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REPORT ON HARRIS TWEED PROMOTION, 1973/74, UNITED STATES
AND CANADA

I paid my normal yearly visit to New York and Montreal from September 5th to 21st, working with Arthur Todd in both cities. The purposes of the trip, vis-a-vis Harris tweed were to check on the progress of the 1973 Fall campaign and to try to develop operations for 1974 in collaboration with American and Canadian buyers and on a shared-cost basis.

UNITED STATES

During the first two days, we made a point of visiting the main Harris tweed representatives in New York, in order to get some idea of the way the market is developing and to assess the impact of the initial campaign. Contacts of varying length were made with the following companies:

Brampton Textiles	Shampain Jacobs
Textile Import Corporation	R.W.J. Textiles
St. Andrews Textiles	Norlic Import Co.
William V. Siegel	Richard Barr

I was very favourably impressed by the impact which our initial operations for Harris tweed seems to have made. Virtually all the agents felt there was renewed interest in Harris tweed in the market and seemed to approve of the promotional methods being used. Through our talks with them we were able to build up a "portfolio" of likely prospects for co-operative promotional work in 1974, which was put to good use in the ensuing days. The firms interested in Harris tweed promotion during 1974 and the projects worked out with them are as follows:

1. Towncliffe: This is one of the top names in ladies' wear in the U.S.A. and we shall be working with them on British Woollens promotion next year. They would also like to do a full page in colour in "The New Yorker" on their Harris tweed garments probably with a black and white column listing retail-stockists, and are prepared to pay one-third of the cost of this exercise. This effort might also be developed into direct mail.

....

The Corporation would keep separate accounts for any work undertaken on behalf of Harris tweed and would give the H.T.A. regular appreciations of spending under each head, providing audited accounts at each year end. Initially, it is suggested the Association might transfer a working float of, say, £10,000 to the Export Corporation which could be replenished by monthly or quarterly transfers, according to spending in any particular period. The amount set could be adjusted, if necessary, in the light of experience.

At this point in time, it is very difficult to put an exact figure on the cost to the Corporation of extending its promotional facilities to the H.T.A., should the Association agree that joint utilisation would be mutually advantageous. However, it should be possible to negotiate an amount acceptable to both parties, which would give the Association effective bases in Germany, Canada and America to carry out the work outlined in this note and which, equally, would contribute towards the Corporation's standing costs in the markets concerned and at headquarters from where all operations would be controlled in close liaison with the Association.

purpose, in the Corporation's experience, and it is suggested that, if the Harris Tweed Association's members view this appreciation favourably, a continuing operation over the next three to five years should be the aim.

At the same time, it is doubtful whether spending on the various projects put forward is likely to reach the levels suggested by the Association, namely £170,000 - £190,000 for the first year. The Corporation through many years of promoting British wool textiles abroad on limited budgets, has acquired a considerable aversion to spending a £ where a penny would do and to spending funds simply to make sure a yearly appropriation was exhausted within that year. Instead, funds are applied when and where they will do practical good and in the minimum quantities necessary to generate the desired result. Excess funds are carried forward to supplement future budgets and to provide a financial reserve against any exceptional expenditure which may be called for on occasion, e.g. prestige exhibitions.

CONTROL, ADMINISTRATION AND COST

7. If the programme outlined in this paper generally commends itself to the Association, an administrative structure will have to be formed to ensure that ultimate control of all work undertaken for Harris tweed is vested solely in the H.T.A. This might be done through the formation of a promotion sub-committee by the Association which would lay down broad principles to be followed, leaving the Secretaries of the two bodies to liaise regularly to ensure that actions taken were in conformity with the agreed principles. Regular reports from the Corporation's offices would be transmitted via the Association Secretary and a meeting of the promotion committee could be held, say, twice yearly, to discuss progress and recommendations for future action. This system would be identical to the method of control used by the Export Corporation for its promotional work.

where possible from makers-up and/or retailers, comprising:

- (i) "Harris Tweed Weeks" in selected areas of Germany aimed at encouraging retail displays of garments in Harris tweed in support of centralised advertising in local and/or national media.
- (ii) Further encouragement of window displays in this context could stem from a window display contest, whereby prizes are offered for winning displays, e.g. holiday for two in the Islands, which gives opportunities for follow-up press publicity.
- (iii) Promotion of selected garment ranges in Canada and America through prestige magazines, in collaboration with makers-up and retailers. This advertising can often be developed as a mailing-piece which stores send to their charge accounts as follow-up promotion.
- (iv) Further promotion in the young women's market is envisaged through advertising in appropriate journals and participation in, or inception of, home-sewing contests, designed to increase knowledge and usage of Harris tweed in this area of vast potential. Prizes for this type of event can often be attracted from sponsors such as sewing machine makers and travel agencies.

C. The promotional work projected should generate editorial press publicity and this can be capitalised on by providing a steady flow of news material to journalists throughout the world. This could be arranged by concerting the efforts of the Association's existing P.R. connection with the work done by the Corporation's press department aimed at producing authoritative and gratuitous publicity for Harris tweed.

D. It is stressed that the programme outlined, while envisaging early commencement, must be regarded as a long-term project if it is to have any chance of success. One-shot promotions serve little

6. Co-ordination of promotional recommendations from Germany and North America is usually something of a problem since differences in the markets necessitate variation in the basic approach. However, certain broad similarities appear in both reports and an overall programme might be summarised as follows:

A. Immediate action to restore the prestige image of Harris tweed at trade level, through:

(i) Production of a multi-purpose, illustrated brochure, projecting a fashion/quality image and featuring the registered mark.

All or parts of this publication would be aimed at makers-up, retailers and consumers/press/educational contacts.

(ii) In North America this aspect would be developed considerably through the introduction of direct mail promotion to makers-up in the men's, ladies' and children's fields, advising them of new fashion developments and featuring selected fabrics with source information. This method would be extended, in collaboration with makers-up, to push sales of selected garments to retail outlets, again featuring swatches of the fabric concerned and giving source information. Coverage could also be expanded to attack the enormous home-sewing field through mailers to all major retail store buyers throughout Canada and the States.

(iii) This work could be further reinforced through the use of selected trade media in the three markets aimed at impressing a prestige/fashion image on makers-up and showing that Harris tweed was busy promotionally in their country. This latter point is extremely important, particularly in North America, where promotion, per se, is news.

B. Following action to capitalise on work done for the trade by instigating promotion aimed at consumers, with participation

the consumer in cheap-make garments, consequent involvement in "sales" and resultant association in the minds of public and trade alike with cheapness and low-quality. Our U.S. office sums up the situation in saying "It is nothing short of tragic the way the prestige of this cloth has deteriorated over here" and goes on to list several good U.S. makers-up who are using Harris tweed, but not identifying it as such.

The main immediate task, therefore, appears to be to restore the image of Harris tweed in the eyes of the trade and to do so in such a way as to lead logically into hard-sell promotion aimed at consumers and developed in collaboration with makers-up and retailers.

4. Our German office lists a number of secondary problems, such as the lack of awareness in Germany of the distinction between Harris and Scottish tweeds, lengthy transit periods for shipments to Germany (for which remedies are suggested), the need for more variety in design while using traditional shades, and the wider marketing possibility which could arise from introduction of 150 cm width fabrics. Our U.S. office agrees on the design point, which both see as a potential key to the youth market, but feels scope for double-width cloth in the U.S.A. is currently limited by tariff variations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Before proposing a promotional strategy to restore Harris tweed to its proper place in the quality spectrum of British Woollens, it may be appropriate to suggest that any work undertaken is likely to be undermined by the continued availability of Harris tweed through cheap makers-up, notably Dutch firms. The obvious remedy would be to cut off supplies of fabric to this particular channel, but, this may not be generally acceptable, particularly perhaps when order books are less full than at present. The members of the H.T.A., however, should seriously examine whether or not they could at least agree to withhold labels from this channel, thus divorcing it from the mainstream of proposed promotion.

AN APPRECIATION OF THE PROMOTIONAL PROSPECTS FOR HARRIS TWEED

IN THE WEST GERMAN AND NORTH AMERICAN

MARKETS

INTRODUCTION

1. Following preliminary approaches from the Harris Tweed Association, a meeting was arranged in Edinburgh on January 24th, 1973, between the Chairman and Secretary of the Association and the Secretary of the National Wool Textile Export Corporation, to examine the possibility of joint utilisation of Corporation promotional facilities in overseas markets. From this discussion, it became apparent that a substantial coincidence of interests existed and, subject to approval by the Officers of the Export Corporation (subsequently given on February 6th) it was agreed that the Corporation's German and New York offices should be asked to prepare preliminary reports on promotional possibilities for Harris Tweed.

2. The reports have now come to hand and are consolidated in this appreciation. It should be noted that the New York office recommends strongly that any promotion undertaken in North America should cover the United States as well as Canada, since there is considerable interchange of publicity media between the two markets. It follows that a co-ordinated campaign in both markets makes more promotional sense than an isolated exercise in one or the other. Recommendations for work in the United States are, therefore, included in this summary.

THE PROBLEM

3. In planning any effective promotion, it is essential at the outset to identify the main obstacles to influencing buyers (trade and consumer) and thus to increasing sales. In this instance there is almost surprising unanimity in the views of our German and American offices on this point, who say that the former prestige image of Harris Tweed has dropped sharply in recent years, due to its presentation to

THE HARRIS TWEED ASSOCIATION LIMITED



Harris Tweed

Secretary: W. H. Renfrew
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Station Square
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5th March, 1973.

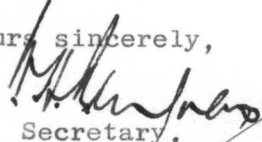
Angus MacLeod, Esq.,
Secretary,
Harris Tweed Small Producers Association,
Park House,
Marybank,
Stornoway.
Isle of Lewis.

Dear Mr. MacLeod,

You will remember that it was suggested that we make use of the National Wool Textile Export Corporation's services for promotions in Canada and Germany. They have now produced a report and I enclose a copy of it.

We hope that a meeting with the Corporation's representatives, producers and ourselves will be held some time in the week beginning 19th March and I will let you know when a date has been fixed.

Yours sincerely,


Secretary.

Enc.

generally. A reserve for this purpose is included in the budget summary which follows.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR PROMOTION OF HARRIS TWEED IN NORTH AMERICA, 1974

U.S.A.

Continuing trade promotion through "Tweed Talk from Harris" mailers, etc. \$ 7,500

Individual promotions to consumers in co-operation with U.S. cutters (Contributions equal to 50% of the amount stipulated, from collaborators would be sought). 50,000

CANADA

Continuing trade promotion on U.S. pattern 5,000

Possible non-contributory promotion to consumers with selected makers-up 30,000

Home sewing promotion with Vogue Patterns on shared cost basis 4,000

Provisional total \$96,500

Equivalent to approximately £40,000

Note: When considering this budget, the Association might bear in mind that we shall again be presenting proposals for work in West Germany after an assessment of the 1973 operation has been possible and also for continuing work in trade press advertising, which is seen as necessary to capitalise on the undoubted impact of the "Harris Tweed Handbook" and the associated feature in "Textile Forecast". Together, these projects could involve expenditure of up to £40,000 and some reserve for the Corporation's servicing costs would also be necessary. On this basis, a projected increase overall of around £10,000 - £15,000 over 1973 costs might be looked for.

In the absence of authority from Stornoway to proceed on a non-contributory programme, we were not able to go too deeply into individual prospects but are reasonably assured that a satisfactory schedule could be put together on this basis. If the Association is interested, we would recommend that an initial budget of approximately \$30,000 might be made available for this purpose.

Regardless of the Association's views on the major programme's possibilities, we would like to continue to develop promotion to and through the trade for Harris tweed, as we are doing for British Woollens. The cost of this part of the operation would be unlikely to exceed, say, \$5,000.

A confirmatory point on the labelling question arose from discussions in Canada with the Freedman Company. Mr. David Cohen, Vice President, who is a very intelligent, thrusting, young executive and predictably impatient with rules and regulations, has been conducting a somewhat acrimonious (on his side) correspondence with the Association on development of a special Harris tweed label for his range. It is appreciated that the Association needs at all times to control the use of the Orb mark, but the presentation of the name of Harris tweed jointly with that of the Freedman Company, at no cost to the Association, would be a valuable promotional asset and it is hoped that assent may eventually be given, with proper safeguards, to Freedman's request, at least on a joint label. If this is not feasible, the Association may wish to consider producing a Canadian version of the "superlabel" proposed for use in the U.S.A., which could be issued to better cutters like Freedman.

A further promotional prospect in Canada involves development of the very attractive initial advertising programme with Vogue/Butterwick which might be extended to involve store participation in various ways. This would be a relatively new outlet for Harris tweed and, though not capable of rapid development immediately in our opinion, could pay dividends in making the younger sector of the population "aware" of Harris

America for Harris tweed. There are a few problems on price-competition between Producers (which is somewhat surprising at a time when the fabric can surely make its price) and the labelling position needs attention, but these apart, every indication I received was that 1974 could be a boom year for sales of Harris tweed in America, given an effective supporting programme of promotion.

CANADA

We transferred our operations to Canada on the evening of September 18th and worked in Montreal for three days. Canada has always been a much more difficult market than the U.S.A. in which to arrange co-operative promotions due to the less-responsive attitude of the makers-up. One feels that this situation is changing gradually, but much spade-work remains to be done. A further difficulty is the lack of national advertising media of a standing and effectiveness equivalent to "The New Yorker" and other U.S. magazines, which necessitates greater use of local press in individual areas.

The main obstacle to arranging Harris tweed promotion for 1974, however, is undoubtedly our insistence on financial participation by cutters and it is felt that, in this case, the Association might wish to consider carrying the full cost of promotion in the first year as has been done in the U.S.A. and West Germany. A compensating advantage would be that we should have full control of media and presentation, as we have had in the other markets and we have no doubt that we could produce an effective promotion for Harris tweed and involve prestige and up-and-coming makers-up in the programme.

Our initial investigations indicated that worthwhile promotion on the Montroy line of pastel-shade coats for Spring could be enormously helpful in raising the fashion image of Harris tweed in Canada and we are very interested in the possibility of working with Bagatelle, a leading maker of cheaper "sporty" uni-sex lines aimed at the 18-30 age group, who we feel could become a large user of Harris tweed in their Winter range.

Stanley Blacker: May be interested when buying completed.

Bonnie Cashin: Possibility on non-contributory basis.

Other companies which have taken part in our 1973 operation may be given the opportunity to come in again on a contributory basis according to the wishes of the Association and Producers and the budget available.

On the last day of the New York visit, we were advised that Alexander's were again moving on Harris tweed promotion. We visited their store on 3rd Avenue and found no strong effort to sell Harris, indeed the manager was unaware that he had Harris tweed in his racks. We located some 20/30 sports jackets, eventually, which were mixed in with similar garments in other fabrics and which appeared to be remnants from their 1971 operation. However, I have to report that Arthur Todd was considerably upset by the appearance of Harris in Alexanders and by a subsequent promotion on ladies' coats, by the same store which he has since reported.

I discussed this problem at considerable length with Arthur and it is our joint conclusion that positive action to prevent Alexanders and similar stores interfering with our promotional drive is essential. In essence, we propose that these stores' lines should be divorced from the main-stream of promotion through the registration of a new style of label, incorporating the Harris tweed mark, which would be issued by Arthur to our promotional collaborators only, and would be featured in our advertising. We feel this would solve the problem, since the better cutters do not object to using and identifying Harris tweed, particularly now that the Association is promotionally active in the market. What they do not wish to do is to use the identical label that is available to the cheaper sellers.

This proposal is put forward for most urgent consideration by the Association.

One final, personal note on the U.S. market: I have seldom seen so much resurgent enthusiasm for a fabric as currently exists in

one-third of the cost and while he is not a large user of Harris it is felt the standing of this firm makes this a worthwhile proposition for Harris tweed support.

6. John Gilbertson: This is the "featured" company in our 1973 operation and it would be invidious to neglect them entirely for 1974 even though Norman Hilton is a better prestige vehicle. It is suggested that the Association may wish to develop at least one single column advertisement in "The New Yorker" with Gilbertson on a co-operative basis.

7. Home Sewing: As British Woollens, we are trying to develop a co-operative project with Vogue Pattern Book for America, which would involve a pocket-size, travelling fashion show used by specialist stores in major cities. This would be done on a shared-cost basis and would be supported by appropriate advertising. This could be a project in which Harris tweed might also wish to take part and this could be arranged if desired.

8. Other Possibilities: It was not possible in the time involved to see all possible participants in joint Harris tweed promotions next year, nor to produce definite proposals from every discussion. Arthur Todd will continue to investigate possible promotion with the following companies:

Anne Klein: Reported great reponse from their "New Yorker" column this year.

Levine & Levine: Very pleased with their 1973 advertisement.

Tarlow: Reported as still using large quantities of Harris tweed.

Custom Casuals: Will give definite answer after buying plans mature.

Keith & Co.: Very pleased with their 1973 ad, but unwilling to contribute for 1974.

Mavest: Will give definite answer after buying plans completed.

2. Pincus Brothers Maxwell: This firm is regarded very much as a "comer" in the American menswear field and British Woollens have worked with them for the past two years and will do so again in 1974. In addition, P.B.M. are developing their purchases of Harris tweed and would like to do co-operative promotion in this sector, again using a full page in colour in "The New Yorker" and paying one-third of the cost. Promoting with this company is quite a coup, since their 1973 Fall promotion on Ballantyne's tweeds is the talk of the trade in America and has proved enormously successful in terms of sales. Pincus is also likely to extend his operation into the women's wear field before too long, thus giving him additional scope to absorb all types of British tweeds which he sees as the last quality source available to American cutters.

3. Country Britches: This is a very progressive line in the men's resortwear field owned by Josephs & Feiss who also run the Cricketeer range. They are extremely promotionally minded and would like to run one or two single columns in "The New Yorker" probably developing this into direct-mail promotion through their retailers, which method is of considerable interest to them. Country Britches will pay one-third of the cost involved.

4. College Hall: This old-established bulk-user of Harris tweed, mainly for sportscoats, are looking to extend their range for 1974 and are keen to work with us again promotionally. Once more the probability is that the promotion would be through "The New Yorker" advertising and/or direct mail, with College Hall paying a third of the cost.

5. Norman Hilton: This is one of the top three names in U.S. menswear and controls John Gilbertson, with whom we are doing a full page in colour this year. Mr. Hilton is so impressed with the quality of this promotion that he wishes to shift the emphasis to his main company in 1974 and to have a full page in colour, with supporting lists of stockists for the Norman Hilton range. He is prepared to contribute