

MARSHALL ISLANDS

TO: Roger Hagler, Director
Peace Corps/Ponape

FROM: Fred Ramp

I was very disappointed and even depressed to hear that the forthcoming lawyer for Ponape is no longer forthcoming. As I explained to you, my problem is that I am doing legal work that would take two lawyers to do well. One set of activities centers around the District Legislature and all of the boards and committees which are necessarily a part of it, and the other set of activities involves the TT Judiciary and the legal training program which I am handling for the Judiciary. The fact that a lawyer is no longer expected here in the near future brings ever closer the day when I or someone else will have to decide which of the two functions I should perform and which I should withdraw from.

Maybe a few words on why I permitted myself to get in this bind are in order. When I first came to Ponape, my assignment was with the Legislature. From the day in August when I arrived until about last April I was more or less ignored by the leadership of the Legislature and most of the members. I suppose there are many reasons for this. The primary one I think is that Ponapeans are very hesitant and slow about accepting outsiders. Soon after I arrived, I sensed that I was not going to be used very extensively by the Legislature and began looking around for other work. It was at this time that I met then Associate Justice Burnett and Phil Evans, the Ponape Public Defender. The three of us began talking about legal training and gradually devised the program which is now in operation. Since I was doing very little work for the Legislature, I had almost all of my time free to work on the training program with Phil Evans. Things went well until the end of January, 1971, when Phil had an unexpected heart attack and died. That left me as the only person working with the training program (Judge Burnett had earlier been promoted to Chief Justice of the High Court and moved to Saipan). The

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situation was critical but not hopeless, since a total of four or five lawyers had been requested for Ponape through various departments and agencies. (One FC lawyer, one or two OEO lawyers, one District Attorney, and one Public Defender to replace Phil) Out of such a relatively large number of lawyers, Judge Burnett and I expected to get at least one or two interested in working with the program and the Peace Corps lawyer to take over my duties with the Legislature. None of this help has materialized and the dilemma still exists.

Not only does the dilemma still exist but it is in a much more extreme form now since the Legislature has grown to fully accept me and use me extensively. With that acceptance has come the inevitable involvement with many of the boards and committees which are a part of this community. As my involvement with the Legislature and the community has increased, the quality of my work with the training program has decreased. Along with this has come a creeping feeling among my students that this is yet another program begun with big promises and high hopes which will disintegrate into nothing. They have invested a year of hard work into this idea. The program can not possibly survive as it is. Unless I get a replacement for the District Legislature soon, I am going to have to either discontinue the training program indefinitely or withdraw from working with the District Legislature. Either way, I think it will hurt the District somewhat, hurt my relationship with Ponape a great deal, and possibly hurt Peace Corps. Let me give you a more detailed description of some of the elements of this problem.

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. The District Legislature has two regular sessions each year lasting for about one month each. During each session and for about one week before and one week after each session, working with the Legislature is a full-time job.
2. Between sessions there seems to be an ever increasing amount of work to be done with committees of the Legislature. As an example, the last session of the Legislature ended about the first of June and another session has just begun. During

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this time I have worked the equivalent of two full weeks with the Interim Committee, I have traveled to Kusaie with the Resources and Development Committee, and I have traveled to Japan with a special committee investigating economic development. In addition, I have done numerous small tasks for the Speaker and various members of the Legislature.

3. Members of the Legislature are also government employees and on various boards and committees and through my contact with legislators I have been drawn into working with many of these boards and committees. Among them are:

- a. Foreign Investment Board
- b. Ponape Housing Authority
- c. Alcoholic Beverage Control Board
- d. Ponape Transportation Authority.

4. I also find myself spending a large amount of time working with miscellaneous groups and individuals. Among them:

- a. Private businesses
- b. Cooperatives
- c. Private Micronesian clients
- d. Municipal councils, particularly the Kolonia Town Council
- e. Americans with a problem and no place else to go

5. In addition I work with the Congress of Micronesia. So far this has amounted to only working the regular sessions and a relatively small amount of committee work between regular sessions.

6. My work with the Judiciary consists of the following:

- a. The legal training program meets twice weekly for three hours per class. Preparation for each class takes a minimum of six to eight hours. In addition, I average another four to eight hours per week on organizational and administrative problems and four to eight hours per week advising my students about cases they are handling.
- b. I also do a small amount of work with the two District Court Judges, Judge Carl and Judge Kohler,

involving mainly research and solving sticky courtroom procedural problems which constantly arise.

- c. Occasionally I also do research work for the High Court Judges.
- d. And finally I am writing a Community Court Judge Handbook for Judge Burnett which hopefully will be translated into all of the major languages.

**BRIEF HISTORY AND PRESENT STATUS
OF THE LEGAL TRAINING PROGRAM**

As I mentioned earlier, the program was devised by Judge Burnett, Phil Evans, and myself. Classes began October 5, 1970, and have run continuously since then. The program was designed mainly to train Ponapean Trial Assistants who are presently handling the duties of a lawyer though without the formal training. Various sources were tapped for funding including the District Legislature and U.S. grant funds, but nothing could be had. Eventually Judge Burnett managed to free up some Judiciary funds for the program and that has been our only funding source to date. In Oct., 1970, Judge Burnett became Chief Justice and later moved to Saipan. He gradually moved into the role of our benefactor and sponsor and ceased being an active participant in the program. Late in Jan., 1971, Phil Evans died and since then I have been the sole administrator and instructor.

We have eight students in the program:

- 1. [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] - [REDACTED]
- 2. [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] 1
- 3. [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] a -
- 4. [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] 1
- 5. [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] - [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

7. [REDACTED]

8. [REDACTED];

[REDACTED]

To date we have completed courses in criminal law, criminal procedure, legal research, legal writing, torts, agency, and contracts. Attached is the original proposal for the program and an amended curriculum which I devised last April.

Lyle Richmond, the District Attorney in Truk, and Judge Brown, the Associate Justice of the High Court in Palau, are both considering duplicating our program in those two districts. In addition, the Director of the Community College of Micronesia has approached me about the possibility of our program associating with CCM as an extension course.

cc: Judge Harold W. Burnett
Larry Johnson, Director, Peace Corps/Micronesia