

NEW CROFTERS' UNION STEERING GROUP

To all Scottish Crofters Union branch chairmen.

From James Hunter.

As you will know, I have been appointed director of the Crofters Union. Other commitments mean I cannot take up the job on a full-time basis until January. Meanwhile, I shall be continuing my part-time work on behalf of the Crofters Union Steering Group.

One of my first tasks on taking up my new post will be to visit all the Crofters Union areas and to meet as many branch committees as possible. I greatly appreciate the work that has already been done at the local level to get the new union underway. And as our central organisation develops during 1986, I will be wanting to help you build on that excellent beginning.

It is very important that we establish from the start that the people who run the Scottish Crofters Union are its members. They will be paying my wages. And I will be there to do a job for them. Union policy will be decided democratically in consultation with our area committees and local branches. And union members must be encouraged to raise with their branches any issues, whether local or national, that concern them.

I will be doing as good a job as I can for the union. But its strength will always lie in its membership and in its local organisation. That means that we will have to look to you and your colleagues for continuing support. I appreciate that we are asking for a good deal. We are asking for the commitment needed to organise branch meetings, subscription collection and much else. But without that commitment, I'm afraid, the new Crofters Union will not work.

So far, I know, you have not had a lot of return on your investment in the Scottish Crofters Union. This year we have had to concentrate on creating our organisation. And though, with your help, this has been accomplished successfully, we have not had the time, resources or manpower to do very much about the many pressing issues facing us. Next year, though we will still have work to do in getting our organisation running properly, we shall be getting to grips with policy matters.

At present, again thanks to your efforts, we seem set to reach our target of 3000 paid-up members by November 6 when we formally inaugurate the Scottish Crofters Union in Inverness. With that sort of membership, and with the sort of organisation we now have, we can do a good job for crofting.

I shall be trying to speak to as many of you as possible on the telephone during October. And I shall be meeting all of you during 1986. Meanwhile, I should be grateful if you would make the contents of this note known to your branch committee. I look forward to working closely with you.

*Yours sincerely,
Jim Hunter.*

Jim Hunter.