20th February, 1956.

Dear Mr. Boutflour,

I have never understood the policy of the Ministry of Agriculture with respect to the Breed Societies. These are, of course, organized by entrepreneurs, who are not in the business for their health, but who gain a great deal of aid and prestige from country gentlemen with a tradition of good works. One of the most extraordinary limitations of the official mind is that they cannot think out a joint policy, and set up the necessary inexpensive organization needed to enable people who want to pursue their own interest, and help others, to do so in cooperation. Fairly early in the interwar period the Meteorological Office, when being reorganized under the Air Ministry, acquired as a going concern a body called The British Rainfall Association that had come into existence without official aid, and was reporting about five thousand rain gauges in different parts of the country, the members meeting their own expenses, recording their own gauges, and paying a guinea or so subscription to support the central office. The Ministry shot this concern dead by abolishing the subscription, and leaving the members in the position of
unpaid servants of Whitehall. I suppose the Ministry of Agriculture is usually staffed by people equally obtuse.

I should like to see them, or the Agricultural Research Council, establish, what would not be cheap, performance testing stations where animals' practical performance could be tested under carefully standardized conditions, e.g. air-conditioned byres, and certificates of performance issued for the use and guidance of breeders. It seems quite clear at present that such performance as is taken into account at all, as in milk yield, is evidence much more of intensive and non-economic management than of inherited capacity.

Sincerely yours,