

BRUCE COHEN

August 2, 1982

Stopped in to get Kevin to fill out his forecast for me. He had two forecasts. One, involves specifying who will block or try to block the bill; the other specifies those who will vote if the bill comes up. (I have it.)

Bruce says they are working to get some Democrats to help with the quorum, at the next executive meeting of the Committee Wednesday PM.

I asked them both why the ~~problem~~ ^{probably} ~~problem~~ with Specter. Kevin emphasized Arlen's "independence". "He votes whichever way he thinks is right. Party labels don't mean much to him. He's independent; and Thurmond just doesn't think young Senators ought to be so independent." He noted that Thurmond's style is reflected in fact that he controls the budgets of all the subcommittees. "We have no discretionary funds. We can't bring witnesses in without getting money from the full committee. We can't buy paper clips without going through the full committee."

Bruce says Arlen has had several problems with Strom. He voted against him on 9995 (or some number like that). "Thurmond lobbied him hard on that one; but he voted against him." Then "On the agent identities bill, he voted against Thurmond on the Biden amendment. He and Mathias did; and the vote was 9-8. He voted the right way, but I think he should have declared early. As it was, he kept going back and forth and so it was very noticeable when he voted against the chairman."

Finally, Bruce talked about the Oklahoma investigation.

"We put in a request for money for an investigation. The request came back. "No." We construed--or chose to construe--the answer as denying us the money but ^{not} as a refusal to allow the investigation. We sent Bill Trainor out there. That was a hard decision. But once he came back with the facts,

it was clear that a hearing was warranted. We set up the hearing quickly. I told a member of the committee staff about 11:30 that we were going ahead with the hearing at noon. I knew it would take them quite a while to get their act together and try to stop it. I also knew that if we didn't go ahead with it immediately, the hearing would never be held. Strom was very upset that we had sent out our investigator and held the hearing without his explicit permission. Once we held the hearing, the case was so obvious that he had to support it. Senator Nickles and ^{Boren}~~Biden~~ eventually came along too; but they had lobbied Strom to stop it. Looking back, I think I should have notified the two Oklahoma Senators at the beginning of what we were doing. And we might also have held our hearing where Bill testified in private, with just the staffs and committee members, so no one would have been surprised. Thurmond's reaction was partly financial. He's a tightwad. H hates to have the subcommittees spend money. Part of it was the speed with which it was done, without notifying people. And part of it was pure power. 'I told you not to do it and you did.' Thurmond is not big enough to rise above these things. If anyone is to get credit, he wants it... The other day when Arlen was chairing the insanity hearings, the staff chief said to me 'what's this, another Oklahoma?' Strom wants all the publicity. So that's the way we're going to play it. The insanity bill will be known as the Thurmond, Specter, Biden, Heflin bill. He'll get all the credit.

They mentioned the Walk vs. crime episode that Rob Owen told me about. A hearing on 1688 was to be the week's centerpiece to call attention to the Walk. The full committee staff shoved a markup on Criminal Code into the slot reserved for 1688 and then never held the markup. Bruce and Kevin interpreted it as Strom's effort to keep the freshmen from stealing the show.

Strom wanted to lead the march; and blacks withdrew when they heard that.
Point is that the opposition started early to Arlen's independence.

Bruce was saying last week "Arlen Specter is the only man that ^{bridges} ~~bridge~~
from Strom Thurmond to John Conyers" on crime. But he may not encompass
Thurmond!