

MINUTES of a MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION in the Ice Rink, PERTH
at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 9th OCTOBER,
1991.

PRESENT: Messrs. R. Doig, J.B. Hollywood, D.H. Lindsay, J.M. Marshall, J.L. Milne, J.R. McArthur, J.O. Robertson, D. Smith, D.Y. Stewart, Jnr., J.M. Swinton and A.S. Whitehead, with D. Blackmore (Assistant Secretary) in attendance.

The President, Mr. J.R. McArthur, took the Chair and welcomed those present to the meeting.

APOLOGIES: Mr. Blackmore intimated apologies for absence received from Messrs. G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, J.G.H. Fenton, A.C. Galbraith, D. Maxwell, I. Melrose, K.A. McKenzie, W. Nicoll and R.D. Hunter (Secretary). Mr. Nicoll's letter, which the Chairman read out, also expressed his appreciation of the experience of serving on Council.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the Meeting of Council in Perth on 4th September, 1991 previously copied to each Member of Council were taken as read. Mr. Swinton drew attention to the second paragraph of the S.S.P.D.C. matter on page 2 of these Minutes, the second sentence of which contained an inaccuracy. After discussion it was agreed to delete the words "before the next meeting took place" from the sixth line of that paragraph and to replace them with the words "prior to the publication of the 1990 Report". It was further agreed that "1991" in the last sentence of that same paragraph be corrected to "1990". Subject to these alterations the Minutes were formally approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING: (a) Agra Europe - Mr. Blackmore reported that one more Member had now transferred into the Association's Group Subscription Scheme, making seven Members in total, with one further Member believed to intend transferring in January, 1992. In brief discussion it was agreed to include a recruiting invitation/reminder Item in a News Letter early in May, 1992.

(b) Merchant Licensing - Mr. Blackmore reported that a reply to the enquiry sent to the PMB as instructed is awaited.

(c) Entertainments - Reporting on a short meeting of the Entertainments Committee, Mr. Blackmore explained that Council's views were sought on the venue for the 1992 Golf Outing. Council favoured a return to Ladybank and agreed the other provisional booking made with Rosemount should be cancelled. Council also noted that the first and second legs of the Annual Curling Match are booked to be played on 10th December, 1991 and 6th March, 1992 in the Murrayfield and Perth Rinks respectively. In brief discussion of the Dinner/Dance arrangements it was agreed the keenest possible overnight accommodation rate must be negotiated for Members and their Guests, £30 per person being regarded as the maximum acceptable rate.

(d) Press Matters - This matter was deferred for discussion later in this meeting.

(e)/

(e) Annual Elections to Council - Mr. Blackmore reported that by the close of nominations at Noon today, seven candidates had offered themselves for election to the six vacancies on Council and a postal ballot of all Members will take place.

S.S.P.D.C.:

The Minutes of a meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council at East Craigs, Edinburgh on 5th September, 1991 (which had already been pre-copied to all Association Council Members) were taken as read. Mr. Swinton explained that objections to these Minutes notified to SSPDC had been circularised to its Council. The Chairman sought views on discussing these Minutes without having these objections. Mr. Swinton felt that without discussion, SPTA influence would be impaired by the lapse of time. In his own view, these Minutes did not fairly reflect the tenor of both the meeting itself and the conduct of its business. During ensuing discussion the Chairman reported his exchange of views with SOAFD on these matters.

In reply to Mr. Milne, Mr. Robertson confirmed that a tape-recording of the SSPDC meeting on 5th September had been made and he explained this would only be consulted if the Minutes were queried. On the basis of his detailed history of events, Mr. Swinton voiced his extreme frustration. He had spent a great deal of time and effort on these matters and remained convinced that SSPDC Council is not directing policy but merely "rubber stamping" it. Mr. Robertson felt the principal concerns were administrative matters and S.E. Growers Ltd. and gave his views on each. The Chairman hoped that SPTA would receive any circularised objections to Minutes in future. Mr. Swinton stated his acceptance of almost all amendments to SSPDC Minutes and Mr. Stewart deplored the extra expenditure to correct inaccuracies and omissions in those Minutes as wasteful. He further felt that support of SPTA Nominees and relevant correspondence was not succeeding.

Mr. Swinton sought views on possible further activity outwith SSPDC Council. Mr. Hollywood expressed gratitude for Mr. Swinton's efforts and fully supported continuation of corrective action. He felt many non-merchant growers shared SPTA disquiet and would support merchant-growers' efforts. (A quick "straw poll" of those present showed over 70% would not support SSPDC, along with unanimous dissatisfaction with its management.) Mr. Hollywood also pointed to the problem of countering accusations that the merchants are only concerned to protect their own interests. The discussion concluded without decisions being made.

PRESS
MATTERS:

Council considered a tabled draft Account in respect of the Press Fund for the year to 31st October, 1991. Including expenditure on advertising (£367.50), the Fees and expenses of the whole six months' trial Contract with Press Consultants (£1,522.50) and offset of Bank Interest received (£120.41), the Account disclosed a balance of £475.89 in hand.

The Chairman pointed out that the same Press Consultant also acts for SSPDC. To review the future position he suggested Mr. Colin Ley be invited to attend the next meeting of Council. Mr. Hollywood supported this suggestion and Council adopted it. In the Chairman's view, however, it seemed unlikely that Mr. Ley would be able to persuade Council to renew a contract that the Association cannot really afford.

Mr./

ANNUAL
ACCOUNTS:

Mr. Blackmore regretted he had been unable to fulfil his intention to table copies of draft annual Association Accounts to date for consideration by today's meeting. It was arranged that the draft Accounts would be completed as soon as possible for consideration prior to submission to the Auditor in the usual way.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) New labels - Mr. Lindsay asked for Council's views following the introduction of new all-red labels for seed potatoes. Brief discussion did not identify any particular problems. In Mr. Stewart's view congratulations are due for the clearer typeface, etc. now being used.

(b) J.C.C. representation - The Chairman pointed out that the next meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee (on 12th November, 1991) would not provide time for any representational change to take place. he was prepared to attend that meeting if Council agreed. This proposal was accepted and Mr. Robertson further proposed that Mr. McArthur's appointment be continued on a permanent basis thereafter. It was agreed this proposal be given further consideration.

(c) Date of next meeting - Council confirmed that its next meeting will take place in Dewar's Rinks, Glover Street, Perth at 2 p.m. on Monday, 11th November, 1991 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

The meeting was then concluded, the Chairman thanking those present for their attendance.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. W. Arthur". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.