

The had, before the  
fifth republic, become  
the



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The same is true of the Senate in the United States. The original object for creating the Senate, apart from its legislative functions, was to serve as an advisory council to the President.

Although this object could not be realised, yet its various committees are a powerful check on and aid to the powers of the President. The Standing Committees in the Continental countries of Europe not only advise, but also control the administrative departments of government. The Commissions in France, which were originally intended to be simple organs of criticism and suggestion, had, before the Fifth Republic, become the engines of control of the executive. They went even so far as to dominate the administrative departments of the government, and the vigour and independence of the great Commissions were, indeed, the main reasons for the weak parliamentary position occupied by the cabinet in France.

But all such committees in France are constitutional instruments. The combination of executive work and advice, however, can best be done extra-constitutionally by executive action. The best illustration of such committees is the Committee of Defence and the Economic Advisory Council in Britain. The former, originally known as committee of Imperial Defence, is charged with investigation, reporting and recommending on all questions of defence. The Economic Council is charged with the duty of studying and reporting to the cabinet on commercial, industrial, and other economic problems of general interest. Equally important is the rise of advisory committees attached to particular departments. The right of the departmental heads to consult informally individuals or groups outside the public service had existed in Britain for generations past. As far back as 1899, provision for

departmental advisory committees composed of non-governmental heads began to be made, for example, Board of Education and Board of Trade.

During World War I a large number of such committees were provided by executive orders. The Machinery of Government Committee warmly endorsed the advisory committee plan so long as the advisory bodies were not permitted to impair the responsibility of Ministers to Parliament. The general testimony is that departmental advisory committees are rendering valuable service not only by bringing to the departments information and advice based on first-hand knowledge, but also “ by inspiring greater public confidence in administrative authorities as being guided by such information and advice rather than by sheer theory of bureaucratic Presupposition. The Advisory Committees in Britain and India have no power to direct or control administrative work or to dictate policy. The ultimate decision is entirely that of the departmental head. But he always decides after he has taken the responsible experts into confidence and heard their point of view. The business of the committees is solely to discuss and advise. The Government of India, in pursuance of the Cabinet decision of July 1954, constituted a number of informal consultative committees of members of Parliament.

They have been formed to enable members to have a glimpse into the working of government departments or Ministries. Each Committee consists of about thirty members. These informal committees do not have any statutory functions or responsibilities. Nothing will be referred to them for decision. It would be for the Minister concerned to determine what to discuss in these committees and what to divulge to them.

Quite a sizable number of Advisory Committees were attached to the machinery of the Central Government in 1962, and since then some new committees have been set up, the more important being: Board of Trade, Advisory Committee on Economic Policy, National Advisory Council, National Defence Council, and Citizen's Central Council. The number and nomenclature of some of the Committees have since changed as a result of organization and reorganization of the Ministries. The five Zonal Councils are also advisory bodies intended to bring about better cooperation and coordination between the States included in each Zone.