

## FRED BARTLIT NAMED CHIEF COUNSEL TO THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE BP DEEPWATER HORIZON SPILL



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### NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE BP DEEPWATER HORIZON SPILL AND OFFSHORE DRILLING

#### FRED BARTLIT NAMED CHIEF COUNSEL

Fred Bartlit, widely regarded as one of America's leading trial lawyers, today joined the Commission as its Chief Counsel. In that position, he will be responsible for investigating the root causes of the explosion of the BP Deepwater Horizon drilling rig last April and the failure of the blowout preventer.

Mr. Bartlit is uniquely qualified for this critically important job, having played a major role in investigating the Piper Alpha North Sea Oil Platform disaster in 1989, in which 160 people died. Piper Alpha was the worst oil rig explosion disaster prior to the BP Deepwater Horizon explosion that occurred this spring.

"This is an extraordinary appointment. It underscores the Commission's commitment to a searching, rigorous and fair inquiry into the root causes of the Gulf oil spill disaster. Fred Bartlit is the quintessential 'lawyer's lawyer.' The Commission, and the nation, are fortunate to have someone of his stature in the legal profession agree to undertake this important public service," said Richard Lazarus, the Commission's Executive Director.

Mr. Bartlit was trial counsel during the year long Piper Alpha hearings in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1990; His work played a prominent role in the resulting judicial opinion known as the "Cullen Report," which led to widespread changes in industrial drilling practices in the North Sea. Bartlit's investigation pinpointed the cause of the 1989 explosion, both in terms of its engineering and regulatory roots, which included showing that several key initial assumptions about the cause were not necessarily correct.

Bartlit has more than 40 years of experience investigating and trying high-profile cases around the country, including many involving technically complex engineering and economic issues. He has served as lead counsel in more than 50 major trials gaining a reputation for both his zealous pursuit of facts and his professional integrity.

In December 2000, he successfully represented President George W. Bush trial counsel in Florida concerning the disputed election results in *Gore v. Bush*. He is currently a partner in the law firm of Bartlit, Beck, Herman, Palenchar & Scott located in Denver and Chicago.

Bartlit is a graduate of the University of Illinois (law), the United States Military Academy at West Point, (engineering) and the U.S. Army Ranger School at Ft. Benning, Ga.

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## **ATTORNEYS**

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