

ORGANIZATION

Six members of the full Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the Senate are, as you know, members of the Commission, appointed by the President of the Senate, with three from the minority side and three from the majority; likewise, three Republicans and three Democrats from the House Interior Committee, appointed by the Speaker, serve on the Commission; six members are appointed by the President of the United States from outside the Federal Government; and those 18 appointed members elect a 19th member who serves as Chairman. I am pleased and honored to have been chosen unanimously as Chairman when the Commission organized on July 14, 1965, and I continue to serve in that capacity. A Presidential appointee, H. Byron Mock, was named Vice Chairman by a unanimous vote.

You will also recall that there is an Advisory Council, presently comprised of 33 persons—eight designated by the heads of those departments and agencies of Government concerned with the management and disposition of the public lands, and 25 members chosen by the Commission as being—quoting from the law—“representative of the various major citizens’ groups interested in problems relating to the retention, management, and disposition of the public lands.” In addition, each of the 50 Governors has designated a representative to work with us.

Last, but not least, in the working structure of the Commission is the staff headed by Director Milton A. Pearl—which I head, referring to myself as the speaker—who was chosen by unanimous vote of the Commission at its organization meeting.

We have furnished, for your information, a complete list of membership of the Commission, Advisory Council, Governors’ Representatives group, and the staff.

At the outset, we adopted the policy, which we think is realistic, of accomplishing most of our substantive work under contract or through the use of consultants. We dedicated ourselves to the proposition that we would hire and retain as small a regular staff as possible. Toward this end, the first thing that we did was to enter into an arrangement with the General Services Administration for it to perform most of our housekeeping tasks and thereby limit our personnel engaged in such endeavors. Through the General Services Administration, we also obtained office space downtown at 1730 K Street N.W., where we would be delighted to receive any members of this committee any time you, Mr. Chairman, or any of the other members find it convenient to do so. Incidentally, the space involved is leased space, and the rental, up until June 30, 1967, had to be paid from our appropriation and charged against the ceiling of our appropriations just as have been the tools necessary for the job, such as lawbooks, equipment, and supplies.

The record should also show that, although the Commission organized in July 1965, it was not until September 1, 1965, that adequate space was available for the initiation of staff work, and it was not until January 1966 that the nucleus of the professional staff was on board. I will not discuss staff personnel, but should you, Mr. Chairman, desire additional information, Director Pearl will be able to furnish it.