

6/7/83

Wow! time has flown. I'm still reeling from the intensely pleasurable sailing trip but also feeling a squeeze from the commitments I have made. The machinery is in place, I just need to get on with it.

The agribusiness training was interesting and may have some nice payoffs once I can get some other things out of the way (most notably the CIDA manpower project which is now a week late!) Basically, the training provided the analytical tools (a manual) to assess the feasibility of agribusiness projects. Biggest stumbling block to Third World development is not technical (most outside agencies are pounding at the door to supply technical expertise) but rather it is motivation & initiative that provides the bottlenecks to development. This however isn't given the regard it is due. People are so anxious to provide assistance that they don't look at the socio-cultural constraints. I have been preoccupied with just this issue. How do you develop entrepreneurial drive in a country where oppression rather than expression has been the rule? How do you educate Vincentians to take the responsibility and initiative in their own development? Especially in a situation where outside agencies are more than willing to do it for them. My stance of refusing to do anything for Vincentian development may be too pat, too naïve. A certain amount of work must be done initially in order to get the ball rolling. The problem comes when the expectation is developed to keep it rolling. Our role as PCVs falls in between. Initiating but also finding a local person to carry the project after implementation. To my knowledge, not much emphasis has been placed on this. Not many development agencies work toward their own obsolescence. PC is close and actually may succeed in this respect on a few projects but this new emphasis on CBI and small business (and technical) development may create some unforeseen problems. I don't want to perpetuate dependence, but on the other hand, a society that lacks initiative is not going to initiate much development on its own at the grassroots level. The Gov't may do so to appear concerned with development or just to get some dollars to help with foreign exchange. But essentially, we have a development catch-22. The agribusiness focus is the correct one but then we are faced with finding those folks who want to start small to medium-sized agribusinesses. That's the catch. And if my experience is any indication, disseminating that info to those who need it is a slow, hit and miss process. My idea, for what it is worth, is to centralize that small business development effort. A Small Business Development Center would be ideal but both DevCo & Min of Home Affairs deal with that type of development yet haven't been successful to any large extent. But this option, agribusiness development, is a new and exciting alternative to the frustration of working here in finance. I plan to explore some of the possibilities.

For some unknown reason, I suddenly feel better about being here and working here. There hasn't been any awesome changes in my daily routine, just the subtle change of attitude. More positive perhaps? It's been a long time coming. I'm still not gung-ho on this job description project. It's too amorphous and too dependent on others. But a more task-oriented approach to smaller things might make life more bearable around here. I'm still teetering on the brink of change and still too pessimistic about how this government and culture function to say that things will be smooth

sailing from now on, but I'm cautiously optimistic about my current feelings.



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