

serve the public. The first power given to the Chairman by the statute is to "make inquiries into matters he deems important for Conference consideration, including matters proposed by persons inside or outside the Federal Government."

I regard this statutory directive as a specific authorization for the Chairman and the Conference to investigate particular regulatory processes and procedures whenever there is indication from any source that such particular processes and procedures are trouble spots. This indication may arise from a series of citizens' complaints, but could, of course, be manifested in a single complaint.

I do stress, however, that I do not envisage the Administrative Conference or the Office of the Chairman handling individual complaints on a substantive basis—that is, to determine the correctness or incorrectness of a particular action on the merits. But I do see the use of citizens' complaints as a means of pinpointing troublesome areas that the Conference might wish to investigate.

Senator LONG. May I interrupt you right there?

Mr. JERRE WILLIAMS. Yes.

Senator LONG. That would be in this area where the ombudsman concept might be of some assistance in handling individual complaints.

Mr. JERRE WILLIAMS. That is correct. The statutory charge of the Administrative Conference is limited to procedures only, and is not, therefore, concerned with the substance of any particular complain.

Senator LONG. You mentioned a moment ago one of the problems we have considered—and that is the size of the Federal Government. But Mr. Fensterwald just pointed out to me that Great Britain, with a population of approximately 50 million, has just installed an ombudsman system in their government.

Mr. JERRE WILLIAMS. Yes, they have.

Senator LONG. So we will watch that with interest to see how they get along.

Mr. JERRE WILLIAMS. It is really exciting for us to know that Great Britain has installed such a system and to watch how it operates there.

For the Administrative Conference, I do see the use of citizens' complaints as a means of pinpointing trouble in some areas that the Conference might wish to investigate. From the Conference may then come remedial procedural recommendations for improvements which will redound to the advantage not just to the complainant but to all citizens involved in those regulatory programs.

I might add that this concept of the function of the Administrative Conference as it relates to individual citizen complaints seems to be in line with that of Prof. Walter Gellhorn of Columbia, who is undoubtedly, as I am sure you know, one of the leading experts in the United States on ombudsmen and similar devices for resolving citizen's complaints against governmental action. In his book, "When Americans Complain," he sets forth a role of the Administrative Conference similar to what I have just outlined and I quote:

The Administrative Conference of the United States is particularly well suited, in structure and in concept, to analyze methodological problems and prescribe their solution; if the Conference functions as it should, complaints should become less voluminous.