



**Smithsonian Institution**

*Smithsonian Institution Archives*

## **Proceedings of the Board of Regents Meeting – January 15, 1969**

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## "Establishment" of the Smithsonian Institution

The relevant sections of the act establishing the Smithsonian Institution, August 10, 1846 (Chapter 178, sections 1 and 8) read as follows:

Sec. 1 - Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President and Vice-President of the United States, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, the Postmaster General, the Attorney General, the Chief Justice, and the Commissioner of the Patent Office of the United States, and the Mayor of the city of Washington, during the time for which they shall hold their respective offices, and such other persons as they may elect honorary members, be, and they are hereby, constituted an "establishment," by the name of the "Smithsonian Institution," for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men; and by that name shall be known and have perpetual succession, with the powers, limitations, and restrictions hereinafter contained, and no other.

Sec. 8 - And be it further enacted, That the members and honorary members of said Institution may hold such stated and special meetings, for the supervision of the affairs of said Institution and the advice and instruction of the affairs of said Institution and the advice and instruction of said Board of Regents, to be called in the manner provided for in the by-laws of said Institution, at which the President, and, in his absence, the Vice-President of the United States shall preside.

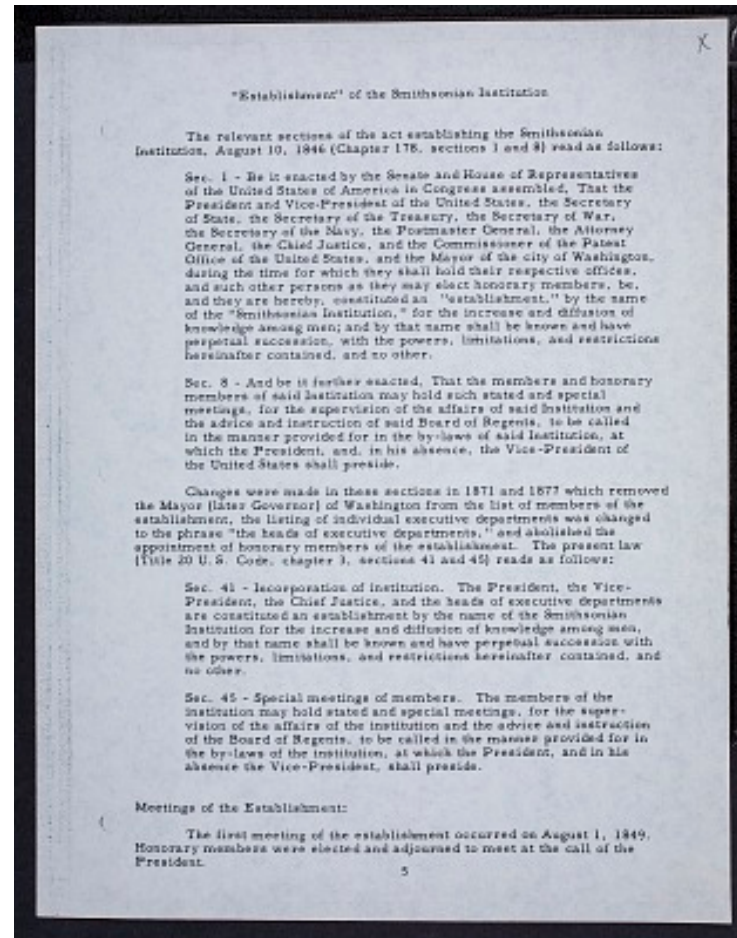
Changes were made in these sections in 1871 and 1877 which removed the Mayor (later Governor) of Washington from the list of members of the establishment, the listing of individual executive departments was changed to the phrase "the heads of executive departments," and abolished the appointment of honorary members of the establishment. The present law (Title 20 U.S. Code, chapter 3, sections 41 and 45) reads as follows:

Sec. 41 - Incorporation of institution. The President, the Vice-President, the Chief Justice, and the heads of executive departments are constituted an establishment by the name of the Smithsonian Institution for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men, and by that name shall be known and have perpetual succession with the powers, limitations, and restrictions hereinafter contained, and no other.

Sec. 45 - Special meetings of members. The members of the institution may hold stated and special meetings, for the supervision of the affairs of the institution and the advice and instruction of the Board of Regents, to be called in the manner provided for in the by-laws of the institution, at which the President, and in his absence the Vice-President, shall preside.

### Meetings of the Establishment:

The first meeting of the establishment occurred on August 1, 1849. Honorary members were elected and adjourned to meet at the call of the President.



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