

Supplementary Appendix to the
Minutes of the meeting of Council
on Friday, 5th March, 1993.

In respect of enlargement of the third paragraph of the Item S.S.P.D.C. at the end of page 2 of the above Minutes, Council's discussion of "other relevant matters" included as follows:-

Mr. McKenzie expressed his serious concern regarding Mr. Bethell's activities in connection with the Ukraine. Quite apart from the frequency and expense of his many visits there, the perceivable benefits to the Scottish seed potato industry appear to be minimal.

Speaking in support, Mr. Melrose drew attention to the effect this was having on the English and Dutch markets. In this latter context he quoted a Dutch comment that Mr. Bethell was the finest asset the Dutch market had at this time. He also referred to a recent Press photograph caption in respect of modern Ukrainian art material supplied by Mrs. Bethell from her Art Gallery. He felt this raised a specific fundamental question which should be raised and answered in writing with SOAFD.

He expressed the view that Mr. Bethell is both highly intelligent and extremely industrious, but his apparent use of SSPDC-funded opportunities for personal, non-SSPDC-related gainful purposes must be totally unacceptable. He also felt that Mr. Stobo must bear full responsibility for failing to ensure that Mr. Bethell's activities were properly defined and directed, to prevent such a situation arising. More effective steps must also be taken to ensure that untruths in Mr. Bethell's Press Statements cannot occur.

Mr. Lindsay firmly supported these views and Mr. Brass felt the whole situation ought to be got rid of at the earliest opportunity. Mr. Robertson explained SSPDC Council Members' appointments expire at end-1993, while the Organisation itself is due for renewal three years later. Mr. Bayne asked whether the proposal was to be rid of Mr. Bethell or the SSPDC itself. Mr. Swinton was delighted to support everything Mr. Melrose had said, indicating as it did his own past efforts.

Mr. McKenzie further pointed out that SSPDC's Budget allocations favoured activities in Russia over activities in the U.K., which Mr. Robertson confirmed. The Chairman cited SSPDC's withdrawal from future Smithfield Show arrangements as additional evidence to support this point. Mr. Swinton reiterated his experience that SPTA nominees cannot operate effectively within SSPDC Council. The meeting was also aware that fewer SSPDC meetings in 1993 would reduce SSPDC Council's supervisory opportunities. Mr. McKenzie proposed that a meeting be arranged with SOAFD's Mr. Whitelaw to acquaint him on all these matters.

Mr. Gordon Smillie joined the meeting at this point. Mr. Lindsay explained his company's experience in respect of "Balmoral" variety seed potatoes sent to Russia in response to SSPDC's initiative. He suggested Mr. Whitelaw be invited to meet SPTA Council with Mr. Stobo. In reply to the Chair, Mr. Smillie voiced his own views which were fully supportive of the views already expressed by others.

Drawing the discussion to a close, the Chairman noted the high degree of unanimity achieved. In view of the desire not to disclose beforehand either the matters discussed or the degree of serious concern they have caused, the Office Bearers will seek a meeting with Mr. Whitelaw as agreed, ostensibly to discuss the Association's end-1993 nominations for SSPD Council appointments.