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## Berman, Ronald: Memoranda (1975-1984): Correspondence 22

Livingston Biddle

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To: Senator

From: LB

Jan 26

Alfred Stern called TH this morning to say that he was authorized by the Carter Admin to say that he was a leading candidate for the Humanities chm. post. TH asked him to call me and we set up a meeting this afternoon to meet with him -- preliminary to his meeting with you. He said he knew Jim Billington was your candidate and that you knew him well. Stern said he wanted you to have a chance to know him. He was very careful to follow all the niceties of the situation and the appropriate courtesies.

However, it is obvious that he is the Carter choice for the post. He is very close to Carter as his Resume indicates -- on the plane with him during the campaign and Eizenstat's deputy. Also he has a long record of working for the Dem. Party, and Hill experience going back to work for then Sen. Humphrey in the early sixties.

I started with a number of reservations, having only met him once previously and that very briefly, but there were rumors that he was a lightweight. I mentioned him in a previous memo, however, as rumored to be Carter's choice.

I was both pleasantly surprised and very impressed by my talk with him. In fact, he would seem to me to fulfill the various needs you have articulated for the program even better than Billington.

He had read the hearing record on Berman very carefully, and was able to respond to the questions I asked in depth -- States, central authority, relative progress of the Arts, administrative problems described in the GAO report, etc.

I was impressed by the fact that

- ... he is not of the establishment, but believes fundamentally in the importance of quality
- ... that he can well express the present shortcomings and failures of the Endowment in terms of national impact
- ... that he has such a close access to the President, who he says believes just as you do in the importance of getting the Humanities out to the people.
- ... that he has solid academic credentials (non-elitist)
- ... and, that perhaps above all, he wants to work with you in making the Humanities reinvigorated and alive.

I recommend him highly... HE'S TO MEET WITH YOU MONDAY AT 3.30. His name meanwhile will be kept in abeyance.

## RESUME

ALFRED LEON STERN (b. 8 July, 1928), New York, N. Y.

Professor with dual appointment in Division of Humanistic Studies,  
Monteith College Wayne State University, Detroit

Division of Natural Science, Monteith College Wayne State Univ., Detroit

### Academic Training at University Level

New York University, B. A., 1949 (Philosophy, Mathematics)

M. A., 1952 (Philosophy)

University of Minnesota, 1952-1956 (Philosophy, Psychology)

University of Michigan, 1956-57 (Philosophy)

### Publications

The Theory of Wit and Humor - Four public lectures later rebroadcast  
on national educational network. (University of Chicago - 1965)

Occasional Papers for the Center for Human Understanding (University  
of Chicago - 1965)

Brain Model Using Multi-Valued Logic

Final Report: 1966

Brain Model Using Multi-Valued Logic Progress Reports I & II

U. S. Air Force, Office of Scientific Research

Mathematics and Logic, (Junior co-author with Max Coral)

Textbook

Structure of the Formal Sciences (Co-author with Max Coral)

Textbook

"Economy and Reduction: Multi-Valued Logic," International  
Congress for Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science,  
Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel, August 1964

Areas in which courses have been given:

Philosophy - aesthetics, political theory, philosophy of science,  
philosophy of social science. History of philosophy, philosophy  
of law.

History of Ideas - methodology, intercultural intellectual relations,  
history of religious ideas, the development of the social sciences,  
history of taste.

Humanities - great books, principles of theory of criticism.

Professional and Academic Experiences

University of Minnesota, Teaching Fellow and Instructor, (1952-55)  
University of Michigan, Teaching Fellow, 1956-57  
Burroughs Corporation, Technical Editor, Manager of the Corporate  
Technical Reports and Proposals Group, 1957-58  
Wayne State University, Monteith College Founder  
Division of Natural Science, Assistant Professor, 1959-62  
Acting Chairman, 1961-62  
Associate Professor, 1962-1968  
Professor, 1968-date  
Visiting Associate Professor, Committee on Social Thought  
University of Chicago, 1963-64

Professional Memberships

American Philosophical Association  
New York Academy of Science  
Cybernetics Committee - A. A. A. S.

Royal Academy of Philosophy  
Cybernetics Group - I. E. E. E.  
American Academy of Political  
and Social Sciences

Civic Services (Non-Partisan)

Consultant to:

Vice President Hubert Humphrey  
Senate Committee on Government Operations  
President's Council on Equal Opportunity  
Economic Development Administration  
Agency for International Development (Asia)  
Council on Youth Opportunity  
National Council on Marine Resources and Engineering Development  
Office of Economic Opportunity - policy formulation and program  
evaluation.  
Foreign Aid Program - including trip to Southeast Asia and Africa,  
Winter, 1966.

Civic Services (Political)

1964 Speech writer Vice President Humphrey  
1967 White House Consultant  
1968 National Democratic Campaign Director of Domestic Policy Task  
Force on Health and Medical Policy  
1970 Democratic National Committee  
Director Study on Congressional Redistricting

Civic Services (Political - continued)

1972 Democratic National Campaign

Member Domestic Policy Task Force on Higher Education

1976 Governor Carter Primary Campaign

Aide to Stu Eizenstat

Democratic National Campaign

Deputy Director, Issues and Policies

## The Pell Position

1. Impact. The impact on the country of the Humanities Endowment is far less than the Arts -- despite some successes in program areas (The Adams Chronicles). This is just the reverse of the situation when the enabling legislation for Arts and Humanities was being developed. Humanities leaders had the clearest and most articulate voice. It took the addition of the Humanities to bring the Arts along -- and into legislation.

Why is impact so lacking? One main reason involves State programs

In Arts -- from beginning, State Arts Councils were established. Appointed by governors, emanating from States -- getting funds from State legislatures ( A total of only \$4 mil. for all States ten years ago -- now more than \$60 mil.) State Arts councils bring the Arts to the grass roots. All groups in the Arts if non-profit are eligible. And the State Councils have been responsible for rapid growth of Community Councils -- from a handful, to over 750, growing all the time -- again at Grass Roots.

In Humanities -- State committees operate in all States. Their leaders are appointed by Berman. They in turn appoint their committee members. It is a laying on of hands. State Committee program is limited -- it prescribes State "themes"; many humanities groups outside of specific theme areas are not eligible for funds in a given year. State committees get not a penny in State funds... there is no community humanities movement (as in the Arts.)

In sum -- The Humanities State program is Washington-based, limited, primarily academically oriented -- NEH says it is to be led by "academic humanists" -- gets no State funds, does not enlist involvement with State legislatures.

No wonder, it is lacking in impact -- and this is the program Berman defended absolutely all last summer. Mounted major campaign.

A result: Arts Endowment has 50 potential critics in the States -- it is a yeasty situation, good for constructive change. Berman has 50 friends in the States -- no opposition. They are all his people.

All this lends substance to great uneasiness about Berman for another four years. It lends substance to charges that he is egocentric, arbitrary, does not brook criticism, runs a one-man show, gives relatively little power to his Council -- his 26 private-citizen advisors.

In sum again -- all this lends substance to a serious questioning of both his JUDGMENT and his ABILITY to conduct a broad-based program which can have a major impact on improving the quality of life.



In sum: Lack of proper safeguards -- lack of monitoring of programs --  
lack of accountability... Questionable practices all through.

### THE GAO REPORT

A two-month study -- an indication of some serious administrative problems.

In 1974, GAO did a routine study of Humanities. It found:

	Late Expenditure reports (required from grantees to detail use of Fed. \$\$\$)	Late Narrative Reports (Required to tell how \$\$\$ are spent)
1974	60	93
1975	273	291

This three to four-fold increase, despite GAO recommendation to improve a year earlier.

NEH does not withhold funds in cases of late reports, and renewal requests.  
(Berman is reported to be changing this rapidly.)

A list of grantees late in submitting reports is prepared only once a year.  
Thus reports can be up to a year late, before being pinpointed.

Monitoring procedures governing cash advances to grantees appeared very lax.

For large cash advances -- over \$100,000 -- similar laxity appeared.  
No itemized monthly budget for the grant period is required,  
and no itemized monthly expenditure report in cases of large grants. GAO implies that can benefit greatly when they have more cash than immediately needed -- the Govt. loses because no longer has interest coming on unspent \$\$\$.

A spot check showed one grantee got \$100,000 plus an added \$50,000 when no use had been made of the first \$100,000. The file showed no explanation of approval of the added \$50,000.

Only in November, 1975 -- after initial Pell criticism -- did Humanities begin a study of national needs in Humanities and the impact of the present program... They are thus only starting to examine something they should have had ongoing all along.

In these circumstances, how can they argue their impact is good, bad or indifferent?

State Programs: No guidelines for accountability required. Very lax monitoring... Can be continued from year to year without full report on programs and results each year.





## THE CRITICS

In the States: Most vocal critics, but representing and speaking for others, are Texas and Missouri.

Critique: NEH and Berman in particular is unbending, unwilling to compromise, conducts a limited and elitist and exclusive program. 11 States have combined Arts and Humanities Councils -- Berman has shunned any connections with the Humanities side of these.

In a  
nutshell!

Donald Homuth, State Senator in North Dakota, writes: "The Arts Councils' commitment to public participation is strong with many programs initiated at a local level. It is not academically dominated. A recent jump in the State appropriation from \$10,000 to \$67,000 indicates recognition by the State of the values of the art program. None of these attributes are to be found in the Humanities program."

Among groups: Many groups -- outside the large, prestigious Ivy-League-type institutional base -- are excluded or receive little help. Examples: The American Association of State Colleges and Universities. They feel Berman is arbitrary and difficult, that he is not interested in the grass roots. The Community College people indicate similar disenchantment.

The Folk Arts Constituency -- a growing grass roots group, concerned with indigenous American culture. Berman, they find, arbitrary, cold, indifferent.

The University Presses. They have had long-standing problems with Berman. He is now "studying" their needs. They find Berman tricky, untrustworthy, bent on feathering his own nest.

(I believe we could find witnesses to testify here in all these areas. The main thrust would be that the Berman program is narrowly elitist, and not getting out to the people.)

Individuals: Hannah Gray, Provost of Yale and Mrs. Rockefeller came to see you before Steve's tragedy... Robt. Goldwin, at the White House, told me these were the only two out of 26 Council members who voiced criticisms and that they had some praise as well for Berman's work.

I have since spoken to Dr. Leslie Koltai, Chancellor Superintendent of Los Angeles Community College. He is a critic.



THE CRITICS (Continued)

Dr. Koltai said there were first and second class Council members in Berman's set-up. He said Berman was secretive, cold, non-receptive, elitist, and that the relations with his staff were not good.

HE SAID HE HAD NOT BEEN CONTACTED BY GOLDWIN -- nor had two other Council members whom he identified as critical:  
Dr. Leslie Fishel, President of Heidelberg College in Ohio., and  
Dr. Arthur Peterson, Chairman of the Dept. of Politics and Government at Ohio Wesleyan.

Also: Hans Rosenhaupt, President of Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation at Princeton.

Rosenhaupt contacted us on his own.

He characterizes Berman as mediocre -- a far cry from predecessors Keeney or Edgerton to a lesser degree. He underscores Berman's ego -- says he gives little heed to his Council. He says Berman has a "Louis XIV attitude."

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation has severed its earlier relationships with the Endowment, and has charged that the Endowment is not making good use of its funds. (He said he would be willing to testify.)

In sum again -- overlooking program criticisms for a moment, all views we are receiving which criticize Berman present an almost unanimous character assessment.

Elitist, indrawn, seeking self-power, arbitrary, and uncompromising... NOT THE LEADER FOR THIS PROGRAM.



## Talking Points

### State Humanities Programs

I... Only 20% of total funding

II... But the part that relates particularly to grass roots development

III... Immense Success of Arts programs in States... The Federal-State PARTNERSHIP... Direct Involvement with State governments...  
Examples: State funds for arts from \$4 to \$60 million  
in ten years  
development of over 1,000 community councils

IV... DECENTRALIZATION OF AUTHORITY.

The Federal-State partnership on the Arts side creates a healthy balance -- 50 potential ~~organizations~~ critics in State governments

Quote from your statement at November hearings:

V... The benefits of the Humanities, ~~being~~ the moral and ethical values, the values which serve to translate knowledge into wisdom -- these belong in the mainstream of the political process, not on the sidelines... Not in the ivory towers.

We are talking about the democratic process of government  
It is based on involvement, participation.

The Arts have a political impact on the country, as a result of the State Arts Council movement

The Humanities shun this direct involvement. They seem to feel that the political process is somehow demeaning, degrading.

Berman has called the Senate bill "wholly unacceptable."

"A program of state humanities committees such as the present one, while it may have advantages, still carries ~~the~~ with it the problems of the appointing by some Federal official of chosen people within the state who must pay very close attention to a Washington base. It is like a laying on of hands..."

Now this program began when the Humanities Endowment -- not some other agency, the Humanities Endowment -- asked a small group of people, two, three, four, five, to form a committee <sup>in each state.</sup> They were selected by the Endowment. They were hand-picked. And they, in turn, recommended others until they had their committee established... And each committee made up its own particular regulations regarding membership. And it was a self-perpetuating body, emanating from a Washington base, a Washington source.

Berman may say that the Senate urged the Humanities Endowment to undertake state programs in just the manner he has been conducting them -- i.e. on "public policy issues." He made this allegation in the private letter he wrote to Brademas and Quie -- and may repeat it. He bases it on Congressional urging to develop "public programs" in the Humanities and on a definition addition for the Humanities (in 1970) which says that they should be concerned with their relevance to the "current conditions of national life."

If Berman makes this allegation, you should point out, he is WRONG on these counts:

1. In 1967 reauthorization hearings "public programs" were discussed. They were described as focusing around historical societies, around media programs. They were envisioned as including -- ~~and~~ the concepts developed -- libraries, community colleges, museums, university extension services, and historical societies.  
(House report of 1970 -- pre-Berman)
2. Initially, in the 1967 hearings, these public programs were presented as involving local, regional, and state activities. In cooperative efforts to broaden the base of the humanities.
3. In 1968 Senate Report, the language draws a clear parallel between the success of the State Arts agencies, (even then) and the contemplated development of similar Humanities programs.
4. The definition addition regarding the relevance of the Humanities was approved in Senate-House conference in 1970. It was not in the Senate bill -- it was in the House bill. The Senate approved.
5. The relevance of the Humanities is highly important -- but in no way, did either House seek to limit the application of this relevance.  
That is a clear distortion of the facts, if Berman implies it.
6. The Congress urged the adoption of "public programs" so that they would have the broadest possible value, and that they would include the broadest spectrum of the humanities community.

If Berman does make this charge, I recommend you take him to task...

for not knowing his facts  
for presenting a distorted view.



WHEREAS, surveys, public demand and increasing private support and participation indicate that citizen involvement with the arts is strong and growing; and

WHEREAS, continued growth of the arts in quantitative and qualitative ways can no longer be sustained by traditional support resources; and

WHEREAS, the arts are an essential element in providing the opportunity for quality environment;

NACO URGES THAT:

. That counties recognize the arts as an essential service, equal in importance to other essential services, and help to make the arts available to all their citizens,

. That every county be encouraged to establish a public agency specifically concerned with the arts,

. That the physical appearance of the county, its architectural heritage and its amenities, be acknowledged as a resource to be nurtured,

. That counties should be encouraged to establish a percentage of the total costs of every county construction budget to be set aside for the purchase or commission of works of art,

. That counties working together with the public at large shall help to effect a new national goal; "That no American shall be deprived of the opportunity to experience the beauty in life by barrier of circumstance, income, background, remoteness or race."

Adopted by the National Association of Counties  
41st Annual Conference  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
June 30, 1976

	Fiscal 1974	Fiscal 1975	Fiscal 1976
Appropriations	\$ 60,775,000	\$ 74,750,000	\$ 82,000,000
Non-federal funds generated	\$ 67,500,000	\$ 78,400,000	\$ 85,000,000
Program	48,000,000	\$ 56,400,000	\$ 60,400,000
Treasury	19,500,000	\$ 22,000,000	\$ 24,600,000

If Berman says that State Arts councils are subject to political change -- and flux, you should make these points.

(Note -- he has noted such changes and sometimes resulting problems in his letter to Brandemas and Quie, and has cited New York, where there has been a change from Joan Davidson, and California, where Gov. Brown almost curtailed the State arts program...)

- But --
1. Isn't change a strength of our democratic process, not a weakness?
  2. Does Dr. Berman recommend no change in State governments?
  3. Is he saying he is opposed to the principles of democracy?
  4. The point is that New York State supports the arts with more than any other State government. This is the result of hard work and a full entrance into the democratic process by the Arts?
  5. Does Dr. Berman think that his Council should never be rotated?

CHANGE IS THE REAL STRENGTH OF DEMOCRACY.

A LACK OF CHANGE MEANS ONE CONTINUING AUTHORITY...

A LACK OF CHANGE IS WHAT EXISTS UNDER A DISTATORSHIP.