

by the police in order to deter riders from modifying the exhaust systems of their machines.

2. In a large number of opinions on technical barriers to trade, the Committee has urged 'total' alignment. It reaffirms this view and can accept 'optional harmonization' only if it is temporary. The Committee calls upon the Commission to propose a deadline for the introduction of 'total harmonization'.

3. The Committee does not wish to go into the technical details of the permissible sound levels for the various categories of motor cycles. It would merely point out that the proposed levels have not received the unanimous approval of experts. At all

events, it is of prime importance that account be taken of the economic situation of the motor cycle manufacturing industry, which is currently facing serious difficulties as a result of competition from countries outside the Community. This being the case, the Committee questions the wisdom of imposing on the industry such severe tests (which are to become even more rigorous as from 1 October 1980) and maximum sound levels which may make it necessary to modify the design of the engine and other components of motor cycles.

4. The Committee trusts that the test method which is adopted will take into account the results of tests in third gear.

Done at Brussels, 30 June 1976.

*The Chairman
of the Economic and Social Committee*

Henri CANONGE

Opinion on the proposal for a Council Decision concluding the European Convention on the protection of farm animals

The text referred to the Committee has been published in Official Journal No C 133 of 14 June 1976, page 6.

A. LEGAL BASIS FOR THE OPINION

On 10 May 1976 the Council referred the abovementioned proposal to the Economic and Social Committee in accordance with Articles 47 and 198 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community.

B. OPINION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Economic and Social Committee prepared its opinion on the above matter at its 140th plenary session, held in Brussels on 30 June and 1 July 1976.

The full text of the opinion is as follows:

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Articles 47 and 198 thereof,

Having regard to the request for an opinion made by the Council of the European Communities on 10 May 1976,

Having regard to the decision taken by its Bureau on 13 May 1976, instructing the Section for

Agriculture to prepare the Committee's work on the matter,

Having regard to the oral report made by the rapporteur, Mrs Evans,

Having regard to the opinion issued by the Section for Agriculture at its meeting on 3 June 1976,

Having regard to the discussions at its 140th plenary session held on 30 June and 1 July 1976 (meeting of 30 June 1976),

HAS UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING OPINION:

The Committee approves the Commission proposal, subject to the comments set out below.

1. General comments

1.1. The Committee notes that the Convention is held in very general terms and that the content and form of the final recommendations are left to the Standing Committee. The Committee, therefore, feels that the Convention must secure adequate representation or consultation of the interested non-governmental bodies in connection with the work of the Standing Committee.

1.2. The Committee draws attention to the fact that in some Member States' legislation may be more effective in ensuring adequate provision for protection of animals kept for farming purposes and emphasizes that the approval in principle of the provisions outlined in the Convention should not prejudice efforts to improve intra-Community and national standards.

1.3. The Committee also sees a need for the Community, via its membership of the Standing Committee, to initiate action to improve the minimum provisions under the Convention.

2. Specific comments

2.1. Article 3, Article 4 (paragraphs 1 and 2) and Article 5

The Committee regrets that the present formulation of these Articles seems to imply an almost exclusive dependence on established experience and scientific knowledge in determining the standard of feeding and housing of the animals. The Committee therefore recommends that the Standing Committee should take into consideration other relevant factors.

2.2. Articles 4, 6 and 7

The Committee requests that the phrase 'unnecessary suffering' be interpreted as 'avoidable suffering'.

2.3. Article 6

The Committee requests that the English translation be aligned with the French text by adding the word 'it' after the word 'cause'.

2.4. Article 7

The Committee is of the opinion that animals kept in intensive stock farming systems should be inspected at least once during every 12-hour period and not daily as proposed in the Convention.

2.5. Article 9 (2)

In line with what has been said above under 2.1. and in order to avoid misunderstandings the word 'follow' should be interpreted as 'take into consideration'.

2.6. Article 12

The Committee insists that it be included among the bodies to be consulted under this Article.

Done at Brussels, 30 June 1976.

*The Chairman
of the Economic and Social Committee*

Henri CANONGE