

## Impact (1964–1968)

Appearing on March 9, 1964—one day after the second *Observer* article—<sup>1</sup> *Animal Machines* achieved an impact beyond anything Ruth Harrison could have expected. The book not only mobilised protest against new forms of intensive farming but also opened the door for a sustained public and scientific debate about what good welfare actually was. Convened in response to *Animal Machines*, the so-called Brambell Committee proposed concrete welfare improvements. Its report also contained an important annexe by ethologist William H. Thorpe, which set out five essential freedoms for farm animals. While the Thorpe annexe marked a significant step towards defining basic constituents of welfare, resulting hopes for more stringent legal standards proved premature. Despite sustained pressure for new statutory regulations by a coalition of well-known scientists and campaigners, the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) and industry representatives successfully pushed for a legal framework based on limited statutory standards and loose voluntary codes. Defining and reviewing these codes would be the task of a new Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (FAWAC). Having come to appreciate the power of closed-door official politics, Harrison was determined to gain entrance to the corporatist world of Whitehall advisory committees. This was no easy task. Despite Harrison's determination, the years after 1964 would see her struggle to overcome

<sup>1</sup>TNA MAF 260/351 Minute: JA Barrah to Mr Hensley (25.02.1964).

sexist stereotypes and use her status as a charismatic outsider to successfully network in activist, scientific, and policy circles. Harrison's nomination to FAWAC in 1967 was a major success and would allow her to maintain influence within the rapidly expanding arena of animal welfare politics.