

talk - talk - Talk...  
Pro-American!

# St. Vincent Update

Guns-Invasion-  
Controversy!

St. Vincent

Grenadines

Grenada

Happy Halloween & Happy Thanksgiving !!

October '83

Please bear with me as I try to put together the October Edition of the internationally famous St. Vincent Update. We had a busy weekend and I'm fighting a cold (or a hangover). So if I appear fuzzy, please be understanding.

Last month we described our various travels about the island and this month is more of the same. Its hard to believe that time is passing so quickly, and That must be due to our busy weekends. We made a second attempt to see Soufriere about two weeks ago. We traveled up to Troumaca to visit with a friend (a french agronomist), stay the weekend and try to climb our famous volcano once again. It was a nice weekend but a lousy day to be climbing. As we began our hike we got the first of many 'showers' that dampened our clothes but not our determination to get to the top. One of the most interesting aspects of the climb was the amount of land that is under cultivation on the way up. The farmers in the area pack in all their supplies by donkey and plant on slopes that make the Matterhorn look flat in comparison. As we ~~wound~~ wound our way up the hillsides we passed fields of corn, yams, guava trees, avocado and other fruits and vegetables. To me it looked like a tough way to make a living. As we approached the top, the heavens once again opened up with a welcoming bath. But we did see the crater this, if only for a few minutes before it REALLY began to rain and the winds to blow. WOW! it was like a hurricane and we were actually shivering in our well-soaked clothes (kind of a nice feeling, actually.). Well, a canoe would have been the best transport down (if we had had one) so we slipped, slid and swam our way back down. The view was spectacular on the top. A 500 foot lava dome wells up from the volcano crater and with all the rain it was steaming and sputtering. We plan to try again (during the dry season).

Next day we took a short hike up to a beautiful area of tropical rain forest (even had pine trees!) and managed to remain dry (of course it was a perfect day-our luck!). Monday we crawled out of bed early (5am) to catch transport back into Kingstown. That in itself is an experience-just envision twenty people piled into the back of a Toyota pickup and you get the picture!

We managed to find rest in the next two weeks though things on our sister island, Grenada, got pretty unrestful. Though its probably old news by now, Grenada had another coup (the first one was in 1979). In the "change of regimes, the old prime minister was 'shot' and several other cabinet members. The island was placed under a 24 hr curfew. We just found out today that two Peace Corps volunteers who were visiting there have just managed to get off the island. The U.S. has an aircraft carrier there to help in the evacuations of the 900-1000 Americans on Grenada. Politically things are hot here. We're waiting now to see what will happen.

Back to weekends. We just got back from another one spent in Troumaca to celebrate the completion of service of the french agronomist 'tour of duty' here on St. Vincent. They had a big fete, Vincentian style. Curried goat, cabbage and potatoe salads and, of course, plenty of rum and loud music. The transport problem (you can only go up on saturday and not come back until monday morning) was solved by renting a vehicle. We packed seven people into

a Toyota Corolla! Originally we had chartered a van but the guy backed out on the deal at the last minute (he had a three day rental which brought in more income than our one-day rental). So, I rented the car, packed us all in, and with several rum & cokes under my belt, I cruised out of Kingstown driving on the left with a steering wheel mounted on the right side. Makes for tricky shifting for someone used to using his right hand (I'm glad I had the rum...!) Anyway, we made it there and back safely and also played ambulance for a Rasta who had a run-in with a truck with his motorcycle (he's OK and very lucky!). Not a bad weekend.

As for more domestic matters.. my job is completely up in the air now. Its a long story but the basics are that I might be transferred to the Labour dept. (though I have yet to find anyone who can tell me why) or I might get this marketing intelligence unit off the ground for the St. Vincent Marketing Corporation. In either case, no one seems to know just what is going on (including me) Deb is busy at the hospital, as usual. One of her assistants is on night duty so she's only had the 'rookie' to deal with this month. I'll let her fill in the details... Stateside, my sister Holly was married, my sister Jeni was married, Debbie's friend, Vikkie, was married, my cousin Lane was married, Deb's sister Karen and sister-in-law Gilda are both expecting (sounding like a soap opera, isn't it!). All this in just the last month! Glad we're coming home at Christmas, when things are 'quieter!...!

Yes we will be in Salt Lake on Dec. 14. Thence to Meridian on December 16 and back to SLC on the 23rd to stay until Jan. 4. The ambiguities in our travel arrangements are enough to fill a book. But we are trying to work out all the hassels and, even if we have to swim, we'll be there to give those who are around, long, boring yarns about Peace Corps life in St. Vincent...

As we enter our second year of life away from home (already!?) and as we come upon the Thanksgiving season, we are thankful to God for so many blessings: Family, friends (old & new), and the privilege to be a U.S. citizen, health, full bellies, a roof over our heads and clothes on our backs. We ask you to be mindful of the millions of poor around the world and to keep us in your prayers so that we may serve those who were not as fortunate to have as much as we have. God Bless you all.

Well, I've managed to hold this letter up so long that things have really heated up next door in Grenada. Though we are 60 miles from Grenada, we were shocked to hear Americans had "invaded" — I refused to believe it thinking it was only more alarming propaganda. Well neither Pete or I were happy about it and even expected some anti-American sentiment to arise here in St. Vincent. Much to my surprise, Vincentians think Reagan is a hero. The only negative comments come from ex-patriots (French, Belgian, British, Canadians, Peace Corps Vol. and U.S.A.I.D. workers) and a few more "worldly" Vincentians. We are relieved to hear that our two P.C. volunteers are safe in Barbados — quite a bit of wondering was going on. The island seemed to come to a stop while everyone tuned their radios to Radio FREE Grenada and later to the radio the Americans set-up.

Well, enough for now... I'm sure you'll hear all the news about Grenada in your TIMES and NEWSWEEK. Vincentians say nothing like that could ever happen here on St. Vincent — most Vincentians say that... others say the injustice and oppression will lead to worse than that. Well Pete and I pray the "wealth" of possessions, education and opportunities will become more "evenly distributed" so that it will not. Please pray likewise.

Hope you're all well.

Peace.

Debbie & Pete

