

1985

## Curran, Edward: Humanities Chairman Nomination Hearing (1985): Memorandum 03

Alexander D. Crary

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M E M O R A N D U M

September 24, 1985

TO: Senator  
FROM: ADC  
RE: Ed Curran Confirmation Hearing - October 2

As we discussed earlier today, the hearing for Curran is set for 9:30 AM on Wed., October 2.

Just to update you on developments..... the opposition to Curran has not abated in recent weeks. The mail which you were largely responsible for generating (from remark made in hearing) has continued to come in. It is being carefully targeted so that Committee members get mail from their home states. We have heard from Brown faculty primarily.

The Modern Language Association, whose members are primarily English and Literature professors, has been the most out front in expressing their opposition to Curran. They have seen the NEH funding for scholarship and research dwindle in the Reagan years and are now going all out to try to reverse this situation. They know too that NEH will in all likelihood punish them in the long run with a cut in grants. So when we ask them to come out of the woodwork and take an open position, it is ultimately going to cost them. I have confirmed this NEH retribution problem with staff inside the agency. It is one of the areas I want raised in Curran's hearing.

It is still unclear who on the Democratic side will come to the hearing. It now seems that Kennedy's interest has lagged and he is unlikely to attend. Simon and Dodd are possibilities. Whether you like it or not, you are the standard bearer for the opponents of Ed Curran. Virtually every constituency of the NEH has serious problems with his nomination but not all are coming out in the open to say it. I do not believe that this should alter the tough stance you have already taken with Curran - both in your very contentious private meeting with him as well as in the NEH hearing in June.

It is crucial that you be at the hearing on October 2nd so that many of the concerns can be raised and Curran's views put on the record. You put him on notice earlier that you would not accept a vague answer on the EEOC compliance issue. I will include this in your questions which will be more extensive than usual and will require close followup work.

We discussed briefly the advisability of inviting an outside witness to testify. I believe this would be a good idea especially if we can get someone of impeccable reputation who can sum up the reasons why NEH needs a distinguished leader in the humanities. One such person is Bob Lumiansky (see attached).

Should we request that he be invited \_\_\_\_\_

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