

April 20, 1972

James Grant, Esq.
President
Overseas Development Council
1717 Mass. Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Jim:

As you may know, I have been assigned since June 1971 as Special Assistant to Rod O'Connor for narcotics control programs in East Asia. At the outset there was considerable activity involved in organizing the U.S. team, framing overall guidelines for field action and helping to get projects going in such countries as Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and elsewhere. At this point the principal creative work has been done, and we are now in the field implementation phase in which the action is really located overseas, as it should be.

The Washington end has become increasingly inactive, at least on the AID side, and I have asked Rod O'Connor to transfer me back to Saigon if there is suitable work to be done there in some non-drug field. George Jacobson has given me an interim reply indicating a desire to get me out there and stating that a consideration of an appropriate job is underway. I presume that is what will happen, but it is chancy since at the same time they are cutting some 300 spaces from the USAID/CORDS complement.

If nothing works out there, I am seriously considering applying for early retirement and moving on to something else. If I retired I would be financially relatively independent but would still have the challenge of finding constructive work to do, without which I certainly would not be fully satisfied.

It occurred to me to write to you to inquire whether you have any ideas as to lines of activity here or abroad that would be constructive and interesting, and suitable for someone who would not need to have extensive financial remuneration but who would definitely want to feel he was doing something vital and interesting.

I suppose this might include working on activities conducted by some of the myriad foundations. The Far East, India and the Arab world are my principal areas of experience, and having no family responsibilities I would be in a position to go anywhere to do anything with a maximum of flexibility. Knowing your great scope of interests and familiarity with the overseas development picture, it occurred to me that you might know of something interesting in the general field. A former close associate of mine, Worf Ladejinsky, is working for the World Bank in New Delhi where I spent 2 1/2 years with our Embassy. That type of assignment might be very interesting, as only one example. In any case, any comment you could make would be highly valued.

With best personal regards.

Sincerely,

Ogden Williams
Special Assistant to the Coordinator