

publicity a powerful weapon to enforce obedience to the law. But here we are proposing to do this:

—to take such steps with the approval of the minister to ensure such publicity as in the opinion of the commission may be necessary to enable it effectively to discharge its powers and duties.

Mr. ROGERS: "As in the opinion of the commission."

Mr. BENNETT: But "with the approval of the minister." It does not make any difference what they think.

Mr. ROGERS: It does.

Mr. BENNETT: If the minister does not give his approval, that is the end of the matter.

Mr. ROGERS: The two must meet.

Mr. BENNETT: The two must meet. Exactly. That is the answer, and if the minister says no, there is nothing doing. That is the end of the matter; there is no publicity. Is that a proper provision to put into a statute? Is that a proper provision to put into the hands of one man, a politician—I use the word in the proper sense—a politically minded man, representing the government of the day, that he shall have power to say whether the offence which company A has been guilty of shall be punished by publicity or not. The officers of the company may be friends of his, and his approval must be given. That is the difficulty I see.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I am not surprised that my right hon. friend is suspicious concerning matters of publicity—

Mr. BENNETT: It is not a question of suspicion.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: —because he was responsible for much of it during his term of office through the Department of Trade and Commerce and other departments of government. May I dismiss from his mind at once the thought that there is any intention on the part of the government of this power being exercised as a political weapon. In fact, the purpose of inserting the phrase, "with the approval of the minister" was to ensure to the full the doctrine of ministerial responsibility, which the leader of the opposition has been saying we should be very careful to maintain.

Mr. BENNETT: You cannot escape it anyway.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I was just going to say that I hope it will relieve my right hon. friend's mind if we take out the words "with the approval of the minister" so that the paragraph will read:

—to take such steps to ensure such publicity as in the opinion of the commission may be necessary to enable it effectively to discharge its powers and duties.

I move accordingly, Mr. Chairman.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. BENNETT: I regret to find the Prime Minister putting this on the basis of my feelings being affected one way or the other. My objection is not on that ground at all, but on high public grounds. It is not a matter of what I think. I am merely suggesting that this places a political power in the hands of the minister. There is another point which now arises out of that amendment. Taking out those words gives the commission a tremendous power of punishment. It is a sanction placed in the hands of seven men. It therefore becomes all-important to see, in selecting these men, that they should be of a type and class that will command public confidence in the largest and best sense because they are given the power of applying sanctions in every sense of the word, exactly the same situation as developed recently in the League of Nations. If in the opinion of these seven men any companies with which they have to deal have not shown that regard for their views as expressed within the law, they can subject the companies to the sanction of publicity, and that enforces the view which I have endeavoured to point out, that everything depends upon the personnel of this commission which the government are clothing with all these powers.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: What was in the mind of my colleagues and myself when we considered this paragraph was the most effective way of meeting practices in the nature of rackets, frauds and the like, which obviously it is in the public interest to have exposed. This body should have the power to give publicity to these matters in order to terminate abuses of the sort.

Mr. CAMERON (Cape Breton): I am very sorry to see this amendment carried as I am strongly in favour of ministerial responsibility. I think the provision as to publicity should be under the control of the minister.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The ministerial responsibility will still be there; it was doubly in evidence with the use of these additional words.