

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE
UNITED STATES COURTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20544

L. RALPH MECHAM
DIRECTOR

JAMES E. MACKLIN, JR.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

June 26, 1990

Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510-6275

Dear Mr. Chairman:

It was reported to me that at the hearing this morning on S. 2648 you were deeply concerned by comments attributed to me in a Legal Times article which you believe reflected adversely on yourself and your colleagues. That was not my intent nor do I believe it was so construed by the judges who were present. These comments do not reflect the views of the Judicial Conference as Chief Justice Rehnquist advised you on June 12th. A copy of the Chief Justice's letter is enclosed.

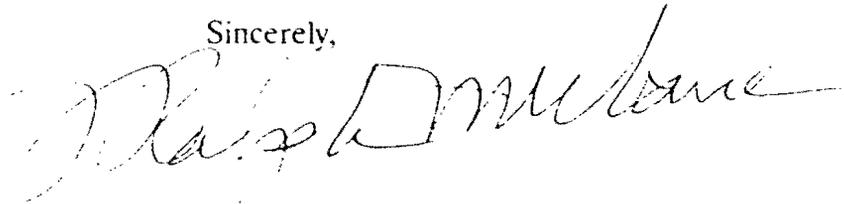
I apologize for my remarks which resulted in unfair characterizations of your motives. I had understood that my comments were off the record and were being made only to the federal judges of the D. C. Circuit, who had expressed a great interest in your bill, S. 2648. I regret that my -- and the Conference's -- words of praise for you have not received the same attention. Your leadership on the judgeship bill is sincerely appreciated and well recognized by the Judicial Branch and by me. In fact, at the same meeting, I praised your action in introducing a judgeship bill as a "major breakthrough", a statement which along with other positive comments I made about the progress made on Title I of your bill, did not appear in the report.

I hope that the friction of recent days can be put behind us and that we both can return to our shared goal of advancing the cause of justice through mutual cooperation and an understanding of the needs of our respective branches.

Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
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I will be pleased to come to your office this afternoon or at any other time to carry this same message and respond personally to your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ralph Mecham". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Ralph Mecham
Director

Supreme Court of the United States
Washington, D. C. 20543

CHAMBERS OF
THE CHIEF JUSTICE

June 12, 1990

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman,

I have received your letter of June 6th inquiring as to a newspaper column report of statements made by Ralph Mecham, Director of the Administrative Office, at the District of Columbia Circuit Conference in Hershey. Mr. Mecham was speaking "off the cuff" to an audience of lawyers and judges, and his jocular remarks about the civil justice and judgeship provisions of S. 2648 do not represent the position of the Judicial Conference. The Conference has long favored the creation of additional judgeships, and its position on the civil justice legislation is being worked out by the Committee of District Judges about which you and I spoke when we had lunch in April.

Sincerely,

