed Messrs. Barr, McArthur and Robertson jointly compose a further letter to be sent by the Association.

(b) Membership and Subscriptions - Mr. Blackmore reported that following Council's last meeting, a second nomination of Messrs. J. & W.F. Lind for Association Membership had been received on 23rd January, 1987 from which date that firm had been duly enrolled, thus increasing the total Roll to 104 Members.

He also read out a letter received on 11th February, 1987 from Messrs. James Wilson & Son intimating that Firm's resignation and cessation of business on retirement of its Principal. This reduced the total Roll to 103 Members.

He next tabled letters received from The Forfar Potato Co. Ltd. and Robert Morris & Son Ltd. nominating Messrs. S. Thompson & Sons, Alyth for Association Membership. After brief discussion, Council accepted these nominations thereby restoring the total Membership Roll to 104.

Mr. Blackmore further reported receipt of PMB notifications of applications for Ware Merchant Licences by H.I. Thompson, Esq., Turriff and by Wm. Whitelock trading as Messrs. J. & T. Stirrat, Blantyre. Council instructed Mr. Deuchar's views on the former be obtained and agreed the latter does not prevent continuation of that firm's existing Association Membership.

Reporting receipt of 51 annual Membership Subscriptions totalling £4,810 to date, Mr. Blackmore explained these included six upward bracket changes, increasing projected total 1986/87 subscriptions by £165 to £9,440, compared with the 1985/86 total of £9,354. In reply, he confirmed this rate of receipts to be in line with earlier years and that reminders will be sent to unpaid Members with the next News Letter.

(c) Dinner Dance and Golf Outing - These topics were deferred until later in the meeting.

(d) Health & Safety at Work - Mr. Blackmore explained he had arranged to write formally to NFUS to seek approval to circularise their pro forma/

forma Model Policy Statement and notes to all Association Members for guidance.

(e) Future of SSPDC - The Chairman confirmed he had conveyed the Association's view to Mr. Gordon Lyall (DAFS).

(f) A.G.M. - The Chairman reiterated his extreme disappointment and personal embarrassment at the very low attendance of Members at the A.G.M. and read out a letter received from a Member in response to the President's circularised Additional Remarks.

(g) E.S.C.A. and New Year Honours - Mr. Blackmore confirmed that he had written to Mr. John Anderson and Andrew Arbuckle, Esq., O.B.E. respectively, as instructed.

S.S.P.D.C.:

Messrs. Cook, Doig, McArthur and Swinton reported on a meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council which they had attended in Edinburgh on 28th February, 1987. Topics discussed had included NASPM representation, current Season exports to Algeria (Mr. Doig advocated a complete change of attitude towards Algeria) and planting of unclassified seed of controlled varieties.

During discussion of this latter topic, Mr. McKenzie referred to a first draft of a Paper prepared by Mr. Bethel entitled "A Charter for the Development of New Varieties through their multiplication in Scotland". It was agreed the Secretariat should copy this Paper to each non-SSPDC representative member of Council for information and to place the matter on the Agenda for Council's next meeting. Mr. Cook expressed serious concern over the unofficial "private" seed potato inspection scheme which the Paper states is, in effect, developing in Scotland. He urged that this development must be stopped. In reply to the Chair, Mr. Doig felt that input on these topics is expected from this Association. In further discussion no clear conclusions were reached. Mr. Swinton reported that Mr. Bethel is to look into the costs of a proper commercial inspection scheme. It was also agreed the Secretariat write Mr. Bethel formally requesting that a copy of the Minutes of each future SSPDC meeting be sent to the Association for copying to each of its Council Members for information.

SEED
TRADE
COMMITTEE:

Messrs. Brass and McKenzie reported on two further meetings which had taken place in Edinburgh. At the first, on 29th January, 1987 it had been agreed that an "acreage grown" based support scheme would reduce the support level in surplus years and should not be pursued. On 13th February, 1987 the Committee had met PMB representatives. Without the necessary "past experience" starting point, NFUS had been unable to comply with an NFU request for detailed projected costs of the Committee's proposals. This second meeting had thus been somewhat hazy, although Mr. Hitchcock's attitude had remained supportive. Mr. McKenzie also explained that MAFF is understood to be supportive of the proposals but that Mr. Lyall (DAFS)' views are unsupportive.

In reply to Mr. Cook, the Chairman read out the salient proposals which led on to extensive discussion including disposal of Board purchases, interference with trade and the effect on ware DIS (which may have to be given up on seed DIS crops), etc. Mr. Brass highlighted the value of the PMB's response to date and urged maximisation of present pressure and momentum to ensure a scheme is available for Season 1987-88. Council agreed the initiative should be continued.

BRITISH
POTATO
TRADES
CONSORTIUM:

Council took note of the Minutes of the Consortium meeting in London on 2nd February, 1987 (which had been copied to each Council member) at which no Association representative had been able to attend. Council authorised payment of the sum of £222.55 being the Association's share of the Consortium's Budget for the year to 31st December, 1987.

JOINT
CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Brass enlarged on the PMB's Report on the JCC meeting in London on 2nd February, 1987 (which had been copied to each Council member) which he had attended. Proposed three-tier grading had been finally buried forever. Mr. Fox (representing the National Federation) had spoken very strongly on supplies of peeler grade in Glasgow Market. Council confirmed a heavy trade in peeler grade is widespread and during discussion Mr. Robertson felt the trade should be restricted to bulk deliveries to processors. If trade in bags is to continue, it was felt this should only be permitted in distinctive bags to be obtained from the PMB. Council agreed a suitable letter be sent to the Board.

In reply to Mr. Cook, Mr. Brass also explained regarding the reported possibility of a separate rate of excess area contributions for pre 1st March, 1987 plantings. The Chairman undertook to telephone Mr. Pooley on this point and to report back to the Secretariat.

ENTERTAIN-
MENTS
COMMITTEE :

Council took note of pre-circulated Report on the meeting of the Entertainments Committee in Perth on 6th February, 1987.

(a) Annual Dinner and Dance - The Chairman congratulated the Committee on the success of the arrangements and spoke highly of the Committee's personalised presentation to Mr. McArthur in recognition of his particular work for this event over many years.

(b) Annual Golf Outing - Mr. Lindsay confirmed that a firm booking had been finalised with Blairgowrie Golf Club for Thursday, 21st May, 1987. From cost estimates pre-circulated to the Committee, he and Mr. McArthur determined that tickets be priced at £11.00 for Club Member Golfers, £30.00 for non Club Member Golfers and £17.50 for non-Golfers. Council instructed that full details including the closing date for tickets on Tuesday, 5th May, 1987 be circularised to all Association Members as soon as possible.

(c) Curling Match - Mr. Lindsay also reported his completion of arrangements for prizes, etc. for the second leg match this afternoon. Mr. Blackmore confirmed the Secretariat would settle payments on this occasion and Mr. Swinton agreed to collect and remit each Curler's contribution of £5.00.

N.S.D.O.:

Council considered Mr. Barr's Report on the meeting with the National Seed Development Organisation Ltd. which he had attended in London on 18th February, 1987. Mr. Barr explained the meeting had lasted less than thirty minutes and was the last meeting with the NSDO as presently constituted. The Royalty Rates agreed for the 1988 Crop were binding on NSDO's successor but, although the date for next year's meeting had been fixed and retention of continuation of the index-linking formula had been recommended, these aspects were not binding. No information had been available on the post-NSDO future. Council's discussion centred on what assets the purchaser of NSDO will acquire and it was felt to be unlikely they will include a continuing monopoly of state-bred varieties of seed.

SEED
POTATO
CONSULT-
ATIVE
PANEL:

Council also considered a pre-circulated Report on a meeting of the Seed Potato Consultative Panel in Edinburgh on 19th February, 1987. In the ensuing discussion Mr. Brass enlarged on several points and in reply to Messrs. Maxwell and Lindsay respectively, he explained procedures for downgrading and stated no details of withdrawing VTSC growers had been given. Sealing of 1 tonne boxes was also discussed at some length, it being Council's unanimous view that existing arrangements are unnecessarily cumbersome, difficult and expensive.

ANY OTHER
COMPETENT
BUSINESS:

(a) Correspondence - The Chairman drew attention to the requirement to treat ware exported to N. Ireland and Eire with chlorpropham and the arrangements outlined in DAFS' letter of 29th January, 1987.

He also reported receipt of an Invitation to attend NASPM's A.G.M. and Dinner to be held this year on 14th May in Jersey. Enquiries indicated costs entailed approaching £250.00. After brief discussion Council instructed this invitation be declined.

(b) /

(b) Producer Meeting - The Chairman also pointed out that the postponed meeting of 15th January has been re-arranged to take place in the George Hotel, Bird Street, Lichfield at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 18th March, 1987. Mr. Arnold Hitchcock will address the meeting at which Mr. Eric Allan, M.A., Director of Cambridge University Farm will speak on "Producing for a Quality Market".

(c) Date of Next Meeting - Council confirmed it will meet again on Thursday, 14th May, 1987 and agreed the meeting be held in the Wheel Inn Motel, Scone. The Secretariat was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be "C. J. ...", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is somewhat stylized and difficult to read precisely.