Curran, Edward: Humanities Chairman Nomination Hearing (1985): Memorandum 01

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MEMORANDUM

July 23, 1985

TO: Senator
FROM: ADC
RE: Curran Situation

As you know, the Curran hearing has been put off until late September or early October. This action has been widely supported and the mail opposing Curran has been reasonably strong. However, I am getting nervous that the Administration may appoint Curran under recess appointment rules during August. If this is done, he will be able to serve until Congress adjourns in late 1986.

To strengthen our hand somewhat, I have asked that a date be set now for a Curran hearing. Our first choice is the week of Sep 30. The Kennedy and Hatch people are discussing this now and as soon as an agreement is reached I will let you know.

In the meantime, our investigation into Curran's background continues. Kennedy's investigator, Walter Sheridan, has a number of things going. He and I have agreed that a call from you to former Education Secretary Ted Bell would be useful now. It would be helpful to know just what exactly happened when Curran left NIE. Curran apparently said he was fired by Bell in his Peace Corps hearing testimony but it is my recollection from your private meeting with him that he told you he was not fired and that Bell continued to support him after he left NIE.

You could tell Bell that your conversation is very much off the record but that your concern over the nomination made it imperative to speak to him.

Other talking points for Bell:

What problems did Curran pose at the Department? Do you think he poses a similar threat at NEH? What was the real story at NIE? Was Curran fired?

The last question about being fired is the most crucial. If Bell fired Curran - as everyone assumes - this will be very useful to Walter as he builds a case based on Curran's two versions of the NIE story.

Ted Bell telephones office: 801-581-4817
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FYI: I have added you as a co-sponsor to a Heinz resolution that declares November 18, 1985 as "Eugene Ormandy Appreciation Day."