

MINUTE of MEETING of the  
PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE of  
S.P.T.A. held at 25 SOUTH  
METHVEN STREET, PERTH, at  
1.45p.m. on TUESDAY, 29th  
NOVEMBER, 1994.

PRESENT: Messrs. D. Stewart, A. Pullar, A.M. Beattie, D. Harley and H. Lindsay, along with Mr. R.D. Hunter, the Secretary.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated in behalf of Messrs. R. Doig, V. Lumb, J. Marshall, R. McArthur and K. McKenzie.

FRAMEWORK FOR DEFINITION OF A P.M.B. SUCCESSOR BODY: The Committee considered in detail the Paper prepared by Jim Godfrey and Jim Cruickshank entitled "Framework for Definition of a P.M.B. Successor Body".

The Committee were unanimously of the opinion that a new Body must be introduced to take over from the Potato Marketing Board on its demise in 1997 or hopefully earlier. It was envisaged that the new Body was almost certain to be a Development Council under the umbrella of the Industrial Organisation and Development Act 1947.

The Committee then proceeded to consider the three "F's":-

Functions: The Committee worked on the assumption that the Seed Potato Development Council would also be superseded by the New Body. The Committee agreed that the functions of the new Body would be:-

- (1) Collection and dissemination of information and statistics.
- (2) Research and Development.
- (3) Promotion and Market Development, including exports.
- (4) Acting as THE Potato Authority in Great Britain to represent, promote and defend the industry at home and abroad.

The Committee were in agreement that the new Body should not be involved in commercial activities other than within the above roles. It was considered that Sutton Bridge's commercial activities should be sold off. The Committee also considered that the Sutton Bridge Research Unit should also be sold off.

Funding: It was accepted that the funding of the new Body would be made up of Levies from Growers representing, say, 90% of its total income with the balance coming from Processors. The Committee then turned its attention to the collection of levies from Growers. It was in agreement with the principle of there being a Statutory Base Levy as proposed in the Paper. It was accepted that to begin with the Levy would be collected on an area basis but that a cost effective surveillance system (e.g. satellite) must be introduced at an early date. It was agreed, however, that detailed investigations should be carried out



regarding the merits of collecting the Levy on a straight tonnage basis, possibly in conjunction with the collection of Royalties. The Committee were opposed to the concept of a variable Levy related to the potato price as suggested in the Paper.

The Committee were in favour of Research and Development and Promotion and Market Development being "contracted out". With regard to R. & D. the Committee considered that it should only be undertaken if there was a reasonable chance of success in a reasonable time-scale and that "specialist" sections of the Industry should carry out their own R. & D. The Committee were in agreement in principle to the suggestion that, Sectors or Groups which can convince or prove to the new Body that they receive significantly less benefit from the new functions, should be entitled to have their Levy rebated or diverted into functions more appropriate to their needs.

The Committee accepted that the total funding could amount to, say, £M5.6 of which £M5 would be derived from Growers' Levies and the remaining £600,000.00 from other sources.

Framework: The Committee accepted the suggestion that the Executive Council of the new Body should comprise 12 Members. The Committee was in favour of the principle that the balance of representation on the new Body would reflect the balance of funding. That being so it considered that 9 of the 12 Members should be appointed from Growers of whom 2 should represent Scotland. The Committee considered that S.P.T.A. should be invited to nominate one of the Scottish Members, the Scottish N.F.U. nominating the other. The remaining 3 of the 12 Members would be the independent Chairman, the employee representative and one Member representing Industry.

The Committee were in favour of the proposal that in addition to the Executive Council of the new Body there would also be three Sector Groups covering -

Seed

Fresh (bagged plus pre-pack plus early, etc.)  
Fresh for Processing.

The Committee considered that each Sector Group should have a Chairman appointed by the Executive Council of the new Body from its own Members. The other representatives on the Sector Groups would be elected by Growers whose interests are represented on the Sector Group (e.g. Seed Growers would vote to appoint the elected Members of the Seed Sector Group).

General: Subject to the foregoing comments the Committee were in favour of the principles detailed in the Paper.

COLLECTION OF PLANT BREEDERS'S ROYALTIES: The Committee considered the proposals contained in Christopher Baker's letter of 22nd September, 1994. The Committee were in favour of the suggestion that Royalties should be paid on every acre (including ware production) of the variety grown.

This terminated the business of the Meeting.