

# 21/11/83

Still counting down and I'm feeling impatient to go. Just 22 days now but it seems forever. We need to get organized on Christmas gifts and odds and ends. Job wise my footwork is done now I just have to wait. Wait for the transfer to go through. Wait for the office to be set up over at Marketing Corporation. I really doubt if much can be accomplished in such a short time. The wheels always turn slowly and I'm just going to kick back and relax, now that I've been so busy over the past few months in setting up the M.I.U.. The only thing on the docket is that the US Dept of Agriculture is coming in to do a pre-feasibility cost study on doing the crop census in St Vincent. I will be involved in that in one way or another.

This week has a couple of high points to to it. First, my birthday Wednesday will be a nice opportunity to get out of the house for a while and have a meal at either the Chinese restaurant or the French restaurant. I may take the day off just to catch some rays and read. A quiet time for me. This weekend is our Thanksgiving party at Dibba's and if the weather is good, it should be a nice time. Two 25 lb turkeys and a host of other various side dishes. Sunday will be talking to Mom and Dad (and Gram and Gramps we hope) and I can at least verify flight itinerary and ascertain whether or not the money I cabled up has reached my bank account. The week following I should be involved in the USAID study. Which puts us around Dec. 5th which is our first anniversary in St Vincent and a major milestone in itself. In some ways it's so hard to believe that we've been here so long. 13 months away from home.

In many ways the change of job is a Godsend. It gives me something to look forward to returning to. In any other case, it would be difficult to come back. The heat, the feeling of being alien, the dogs(!) mosquitoes and ants it can really burn you out especially when you know of a place where those things aren't a bother. I suppose that dogs are still number one on my list of hassles. Uninterrupted sleep is an unknown commodity lately and I'm plenty vexed at Maxine for placing her pups just outside our bedroom window. There seems to be no place to find peace anymore. No quiet evenings relaxing. No nights rest. You can tell how it's affecting me from the tone of this entry. I'm tired and touchy. And less willing to deal with

the demands of third world living. Deb and I have even considered moving but Mrs Douyon is much too nice to pull out on. She's become a good friend and saying 'goodbye' would be much too painful. Our lives have settled down now. We have our routines and expectations and though life isn't free and easy (we're still constrained by our histories) it is tolerable and happy in the main. Sure we still feel too constrained, too different, to really fit in. We're still hassled by school kids and local "toughs" who get enjoyment from hassling white people but the impact on us is not so great. We shrug it off for what it is, mindless discrimination. But the alternatives carry equal anxiety for us. Can we cope with readjusting to the US life. My visit to Barbados gave me a taste of the US in microcosm and I'm not sure I liked it. I will seek refuge in our folks houses. Watching tv, skiing and walking about. But even 22 days seems too long to that experience. But the nice thing about the journal is that the entries compressed time. I need to live out the minutes and hours and days until we step on the plane in St Vincent on December 14th.

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