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Curran, Edward: Confirmation Hearing (1985): Memorandum 01

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MEMORANDUM

October 28, 1985

TO: Senator
FROM: ADC
RE: Curran Vote Wednesday

An all-out effort by the White House to confirm Curran is underway as the vote approaches on Wednesday. Max Friedersdorf is making personal calls and Hatch is rumored to be considering holding various unrelated issues hostage to force Curran through.

From the opposition side, many high level contacts are continuing to be made to Stafford and Weicker including a call from Bart Giamatti. Weicker continues to lean toward a "NO" vote. A member of his staff has said privately that he is troubled more than usual about this one and intends to oppose Curran. However, this was before the latest campaign started from the White House. Stafford, on the other hand, is being kept as clear as possible of the situation by his staff. You will recall he did not even show up at the confirmation hearing. Your call to Stafford was critical in conveying how deeply you are concerned about this one but he clearly does not want to have to vote "NO". My guess is that he would prefer to have Weicker cast the "NO" vote while he either takes a walk or votes "PRESENT".

All of this may be moot if we do not get Kennedy turned around, however. Very confidentially, it now appears that he is a weak link. This did not become apparent until late last week just at the time he left for the Geneva arms talks. On Friday, his staff reassured me that he would never be the only democrat to vote "YES" but today they are talking about his abstaining. The problem pertains to the fact that his daughter Kara went to NCS when Curran was headmaster and has nothing to do with the substance of the matter.

On the one hand I do not want the word to get out that a Democrat is weakening which could weaken others while on the other it now is critical to direct calls to Kennedy.

I strongly urge you to make personal contact with Kennedy, Weicker and Stafford and stress how deeply you care about this nomination. If Kennedy abstains we not only have to keep all other Democrats in line (which seems possible) but both Weicker and Stafford must vote "NO". The Committee has 9 republicans and 7 democrats.

Kennedy returns from Geneva on Tuesday afternoon on the eve of the vote.