
CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

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SENATE COMMITTEE REJECTS CURRAN NOMINATION

On Tuesday November 19 the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee finally voted on the nomination of Edward Curran to be the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The Committee voted to reject the nomination.

It was a tense scene in the committee room. The thrice-postponed vote was finally going to occur. For weeks Senators Robert Stafford (R-VT) and Lowell Weicker (R-CT) were the keys to Curran's success or failure. At the Committee hearing on October 2, Weicker sharply questioned Curran, yet he voted for his confirmation "with trepidation." Stafford, who was not present for the hearing or the vote, cast a nay vote by proxy on the basis of Curran's tenure as Director of the National Institute of Education (NIE) during which he circumvented Secretary Terrell H. Bell and wrote a letter to the President advocating the abolition of NIE for which Bell subsequently sought and got Curran's resignation. Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT) defended Curran and urged the Committee to support the President's choice. Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI), who spearheaded the opposition to

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Risa I. Palm, *President*

David Jenness, *Executive Director*

the nomination, reiterated his belief that Curran "was the wrong man for the job."

The committee took two votes. The first to send the nomination to the Senate floor with a recommendation to confirm. The second to send the nomination to the Senate floor without a recommendation. On both votes, all seven Democrats (Senators Pell (RI), Kennedy (MA), Metzenbaum (OH), Matsunaga (HI), Dodd (CT), Simon (IL), and Kerry (MA)) were joined by Senator Stafford in voting nay. The rest of the the Republicans (Senators Hatch (UT), Quayle (IN), Nickles (OK), Weicker (CT), Grassley (IA), Hawkins (FL), Thurmond (SC) and Wallop (WY)) voted to support the President's nominee. The 8-8 tie votes meant, in effect, that the nomination was dead. In order to move nominations and bills out of a committee, a majority vote is needed.

The NEH is a \$139 million a year agency that awards grants for research and projects in the humanities (including "those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods"). It is not the focus of major attention (for example, the Washington Post covers it in the 'Style' section). Yet the nominee of an immensely popular president to head this agency was defeated. How did this happen?

For the most part, it was another case of a low visibility issue being ripe for an effort by an intensely concerned coalition that was willing to work hard. COSSA, along with a number of other groups led by the National Humanities Alliance and the Modern Language Association, generated letters and phone calls that questioned the qualifications and experience of Mr. Curran to lead NEH. The volume of responses on this issue surprised Senators accustomed to docile acceptance by the academic and humanities community of political actions, especially on appointments. At hearings on the reauthorization of NEH, Senator Pell even noted the frustration he felt in trying to motivate the academic community to take a stand.

In addition, it was also a case where a weak nominee with a bad track record came before the committee in the Republican-controlled Senate that provides the best opportunity for defeating an administration nominee.

Senator Pell's leadership on this issue, one dear to him as one of the co-authors of the original legislation creating the Endowment, was a major contribution to Curran's defeat. The solidarity of the Democrats was also important. Finally, the conviction by Senator Stafford that Curran's previous tenure as the director of a research agency did not merit him another leadership position, led to the crucial vote that spelled defeat.

What is next? Will the White House learn its lesson and now nominate a candidate who possesses the qualifications, scholarly reputation, and management experience to head NEH? Stay tuned! The scholarly community certainly learned a lesson about challenging the odds and came up a winner.

PRESIDENT SIGNS NSF BILLS

On November 22 President Reagan signed into law the National Science Foundation (NSF) authorization bill (H.R. 1210). This is the first time since 1980 that NSF has had an authorization. The new law changes the Foundation's fundamental charter by adding "and engineering" after "science" every place in the charter, except its title.

Three days later on November 25 the HUD-Independent Agencies appropriations bill (H.R. 3038) was signed by the President. This new law appropriates \$1.524 billion for NSF in FY 1986, of which \$1.352 billion is for research and related activities and \$87 million (including the \$31.5 million carry-over from FY 1985) is for Science and Engineering Education.

The culmination of legislative action on NSF was somewhat disappointing to social and behavioral scientists in light of the high hopes generated in February when the administration's budget was released and included large increases for these disciplines at NSF. Yet in an atmosphere, first of "budget freeze" and now of "budget reduction," NSF emerged relatively well. The appropriation for research was increased by 3.5% over last year, while the authorized level for the Directorate for Biological, Behavioral and Social Science (BBS) was increased by 4%. It is now up to the Foundation to allocate the funds among its various programs. COSSA has urged NSF to keep in mind its allocation decisions of February and, albeit on a reduced scale, to maintain the same priorities in December.

Finally, the FY 1987 NSF budget has been prepared and planning for future budgets is already underway. It now appears some version of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings will pass the Congress. Deficit reduction has indeed become a serious priority. This will clearly affect research budgets. Social and behavioral scientists must remain alert to the possibility of attempts to disproportionately mete out future reductions in funds available for research.

LABOR/HHS/ED APPROPRIATIONS CLEARS CONFERENCE

The massive appropriations bill that provides funds for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education (ED) cleared a House-Senate conference committee on November 20. The following reports only on those agencies where there were differences in funding between the House and Senate versions of the bill that needed reconciling by the conference. (For an earlier story see Update, October 18, 1985.)

The bill provides that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) shall support "no fewer than 6,100 new and competing research projects" in FY 1986. The total appropriation for NIH

is \$5.49 billion, an increase of 6.6% over the \$5.15 billion appropriated last year. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) was appropriated \$321.97 million, up from \$310.4 million last year. The National Institute on Aging (NIA) received \$156.59 million, up from \$144.79 million last year.

At the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA): Mental Health Research was funded at \$214 million, increased from \$193.34 million last year; Drug Abuse Research received \$74 million compared to \$64.32 in FY 1985; Alcoholism Research received \$57 million compared to \$48.51 million in FY 1985; Research training equalled last year's appropriation of \$21 million.

In other HHS agencies where there were differences between the House and Senate versions the following occurred: National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) received \$ 45.49 million for FY 1986, \$39.26 million in FY 1985; Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) received \$6.5 million reduced from last year's \$9.75 million; Office of Human Development Services (OHDS) received \$2.02 billion in FY 1986 compared to \$2.01 billion last year.

At ED the National Graduate Fellows Program did not receive the \$500,000 increase proposed by the Senate and will receive the same amount as last year -- \$2.5 million. The conferees agreed to free up \$1.5 million of the \$51.2 million appropriation of the National Institute of Education (same as last year) for individual investigator initiated competitive grants.

SENATE OVERRIDES VETO OF NIH REAUTHORIZATION

On November 20 the Senate, by a margin of 89-7, voted to override the President's veto of the the Health Research Extension Act (H.R. 2409) which reauthorized programs at the National Institutes of Health. The bill now becomes law without the President's signature.

Despite the claims of the administration and some in the biomedical research community that the bill was an example of congressional micromanagement of scientific research, there was overwhelming bipartisan support for its enactment. COSSA supported the bill because it provides for increased representation of social and behavioral scientists on the advisory councils of the Institutes. This more equitable representation may convince NIH to increase the visibility of and commitment to social and behavioral science research on the relationship of health and behavior.

DUTCH EXPLORE SCIENCE POLICY FROM DIFFERENT ANGLE

A group of researchers at the University of Amsterdam is trying to study what they are calling "science dynamics" -- the development and 'steerability' of science. The major question, according to Stuart Blume, is "under what conditions are the developmental needs of science compatible with the external direction of science?"

The Dutch government held a competition to designate a single academic center to study this issue. The result led to the establishment of the Department of Science Dynamics chaired by Professor Blume at the University of Amsterdam, where scientists are treating the issue as a researchable problem. Their program so far consists of case studies: one on the links between university research and technological and industrial demands in chemistry; and one in applied ecology.

The chemistry case is examining how the technological possibilities society eventually sees are selected from a wider range of options which might be imagined by someone with a knowledge of chemistry. Stated in general terms: how are social priorities woven into the research agenda of a well-established discipline with strong ties to a major industry?

The project on applied ecology examines the influence of the rise of environmentalism on the work of ecological researchers. The growth of environmental concern led to opportunities for ecologists to command new funds, but also raised expectations the discipline was not ready to meet. The question is how do the complex influences mobilized by the political and social salience of ecological problems shape the way researchers see their role and the work they do?

The work of the science dynamics department at Amsterdam inverts the common question of 'the impact of science on society' and looks instead at the 'impact of society on science.' As the House Science and Technology committee continues its study of U.S. science policy, this Dutch initiative merits further investigation.

(The preceding was based on an article in the the (London) Times Higher Education Supplement, " November 15, 1985, p. 12.)

SECOND ANNUAL CENSUS RESEARCH CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR MARCH

The Census Bureau's Second Annual Research Conference will be held in Reston, VA, March 23-26, 1986. The theme for the conference will be nonsampling error. Invited paper sessions include discussions on causes, measurement, and reducing the effects of nonsampling error; quality issues; nonsampling error considerations for longitudinal data; and public attitudes and survey response issues. Research in specific program areas will

be discussed in sessions devoted to the 1990 Decennial Census, international economic input/output analysis, new methods of estimating household and population characteristics, economic census and survey evaluation studies, and research on the Survey of Income and Program Participation and service sector of the economy.

The program will also contain four sessions on under-coverage, which will include discussions of census undercount research and research into problems caused by underdocumented immigration. Professor James Durbin of the London School of Economics and Political Science will present the annual Shirley Kallek Memorial Lecture. John G. Keane, Director of the Bureau of the Census, and Vincent P. Barabba, Executive Director of Market Research and Planning, General Motors Corporation, and former Director of the Census, will provide dinner presentations.

For additional information, contact: Center for Survey Methods Research, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233.

STAFF ACTIVITIES

On October 24, executive director David Jenness was the speaker at a luncheon meeting of the Washington chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research. On November 6 he participated, with two other executive directors of science-related associations, in a panel at the National Council of University Research Administrators, meeting in Washington.

On November 16, in Ann Arbor, Dr. Jenness was part of a panel on The Social Sciences in the Last Half of the '80s: Opportunities and Prospects, at a meeting of Official Representatives of the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. On November 20, at the 113th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in Washington, he participated in a panel session on Issues in Federal Statistics of Concern to Public Health.

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PRICE INCREASE FOR UPDATE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Effective January 1, 1986, the subscription price of the COSSA Washington Update will be increased. This will be the first price increase since the newsletter was first offered through individual subscriptions in 1982. The new rates are as follows:

Domestic individual subscriptions: \$40.00 per year
Overseas individual subscriptions: \$50.00 per year
Institutional subscriptions: \$90.00 (no change from current rate)

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

COSSA provides this information as a service, and encourages readers to contact the agency rather than COSSA for more information.

Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs

The Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs (OAPP), like the Office of Family Planning (see Update, November 15), has begun issuing a general research announcement to stimulate investigator-initiated proposals in areas of agency interest. OAPP is primarily responsible for administering the Adolescent Family Life Act (AFL) enacted by Congress in 1981.

OAPP supports basic and applied research, demonstration, and evaluation projects for delivery of services to prevent adolescent pregnancy and to care for pregnant adolescents.

Six priority areas identified for FY 1986 are: 1) influences on adolescent premarital sexual behavior; 2) consequences of adolescent premarital sexual behavior; 3) consequences of adolescent premarital pregnancy; 4) adoption option for the unmarried adolescent mother; 5) parenting by the unmarried adolescent mother; and 6) adolescent pregnancy services.

OAPP staff are encouraging researchers to submit proposals by the February 1, 1986, deadline. Most new awards for FY 1986 will be made from this round of competition.

FY 1986 Budget: Approximately \$1 million is expected to be available for new projects.

Review Process: Applications are submitted to the Division of Research Grants at the National Institutes of Health. After scientific review by DRG study sections, final funding decisions are made by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Population Affairs with assistance from her staff.

Deadlines: February 1, June 1, and October 1

Funding Mechanisms: Researchers may apply for individual research project grants and the New Investigator Research Awards (NIRA). Annual direct costs for investigator-initiated research projects should not exceed \$100,000; NIRA awards are limited to \$37,500. Awards can be made for a maximum of 3 years.

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