WELFARE BOARD TO PREVENT CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
MUNICIPALISATION OF SLAUGHTER HOUSES
ENQUIRY COMMITTEE’S RECOMMENDATIONS

New Delhi, April 4, 1957.

An Animal Welfare Board composed of officials and non-officials, with its counterparts in different States, has been recommended to be set up by the Committee for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals appointed by the Government of India in August 1956. The Committee submitted its report on March 28, 1957.

It was appointed by a Resolution of the then Ministry of Food and Agriculture under the Chairmanship of Shri V. K. Menon. It had as its Members a number of non-officials including Members of Parliament and some officials of the Government of India. Shri Menon resigned from the Chairmanship of the Committee in June 1956 on his appointment as Member of the Union Cabinet. Since then the Committee carried on its work under the Chairmanship of Shri V. B. Gandhi, Member of Parliament.

CREATING HUMAN CONDITIONS

Important among the recommendations of the Committee relate to the creation of humane conditions for animals used for scientific experiments and their gradual elimination for experimental purposes. The Committee has recommended rendering of animals insensible to pain before actual slaughter, the construction of slaughter houses on scientific lines and their municipalisation. It has also suggested legislative ban on animal sacrifices before deities, rigid enforcement of existing game laws in different States, strict regulations for training and exhibition of performing animals in circuses and confinement of animals and birds in municipal markets according to rules. It has pleaded for improving the insanitary conditions prevailing ....
prevailing in Khatale, housing milch animals, reorganisation of zoological gardens to provide natural habitat to animals, improved arrangements for transportation of animals by rail, road and sea and stricter control in the export trade of monkeys. The Committee has also recommended the compulsory licencing of pet dogs and electrocution of stray ones, humane disposal of useless animals through Goaadans and activation of the Societies for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals as active instruments of animal welfare. The Committee has emphasised the need to impart humane education to children as well as adults and the observance of Animal Welfare Week every year. The Committee has also suggested a draft Bill entitled "The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill, 1957". The following are its main recommendations in brief.

WELFARE BOARD

In order to protect animals from being subjected to unnecessary pain and suffering and to promote animal welfare in general, an Animal Welfare Board, consisting of officials as well as non-officials, should be set up at the Centre with counterparts in the States. Such a Board, the Committee thinks, will pay exclusive attention to the problems of animal welfare which have not, hitherto, received the attention they deserve.

In order to ensure that animals are not subject to unnecessary pain or suffering while they are being used for scientific experiments, the report suggests that a Committee of officials as well as non-officials may be constituted by legislation at the Centre. This Committee shall lay down rules which shall be binding on all persons and institutions carrying on experiments on animals so as to ensure, inter alia, that experiments are performed on animals by qualified persons with due care and humanity and, as far as possible, under the influence of some anaesthetic of sufficient power to prevent the animal feeling pain. The Report also adds that special efforts should be directed towards a search for suitable alternatives to animal experimentation in order to reduce progressively and ultimately eliminate the use of animals for purposes of experimentation.

STUNNING ANIMALS

Regarding the cruelties to which animals are subjected during and before actual slaughter, the Committee suggests the prevention....
prevention of undue pain and suffering to animals during slaughter and that killing should be done humanely by stunning animals or by making them insensible to pain by a suitable device before actual slaughter. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Draft Bill which the Committee has suggested seeks to enforce humane methods of slaughter only after ascertaining the opinion of communities in India whose religions prescribe the killing of animals in a certain manner. For the prevention of cruelties inflicted at the pre-slaughter stage arising out of insufficient and irregular supply of food, water and rest and unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in slaughter houses and defective ante-mortem inspection and such other factors, the Committee advises the construction of slaughter houses on scientific lines and the enforcement of adequate veterinary supervision.

MUNICIPALIZATION OF SLAUGHTER HOUSES

The Committee has also recommended municipalization of slaughter houses to be undertaken in convenient stages for the proper endorsement of municipal regulations and for enabling improvements to be made in the general unsatisfactory conditions prevailing at present in them. The Committee has suggested banning by legislation of animal sacrifices before deities.

The existing game laws in various States, the Committee feels, need to be rigidly enforced so as to effectively prevent the cruelties involved in the hunting and shooting of wild animals and birds. The Committee also feels that adequate administrative machinery will have to be set up for this purpose. The game licences, the Committee recommends, should be issued only to those who can produce certificates of proficiencies in handling guns, rifles, etc., and in shooting at moving targets. Every licence should be accompanied by a pamphlet for guidance to the sportsman.

SYSTEM OF REGISTRATION

The Committee further suggests that the training and exhibition of performing animals in circuses should be strictly regulated to prevent their being misused. The Draft Bill suggested by the Committee seeks to control activities of persons desirous ....
desirous of training and exhibiting of performing animals by a
system of registration.

ELIMINATION OF KHATALS

The Committee further suggests that the keeping and confine-
ment of animals and birds in municipal markets should be regulated
by comprehensive rules to be prescribed and enforced by municipali-
ties and it calls for rigid enforcement of conditions prescribing
adequate sizes of cages and baskets, adequacy of space, food, water,
hygiene, sanitation, veterinary aid and other related matters.

Khatala in which milch animals are housed at present under appalling
conditions of congestion and filth, the Committee feels, should be
eliminated and gradually replaced by cattle colonies. Meanwhile
urgent steps should be taken to improve the existing conditions in
Khatala which should be licensed and controlled by municipalities.

Zoological gardens in India, according to the Committee also need to
be reorganised on scientific lines so as to provide a natural
habitat to animals.

RAILWAY REGULATIONS

In order to improve transit facilities by way of providing
adequate and timely food, water, rest and other basic amenities for
animals travelling by rail, road and sea, the Committee feels it
necessary that the existing rules and regulations made by railways
should be rigorously enforced. Further arrangements should be made
to transport animals in wagons especially constructed for the purpose
and on road also animals should be transported only in specially
designed vehicles. It suggests the construction of wells or small
tanks at small distances on roads by local bodies so that animals can
get water. The cartage of animals and birds in unnatural positions,
according to it, should be prohibited. There is also need to for-
mulate rules to regulate loading, unloading and transportation of
animals by ship as most of the animals exported from India are
transported by ship.

CONDITIONS FOR EXPORT

Though the Committee is convinced that monkeys exported from
India are for scientific and medical research and for the production
of.............
of medicines, unless export, it feels, should be allowed only if experiments on them in the importing countries are performed under conditions similar to those prescribed by the Committee for experimentation on animals in India. The Government, according to it, should also exercise stricter control at the various stages of export trade in monkeys, so that humane treatment could be effectively ensured to them during their catching, transportation to the port of despatch and their onward air journey. The Committee prefers the method of electrocution to other methods employed at present for destroying stray dogs as it causes instantaneous death and it strongly recommends its early introduction by local bodies. The licensing of dogs, it further suggests, should be made obligatory for their owners as this can serve as an effective check on the growth of stray-dogs.

**SHELTER FOR USELESS ANIMALS**

For the humane disposal of old, decrepit and useless animals in India, the Committee suggests that Gosadans can serve an additional purpose; if they accept other old and useless animals besides cattle. If this course is not feasible, institutions may be established where, under Government auspices or privately, useless and decrepit animals other than cattle may be provided shelter. The Committee also suggests encouragement to be given to pinjrapoles which admit all kinds of animals, including cattle.

In order to improve the working as well as the constitution of the existing societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals the Committee suggests their thorough reorientation in order to make them active instruments of animal welfare. These societies, it feels, should be manned by sincere and honest persons actively interested in the welfare of animals and the Government should be represented on the executive and managing committees of these societies to improve their administration. It also suggests that these societies should progressively place greater emphasis on the positive aspect of their animal welfare programme instead of rely chiefly, as at present, on the prosecution of cases of cruelty to animals for their existence.

Contd.....P.6.
ENDURING SOLUTION

The Committee feels strongly that an enduring solution of the problem of prevention of cruelty to animals lies in inculcating love for animals among children as well as adults. This is the only means by which social conscience can be aroused to the need for treating animals with love, kindness and compassion. The programme of humane education according to it, will require education of children in schools through proper text books up to the matriculation standard supplemented by systematic publicity and propaganda. The observance of 'Animal Welfare Week' every year throughout the country may also serve a very useful purpose, it suggests.

A comprehensive bill entitled "The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill, 1959" has been appended to the Report of the Committee which if enacted, the Committee feels, will give effect to all those recommendations which require legislative implementation. The provisions of this Bill cover a wider ground than those of the existing Central Acts on the subject, i.e., "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1890". The Bill if enacted will supercede the present Act.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Besides going into the whole question of prevention of cruelty to animals, important among the terms of reference of the Committee related to examining the present legislation on the subject and the practical and administrative difficulties in the implementation of that legislation. The Committee was also asked to examine corresponding legislation in other civilized countries and to examine and define clearly the word 'animal' for the purpose of this legislation. Finally the Committee was asked to suggest such recommendations as it thinks necessary, having due regard to...
regard to the requirements of scientific research and medical and veterinary treatment, the nutritional and non-vegetarian dietary requirements of the population, the most modern practices for the slaughter of animals, the game and wild life legislation in various civilized countries, the conditions governing the import and export of animals, the requirements of scientific and nature study in so far as confinement of animals is concerned and the requirements of public entertainment in so far as exhibition and performances of animals are concerned.

800 WITNESSES EXAMINED

The Committee issued a comprehensive questionnaire to more than 1,500 organisations and individuals in India and abroad. The response to the questionnaire was fairly satisfactory. It also collected a large volume of oral evidence by touring different parts of the country. It examined over 800 witnesses representing different shades of opinion at different places visited by it, namely, Madras, Kurnool, Hyderabad, Patna, Calcutta, Bombay, Poona, Amritsar, Delhi, Bareilley, Lucknow, Jodhpur and Mysore. At these places the Committee also took the opportunity to visit various institutions which were of interest to it from the point of view of its enquiry, e.g., S.P.C.A.'s, gaushalas, pinjrapoles, medical colleges, research institutions, slaughterhouses, moos, etc. It held in all 17 meetings.