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STATEMENT BY SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL, Chairman of the Senate Special Subcommittee on the Arts & Humanities, prepared for delivery at the Hearing before the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, on the Nomination of Dr. Ronald Berman for re-appointment as Chairman of the National Endowment on the Humanities; Wednesday, September 15, 1976, 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, I have a strong interest in and concern for the role of the humanities in our society. More specifically, I have a deep concern for the successful administration of the program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, because of the potential of that program to enrich the everyday lives of Americans throughout ^{our} the country.

~~I~~ As the original Senate author of the legislation that established the national arts and humanities programs ^{eleven} ~~ten~~ years ago ^{and} ~~I~~ ^I have ~~served~~ as Chairman of the Special Subcommittee on Arts and Humanities since that ^{sub} committee was ^{more than} established 12 years ago,

It has been my responsibility, and my pleasure, to manage in the Senate the four Humanities Endowment authorization bills considered by the Congress since establishment of

the Endowment.

It is with this background of experience and knowledge of the Humanities Endowment that I must state, at the outset of this hearing, that I have the most serious reservations about the confirmation of Dr. Berman as Chairman of the Endowment for a second four-year term *and, thus,*

~~Indeed, at this point at the outset of this hearing,~~ I must say that I am strongly inclined to oppose confirmation.

Let me state briefly the basis of my ^{concern} ~~reservations,~~ in the hope that we can explore, for the record, some of these areas with the nominee and perhaps with other witnesses, ~~during the course of this hearing.~~

---First, it is clear to me that the Humanities Endowment, which once was the stronger and more vigorous of the sister Endowments for the Arts and ^{the} Humanities, has faltered during Dr. Berman's tenure, despite sharply increased

Congressional appropriations. Indeed, the Humanities Endowment today is ^{become a} ~~but~~ a pale shadow ^{as compared to} ~~of~~ the Arts Endowment.

---Secondly, in an effort to strengthen the Humanities Endowment, the Senate passed legislation to create in the Humanities Endowment the federal-state partnership that has worked so effectively in eliciting local grass-roots participation and enthusiasm in the Arts Endowment programs. Dr. Berman ~~has~~ characterized this proposed state-federal partnership proposal as "wholly unacceptable" and has actively opposed it.

---Thirdly, instead of supporting these proposals to broaden participation in the humanities program, Dr. Berman sought to continue and ^{to} strengthen a central Washington control of all activities and programs of the Endowment. This centralization, whether it was his intention or not, has tended to cloak the Endowment programs in elitism and hindered imaginative efforts to bring the richness of humanistic

studies to bear on the lives of the average American.

We are concerned here with the leadership that will be responsible during the next four years with the *authorized* expenditure of ~~some~~ *several* hundreds of millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money. I believe that responsibility requires excellence in leadership, and excellence in administrative skills, to make certain that these taxpayers' dollars do have an impact in enriching American life. I question whether Dr. Berman during his term as Chairman of the Humanities Endowment has exhibited the requisite excellence in leadership and administration.

I am quite cognizant that I am setting here a standard for confirmation that is quite different from the standard usually applied to appointees, who serve at the pleasure of the President for unspecified terms. We are concerned here with an *appointment for the head of an agency* to a set four-year term of office. And in those circumstances, I believe we must apply

a higher standard. I believe the Congress should insist
be heads of agencies and to
that persons should be reappointed to set terms of office
only in cases of exceptional performance. If the performance
during the first set term has been only acceptable and
passable, it is time for an infusion of new leadership, new
ideas, and fresh enthusiasm.

A professional football coach who leads his team
to only a passable, 50-50 won-loss season knows full well
that the odds on renewal of his contract are also only 50-50.

I repeat--excellence should be the criterion for
reappointment to a set-term office, and I question whether
the nominee for reappointment has exhibited that excellence.

To put the performance of the Humanities Endowment
in perspective, I think it is necessary to go back to those
days more than ten years ago when those of us committed to
the concept of Federal assistance to the arts and humanities
struggled against strong resistance to bring that concept to

reality. In those days, ~~in the early years after passage of the act,~~ it was the humanities community in the nation which provided the vigor, the creativity, and the enthusiasm which this new effort required. The arts, by contrast, rode on the coattails of the humanities. Indeed, ^{my} ^{in two previous Congresses} efforts to enact legislation ~~solely~~ ^{aid} to ~~promote~~ the arts failed until the aid to the arts and humanities were linked in legislation that brought forth the vigorous support of the humanities community.

Today, I find the situation reversed. The Arts Endowment is now the more vigorous, innovative and creative ^{the true} of endowments. It is growing, reaching out, attracting unprecedented business support and involving all segments of society; especially women, minorities, ethnic groups and the underprivileged.

I think the American people know they are getting value for their tax money in the Arts Endowment--they have felt the enriching impact of the Arts Endowment programs.

Sadly, there is far less evidence that the Humanities Endowment has reached out to produce a similar enriching impact on American life. The Humanities Endowment has in fact been overhauled and outstripped by the Arts. And this slippage has occurred most noticeably during the past few years.

In the Arts Endowment there has been flourishing for several years a strong state-based program conducted by state councils which are responsible to state governments. These councils spring from within the states and owe no allegiance to Washington. Their success has been phenomenal.

On the Humanities side, the state programs are operated by state committees whose genesis comes from Washington, whose chairmen were originally ~~appointed~~^{chosen} by Washington, who are dominated by Washington, and, consequently, are responsive mainly to Washington.

In an attempt to right this situation, the Senate this year passed legislation to allow the states themselves a

a voice in the operation of their own state programs. From the outset, Dr. Berman bitterly opposed this Senate effort,

calling it "wholly unacceptable."

In the Arts Endowment, the state program has been a decentralizing and democratic force. The Arts Chairman has fifty potential critics with a strong voice in the states. It is this balancing force which prevents Federal domination and allows for a true Federal-state partnership.

One of the strongest original objections to national arts and humanities programs from Members of Congress was based on the fear that the heads of the two Endowments would dominate those fields in a way that would frustrate the spontaneity and creativity which are so basic to their natures. That has not happened in the Arts. ^{But} And I believe it imperative that trends in that direction in the Humanities be reversed.

Mr. Chairman, these are the reasons for my reservations about confirmation of this nomination for reappointment.

I would emphasize that my concern has been based solely on the principles I have outlined. My concern is not and has never been based on personal considerations. As one of the fathers of this Endowment, I care passionately about its future and wish to see it flourish. That is the basic reason for my concern over this nomination.

I would add, Mr. Chairman, that my concern over this nomination has been the subject of substantial commentary by columnists, much of which is distorted and shrill in tone, and most of which appears to have a common inspiration.

The surprising thing is that if these columnists and editorial writers, who mostly come from the conservative spectrum of our community, had had objective access to the facts and knew that the issue here was whether our humanities leadership should be continued in the tightening reins and grip of Washington or whether it should be spread across our nation with Washington exerting less, not more, influence,

would have come out with an opposite viewpoint from the

one they have espoused. ^{Here,} ~~However, any discussion of these~~
~~press commentaries, I believe, would be a distraction from~~
~~the real issues before the Committee, but~~ for the purposes
of the Record, I ask that a compilation of these commentaries
be included in the hearing record.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would re-emphasize

Obviously, from the viewpoint of my own
political interest, ~~I want~~ it would be
far better for me if I had not ~~ever~~
become the butt of ~~these~~ articles this propaganda
or of the elements of that have been stimulated
in the humanities community, but had been
a good guy and said fine, let's continue
doing what we have been doing, even though
I know it's not right.

But, in conscience and as father of this
program, I just couldn't ~~and~~ shouldn't do this.

my principal concern. I believe the humanities have a tremendous potential to enrich the life of every American.

But if that is to happen, the humanities must reach out from the campuses and the ivory tower and include ~~clergies~~ ^{farmers}, in-

surance salesmen, factory workers, young people and senior citizens, We cannot justify the expenditure of taxpayers'

money in support of the humanities if the tendency of the

program is to poliferate volumes of humanistic studies in

university libraries ^{just} for other academic humanists to read.

I think there is a parallel here between the humanities and the ocean sciences. Ten years ago, oceanography and the marine sciences were a highly academic field. Marine scientists compiled magnificent studies of the oceans and ocean life which simply gathered dust in university libraries. The knowledge never reached the fishermen, the environmentalists, and the conservationists--those whose lives were intimately involved with the oceans.

workers in all varieties of fields. The humanities must appeal to those without or formal education.

As the late Wib Chapman, one of the great men of American oceanography put it at that time, "If all the oceanographers of the world dropped dead tomorrow, it would have no affect whatsoever on the world fish catch." The Sea Grant College program, which I sponsored, and which the Congress enacted, has changed that situation dramatically. Oceanography and the marine science are now out in the real world, and are having a real impact on man and his living relationship with the world's oceans.

I want to see the humanities reach out in a similar fashion and have a real impact on the lives of Americans. It is an exceedingly difficult challenge. It requires exceptional, innovative leadership. And that is what I will be looking for in the course of this hearing--evidence of exceptional performance and exceptional leadership that justifies reappointment to one of the most challenging positions in the executive branch of our government, and a position that, because of the

way and the very size of the money grants that are distributed,
is having the effect of giving enormous power to a single
individual to dominate the intellectual life of our nation.