

3rd December, 1955.

Dear Jeffery,

Thanks for your letter and for the entertaining commentary.

I am afraid I have no suggestion to make as to how officials of this Ministry, or any other, can be induced to take notice of advice, which would involve in some sense an imputation of lack of omniscience. The idea that facts must be ascertained is in some sort <sup>approved</sup> ~~proved~~, but the idea that when ascertained, policy should constantly be modified in the light of what is known, is not at all acceptable. When I was on the Marine Biological Association, I was impressed by the fact that not only Ministry officials, but some of their so-called scientific advisors, constantly ignored the fact that one of the reasons for research on life in the sea was to guide the Ministry in the making of regulations intended to have certain effects, but quite liable to have effects of a totally different nature.

One of the vices of officialism that Jeremy Bentham was never tired of pointing out, is that a regulation offers a decision for thousands of cases, of the particular circumstances of

each of which the drafter of the regulation was ignorant. The remedy would seem to be to build flexibility of judgement, with the corresponding responsibility, into the drafting of all such regulations. I know enough about teaching to know that some exceptional men can keep 50 children interested, happy and busy, while with other teachers the quality of instruction falls off after about 15.

Sincerely yours,

Encs.