March-05

HELPING THE PHOENIX RISE

On Good Friday, March 27, 1964, the evening news seemed to show something out of science-fiction taking place in Alaska. The earth appeared to be alive as it heaved and churned, gobbling up houses in Anchorage. A place I had never heard of, Seward, was on fire. The screen showed large fishing boats being swept into the heart of the Kodiak business district. Another name that was new to me, Valdez, was said to have been destroyed by this powerful earthquake that dominated the television screen that night. People were killed by the resulting tidal wave as far away as Crescent City, California.

This riveting television image turned out to be all too real. This strongest earthquake ever recorded in North America measured 9.2 on the Richter scale and lasted nearly four agonizing minutes. The combination was devastating. I recall a fleeting sense of sympathy for whoever would have to deal with the daunting task of recovery.

The next several days produced a blur of stories about the damage and the difficulties being encountered in bringing order out of chaos. Individual examples of heroism began to emerge, but so did concerns about the capacity of federal, state, and local agencies to cope with the extent of devastation and begin the rebuilding. I did not follow these reports very carefully until Glenn Seaborg, AEC Chairman, asked me to meet with him and Senator Anderson about a very important matter.[1] I thought it probably had to do with some nuclear safety matter, or perhaps an Admiral Rickover issue, controversial areas in which I had become heavily involved. Not so.

Senator Anderson said it had become clear that none of the three levels of government were then equipped to lead the urgent rebuilding of Alaska. It was feared that most of the population would have to abandon the state and move to the lower 48 before the Fall freezing weather for lack of housing, utilities, and a sustaining economy. Further, in those pre-oil days, the new state had little in the way of money to finance rebuilding. The President, Anderson continued, had asked him to chair a cabinet-level commission to give direction to the rebuilding[2]. This would be a very complex undertaking with an unprecedented sense of urgency, requiring the involvement of the very best talent the nation had to offer and the skill to use highly innovative approaches to construction and economic planning. He stressed his concern about skyrocketing inflation, a persistent problem in Alaska that could quickly spiral out of control with the influx of reconstruction pressures. There was a woeful lack of disaster insurance in Alaska. He mentioned the difficulties in transporting reconstruction equipment to far-away Alaska, and the

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[1] At the time, I was Assistant General Manager of the AEC, the third ranking operating official.

[2] President Johnson issued Executive Order 11150 on April 2 establishing the Federal Reconstruction and Development Planning Commission for Alaska.

need to avoid rebuilding in unsafe areas. He raced through these challenges, as well as others, so fast I had difficulty grasping them all, still not having the faintest idea what all this had to do with me.

Then the bombshell. Anderson said that he and President Johnson believed I would be an excellent choice to serve as Executive Director of the rebuilding effort, to be appointed by the President. I would report jointly to the senator and the President. I was astonished because the President did not know me. I later learned that Anderson had floated my name because of the trouble shooting reputation I had developed at AEC, and Harold Seidman at OMB had strongly supported my appointment.[3] It was clear that I was not really being asked whether I would serve; rejecting the appointment was not an option. Stammering an acceptance, I really had no idea what I was getting into, but, somewhat dazed, I sensed it would be a unique experience. Also, the prospect of an exciting challenge had considerable appeal.

Organizing the Commission

The organization of the Reconstruction and Development Planning Commission for Alaska defied conventional wisdom. It was not something I would have recommended, nor would the Bureau of the Budget[4] have done so. Essentially, Johnson reconstituted much of his cabinet as the Commission, chaired by Senator Anderson. Because, as a Senator, Anderson could not give direction to executive branch agencies, the structure called for an executive director who would represent the President in seeing that agencies moved ahead rapidly within the policies formulated by the Commission. The executive director would have the unenviable role of serving two powerful and demanding men at the same time. That person was to be me.

In theory, few would expect Johnson's unconventional arrangement to work well, and I was very dubious, but in no position to argue at that point. In addition to the challenge of making this unprecedented structure work, there were two other major complications.

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[3] Anderson knew me quite well as the result of my having served in the delicate role of liaison between him and Lewis Strauss in their fierce battle over the Strauss confirmation in which Anderson had successfully blocked Strauss from becoming Secretary of Commerce.

[4] The Bureau of the Budget had responsibility for providing management and organization leadership in the executive branch on behalf of the president. It had advised the president that the existing Office of Emergency Management could not cope with a disaster of this magnitude and recommended a special organization that had the stature to call upon the full resources of the government for both rebuilding and economic planning for the future. This particular arrangement, the unique meshing of a powerful senator with cabinet departments, however, was the personal brainchild of Lyndon Johnson who was not known for understanding management and organization. My role of executive director, serving both Anderson and the president was intended to allay constitutional questions. It is the only time in our history that a combination executive-legislative structure has been used for operational purposes.

First, in Alaska most outside construction stops when the heavy freezes arrive in the fall, usually by early November. This was an extremely short time to plan and execute the reconstruction.

The second major complication was an Executive Order in which Johnson set forth a new policy that linked our reconstruction work with economic and resource development.[5] Whereas disaster rebuilding had heretofore simply rebuilt what had existed before the disaster, this reconstruction was to be done in ways that would help the future development of Alaska, a more complex, but far more effective approach to recovery. Legislation would be sought, for example, to double the size of small boat harbors that were so crucial to their fishing industry. Highways were to be rebuilt according to modern standards rather than those in place when they were built.

On April 7 the Commission held its first, and by far the most important, meeting. It was agreed that Anderson would appoint a Construction Consultant Committee. I was authorized to establish nine interagency task forces to make studies and prepare action recommendations in various subject areas that will be discussed later I was also authorized to establish a field committee in Alaska that turned out to have considerable significance for the later field organization of federal domestic departments that was an important initiative of the Nixon Administration's New Federalism. Over half the cabinet members, including the Secretary of Defense, were named as members of the Commission by Johnson's Executive Order, and as the work progressed, every department and most independent agencies in the government became involved. Anderson, with the support of the Bureau of the Budget, forcefully impressed on the agencies the urgency with which the President expected each of them to act and the necessity for close cooperation. He then surprised me by telling the Commissioners that in my work with the departments and the state of Alaska, I would be speaking for both him and the President, greatly strengthening my hand in view of my modest rank and the fact that I had no legal authority to direct anything.

I decided to establish a minimum number of staff, something Anderson probably would have insisted on had I not done so. My only full time staff consisted of a deputy and two secretaries. However, two colonels from the Corps of Engineers and a third colonel Anderson had selected from the Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee were assigned to me nearly full time. Nineteen others were also designated as staff, though they spent the bulk of their time in their home agencies from which they were detailed..

Twenty-four hours later, I was immersed in the task of selecting these detailees, establishing task forces, and gathering information on the basic roles and responsibilities of the various agencies that would be involved in the rebuilding effort. The Office of Emergency Management was already active in Alaska, helping with the emergency relief measures of providing food, temporary housing, and

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[5] The economy of pre-oil Alaska was very fragile, even without the earthquake devastation.

medical attention. The Commission was not involved in these initial measures, providing us about ten days to fully organize our inter-agency, inter-governmental machinery. Over the next several weeks, the Construction Consulting Committee and members of the task forces were in Alaska making initial surveys of damage and highly preliminary estimates of priority work to be done.

Off to Alaska

Senator Anderson, with me and his able assistant, Frank DiLuzio, in tow, arrived in Anchorage April 26 to review these highly preliminary findings and meet with key state and local officials. We landed amid great local excitement and anticipation. No doubt most of the Alaskans expected a generous outpouring of federal money through the "Anderson" Commission. Earlier Senator Gruening had greeted the announcement of my appointment with the words, " I hope his full name is 'Red" not "Black" Ink. It turned out that Anderson stressed that he and the President were determined to follow a business-like approach by supporting only what was truly needed after professional analyses. Initial disappointment of Alaskans over his comments about fiscal restraint did not prevent their enthusiastic embrace of the Commission they regarded as the savior of Alaska.

After Anderson returned to Washington the next day, DiLuzio and I remained to assess the task that lay ahead. What we learned was disturbing to say the least. No engineer in either the government or the private sector believed it was possible to complete enough design and construction of public facilities to enable roughly two-thirds of the Alaskan residents to remain in the state during the harsh coming winter. The more the engineers were learning about the damage, the greater the rebuilding challenge became. Severe earthquakes present a far more complex set of challenges than other disasters such as hurricanes. Some of the earthquake damage is not clearly visible, and many of the reconstruction decisions are affected by changed underground conditions that require extensive studies to fully understand.

Geologists were beginning to realize that some 64,000 square miles of Alaskan territory rose or sunk at least 5 feet; one island rose about 30 feet. As a result, small boat harbors were either made too shallow to admit fishing boats on which much of the Alaskan economy depended or they had dropped to the point that breakwaters were now submerged and could not protect boats from rough weather. Combined with the destruction of many boats and the damage done to processing plants, the vital fishing industry virtually came to a halt.

Much damage resulted from shifts in the Bootlegger Cove clay that underlay the surface ground in a number of areas. When that clay is saturated it becomes slick and the continuous four-minute action of this earthquake caused surface layers to move, often sliding toward the water carrying with it whatever structures they bore. In fact, whole blocks of houses in the Turnigan Arm community of Anchorage slid into the bay, and the Seward terminus of the Alaskan railroad disappeared into the

sea. It was not going to be easy to determine where rebuilding could take place safely without endangering lives in the event of a future earthquake.

In areas hit hardest by ground movement, water and sewer lines were not only broken, but long portions were virtually pulverized. In many areas, particularly Anchorage, property lines had shifted and numerous questions would arose with respect to who owned the land required for the replacement of public facilities.

Against this grim background, I spent the day after Anderson's departure from Anchorage meeting with state and local officials and setting up our federal field committee. I simply designated as a member the senior person from each federal agency serving on the Commission that had a significant presence in Alaska. This field committee had no authority as an organization, relying instead on whatever authority the members had in their agency position. Before I left Washington, however, I had asked each agency to delegate new authority to their field representative, actions that several agencies deferred until I returned to Washington and could provide a clearer description of the need for decentralization and a better picture of how the field committee would function. I was extremely fortunate in the fact that the governor of Alaska, Bill Eagan, appointed a former president of Ozark Airlines, Joe Fitzgerald, as the state liaison with me. Joe was more than liaison; he was a terrific partner.

Community Survival in the Balance

On our third day in Anchorage, Joe and I accompanied Governor Eagan through the snow to the airport for a flight to the Governor's devastated hometown, Valdez, to see how we might find a way to help it come back to life. The memorable flight ended in tragedy, but turned out to have a silver lining.

As soon as we took off, the pilot informed us that blizzard conditions were worsening in the uninhabitable rugged mountain area between Anchorage and Valdez, creating very hazardous conditions. Eagan, a former bush pilot, was fearless and most anxious for me to see the damage so I could arrange for federal assistance. He also thought my visit would help build town morale which was in bad shape. After a survey of the town, we were to meet with the town council to discuss rebuilding. Turning the plane back to Anchorage was unthinkable to Eagan despite the obvious danger.

As we threaded our way through mountain sharp peaks and narrow glacial rivers of ice, the snow was blinding much of the time. Wind and air currents buffeted the plane to the point I marveled that the pilot could maintain control of the plane. Adding to the natural forces, a jeep was chained inside the plane, and the different thrusts of the plane caused it to lurch at its chains, first in one direction and then another. At times we grasped rungs on the plane walls to climb up above the jeep in case it broke loose. Probably a futile maneuver, because such an event would have

broken the fuselage of the plane, dooming the flight in that remote mountainous terrain.

As we finally approached Valdez, through the snow we caught glimpses of structural wreckage, but could not see an airport. After circling the town, we saw what was little more than a dirt airstrip near the water that was crowded between small buildings and a cliff that was scarcely visible through the swirling snow. Unsure of his ability to take off in the ugly weather if he turned the engines off, the pilot kept them going while Eagan, Joe and several others of us rushed out the door, careful to dodge the propellers.

the plane took off immediately, and we anxiously watched it climb about 200 feet into the air, at which point it inexplicably dove straight into the icy bay carrying the crew and the state adjutant general who Eagan had put in charge of the state role in recovery and rebuilding.

We rushed to the bay where Eagan and I jumped into a large rowboat since no motorboats had survived the quake.[6] Unfortunately, the first man to join us to help row broke his leg on the boat edge. After someone else volunteered to help, we rowed out to the area where we guessed the plane had gone in, but saw nothing. In fact, no trace of the plane or its passengers was ever found. The first news report stated that I was one of those killed in the crash, but that was soon corrected.

Instead of our trip buoying citizen morale, the plane crash was viewed as a further bad omen, and dropped their spirits even lower. Eagan disappeared to comfort families he knew, and I never saw him again through the long night. I visited with several hundred homeless families who were camping in and around the high school gym that had withstood the earthquake quite well. At that point, I had little to offer that was of immediate help in their dire circumstances other than continuing emergency food and medicine. With Joe's assistance in locating city council members, I was finally able to convene the city council well after midnight. We gathered in a small room above the fire station, another building only partially damaged.

The council members spent much of the first hour asking for federal assistance for everything. They needed help to rebuild homes and businesses as well as the waterfront that was destroyed. Earthquake insurance had not been available except at prohibitive rates, and neither private nor government loans were expected to be available under existing conditions. The community was simply destitute. As carefully and tactfully as I could, I explained that the federal government could not help restore Valdez in its current hazardous location. Not only was it overly vulnerable to land movement during future earthquakes, even more hazardous was a lake some miles back in the mountains that was likely to sweep down on the town

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[6] The earthquake and the subsequent tsunami had ruined the waterfront. The pier and the former land frontage were now in the bay. Boats had been washed up on land and then sucked back into the water where most of them were wrecked.

at some point in the future when its natural dam of ice and snow would probably melt. A bleak future, indeed. Despair began to sweep across the room as I explained the geological difficulties the existing Valdez site posed.

I hastened to add, however, that if the town was willing to pull up stakes and move six miles around the bay where a rock foundation existed instead of the unstable soil in the current location, a new location that would be beyond reach of the prospective flood from the mountain lake, the government would provide substantial help in relocating and rebuilding. This was an extremely difficult issue for the council, particularly when a wrenching decision to move would be based on nothing more tangible than a promise from a government stranger just arrived from Washington. Understandably, several townspeople in attendance protested such a move with considerable feeling.

Later I was told that what turned the tide toward moving was my stressing the idea that the Valdez community had an opportunity few have, that of rebuilding totally anew. A number of the homes were shabby relics of the rugged pioneer days, and nearly all seriously damaged. Except for the gym, the old school was now unsafe to use. The waterfront on which their fragile economy had depended had slid into the sound. An offer of federal assistance provided them with a fresh start, enabling them to shape their community any way they pleased, taking full advantage of their experience and the mistakes they had made in the old location. Someone then said, "We can rise like a phoenix from the destruction of the earthquake!

As dawn approached, the weary council decided, albeit with misgiving, to move their town, and agreed to hold meetings in the coming weeks to develop plans for their brand new community.

As I left the meeting, the blizzard had been replaced with blue sky. The sun shown brightly and, with the snow covering much of the debris, things looked a great deal different than they had during the previous afternoon and night. But when I entered the lobby of what was left of the hotel, I was brought back to earth. The few rooms that still had walls and ceiling largely intact were packed with people, as was the lobby floor where men without housing were lying on the floor, some still recovering from injuries suffered in the earthquake. Giving up the notion of any sleep, I walked around town gaining a better feel for the magnitude of the task ahead, a task that would be entirely new to all of us. Yet the thought of helping these people build a new community to "rise like a phoenix" was an exciting challenge. Ten years later the people of Valdez took up a collection so Dona and I could join in a celebration of the All-American award given to this gritty community that had rebuilt so successfully at the new location we had discussed over the fire station. Valdez later gained some degree of prominence as the terminus for the Alaska pipeline.

Riding Circuit

After spending the day inspecting the proposed new town site and assessing ways in which the federal government might be of most help to the struggling Valdez community, by early afternoon I was ready to move on to the next town, Seward. The problem was that the snow had resumed and no plane had arrived to take me. We could not contact the pilot by radio, and I became quite concerned since no Valdez airstrip lights had survived the earthquake, and the terrain would be treacherous after dark.

A single engine plane finally landed as darkness moved in and the wind and snow increased. After refueling, the pilot calmly explained the odds on another crash under the bad conditions, and asked me if I still wanted to fly out. Alaskan bush pilots are notoriously courageous, some would say foolhardy, and this one was particularly so. Of course, I said yes but immediately wondered how wise that decision was. As we were ready to go down the airstrip in total darkness, the pilot worried me further by handing me a long flashlight and instructing me to flash it along the side of the adjacent hill during the takeoff to tell him how far we were from crashing into the embankment beside the runway.

No one had told me about this aspect of my job, one for which I was totally unprepared. As we began moving, the pilot mentioned the difficulties and asked again if I was sure I wanted to proceed. I really did not want to in view of those who died the day before taking off from that same runway in much better conditions with a better plane, but there was no way I could back out. Not at all sure I could judge distance through the heavy snowfall, I kept announcing my best estimate of distance from the hill at roughly seventy-five feet as we bounced along over the uneven runway, hoping I was in the ballpark with my numbers. Being so unsure of my vision, it was a great relief to finally rise from the airstrip and head along the water to our next stop, Seward. The whole Valdez experience gave me a better feel for the reputation Alaskans have for retaining the courageous spirit of the frontier, as well as why so many bush pilots die young.

Up after dawn, our initial daylight view of Seward revealed that the portion of the town near the water was devastated. At first glance, it looked as though a major battle had been fought. The small boat harbor had completely disappeared. The railroad terminus, major portions of the water, sewer, and power lines, the power generating station, and petroleum storage tanks along the waterfront were also gone. In sharp contrast, on my way to meet with the council, a smiling teenage girl in a fresh white apron greeted us in the street to offer a basket of freshly baked doughnuts from the bakery. A most welcome sight because I had not taken time for breakfast, or even knew where to get one.

After considerable fact-finding, and consulting with the Seward town council and townspeople, it was on to the town of Homer that afternoon. Unfortunately, much of the Seward airstrip on which we had landed was now under water, and we

experienced another challenging take-off along a narrow strip of rock-strewn grass between rocky hills and the water. The pilot was amazing.

Much of Homer's commercial facilities were on a narrow five-mile long spit that was hit hard by high water as well as the subsidence of the land. This unusual topography would pose one of my most difficult decisions later on, because no one know whether the future action of the water would rebuild the spit or destroy it together with whatever I had helped rebuild. After observing the limited evidence of the water on my next two trips to Homer, with considerable trepidation I gave the green light to federal agencies to help fund its reconstruction.

The next stop was Kodiak, an island famous for its brown Kodiak bears, the largest bears in the world, occasionally reaching weights of 1,600 pounds. It was the town that had been hit the hardest by the drop in land elevation. The Kodiak central business district now sported several large fishing vessels that had been swept in by the tsunami, and a number of businesses were now very vulnerable to the high waters from the fall storms. Because of the subsidence, the harbor breakwaters were submerged, making useless the boat harbor on which most of its economy rested.

We had lunch at a motel that had survived the quake because it was nestled along a rock hill at the edge of town. The waitresses were very attractive, and a room had been reserved for me that night. However, someone quietly tipped me off that the friendly girls were prostitutes attracted to Kodiak because of the Navy base, so I declined their hospitality. After a quick stop at picturesque Seldotna that was in danger of flooding because of subsidence, we returned to Anchorage where I discussed possible lead roles[7] for various federal agencies, and Joe did the same with respect to state agencies.

At each community I asked the leadership to develop initial estimates of the time and money required for projects needed for rebuilding. Upon my return in about ten days, I would meet with them to firm up the plans. This proposed timetable was met with numerous protests that it would take longer to develop a project of any size, but each plea for more time was rejected. For projects that were similar to work done previously, such as laying water and sewer lines or building breakwaters in the harbors, I asked the agencies to set a target for time of construction at only 10% of the construction time experienced in the past, a request that shocked engineers. I also asked the Alaska Field Committee to (a) complete whatever damage surveys were needed, (b) develop a list of policy issues that our Anderson

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[7] Upon returning to Washington, I discussed these designations with the agencies involved, and then made formal assignments. Navy, for example, was assigned the lead role for the rebuilding of Kodiak even though other agencies also had important tasks in Kodiak that Navy would not handle. The Corps of Engineers had the largest reconstruction assignment overall. Most assignments simply followed existing agency missions, as in the case of HHFA which had responsibility for urban renewal and housing. Bureau of Indian Affairs had responsibility for rebuilding Indian communities, but their performance was such that I later reassigned this task to the Corps of Engineers.

Commission needed to address on my return, and (c) a list of impediments they saw as limiting the effectiveness of our response to the Alaskan disaster.

A very ominous problem began to loom much larger than expected during my final meeting in Anchorage. Bill Schaem, chair of the Scientific and Engineering Task Force, informed me that it would likely require much more extensive soil testing than he had earlier thought before it could be determined where it would be safe to rebuild in significant areas of Anchorage and three other small towns. Further, he had no idea where we could locate sufficient drilling equipment to do the job in time to relocate, design and reconstruct before the construction season ended. The "impossible" had now become more difficult.

Back in Washington, I briefed Senator Anderson, the Alaskan members of Congress, BOB, and key agency leaders. When asked for assurance that we could find a way to do the job, I expressed confidence in our ability to find a way, though I had no idea how we were going to do it. This was not a wise position, but I could not bring myself to tell Anderson and the President, that after 30 days on the job, I could not carry out my assignment. In fact, I could see the November issue of Life showing me standing beside a half finished home in the midst of a blizzard with a simple caption, "ALASKA ABANDONED!" The feature story would then provide graphic details about how the President had inexplicably sent this hotshot manager to Alaska to undertake this extremely difficult rebuilding task despite the fact that he had never been to Alaska and knew nothing about earthquakes. In fact, already there was some grumbling in Alaska precisely along those lines. And, the Life article would continue, because of this presidential blunder, most of the Alaskan residents had left for the lower 48, and the new state of Alaska was a bust. But I kept these grim musings to myself.

Before returning to Washington, I had already arranged for the two engineers, Col. Tufts, detailed from the Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee, and Col. Penly, detailed from the Corps of Engineers, to fly to Alaska and work with the federal engineers to get greatly expedited initial plans in shape for my return ten days later. They were authorized to visit any site or office and collect information from anyone in any agency of the three levels of government. Fortunately, they were men of excellent judgment who were respected by those with whom they met.

As one might expect, we encountered many management problems one could not possibly foresee. Kodiak was not the only community suffering from subsidence that rendered their harbor useless until the breakwaters could be built higher. In one case, the water would come so high it would flood the business district and a Russian Orthodox cemetery. I had to go through our Department of State, then through the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow, and back again to get permission to move the cemetery. In those Cold War days this bureaucratic journey took nearly all of the construction season to complete before we could even begin. Another community presented a proposal to scuttle three merchant ships

near the entrance to their harbor to reduce the damage from the fall storms. What an ugly legacy that would have left. I turned them down.

Success

Because we had such unbelievable support and freedom to operate from the White House and Congress, together with the effective policy leadership of Senator Anderson and the Commission, we were able to provide operating leadership that turned a prospective failure into a welcome success. Because of the unusual management approaches we used, peacetime construction records were set, water and sewer systems were redesigned and rebuilt, inflation was controlled, bigger and better harbors were back in operation though some work remained, various types of cash and low-interest loan assistance were provided, and inflation was controlled. Alaskans did not have to move to the lower '48 when Fall arrived.

The Anchorage Times had been skeptical of my appointment because I had never been in Alaska and had never dealt with earthquakes. But four months later on August 10, the paper published an editorial entitled "Government at its Best" in which I and our small staff were rewarded with generous praise for our work, concluding, "If more government officials functioned with the same type of positive outlook and attention to needs and details, that word 'bureaucrat' would fast disappear from popular dictionaries."

Management Strategies

There were four management strategies that I found especially useful in our success:

- **<u>Use of new, unprecedented approaches.</u> The Executive-Legislative structure was unique in our history. Our freedom to suspend any procedures delaying our progress was also unique. Further, I refrained from overlaying agency processes with additional Commission requirements other than a rapid reporting system that required my being informed of any developments in less than 24 hours, simultaneously with their department head. This Alaskan recovery effort was the most complex in our history, had the greatest urgency because of the short construction season, yet employed only a handful of specially assigned personnel with very few formal processes**

- **<u>Openness combined with outreach.</u> All Alaskan meetings were open to the public, and all could speak. We did not develop separate federal, state, and local plans. All levels joined hands in developing a community plan in which each level had a role, e.g. Seward, Turnigan, Kodiak, etc. Our records were available for public inspection, and GAO had full and current access. The State Attorney General had a Washington office next to mine and participated in all Washington staff meetings. Congressional staff were also**

welcome. The broad participation generated trust and support, as well as saving much time in explaining and defending actions.

- **Political-Career Teamwork. Political leadership was accountable for policy, and career leadership accountable for implementation. These were regarded as two sides of the same coin, each of which quickly developed genuine respect for the other. In theory, this is nothing special. But in practice the two groups functioned much as partners, and this is unusual. All operating decisions, even those regarding whether it was safe to rebuild several towns, were left to the career executive director who informed the Commission after the fact. When Senator Anderson left for the hospital seriously ill, he asked me to chair the Commission. The wisdom, if not the legality, of this was debatable, but no one complained and things moved forward without a ripple. However, I exercised my new role very discreetly through phone calls and informal gatherings rather than formal sessions.**

- **Rapid action. The foregoing strategies, and the availability of a small number of highly qualified professional staff, combined with a willingness to take substantial risks in my decision-making, enabled us to take extremely rapid action, and insist on schedules that nobody thought possible. Otherwise, Johnson's goal of salvaging a viable state out of the earthquake ruble would have failed.**