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MEMORANDUM

March 27, 1985

TO: Senator
FROM: ADC
RE: RI Arts Issues

Your letter to Frank Hodson asking for a second look at the RI Philharmonic's application may have produced some results. The Endowment has decided to send an outside consultant to Providence to hear a Philharmonic concert and re-evaluate the orchestra. Whether or not this will boost the Philharmonic's grant remains to be seen - but at least they are doing what you asked. Muriel Stevens is delighted and grateful to you.

Rowena Stewart, as you know, won a long battle with Dan Lecht to become chair of the RI State Council on the Arts. But it seems her problems are far from over. Lecht is still lobbying his friends in the legislature to pass various schemes that would undermine Rowena's authority. The Governor too wants to appear to be addressing the Council's problems and has proposed moving the Council to a position directly under his office. This will most likely happen but it is not a solution to the deeper problems inside the Council itself. DiPrete is also asking Council employees to justify their jobs. Rowena has a three year term and intends to see it through. From another side she is being hit by the major arts organizations in the state who are unhappy about her initiatives to help groups that are not in the mainstream. Those already in the pipeline are always threatened by newcomers. But she knows she is doing the correct thing and intends to pursue it.

She is making a special effort right now on behalf of the Newport Art Association which has emerged from under its rock and is actively looking for help and ideas. She may organize a small conference to address the problems of groups that need more help. I expect to help out on this both by participating and suggesting Endowment types who could come up to make presentations and answer questions.

Rowena is coming to Washington in late April for a meeting of state arts council chairmen - something Dan Lecht never did. It will be good for RI to get back into circulation. I will take her to the Endowment to meet some people and will schedule a short appointment for her to see you then as well.

Thanks