the money; but now we are shifting a little bit, as indicated in the Chairman's statement, and say that if we feel around November 15 reasonably certain that we will be able to get the money, we will then go out with requests for proposals for a couple or three of our studies and have the proposals come in and the contract would not have to be awarded until after the money is received.

So the answer to the question still is, "Yes." We can accommodate our program in the manner we indicated before.

Senator CHURCH. Well, I understand your concern about followthrough, but couldn't you simply put the bidders on notice of the situation and let them decide accordingly whether or not they want to submit bids?

In other words, the delays that have been involved here have been very considerable and, as you know, there is an old saying that old soldiers never die, and there is some feeling up here in the Congress that commissions never die, even temporary ones, and like a temporary building—you know there is nothing more permanent in life than a temporary building—can go on forever.

Now we are considering the extension of time for this Commission. I know that some members of this committee have expressed belief that this is just the first of a series of requests, and I should think it would be very much in the interests of the Commission to look for ways to cut the time requirements here.

Even if you can't be positively assured now of the followthrough, I should think that putting the bidders on notice of the situation and leaving it up to them as to whether or not in those circumstances they want to come forward with a bid would certainly be fully fair.

Mr. PEARL. Let me comment in answer to that, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, we have the greatest concern—and when I say "we," the Chairman and other members of the Commission, as well as I myself—that the Commission can wind up its job at a date certain and not go beyond it. That is why we were very careful in trying to estimate what that time limit should be and stating the time in the legislative proposal before you as our best estimate of when it can be done, and we intend to stick to that date.

The date that was in the existing law, in the original legislation, was one that was made up on a basis of really looking into a crystal ball and making an educated guess but, by the same token, not knowing the situation. The estimate you have today is one that is based on experience. We think it can be met.

Secondly, our contract program to date has not suffered. We have not slowed down the contract program. As we indicated earlier, we have bids in now on the forage study that are being evaluated. We have requests out for the fish and wildlife study, and those will be coming in to be awarded.

We are trying to expedite our study on the Outer Continental Shelf to get it out for proposals even before November 15 by reprograming of money if necessary, and then the rest of our schedule would pick up from there.

Up until now, the contract program has not been stymied in any way by a lack of dollars. We have considered the possibility of going out without the money or without the reasonable knowledge that we would get the money and ask bidders if they would submit proposals and we came to the conclusion that we should not do that because the