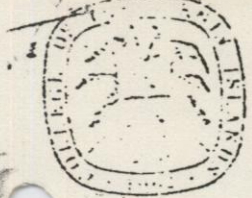


LEGAL TRAINING AT THE COLLEGE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

(Board of Trustees Meeting, July 14, 1978)

Concerning the subject of legal training at the College, the Board of Trustees discussed the legislative resolution in the light of a visit which they had made the previous day to the Law School of New York University. During that visit, the Dean of the Law School had shared with members of the Board problems and concerns facing an institution of higher learning considering the establishment of a law school. After further discussion at this Board meeting, it was the consensus of the members that the College was not yet ready for graduate level training in this professional field and the position contained in the letter of May 15 was confirmed.



# COLLEGE of the VIRGIN ISLANDS

May 15, 1978

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Senator Elmo Roebuck  
President of the Legislature  
Legislature Building  
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00801

Dear Senator Roebuck:

Pursuant to Resolution No. 923 of the 12th Legislature, the College of the Virgin Islands has initiated a study of the "feasibility and costs of providing legal training at the College. Such training may include coursework sufficient for the achieving of a Juris Doctorate, or 'pre-law' coursework which would qualify the student to enter a law school at a College or university on the mainland United States".

The findings we have with regard to pre-law coursework are positive. After consultation with other universities and with the concerned professional organizations, we are satisfied that the current curriculum of the College provides a sound basis for the study of law after graduation from one of the College's four-year programs.

The current thinking of those concerned with law school admissions and with the administration of law schools is to encourage a wider compared to a more narrow pre-law preparation. Training in political science or history is common, but students trained in the humanities, including philosophy or English, have been equally successful in gaining law school admission and succeeding once admitted.

The College presently has a social sciences major which provides one route towards law school admission. We also have a humanities major and an English major which can be pursued towards this end. In addition, a number of our students major in business administration and then continue into law school. Additional specific funding for these programs is not requested because they are part of our present regular programs. However, the strength of these programs depends on successful funding of the College as a whole.

Turning to the question of the establishment in the immediate future of a law school at the College of the Virgin Islands, we have carried out a preliminary study, but an in-depth appraisal will require more time.

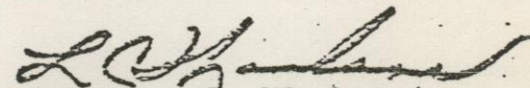
Some of our tentative observations and concerns are summarized below. We are not presently certain that a sufficiently large student applicant pool exists to justify the expense at this time of establishing such a program. Many of the students who might be attracted to the program from the Virgin Islands stand a reasonably good chance of being admitted to one of the better mainland law schools, and we are concerned that we might not have a sufficient base of qualified students on which to build.

It is true that the establishment of a law school is less expensive than many other graduate professional programs. Our studies have shown that many law schools have recently been opened in the United States in response to the economics involved. High tuition and comparatively low operating expenses have combined to make the establishment of law schools attractive. However, for the College of the Virgin Islands to establish a quality program-- and we would not wish to have any other kind--we would still be facing high start-up and operating costs. Given the financial pressures being experienced in the Virgin Islands, we are not certain that we could fully justify such expenditures at this time.

However, as indicated above, the 90 days available to us has not given us time to reach more firm conclusions and we will undertake to continue our investigation of this matter if we are requested to do so.

With best wishes and personal regard,

Sincerely yours,

  
Lawrence C. Wanlass  
President