

MINUTES of a MEETING of COUNCIL of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION in  
the Ice Rink, PERTH at 2 p.m. on  
Thursday, 30th APRIL, 1992.

PRESENT:

Messrs. A.W. Bayne, G.S. Brass, J.P. Deuchar, R. Doig, A.C. Galbraith, D.H. Lindsay, J.M. Marshall, D. Maxwell, I. Melrose, J.L. Milne, J.R. McArthur, J.O. Robertson, D.Y. Stewart, Jnr., and J.M. Swinton, with R.D. Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

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

APOLOGIES:

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence received from Messrs. J.E. Cook, J.G.H. Fenton, J.B. Hollywood, K.A. McKenzie, A.B. Pullar, D. Smith and A.S. Whitehead.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the meeting of Council in Perth on 6th March, 1992 previously copied to each Member of Council were taken as read. They were formally approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS  
ARISING:

(a) Press Matters - The Chairman enlarged on tabled copies of a letter he had received yesterday from Colin Ley Consultants. After discussion Council agreed the Press Committee should pursue the offer to discuss compromise arrangements which the letter sought.

The Secretary reported receipt of 12 further Donations to the Press Fund, amounting to £480.00, which had increased the Press Fund total to £1,590.89.

Council confirmed its wish to retain independence in Press matters but agreed the Press Committee should arrange informal exploratory discussion with its SSPDC counterpart and report back to the next meeting of Council.

(b) E.C. Potato Regime - In the absence of any hard information from official sources, Mr. Marshall reported his understanding that the next discussions are due to take place during the next month. The matter was left on the table to await developments.

(c) Minimum Residue Levels - Mr. Hunter reported that the Food Safety Act 1990 is an all-embracing enabling Act, providing wide powers to introduce Statutory Orders to control specific matters. Copies of such Orders will be ordered as identified as relevant. In reply, Mr. Galbraith stated he does not have any copies of any such Orders. He added that the matter is further complicated by some buyers requiring that their own even more stringent levels be met. The Secretariat undertook to continue investigation of the matter.

(d) Complaints periods - Mr. Hunter reported that SOAFD's response had been conveyed to and considered by NASPM's Council and a formal reply is awaited. Mr. Blackmore added that he understood SOAFD's response had been accepted, but a fourteen days complaints period is still to/

to be sought by NASPM. Mr. Hunter read out a letter sent to Mr. Doig as President by Mr. Hollywood supporting such a period for both latent and patent defects and Mr. Doig reported Mr. Cook had added his support by telephone.

Council's discussion recognised the 3 days period (subject to "reasonableness") is intended to ensure prompt examination after arrival. Only the 10 days period, in respect of skin spot, gangrene and dry rot, might be extended. Mr. Hunter also pointed out the importance of NFUS involvement in this matter. He further reminded the meeting that the Association's Conditions of Sale do not provide any period of complaint for latent defects, because those Conditions specifically exclude all liability for such defects. Council agreed to try to ascertain NFUS views on extending the 10 days complaints period.

(e) Membership and Subscriptions - Mr. Blackmore reported that to date, payment of 78 Membership Subscriptions totalling £10,169.00 had been received. This included eight tonnage-bracket changes which together with the one resignation already reported, was £76.00 less than budget at this point. Fourteen Subscriptions remain outstanding and reminder notices had been posted the previous day.

Mr. Hunter also reported receipt of two notices of applications for PMB Ware Merchant Licences. Council agreed to await the results of these applications in due course.

(f) Association Investments - Mr. Blackmore reported that having considered the Stockbrokers' recommendation for re-investment of the proceeds from redemption of the Association's holding of £2,800 10% Treasury Stock 1992, the Chairman's Committee had agreed to purchase £2,900 9% Conversion Stock 2000 for a total cost of £2,807.81. Council formally ratified this decision.

Mr. Hunter explained that the Association had maintained a Savings Account with the Royal Bank of Scotland for many years, to which the Bank's Nominee Company remitted Income from the Association's Investments. The Bank now required completion of a formal Mandate document on its own terms and in particular, specifying those authorised by the Association to sign withdrawals from the Account. After due consideration Council determined that withdrawals will be signed by any one of the President, the Vice President, or the Secretary/Treasurer of the Association for the time being and that all other terms of the Mandate be complied with.

CLASSIFICA-  
TION SCHEME  
CHANGES:

The Chairman reminded Council that following the prolonged and energetic consultation process, SOAFD had formulated a balanced package of proposed changes to the Classification Scheme. This package had been unanimously accepted by the Seed Potato Consultative Panel on 2nd March, 1992. He explained SOAFD had now announced withdrawal of the agreed combined virus tolerance without differentiation between the separate viral strains. The alternative, of counting leafroll and severe and/or mild mosaic (including veinal necrosis according to the severity of symptoms expressed) will be adopted.

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The Chairman also reported a visit by embarrassed SOAFD officials which revealed this withdrawal was decided under pressure from interests outwith the consultative process. The Association had been invited to express its views and the Secretary read out a draft letter which had been prepared for Council's consideration. Following discussion, which recommended some changes to the letter, the Secretary was instructed to send the amended letter as soon as possible.

S.S.P.D.C.: Pre-circulated copies of the Minutes of a meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council in Perth on 18th February, 1992 were taken as read. In enlarging replies, which overlapped into the next meeting held in Edinburgh on 19th March, 1992 Messrs. Swinton and Robertson respectively reported on the mix-up over the Press Release re seed for the C.I.S. and S.E. Growers Ltd.'s sourcing role in this.

Mr. Robertson further reported that 95% of SSPDC Levy for 1991 had been paid, that the PMB may contribute £15,000 towards travelling costs to Eastern Europe and that an application by the Commonwealth of Independent States (C.I.S.) for E.C. grant-aided assistance for imports of seed had been approved. He also confirmed that S.E. Growers Ltd. is to be financially divorced from S.S.P.D.C. on 1st July, 1992. He added that the marked improvement in the atmosphere of S.S.P.D.C. meetings since Mr. Swinton's pressures, highlighted the effectiveness of those efforts. Council of this Association expressed its unanimous appreciation and thanks to Mr. Swinton.

The Chairman also reported on his visit to the C.I.S., at the invitation of the SSPDC, as an audit/observer. He explained that the arrangements made and the difficulties encountered followed a common pattern with other trade visits. He expressed the view that these initiatives will achieve the success they deserve in due course. Council's ensuing wide-ranging discussion supported the view that all trade liberalisation in the C.I.S. and Eastern Europe should be welcomed.

W.P.I.A.C.: Pre-circulated copies of the P.M.B.'s Minutes of a meeting of the Ware Potato Imports Advisory Committee in London on 11th March, 1992 were taken as read. During his enlarging remarks, the Association's representative, Mr. Lindsay, reported that a new E.C. representative, Dr. H. Spitz, had been present at the meeting. The European representatives had expressed the opinion that planted acreage in Europe in 1992 will be about 10% higher than the previous year.

S.P.A.C.: The Chairman reported on a meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Committee in Edinburgh on 26th March, 1992 at which he and Mr. Smith had represented the Association. He provided Council with very comprehensive details of the proceedings and the full statistical information which had been given, expressing his view that the meeting had been a good one and very useful.

Mr./

ENTERTAIN-  
MENTS  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Blackmore reported that the Association's Entertainments Committee had met in Perth on 23rd April, 1992. In respect of the Annual Golf Outing (for which reservations for 32 golfers had been made with Ladybank Golf Club for Thursday, 28th May, 1992), steeply increased costs had necessitated a change in the traditional outing format. Full details of a single afternoon North v. South Competition and Sweepstake round of golf, followed by a set-time High Tea and Prizes presentation had been circularised to all Association Members the previous day.

The Committee had also arranged to book provisionally the Queens Hotel, Perth and Bill Wilkie's Band for the Association's next Annual Dinner and Dance on Friday, 18th December, 1992. An application for the second leg of the Association's annual North v. South Curling Match to be held in Perth Ice Rink on Friday, 5th March, 1993 was also arranged.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Meeting with PMB Licencing Committee - Mr. Blackmore reported that a repeat of last year's meeting is now proposed to be held in London on Monday, 15th June, 1992. After brief discussion, Council agreed that the President, Mr. Doig, (whom failing, Mr. McArthur) should represent the Association at this meeting.

(b) Association's "Chemicals" Conference - Mr. McArthur explained proposals for a 3 or 4 day Association Conference supported by MSD (who sponsor the annual VTSCGA Conference at Aviemore) to be held at the end of July/early August. He added that final afternoon conference session, followed by a Dinner (possibly at the Huntingtower Hotel, Perth) was envisaged. The Chairman sought Council's approval for Mr. McArthur to follow up these proposals and sought Council's ideas on invitees, hosts for visits, etc. Council appointed a sub-Committee comprised of Messrs. McArthur, Brass and Melrose, with power to co-opt if required, to further these arrangements.

(c) Registration for ware packing - Mr. Galbraith reported that there was some confusion as to whether growers packing ware potatoes into paper sacks are required to register their premises with their area Environmental Health Offices, in terms of the Food Safety Act 1990. He explained that while some areas are requiring this, other areas are not. The Secretariat undertook to make enquiries to clarify this matter.

(d) Horberry & Baker Ltd. Press Release - Discussion of this topic revealed that the matter concerned an Aberdeenshire grower of Cara potatoes. Council agreed the Association should ascertain what action SOAFD is taking, or is able to take, in this matter.

(e) Association's Conditions of Sale - Mr. Deuchar raised the question of deleting reference to uncertified seed from the Association's Conditions of Sale. After brief discussion, Council decided to re-constitute a "Conditions" sub-Committee. Messrs. G.S. Brass, K.A. McKenzie, J.O. Robertson and J.M. Swinton were appointed to serve on this sub-Committee and to review the Association's Conditions.

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(f) Inspections of ware crops - Mr. Galbraith sought clarification of SOAFD's inspections of ware crops and in particular, the extent of any sanctions following a grower's voluntary agreement to a request to inspect his crop. The Secretariat was instructed to take the matter up with SOAFD.

(g) Date of next meeting - Council agreed to hold its next meeting in the Ice Rink, Perth at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, 30th June, 1992. The Secretariat undertook to make the usual necessary arrangements.

The meeting was then concluded.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Galbraith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.