

2016

## Berman, Ronald: Memoranda (1975-1984): Correspondence 06

Livingston Biddle

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TO: SENATOR

FROM: LB

LB  
Am not sure we should  
wait for report - pls chat with  
me about this. Feb. 17

Attached is the GAO report on the Humanities Endowment. It isn't very comprehensive -- in terms of length; but then we were informed in advance that this would be a quick study, not in any way in depth. I've made some notes on this for you; we have other copies.

The findings coincide closely with my memo taken from our half-way point interview with the GAO representatives -- copy of this is attached.

I find the report grounds for a strong critique of the Endowment and Berman as an administrator, if we wanted to use it as such. Certainly it would indicate that Berman does not excel as an excellent administrator. It would, I think, corroborate your view that he is passable.

On the other hand -- the attached letter from Robt. Kingston, *the Deputy*, to me indicates that the Humanities find the report gives them a clean bill of health in every way... I am somewhat puzzled by this letter... I have always found Kingston to be more honest than Berman, and straightforward, but this letter appears to me quite devious.

The implication that the GAO and the Endowment were in some sort of collaborative sweetness and light development of the final version of the report caused me to call the GAO. They emphatically denied that such was the case, but I certainly didn't want any of the findings reported to Paul and me half-way through the proceedings to be diluted, as a result of discussions and explanations from Berman.

I would recommend a polite but emphatic "no" to Kingston on his request for a copy, as attached.

Berman's nomination has been transmitted to the Senate as of the beginning of this week. We will just sit on it now, unless provoked into some action.

The attached letter is also of interest from Hampshire College -- unsolicited.

OK on Kingston Letter? —  
Discuss —