

THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY COMMISSION IN POLICY MAKING: A COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

(ABSTRACT)

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Since President Theodore Roosevelt created his first Commission on Public Land in 1903, the Presidential Advisory Commission system has been widely used by the following presidents for the policy initiative and formation. Besides functioning as independent experts for the president's guidance, the Commission's members satisfy the public need as well. However, some scholars argue that the setting up of the Commission is just a presidential political cloak for evading pressures from the public and other sources. They argue that presidents don't respond effectively to the recommendations and findings made by the Commissions. Professor Thomas R. Wolanin of the University of Wisconsin—Madison conducted an investigation to examine presidential responses from Truman to Nixon and found that ninety-nine major Commissions had been appointed and that the commissions in general have enjoyed a good measure of success in having their recommendations supported by the presidents and adopted as government policy. Using the materials surveyed by Professor Wolanin, the author indicates in this article that presidential responses to 99

commissions in this period have been of four types, namely, "statement" (a public endorsement of the Commission's report out no further action); "message" (a recommendation to Congress); "administrative actions"; and "legislation." The author concluded that the Presidential Advisory Commission system will be used continuously as a policy making machinery in the future.