

Mr. BENNETT: One is a commission responsible for the administration of the act, and the other is a committee discharging the duties of a critic and endeavouring to assist the commission in the operation of the statute. Such a committee can do a great deal. I know whereof I speak, for I have seen it in actual practice—good will; the desire to help; the desire to make something effective; the desire to offer criticism, not in any carping spirit for the purpose of destroying, but with a view to enabling the thing to be done better than it has been done. Who will deny the value of such a committee?

The selection of this group of men and women is a grave responsibility. Wherein the commission and the committee differ is that in the one case you have responsibility for administration; in the other you have responsibility for observation, analysis, and criticism, for the purpose of promoting the administrative functions and powers of the commission, and above all to see that this fund, which after all is a great national trust fund, is administered so as to prevent it becoming insolvent and thereby bringing sorrow to those who should benefit from it. There is a very clear distinction between the two, and I think upon reflection the hon. gentleman will agree that that is so. A voluntary committee of able men and women is very desirable in checking over the administration of any of the functions of a commission if with good will they desire to assist them in attaining the ends and objects sought by the statute.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): In England one member of the advisory committee must be a woman. Has the Prime Minister given consideration to that?

Mr. BENNETT: I have, and the hon. gentleman may have noticed that I twice, in speaking of the committee, said able men and women.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): There is nothing in this act to make the selection of a woman compulsory.

Mr. BENNETT: If it is thought desirable, that can be done, but I contemplate that one of the members of the committee shall be a woman. It must be remembered that the situation is somewhat different in Great Britain from what it is here, but a provision can be inserted in the measure if it is thought desirable.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Far be it from me to deprive the Prime Minister, the government or the commission of the opportunity of salutary and helpful advice. Personally I am not particularly interested in this clause. I have no objection to it, but it is an extraordinary clause, almost as extraordinary as the speech the Prime Minister has just made about it. If there should be an advisory committee in the case of this commission, why not in the case of the radio commission, which also expends a very large sum of money? Why not in the case of the railway commission? Why not in the case of the civil service commission, involving as it does the welfare of human beings and their appointment to office? Why stop at one commission? The argument made by the Prime Minister in an attempt to make this appear to be similar to the British provision does not upon examination hold water, because everything that this new statutory committee in England has to do now falls within the ambit of the functions of the commission to be appointed under this act. In England they advise the minister, and the minister surely needs advice in the administration of a scheme of this magnitude. If this bill set up only a minister, then certainly there could be no argument against providing an advisory committee to assist him in carrying on his functions. But this advisory committee which the Prime Minister proposes, and the statutory committee in England, are two very different things indeed. This advisory committee is to protect the fund and see that it is not invaded, that sums are not overspent and all the rest of it. And yet we have on the preceding page the provision for an investment committee. While the investment committee's powers under that section would seem to be for the purpose of designating the type of investment for which the fund may be used, surely its powers might properly be enlarged by giving them the right to investigate from time to time the condition of the fund. While I have no objection to the appointment of the advisory committee—not the slightest—on the other hand, if I were on the commission or if I were chairman of the commission, I should feel that the Prime Minister was hardly paying me a very high compliment. There are doubtless many men who would be glad to accept a position on the commission, but anyone who does so now knows that this body of courteous and kindly persons will investigate the daily operations of the commission; otherwise of what value is it if this body is not to watch the operations from day to day? It is a very pleasant