

Development in Belize

1960 - 1980

Initiatives at the State and Community Levels

By

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In Memory of Clarence Borland, MSc.

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Contents

EDITORIAL	i
Herman Byrd	
FOREWORD	ii
Joseph O. Palacio	
CHAPTER 1	
THE BACKGROUND	I
1.1 The Study	
1.2 The Country	
1.2.1 Territorial dispute	
1.2.2 Ethnic Relations	
1.2.3 Administrative Units	
1.2.4 Geographical Units	
CHAPTER 2	
INITIATIVES AT THE STATE LEVEL	8
2.1 Introduction	
2.2 Central Government Planning	
2.3 Private Sector	
2.4 Social/Community Development	
2.5 Cultural Integration	
CHAPTER 3	
MICRO-LEVEL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	20
3.1 Introduction	
3.2 Case Study No. 1: The Use of Mixed Resources	
3.3 Case Study No. 2: Milpa Cultivation	
3.4 Case Study No. 3: Fishing Cooperatives	
3.5 Case Study No. 4: Sugar Agroindustry	
CHAPTER 4	
DEVELOPMENT/UNDERDEVELOPMENT - LESSONS LEARNED	47
4.1 Introduction	
4.2 Indications of Development/Underdevelopment	
4.3 Linkage between Macro/Micro Levels	
4.4 Towards the True Enclave	
POSTSCRIPT	52
REFERENCES	55

I. Abbreviations

II. Major Plans and Projections for Development
During the Period 1964-1983

III. Major Crops Produced in Select Years between 1970-1984

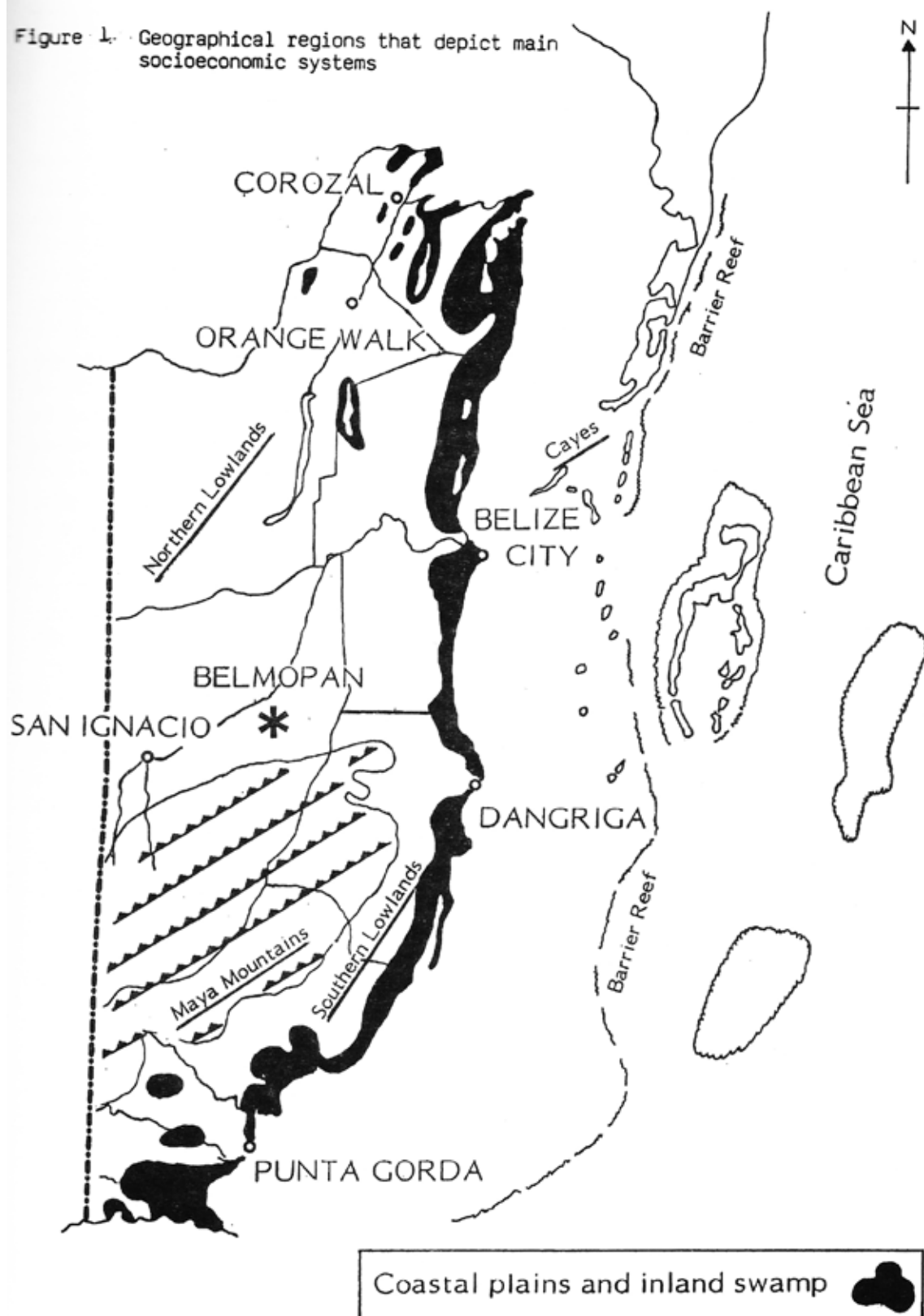
IV. Marketing Board Purchases of Various Commodities

V. Marketing Board Purchases from Toledo District and the Country

TABLES

1. Percentage Distribution of Ethnic Groups by District 1980 Census	3
2. Area and Population of Districts	6
3. Proposed Allocations of Capital Expenditure	9
4. Some Parastatal Agencies by Year of Establishment	11
5. Percentage Distribution of the GDP in Select Years Between 1970 and 1980	14
6. Education, Health, and Social Services As Percentages of Total Expenditure in Select Years	16
7. Major Trends in Social/Community Development	18
8. Outline of Garifuna Village Economy	22
9. Membership and Assets of Fishing Cooperatives in 1986	32
10. Sources Contributing to the Fishing Cooperative Movement	37
11. Main Actors in the Sugar Industry	39
12. Main Characteristics Among Socioeconomic Systems	48

Figure 1. Geographical regions that depict main socioeconomic systems



EDITORIAL

In all former colonies the few years before independence are crucial in laying the groundwork for political independence and the economic growth that followed. The period of such reckoning for Belize was 1960 to 1980. The monograph *Development in Belize 1960 to 1980 - Initiatives at the State and Community Levels* reviews what the government did to start the development process that coincided with independence. The basic patterns that was established then remains thirty years afterwards. The primary contribution of the monograph is to widen the scope of the debate on development. It does so by the theoretical perspective it espouses, the wealth of material it uncovers, and its methods of presentation. For these reasons *Development in Belize 1960 to 1980* is essential reading for students interested in understanding the Belize of the 1960's and beyond.

Originally conceived as part of a regional study by the Consejo Superior de Universidades de Centro America (CSUCA), it is the first study to integrate Belize within a theoretical framework originating from the Central American highlands, more specifically the University of Costa Rica. The study modifies the usefulness to Belize of the enclave society model, which the CSUCA document had originally proposed. Furthermore, it enriches the use of a related idea, the developed/underdeveloped dichotomy, applying it as a framework to understand the underdevelopment of the Toledo District viz. a viz. the rest of the country.

The body of the monograph covers the strategy of the government to initiate development whether through the machinery of central planning, passing laws, and creating several statutory boards; or generating openings on which the private sector could capitalize.

The wealth of data replete with figures from several of the development plans among other sources makes the monograph a gold mine of statistical information for students. This by itself is enough reason to get a copy.

Probably the greatest contribution of the monograph is its use of the case study method to highlight community level information that normally does not find its way into development studies. Throughout the country there are several responses from communities to various shades of the development process. The result is to show the self-initiated activities of peoples and groups even when they did not perceive of state-initiated development as directly influencing their lives. The ethnographic depth of the case studies makes them useful for comparison with other communities in Belize and the Central American Atlantic Coast.

The monograph also breaks ground in the discussion on a sensitive social issue that is often glossed over in must scholarly efforts on Belize - culture, its twofold manifestation through ethnicity and the aesthetic representation of the arts. It shows that the double edged sword of ethnic introspection and forging a common Belizean identity was the pillar of cultural policy within the nationalist movement. This in turn generated an ease in interethnic relation during the 1960's and beyond. The thrust on cultural integration through the sponsorship of massive patriotic events, declaring two ethnic holidays and the National Festival of Arts produced a generation of artistes and technical support groups that have held their own in Belize and abroad.

Development in Belize 1960-1980 goes a long way in answering some basic questions about ourselves at a time when we first called ourselves Belizeans and no longer British Hondurans.

FOREWORD

While a great deal is known about the upheavals that overcame Central America during the decade of the 1980's, there is little known about another crisis that raged along the Atlantic seaboard two decades earlier, starting in Panama (Castro 1983: 115-124) and Costa Rica (Murillo 1988: 93-114) in the 1970's, moving northward through Nicaragua during the early 1980's (Hale 1988: 71-92), and through Honduras (Chavez 1988: 49-70) and Guatemala (Arrivillaga & Gomez 1988: 35-48) in the late 1980's and early 1990's. It was the gradual penetration of residents and business interests from the highlands of the respective countries into the region's last frontier, its Atlantic Coast. Facing acute shortage of land and jobs and lured by new investment opportunities in agroindustries and tourism, thousands descended on the Coast creating strained relations with long term residents - campesinos, laborers, and large landowners alike.

To comprehend the complexity of the crisis the *Consejo Superior de Universidades de Centroamerica* (CSUCA) launched in 1983 a research project entitled "State and Development of the Atlantic Coast of Central America: 1960-1980". The countries participating were Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize. The project was designed in the highlands (specifically in San Jose, Costa Rica) which has the largest population of the region. The conceptualization of the project was nourished during a symposium of academics from the participating countries held at the University of Costa Rica in 1983.

The main goal of the research was to review state initiatives toward national integration between 1960 and 1980 and the response of local residents. The state initiative included central government planning, attracting private investment, and promoting social and com-

munity development. The focus on the coastal residents looked at their experience as laborers, peasants, and self-employer, and especially their attempts at group mobilization in response to the incursion.

If the Atlantic coastal region was little known in the highlands, Belize was virtually a blank slate. Our reason for participating in the project, therefore, was to inform colleagues from the other countries about Belize and ultimately to share the Belize data as reference material for other students. Besides, we saw our involvement as pioneering the insertion of Belize into research efforts from Central America. Shortly afterwards we were able to recommend Assad Shoman for another research effort resulting in his *Party Politics in Belize* (1987).

As preface to state and community initiatives on development from 1960 to 1980, it is necessary to summarize major developments during the postwar period in Belize. Essentially during this period, Belizeans sought to divest themselves from the apron strings of the mother country. Below, I highlight what had taken place in the political and economic arena a decade or so before 1960.

The political environment had been taken up with the formation of political parties and their participation in general elections after the introduction of adult suffrage in 1954. Since then the Peoples United Party (PUP) under the leadership of George Price assumed ascendancy in political popularity by winning all elections until 1984. Price's nationalist ideology rested on three pillars. One was to discard from Belize all the vestiges of British colonialism and to insert her into the geopolitical framework and interregional trade of the Central American states. The other was allegiance to the principles of Christian democracy which assigned a major role to the third pillar, the private sector as the engine of economic growth.

On the strength of these pillars, his unbounded charisma, and successive election victories Price was able to dominate the political culture of Belize for over forty years. Reinforcing the economy to provide for the public well being was the corollary of the political movement toward independence. The government struggled to downplay forestry, which up to 1959 was the backbone of the colonial economy. In its place they promoted agriculture.

The Colonial Office had often argued that the small population of the colony had been a main deterrent to develop its ample landmass (See Evans Commission in 1947 and the Downie Report in 1959). While being aware of the need for a larger population, the PUP disagreed with these reports for several reasons including the suggested source of immigrants and their increasing suspicions against British experts and their conclusions about Belize's future (Grant 1976: 210-217). The question gradually narrowed to two alternatives: whether to follow the colonial designs of "importing" people or to have Belizeans themselves engage in their own development leaving some opening for outsiders. Between 1960 and 1980 the government had adopted the latter approach. It became the basis for its policy on open immigration. It also predicated the need to build among all Belizeans a strong national identity.

The above macrolevel issues of decolonization have dominated the literature for the pre-1960 period (see Bolland and Shoman 1977, Dobson 1973, Grant 1976, and Shoman 1987: 194-238). However, there has been very little on what took place in microlevel development up to 1986. There were several small scale efforts, such as benevolent funds initiated by churches and friendly societies, and several efforts of the various ethnic groups. These have remained unknown awaiting much needed

research. More is known about voluntary organizations like the Black Cross nurses that had been active in Belize City since the 1920's (Herrmann 1980:1-9). Similar organizations directed more toward the economic well being of its members like Credit Unions started operations in the Belize and Toledo Districts from 1943. This study provides information on community based initiatives on development after the 1960 period.

The CSUCA Atlantic Coast project was very much a collective effort at the regional as well as the national levels. In Belize we selected a national research team made up of four persons. They were Mr. Dudley Augustine, B.Sc.; Social Development Officer in the then Ministry of Social Services, Labor, and Community Development. He did the research on social and community development. The late Mr. Clarence Borland, M.Sc., who worked in the the Ministry of Economic Development, did research on government planning. Mrs. Myrtle Palacio, B.Sc., owner and director of Glessima Research and Services Limited, worked on the private sector. I headed the research team bringing along the advantage of my own training in anthropology and my institutional affiliation with the University of the West Indies.

A word of *caveat*. The bulk of this study was first written in 1985 and 1986. The Postscript addresses some of the changes since then. I take this opportunity to thank my Central American colleagues especially David Smith as well as the members of the Belize team. Without the cooperation of many persons in Belize this study could not have been done. I am indebted to Mrs. Crystel Straughan and Miss Roxanne Williams who typed the manuscript. Finally my gratitude to *Belizean Studies* for agreeing to publish this monograph.

Joseph O. Palacio
September 1996

CHAPTER 1

The Background

1.1 The Study

The CSUCA project document uses the enclave society paradigm to describe the social and economic formations found in the Atlantic Coast. It makes a distinction between an isolated or marginalized society and an enclave society. Whereas the former implies some form of a deliberately subordinated status the latter refers to an entity with its own autochthonous identity being juxtaposed to another which is different - albeit more powerful. Secondly, the more powerful attempts to impose its hegemony on the smaller. The enclave society paradigm, therefore, predicates several factors. They include the coexistence of two distinct systems, the primacy of social and economic parameters as opening the door to analysis, and the twin forces of hegemony by the dominant society and resistance by the dominated. We decided to be eclectic in applying the concept of enclave society to the Belize segment. Within the country there is no Atlantic region that fits the designation of enclave society as in the other countries.

The whole country has historically been an enclave society. Indeed, it carries the concept to its logical conclusion since as a colony Belize was an Atlantic Coast extension of Britain. The country's pervasive littorality increased its utilitarian value as a colony. Its main exploitable resource - timber - could be cut at short enough distances inland and floated down the rivers to be exported. Besides, up to 1855 when the Trans-Panama railroad was built the Belize City harbor was a major entrepot for goods originating in Britain and other centers in the metropole bound for northern Central America (Woodward 1976: 138-148). There is, of course, the temptation to suggest that the Toledo District comes close to being an enclave

element of Belize. Its geographical isolation and predominant Maya population with a distinct culture are ingredients for the segmentation normally associated with being an enclave. However, the political and economic integration of Toledo with the rest of the country through the pervasive ties of common colonial exploitation (Wilk 1991:54-65) has effectively limited its exclusivity. On the other hand, I find analytically helpful the duality inherent in the enclave concept between parts of the country that are more underdeveloped than others.

I discuss this configuration in Chapter 4 showing that the underdeveloped parts have a symbiotic association with the more developed. Such a viewpoint introduces a rather novel and dynamic framework to understand the overall development process within Belize. Furthermore, I retain the social and economic bias prevalent in the enclave society analysis. It comes alive in the use of case studies in Chapter 3 to spotlight the types of community initiated development. The four case studies are situated in different parts of the country.

As in the other countries, the state initiatives on development in Belize featured a renewed effort at integrating all parts of the country through central government planning together with promoting private sector investment and social and community development. The particularity of Belize is that the period 1960-1980 coincided with the penultimate phase of decolonization, which provided an historic opportunity to build a new society. The nationalist movement seized the opportunity to strive toward a new Belizean society free from the social inequalities immanent in colonialism. Shoman (1973) has argued that the possibilities for social justice were unfortunately negated by the process of decolonization that Belize and the other former British Caribbean territories adapted. However,

the nationalist ideology on creating a new and just society was present in the pre-independence development efforts between 1960 and 1980, even if it quickly lost its currency as local elite groups vied for socioeconomic stratification in post-independent Belize. Such ideology toward the building of a new society was non-existent in the other countries participating in the research with the exception of Nicaragua.

In short, the Belize segment provides data that augment the broad information base on the Atlantic Coast of Central America. It adds qualitative differences to the concept of social enclave. It uses the case study method to graphically highlight community led development about which so little is known. Finally, it introduces the political process of decolonization as being integral to development.

1.2 The Country

There were two essential factors that circumscribed the nature of development taking place in Belize during the 1960-1980 period. They were the territorial dispute with Guatemala and divergent ethnic relations. I discuss these before describing administrative and geographical distinctions of the country.

1.2.1 Territorial Dispute

Unlike the neighboring English speaking Caribbean islands that proceeded into independence merely on the basis of constitutional decolonization, Belize could not do so. Guatemala laid claim to the country. Between 1971-1975 it threatened to invade militarily with the assistance of El Salvador had it not been for the quick and determined response of a British troop airlift (Shoman 1992: 13-31). The result was that after Belize acquired internal self-government in 1964, normally the last step before independence, it could not take that final move for another twenty years. There was the distinct possibility that Belize could exchange British colonialism for Guatemalan colonialism as a result of armed conflict.

The ensuing struggle for independence became more a strategy to acquire world approval for Belize's right for sovereignty over her territory, thereby exposing Guatemala's claim as a barefaced attempt at expansionism.

With extensive support from CARICOM and the Commonwealth Belize took its fight to the UN General Assembly where it won resolutions confirming its right to become an independent state between 1975 and 1980.

The Guatemalan claim put a hold on independence and in so doing stymied Belize's obligation to tackle the problems of development. Furthermore, under the cloud of its own pretensions Guatemala prevented Belize from participating in regional and external fora effectively limiting its possibilities to enter into cooperative ventures with other countries. The gridlock was finally opened when Belize successfully argued for its right to participate in the regional UN conference on refugees in Guatemala in 1989.

1.2.2 Ethnic Relations

There was another task that the government had to address as it laid the foundation of statehood between 1960 and 1980. It was the question of limited overlapping national identity among peoples traditionally segregated into sub regions where they maintained separate ethnic identities. Table 1 gives a distribution of the main ethnic groups by district for the 1980 census.

They are Creole, East Indian, Maya, Ketchi, Garifuna, White and Mestizo. There is a concentration of groups in different parts of the country. The Creole are in the Belize District; East Indian, Maya and Ketchi in Toledo District; the Garifuna in Stann Creek District and the Mestizo in Orange Walk, Corozal and Cayo Districts. A common referent of regionalism in Belize is the remarkably high concentration of different ethnic groups in distinct parts of the country. Unfortunately a change in the use of ethnic designation in the 1991 census does not allow a direct comparison. However, the basic distribution pattern of 1980 has remained the same.

Unlike the Guatemalan claim which was a *de facto* problem, the question of cultural integration was more one of perception; and the perception in the 1960 - 1980 period was that ethnic breakdown was incompatible with nation building. Peoples in Belize like the other parts of the Atlantic Coast are known more for their heterogeneity than homogeneity.

Table 1

**Percentage Distribution of Ethnic Groups by District
1980 Census**

	BELIZE	COROZAL	ORANGE WALK	STANN CREEK	TOLEDO	CAYO	TO- TAL
CREOLE	75.1	16.1	11.3	32.9	11.9	31.0	37.7
E. INDIAN	1.5	2.9	0.2	2.0	8.6	1.1	2.1
MAYA	0.7	13.8	6.8	5.2	25.4	4.6	6.8
KETCHI	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	31.5	0.4	2.7
GARIFUNA	3.2	2.3	2.3	45.6	12.7	1.9	7.6
WHITE	1.1	1.7	13.5	0.5	1.0	8.0	4.2
MESTIZO	13.1	58.4	64.5	10.5	5.9	49.0	33.1
OTHER/NS	5.1	3.7	1.1	3.0	3.0	3.8	3.7
							97.0%

*Figures may not always add up to 100% due to rounding. It occurs on other tables in the text where there is rounding.

On the other hand, the stringent prerequisites for statehood together with the need to counter the Guatemalan claim demanded a high degree of unanimity in consciousness toward the cause of the homeland. The response of the government was twofold - to build physical infrastructure primarily roads thereby breaking down the geographical isolation as well as providing services in social development and education to broaden the level of interethnic awareness. The other was to encourage pride in ethnic cultures as unique nuggets that give Belize its rich pluralist heritage.

At first these responses may seem divergent and at cross purposes to each other. Actually they are complementary and reflect the unique inter-ethnic dynamic of Belize that has a history long preceding 1960.

There is a need to elaborate briefly on the latter move to promote ethnic pride, especially as it was a unique response to multi-culturalism among the Central American countries sharing the Atlantic Coast. In Belize ethnic heter-

ogeneity and inter-racial relations - albeit not always harmonious (Ashdown 1986: 8-14) - had been the rule for centuries long before the 1960-1980 period. On the other hand, the national culture in the other countries traditionally promotes intolerance for heterogeneity especially in terms of peoples of African and aboriginal descent. There are some reasons that account for Belize's unique cultural profile. As a door to the sub-continent Belize has traditionally been a passage way for various peoples, many stopping in transit to settle permanently. As a hotbed for rebellious settlers it had a tradition to handle its own public affairs with minimal interference from Britain until 1871 when colonial status was formally imposed. As a remote colonial outpost it had been a dumping ground for peoples brought from neighboring possessions like the Miskito Coast or as far away as St. Vincent (Gonzalez 1988).

Finally the lack of anything approaching sustained British high culture meant that there

was a great deal of fluidity to generate local customs of widespread interaction including marriages among the races. For more information see Bolland (1977), Dobson (1973), and King (1992).

While the government was emphasizing pride in the ethnic cultures of Belize during the 1960-1980 period, it was also by default drawing attention to the other side of the coin, the extensive interethnic bonding. The whole area of relations across ethnic groups is one where most students have fallen short. A descriptive history of the arrival in the country of various ethnic groups together with a narrative of their current idiosyncratic culture trait marks the limits of scholarly treatment of ethnicity in Belize. With the exception of a few studies Cosminsky (1976:95-114), Kerns (1984:95-112), M. Palacio (1993) there is minimal analysis of interethnic relations, despite the fact that they have occurred at the personal level of intermarriage and in various forms of work and other types of group interaction. There is even less focus on the dynamic interplay featuring an increasingly noticeable hierarchy among ethnic groups as they vie to control the political economy of the new nation of Belize.

The four most numerous ethnic groups are the Creole, Mestizo, Maya/Ketchi, and Garifuna. There are some basic distinctions between the first two and the last two that underline their relative access to political and economic power in the country. The last two are more traditional in maintaining a cultural consciousness about their historic formation. They speak their own languages. Folk culture is very much alive among them in their rituals, music, arts, and crafts. They utilize indigenous artifacts in their material culture, such as food, dress, housing, agriculture, and fishing. As a point of illustration, the milpa tradition is so strong among the Maya/Ketchi that they produce a large proportion of the staple grains consumed by the nation, as we shall see in Chapter 3.

Numerically the Maya/Ketchi and Garifuna are minority peoples. Besides, they do not wield the political and economic power in the nation, which lies in the hands of the Mestizo and Creole. The Creole have traditionally been the professionals and functionaries in the private

sector, a position they monopolize through their concentration in Belize City. As a group the Mestizo have been the beneficiaries of the agroindustrial development in the sugar industry that has had the greatest impact on the country within the past thirty years. A few have used their newly acquired wealth to build an economic base. What is even more important is that many learned how to use their significant contribution to the country's economy as leverage for political power. Jones (1971) has described their methods of mobilizing as sugar cane growers to exert demands on political leaders.

The fortuitous encounter of these four ethnic groups within the complex task of nation building predicated the need to work out some mechanism of over-arching. The strong and bountiful tradition of the Maya/Ketchi and the Garifuna have captured the interest of the political directorate who see in it an autochthonous representation of national identity, at least at the symbolic level. At several international events the government has sent Maya/Ketchi and Garifuna artistes to represent Belizean indigenous culture. Cultural acknowledgment at the symbolic level may at first seem petty. However, it marks the reversal of a trend of neglect and even overt discrimination meted out to these two groups before the onset of the nationalist movement in 1960.

There is another aspect of the dynamism in inter ethnic relations taking place in Belize. It is the increasing rate of assimilation between the Maya with the Mestizo and the Garifuna with the Creole. Actually, some of those who refer to themselves as Mestizo today would probably have chosen to identify themselves as Maya ten or more years ago - so quickly has the pace of acculturation taken. For a discussion of acculturation among the Mestizo see Jones (1971) and Abrams (1974). There are factors that have hastened the integration between the Maya and the Mestizo and the Garifuna with the Creole. One is the relatively recent cultural respectability extended to the Maya and the Garifuna within the process of nation building. The other is an increasing polarization of Belizean society along the axis of color and class. Color and class, combined into one criterion for rank stratification, had

always been built into Belizean society (Ashdown 1986, Grant 1976, Bolland and Shoman 1977). The thrust toward nationalism in the 1960's along with the mass exodus of elite Belizeans from long established white families seemed to have temporarily slowed it. But there are indications that the pace of polarization is accelerating with greater tenacity as the momentum of development accelerates. The Mestizo, Maya/Ketchi with the "clear skin" Creole are at one end while at the other there are the "darker skin" Creole/Garifuna.

To complete this brief profile on inter ethnic relations, it is necessary to refer to the several smaller (numerically) groups who have arrived in the country during this century. Included are the Chinese; Middle Eastern groups from Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon; East Indians; Mennonites; and more recently Central American refugee/migrants. By and large they have adjusted to their adopted country by monopolizing socioeconomic niches in which they have a great deal of experience and for which there was a need. For example, the Chinese and East Indians do retail trading and the Mennonites farming. In most cases the interaction of these groups with the larger population has been limited to cash transactions. The degree of interpersonal relations except for a few marriages has been minimal. Indeed, one of the traits separating newer from older Belizeans is the ease by which the latter intermarry with other groups.

The summary of this brief interlude into ethnic relations - a topic so important to understanding the Belizean social reality - is as follows. In the 1960-1980 period the government generated an openness for ethnic differentiation while simultaneously stressing the overlap across ethnicity based on sharing a common Belizean culture. It was a unique focus of a nationalist government on the cultural dimension of nation building.

The result was the decisive growth for the first time of a Belizean national culture arising out of the ashes of colonial culture. Besides, there was rise of a great deal of interethnic mixtures. It has become so familiar that color with class are superseding ethnicity as a main form of stratification among Belizeans in the 1990's.

1.2.3 Administrative Units

To the casual observer Belize's small landmass, population size, and predominant orientation to the Atlantic littoral - relative to the other countries of Central America - can give the impression of a homogenous country. Yet there are several distinctions that make Belize a small country with many parts. Administrative units are one such form of stratification.

Belize has six districts starting with Corozal in the north and ending with Toledo in the south. Table 2 has a breakdown of the area and population according to the 1960, 1970, 1980, and 1991 censuses. The largest district in area is Cayo with 5,338 square kilometers and the largest in population is Belize. At the district level Table 2 indicates some demographic shifts. There has been remarkable population growth in some of the districts. Cayo, Orange Walk, and Corozal have more than tripled while at the other extreme Stann Creek and Belize have not even doubled. The period 1960-1970 recorded the highest overall growth in all districts with sky rocketing increases in the Corozal and Orange Walk Districts. It was the time of heightened expansion in the sugar industry. During the 1980-1991 period the Cayo district followed by Toledo showed the most growth mainly due to the inflow of Central American refugees. Among all districts Belize has had the least expansion because it is the point of departure for most Belizeans emigrating.

A review of the figures for the urban towns in the Toledo and Stann Creek districts - which are also areas of high emigration - reveals a similar pattern. The significance of these demographic shifts within the dichotomy of development/underdevelopment will become clearer below. It is worth emphasizing here that agroindustry and migration have been two major determinants of population movements within the recent history of Belize.

Table 2

Area and Population of Districts					
DISTRICT	AREA	1960	1970	1980	1991
COROZAL	718 sq.ml. (860) sq. km	9730	15403	22902	28464
ORANGE WALK	1829 (4737)	10306	16638	22870	30681
BELIZE	1624 (4206)	40084	49615	50801	57030
STANN CREEK	840 (2176)	10906	13012	14181	18085
CAYO	2061 (5338)	11764	16023	22837	37693
TOLEDO	1795 (4649)	7715	8954	11762	17439

The districts serve as units for administration within the public sector providing such functions as demarcation for the judiciary districts; the payment of government revenue; and the allocation of police, public works, agricultural, and other public sector staff. The districts also serve as subunits for the private sector, the church and non-government organizations.

In the district towns there are shops, bank branches, churches and markets for produce coming from the outlying rural villages. The towns, therefore, are nodes that provide goods and services originating from Belmopan and Belize City to the districts and *vice versa*. There is a functional classification in terms of being a conduit for goods and services. It is based less on population size, a continuum predicated on degrees of sophistication, provision of public utilities or other intrinsic criteria that define organization. The necessity of making the above clarification is to counter the impression arising from a non-critical appraisal of census figures that subdivides the country into urban and rural areas.

The government makes another administrative subdivision for electoral purposes. There are 29 electoral divisions for the House of

Representatives. The criterion for the demarcation rests on the provision within the national constitution that all constituencies should have about two thousand electors. By virtue of population size Belize City has ten, the largest number of electoral subdivisions. For more information about election results starting in 1954 see M. Palacio (1994).

1.2.4 Geographical Units

Our use of geographical units is not exhaustive for the entire country. It is limited to four socioeconomic areas that form the context for the case studies in Chapter 3. In describing the areas we highlight physical features taken from Furley and Crosbie (1974) and refer to the livelihood of the people living there. They are the cayes, northern lowlands, coastal plains, and southern lowlands.

The main features of the area termed the cayes are the barrier reef, small islands, and atolls. The barrier reef is part of a longer system stretching for 640 kilometers down the length of the Yucatan Peninsula to the Bay of Honduras and extending up to a distance of 75 kilometers from the mainland. Nestled

between the barrier reef and the mainland are scores of cayes varying in size from San Pedro Ambergris, which has an area of about 340 square kilometers, to several that are merely minute stands of mangroves on patches of swamp. The atolls lie outside the barrier reef and consist of their own micro system of cayes locked together with their reef around a lagoon. The cayes with the most population are San Pedro Ambergris and Caye Caulker. They are descendants of Yucatan Hispanic refugees who escaped the Caste War during the latter part of the last century. Their main livelihood is fishing. Since the last decade tourism has also become a major source of income. The cayes are the principal tourist attraction of the country.

Finally, the cayes are the eastern frontier of the country. As such they are the first point of entry for neighbors in Honduras and Guatemala. Nationals from both countries poach on the fishing grounds of Belize at times setting up camp on the cayes. Both countries also have territorial claims on some of our outermost cayes. It is a situation that clouds relations between neighboring states and necessitates dialogue at the diplomatic level.

The northern lowlands are found in the Corozal and Orange Walk Districts. The topography consists of level plains and gently sloping limestone hills. With good drainage the soils are fertile and are used for milpa and intensive cultivation. The flora is made up of hardwood trees, mahogany, cedar, and pine. The inhabitants are Mestizo who live in the two district towns and the outlying villages. Adjoining the towns are two sugar mills that process cane grown in the districts.

The coastal plains are a thin strip adjoining the sea covered by patches of mangrove and sand fragmented by the estuaries of several rivers. Historically the first point of entry for colonizers, the coastal plains remain the site for the only metropolis in the country, Belize City, as well as for three other towns, Corozal town, Dangriga, and Punta Gorda, and several villages. This fact by itself makes the coastal plains - despite their fragile ecology - extremely significant within the socioeconomy of Belize.

A description of the administrative, cultural, and geographical distinctions is significant to

appreciate the underlining complexities for the following discussion on national development. In Chapter 3 four case studies bring alive how people form their livelihood and interact within and across these distinctions.

There are factors that have hastened the integration between the Maya and the Mestizo and the Garifuna with the Creole. One is the relatively recent cultural respectability extended to the Maya and the Garifuna within the process of nation building. The other is an increasing polarization of Belizean society along the axis of color and class. Color and class, combined into one criterion for rank stratification, had always been built into Belizean society (Ashdown 1986, Grant 1976, Bolland and Shoman 1977).

CHAPTER 2

Initiatives at the State Level

2.1 Introduction

The beginning of a new era marking the demise of colonial status and opening the avenues for Belizeans to determine their own political economy came when Britain granted adult suffrage in 1954. Political parties with membership drawn from throughout the country were formed for the first time. The next landmark in the decolonization was the introduction of internal self-government in 1964, which further consolidated decision making in the hands of democratically elected leaders. How did the political leaders extend their power into the economic domain? The following description gives a bird's eye view of the measures that the government pursued from 1960 to 1980 to deal with the varied demands of development. Among the several tasks we review the establishing of a machinery for central planning, building a base for the private sector, and initiating social and community development. To a large extent each of these tasks was being undertaken with some considerable foundation already established by the British colonialists. During this period, however, the development process has to be seen as Belizeans awakening to assume direct control over their public affairs for the first time.

2.2 Central Government Planning

Central government planning embodies government policy in development and to a large extent promotes, initiates, and monitors it. Between 1960 and 1983 there were five plans covering the following periods, 1955-60, 1964-70, 1972-75, 1977-79, and 1980-83. The

total expenditures projected increased from \$13.6 million in 1955-60 to \$55 million for the 1972-75 period to \$194 million for 1980-83. The plans cannot be regarded as succinct entities with a definite beginning and end. At times they were allowed to extend beyond their cutoff date, as when the 1955-60 plan "rolled over" until the 1964-70 period. The late Clarence Borland did the research on this component of central planning using the copious notes he had accumulated while working in the Central Planning Unit.

The order of government's priority for development between 1960 and 1983 was physical infrastructure, social services, and economic activities (see Table 3). Physical infrastructure consists of roads, bridges, port facilities, etc. Social services are mainly education, health, and housing. The economic activities sector represents direct government contribution to productive projects, such as the rehabilitation of citrus, sugar cane, and forestry products to increase yields for the export market.

A brief synopsis of the main achievements is as follows. Roads were the main targets between 1955 and 1970. It was the first major effort to build passable roads to the western and southern parts of the country that had been previously accessible only by waterways. During the 1964-70 period the main objective was to establish agricultural exports primarily sugar and citrus. To this end multinational corporations were invited to invest in factories and plantation lands. Import substitution became a primary aim for the 1970-80 period while at the same time intensifying production in agriculture, livestock, fishery, forestry, and tourism.

Because the economic activities sector is a main primer for the economic developments, which have had such profound impact on the country's population, it is necessary to examine it in greater detail. Appendix 1 includes a breakdown. The main subsectors are agriculture, tourism, forestry, fisheries, and industrial development. The main emphasis

was to increase production in each one. In agriculture the products identified were sugar, citrus, and livestock; and from the 1977-79 plan grains, mainly rice and corn. The trend in tourism was to increase the number of rooms and from the 1972-75 period to integrate local inputs, such as foods and handicrafts. For forestry it was to improve the management

Table 3

PROPOSED ALLOCATIONS OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 1964-1983

	1964-1970 \$M % of T		1972-1975 \$M %of T		1977-1979 \$M %of T		1980- 1983 \$M %of T	
ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	7.6	14.0	7.0	12.7	34.3	18.6	54.2	27.9
PHYSICAL INFRA-STRUCTURE	21.1	39.0	20.0	36.4	86.6	47.8	72.9	37.6
SOCIAL SERVICES	21.5	34.7	23.0	41.8	44.6	24.2	46.2	23.8
OTHERS	3.9	7.2	5.0	9.1	18.6	10.1	20.7	10.7
TOTAL	54.1	94.9	55.0	100.0	184.1	100.7	194.0	100.00

NB: Figures must be taken with some caution since the sectors are somewhat inter-related.

of existing stands, encourage the marketing of lesser known hardwoods and initiate the production of by-products such as plywood and resin. For fisheries the needs identified were to establish a fisheries department to do research in diversification for export. Under industrial development the government encouraged the formation of an industrial park near the international airport by providing factory shells together with fiscal incentives for startup. The above objectives have remained

very much the same decades since they were first placed in development plans.

The formation of the plans, attempts at implementation, and evaluation were procedures integrated into the workload of the planning unit. A cursory review indicates that the conceptual orientation underlying policy and the operations of the planning unit was to earn foreign exchange through exploiting the country's natural resources in forestry, agriculture, and tourism and attracting industries

to employ laborers. Besides, the accompanying attempts at import substitution would ensure that more Belizean dollars would remain at home. The plans effectively laid the basis and provided opportunities for the owners of capital- both foreigners and Belizeans - to perform a pivotal role in the country's economic growth.

The reason why three decades and more afterwards only a relatively small number of long standing developers have taken advantage of the opportunities is a topic that economists and others should study, if only to question the viability of such a pursuit for development. The plans have made it easy for a small elite group, who already were successful to become even more so. The corollary is that others, who do not have capital, land, or resources that could be converted into financing, have become poorer and more marginalized. Case studies in Chapter 3 will show how this has actually taken place in parts of southern Belize. The ideological world view of economists who designed the Belize plans has been criticized by other economists (see, for example, Beckford and Witter 1980). Our objective here is to describe the plans and later to show how grassroots Belizeans responded to them.

It would not be fair to attribute the development which took place during the 1960 to 1980 period only to successful central planning. The government planning machinery itself was going through a series of growth crisis characteristic of all embryonic government departments. There was often shortage of staff, besides those working in the Central Planning Unit were not adequately trained in planning. Even if trained and experienced staff could be recruited from abroad, there was a general shortage of statistical data and other information needed to transform proposals into projects. During the earlier planning periods the Central Planning Unit remained under the Ministry of Finance whose priorities were not central

planning but the overall administration of government revenue and expenditure.

While the bureaucratic structure was slowing down the planning procedure, the political leaders more often stifled it. At an historic moment when Belizean politicians were assuming full executive power for the first time, they were not enthusiastic to abide by plans forthcoming from public officers. *Ad hoc* decisions to suit the requirement of day to day affairs were more in vogue. It took a prolonged time and the overlapping of several factors for government leaders to have some commitment to central planning.

They include the insistence of donor agencies on the existence of government planning as a *sine qua non* of extending assistance, the presence of expatriate staff, and the deliberate efforts of younger Belizean staff persons in the Central Planning Unit working with colleagues in other government departments.

In concluding the section on central planning we need to highlight two of its main aspects that predicated the course of social and economic development within the past thirty years. They are the excessive reliance on outside capital and the highly conspicuous role government attributed to parastatal agencies. Actually they were the two stepping stones that the government used to accelerate development. Outside capital came as grant/loans from international agencies and as part of bilateral agreements and investment by entrepreneurs. The investment capital came at the invitation of the government, often in competition with other Third World countries vigorously soliciting the same sources. The government bolstered its attractions by including a host of incentives, such as tax holidays, exemption from import duties and from taxes on dividends; guaranteed repatriation of profits; rental of factory shells; and preferential access to the CARICOM, EEC, and USA markets (see Belize investment Code undated: 6 - 7).

The bonus that Belize offered, which could give it a decided advantage over other regional countries, was the opportunity to own vast amounts of land (Grant 1976: 306-313). Up to 1973 when the Aliens Landholding Act was passed there was no limit to the amount of land that non-Belizeans could own. On the other hand, the extremely attractive opportunities did not bring in investment at the rate that the government hoped. Rather, there were more entrepreneurs who used the concessions and land ownership not to invest for production but for their own purposes, such as avoiding taxes in the country of origin and speculation. Unfortunately, there has been no published review of this phenomenon in the development history of Belize.

The importance of parastatal agencies between 1960 and 1980 is evident in Table 4, which lists not all but the more important ones

to be found in the country. Only four were established before 1960. The types of functions carried out by parastatal agencies vary in scope from advocacy and serving as a support group (e.g. the Belize Philatelic Bureau); to providing millions of dollars worth of loans in agriculture, housing, education, etc. (the Development Finance Corporation); to managing the finances of the country (the Central Bank). The basic rationale for parastatal agencies, however, is for government to promote specific activities by providing the leadership in management and financing, when it is not forthcoming from other local sources. In this regard the physical infrastructure sector as listed in Table 4 received the largest amount of attention followed by the productive and social sectors. Earlier we had seen in Table 3 that the physical infrastructure sector had also received the highest emphasis in central planning.

Table 4

SOME PARASTATAL AGENCIES BY YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT		
NAME	YEAR	TYPE
Belize Electricity Board	1950	Physical Infrastructure
" Port Authority	1976	Physical Infrastructure
" Telecommunications Authority	1971	Physical Infrastructure
" Water & Sewerage	1971	Physical Infrastructure
" Licensing Authority	1985	Physical Infrastructure
" Philatelic Bureau	1983	Physical Infrastructure
" Belize Marketing Board	1948	Productive Sector - Marketing for Local Consumption
" Sugar Board	1959	Productive Sector - Marketing for export

SOME PARASTATAL AGENCIES BY YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT

" Citrus Growers Ass.	1959	Productive Sector - Marketing for export
" Banana Control Board.	1971	Productive Sector - Marketing for export
" Tourist Board	1968	Productive Sector - Foreign exchange
" Development Finance Corp.	1963	Productive Sector - Financing
" Central Bank	1976	Productive Sector - Financing
" Reconstruction & Dev. Corp.	1962	Productive Sector - Financing
Belize Social Security Board	1981	Social Sector

2.3 Private Sector

The private sector brings into fruition some of the projections in the government plans. The private sector is subdivided into the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors. The first refers to the exploitation of the natural resources, the second manufacturing and processing, and the third the provision of services. Trends in the percentage distribution of the GDP by the three sectors in 1970, 1975, 1980, and 1984 are not immediately evident in Table 5 but there are overall patterns based on gross differences among the sectors that changed only slightly during the years. The tertiary sector remained the highest, hovering around 50% and even more of the total. Next there was the primary sector ranging between 21 and 32% and finally the secondary between 16 to 23%. Each sector had one type of activity that was most outstanding - under the primary it was agriculture; the secondary was manufacturing; and the tertiary was trade, restaurants, and hotels. The following is a brief description of the sectors.

The main activities that fell under the primary sector were agriculture, forestry, and fishing. An overview of the value of domestic exports

between 1956 to 1965 shows that within that period a restructuring took place resulting in the final displacement of forestry as the mainstay of the economy and the rise of agriculture to prominence. Thus, by 1965 the exports of timber had been halved from that in 1956 and chicle had been reduced by three-fourths (Ministry of Finance and Economic Development N.D.). On the other hand, the export of sugar had increased fourfold; citrus doubled; and fish quadrupled. It is interesting to note that the start of the 1960-80 period saw the rise of agriculture to prominence as the primary earner of foreign exchange in the country.

In describing agriculture, it is necessary to mention briefly the land use pattern on which it is based. During the early 1980's Belize had approximately 5.6 million acres (or 2.24 million hectares), out of which over 40% is suitable for agriculture. Only 15% of this was under cultivation despite the attractive climate and soil types. Three-quarters of the 15% was cultivated by mechanized commercial farmers mainly for export crops. The rest was used for milpa and diversified farming (Belize Today 1984: 57).

The situation of having so much arable land without being cultivated is probably unique to Belize among Central American countries. There are several reasons for the rather limited amount of land being used for agriculture (see Cacho 1973:42-66). To a large extent the extended forestry tradition discouraged agriculture while encouraging the consolidation of land ownership among a few, the largest being non-Belizeans. Grant concludes that in 1966 "90% of the privately owned land was in the hands of non-nationals" (1976:306). The relatively recent introduction of commercial agriculture inherited from forestry the use of the latifundia as basis of production. There has never been a comprehensive effort by the government toward equitable land redistribution.

In order of foreign exchange earnings the main crops between 1960 and 1980 were sugar, citrus, and banana (see Appendix 3). Both sugar and citrus responded to fluctuations in the world market. During 1960 to 1970 there was a sharp expansion in sugar due to relatively high prices but this trend was reversed in the following decade. In the case of citrus, 1960 to 1970 saw decline in prices due to increased production by the United States and Brazil. Problems arose locally between 1970 and 1980 including the close down of one of the two companies, shortage in manual labor, and damages by hurricanes.

Banana was re-introduced on a large scale to the Belizean economy in the late 1960's. During the study period it remained plagued by the above mentioned commodity price fluctuations. It also had a marked susceptibility to disruption caused by traumatic weather patterns - such as storms, heavy rains, and drought - that are relatively common in the banana belt parts of the country.

Whereas there was great emphasis on developing agriculture for export, there was far less attention given to the production and

marketing of crops for local consumption most of which was done using milpa cultivation (see Appendices 3, 4, 5). The staple crops of corn, rice, and beans were produced locally. East Indian and Maya/Ketchi farmers - both from the Toledo District - grew most of the rice. The Maya/Ketchi and Mennonites each produced about 50% of the corn and beans. During the 1960 to the 1980 period Belize was not self-sufficient in all staples. A detailed discussion of milpa cultivation as one of the case studies in the following section will highlight some of the problems that detract from the production and marketing of staples.

A final note: Toledo District produced large proportions of the beans and grains consumed in the country. But the government imposition of price controls, prejudiced opportunities for the farmer to earn a just price for his produce. For more information see Moberg (1991:16-25).

In the fishing industry lobster tails dominated the vast proportion of the export market. The increase in earnings during the 1960 to 1980 period came more from rising market prices than from increased production. Co-operatives based in the northern cayes, Belize City, and southern coast did the fishing and export marketing. The third case study in Chapter 3 gives more information.

Manufacturing and construction are two main components of the secondary sector. The thrust in manufacturing was for import substitution of such items as battery, beer, and roofing; as well as to produce exclusively for export, as in the case of clothing. Under a policy of accelerated import substitution during the 1970 decade, the government established industrial parks, making available factory shells for rental. However, the growth in this sector remained marginal.

Construction experienced a boom during the early 1970's as a result of the building of Belmopan. Other times of increased activity

came after hurricane Greta in 1978 and the availability of housing loans from the Development Finance Corporation in 1979. However, construction was especially difficult to quantify because of the lack of control in the issuing of building permits and other methods of monitoring.

The subheading of trade, restaurants, and hotels was the highest in the tertiary sector as well as among the other sectors. One reason for this had been the traditional significance of mercantilist capitalism as a direct extension in the business interest of forestry magnates who dominated the economy up to the early 1960's.

Between 1960 and 1970 there were increases in the importation of food, manufactured goods, and chemicals. The trend continued in the following decade with food still remaining between 20 to 25% of the import bill. There were some changes in the kinds of foodstuff during the times when there were gluts in the production of local staples.

Another factor affecting restaurants and hotels was an increase in tourism, especially in the cayes off Belize City. Between 1970 and 1980 the number of visitors to Belize more than doubled and so did the average length of their stay (Economic Survey 1982/83).

Table 5

**Percentage Distribution of the GDP in Select Years
between 1970 and 1984**

Primary	1970	1975	1980	1984
Agriculture	17.8	25.9	19.7	14.6
Forestry & Logging	2.5	2.2	1.5	2.1
Fishing	3.1	2.7	2.4	3.1
Mining & Quarry	.3	.3	.3	.2
Subtotal	23.7	31.1	23.9	20.0
Secondary				
Manufacturing	8.1	13.5	15.2	14.6
Elect. & Water	.8	.8	1.3	2.0
Construction	7.2	6.7	5.9	4.8
Subtotal	16.1	21.0	22.4	21.4
Tertiary				
Trade & Rest.	18.3	16.0	18.2	17.5
Trans & Comm.	7.1	6.3	9.0	11.0

**Percentage Distribution of the GDP in Select Years
between 1970 and 1984**

Fin. & Insur.	7.7	4.3	3.2	4.5
Real Estate	8.0	5.1	4.8	6.1
Public Admin.	8.2	8.8	9.5	9.4
Other	10.9	7.4	8.5	10.0
Subtotal	60.2	47.9	53.2	58.5
Total %	100.00	100.00	99.5	99.9
Total \$m	88,140,000	110,602	128,906	132,316,000
Per Capita \$	732	859.41	2031	1941

In summary, the private sector showed mixed results during the 1960 to 1980 period with significant changes within some sectors and relative stalemate in others. The greatest achievement was in the primary sector which saw a consolidation in the shift from forestry to agriculture. Following government policy there was far greater success in production for export than for local consumption. The secondary sector remained underdeveloped. The tertiary sector was top heavy under the predominance of trade, restaurants, and hotels, although there was some differentiation caused by an increase in tourism.

Did the private sector contribute to development in the 1960-1980 period? The impact of the private sector was most clearly felt in the sugar belt. Communities that previously relied on periodic wage labor in timber operations and chicle bleeding became farmers with steady annual income. There was less an impact on citrus and banana growers which were fewer in number and did not start at as low an economic level as the cane farmers. The workers engaging in the secondary and tertiary levels did so in urban areas where there

was a surplus supply of labor resulting in relatively low wages.

What does this say about government policy on economic development? It is important to reiterate that we are referring to a unique historical moment when the government was laying the foundation for a new nation in which it saw a pivotal role for the private sector. It determined what areas would be highlighted and stipulated the fiscal incentives and other attractions. This policy was to focus on export led growth with emphasis on agriculture namely sugar, banana, and citrus. It led to the primacy of the rural area of the country over the urban, and even one particular region- namely the north - over the rest of the country. It also meant a higher priority on persons engaging in farming than on workers in the urban area. The unfolding of the dynamic dichotomy of development/under development in Belize will become clearer in Chapter 4.

2.4 Social/Community Development

Social/community development is a component of the larger social sector which includes health, education, and social services.

At first we present a glimpse of changes among these subareas as reflected in the government budgetary allocations in select years. Then we focus on the narrow area of social/community development. It is important to state at the outset that there has been far more emphasis on social than community development.

Table 6 has a breakdown of the total recurrent expenditure in the annual budget for 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, and 1984/85 as well as the percentage allocated to education, health, and social services. There was some similarity among the percentages between 1960 and 1975 but there was noticeable decline in 1984/85,

a time when the government was committed to meeting IMF demands. For a period of 15 years (1960 to 1975) there was about the same level of allocation to education, health, and social services and even a trend of increase, especially in education.

The budgetary percentages are a major indication of the strong commitment by the government to improvements within the social sector. At least in the field of education Belize was in a "medium position" as compared with neighboring countries in Central America and the Caribbean (UNESCO Education Sector Survey 1983:4).

Table 6

**EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND SOCIAL SERVICES AS
PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE IN SELECT
YEARS**

YEAR	1960	1965	1970	1975	1984/85
TOTAL RECURRENT EXPENDITURE IN \$M	7.2	6.5	15.2	25	91.2
EDUCATION %	11.3	21.1	16.9	24.3	6.1
HEALTH %	10.4	16.3	10.8	16.1	9.7
SOCIAL SERVICES %	1.3	3.0	1.4	NA	.5

NB: Not all subareas in social services are included. The following are included: welfare and community development, training in home economics, youth development, adult literacy, probation services, administration of CARE food aid, and administration of relief supplies.

There are quantitative indices of development that have been published for health (GIS/PAHO 1985) but not for education. This report indicates that there had been a decrease in the rate of infant mortality from over 50 per 1,000 in 1960 to 25 in 1980. Lacking a similar report

on education we can only make some impressionistic conclusions. The emphasis would seem to have been toward a sound foundation in primary school education. One indication of this was a national literacy rate of 92% according to 1980 census figures.

There was also an increase in the type of educational service available nationally from the level of infant pre-school to that of the post secondary. Additional information is available in the UNESCO Education Sector Survey (1983).

Social services was the weakest link in the social sector as depicted in Table 6. However, the field of social and community development had experienced major evolutionary changes since the period of the late 1950's. Table 7 is a schematic representation of the major trends showing the agents and objectives. The objectives were directed towards both economic and social development. The former encompassed voluntary organizations formed for specific income generating activities, the most successful examples being co-operatives. Social development highlights the establishing of village councils as a decision-making machinery for local community affairs.

The concurrence of attempts at economic and social development could have formed the ingredient for a movement toward self-empowerment at the local level, especially given the contemporary socio-political background of transformation from colonialism to independent nation-state between 1960 and 1980. The process of building strong community involvement, however, did not take place in Belize. What occurred instead were periodic pretensions by central government - on the one hand - of acknowledging the right of communities to assume control over their own public affairs but - on the other - neutralizing such efforts, should they become politically threatening.

The initiatives in social development came from government and non-government personnel with little emphasis to capture the endogenous potential within the target populations themselves. Under colonial officers the focus in the late 1950's was to have the local populace learn lessons that would make them

more enlightened and better use their leisure hours. Examples were games, music, and dance. In 1956 the Social Development Department appointed an officer to promote the formation of village councils. These are voluntary associations with no power to conduct their own village administration. Their functions are to provide channels for some of the social service efforts of government departments. The methods of operation were through self-help activities with government providing technical and financial assistance to supplement the voluntary labor of the villagers.

By the 1970's some village councils had acquired not only basic organizational skills but were taking on a strong advocacy role for land, education, and public health, among other issues of pressing importance. This trend did not persist throughout the 1970's. In several villages the effort toward self-reliance was stymied from 1975 onwards with the consolidation of partisan politics throughout the country. Politicians used village councils to promote their own national party political agenda. Political patronage became the medium of operation and not voluntary labor for the good of the local community. As village councils became coopted within the centralized political machinery the result was a weakening in the ideal of self-help with a corresponding decline in the decision-making capability at the rural grassroots level.

The other voluntary organizations catering to the social and economic well-being in rural and urban communities were 4-H clubs for youth, home economics groups for women, and co-operatives and credit unions. Both 4-H clubs and home economics groups were primarily agencies for continuing education promoting skills to be applied within the immediate physical environment. The 4-H clubs stressed skills in agriculture and home economics, especially sewing and food preservation. In 1985 there were over 2,000 members

throughout Belize, making the 4-H one of the most popular movements among the youth.

There has not been such success in home economics groups either in numbers or in maintaining long term associations. They consist of 10 to 15 groups that function intermittently to learn skills in craft work and nutrition taught by home economics officers in the Social Development Department. Occasionally for short periods of some weeks they go through intensive training ending with displays of items produced during the sessions.

The co-operative movement started in Belize in 1943. It includes producing/marketing co-operatives and credit unions. The government is very active among them, helping to initiate societies, doing supervision, and providing essential services at an advisory level to societies undergoing difficulties. There was

an efflorescence in the co-operative movement during the 1960's and 1970's. By 1980 there were 45 co-operatives and 39 credit unions located in all districts. In 1986 the most successful co-operatives were fishing societies. One of them had a membership of over 400 and a share capital of over \$4 million. Altogether the 39 credit unions had shares valued at almost \$12 million.

The difficulties affecting co-operatives and credit unions were lack of proper management and marketing capability. It reflected the shortage of skills and the extremely limited local market especially in the rural areas. Related problems included competition from the private sector. However, the co-operative movement has been significant in enabling Belizeans - with government protection - to concentrate in some areas of the economy, notably fishing.

Table 7

MAJOR TRENDS IN SOCIAL/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT		
-PERIOD- Late 1950's - Early 1960's	-AGENTS- Colonial Officers with Local Staff	-OBJECTIVES- Improve local behavior to have more "polish"; start Co-operatives and Credit Unions; develop village councils to democratize leadership in rural communities.
1970 - 1980	Local Staff with foreign volunteer help	Promote voluntary organizations with economic base for income generating.
1980 - 1985	Local staff with help from UNICEF and international agencies	Integrated urban and rural development stressing community participation and grassroots self empowerment.

The above summary is on social/development in the rural areas, where government has concentrated most of its efforts. In the urban communities non-government social welfare

organizations such as the Red Cross and Black Cross have been more active. The exception has been the integrated urban development project spearheaded by UNICEF since the early

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The difficulties affecting co-operatives and credit unions were lack of proper management and marketing capability. It reflected the shortage of skills and the extremely limited local market especially in the rural areas. Related problems included competition from the private sector. However, the co-operative movement has been significant in enabling Belizeans - with government protection - to concentrate in some areas of the economy, notably fishing.

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1970 - 1980	Local Staff with foreign volunteer help	Promote voluntary organizations with economic base for income generating.
1980 - 1985	Local staff with help from UNICEF and international agencies	Integrated urban and rural development stressing community participation and grassroots self empowerment.

The above summary is on social/development in the rural areas, where government has concentrated most of its efforts. In the urban communities non-government social welfare

organizations such as the Red Cross and Black Cross have been more active. The exception has been the integrated urban development project spearheaded by UNICEF since the early

1980's. It was very successful in one community within Belize City (see J. Palacio 1990:52-67).

2.5 Cultural Integration

At first cultural integration may seem to have little to do with socio-economic development. Actually it provides a main aim for development, embellishes it with some aesthetics; and contributes directly to the economy through the sponsorship of massive events, handicrafts, audio/video recordings etc. The process of cultural integration brings out clearly the unique nation state character of Belize versus the provincial status of other parts of the Atlantic Coast *viz a viz* their respective countries. Finally, it is significant in an embryonic nation state inhabited by several ethnic groups.

Between 1960 and 1980 the main objective of cultural integration was to highlight cultural expressions that had remained hidden through prolonged colonial subjugation and geographical isolation. It was an area where institutions, individuals, and voluntary organizations contributed selflessly even as the nationalist government started to provide the lead in some infrastructure and overlapping.

Among several efforts projecting the wide array of Belizean culture - from folk to imitations of the classical - the National Festival of Arts took prominence in the 1960's and 1970's. Under the sterling leadership of the Resident Tutor of the University of the West Indies the late Vernon Leslie the National Festival of Arts showcased the best Belize had to offer. It served as the incubation for several artistes who subsequently could hold their own at home and abroad. Others became stage directors, choreographers, playwrights, etc. It is especially necessary to highlight the late Ronald Clarke, a self taught artiste and ardent advocate of cultural policy, who afterwards used his position as a senior public officer to

force the government to formulate cultural policy.

The celebration of national festivities became a primary undertaking for the government. The Tenth of September Celebrations, which had traditionally commemorated the Battle of St. George's Caye - the last unsuccessful attempt by the Spaniards to lay claim to Belize - was transformed to become officially National Day. The significance was to be less retroactive and more proactive in engendering the national unity so necessary to achieve independence. The annual Festival Grand Market held around the time of the National Day was staged to feature the technological, artistic, and cultural achievements of all Belizeans. Similarly prizes were given to the best poetry written as part of the celebrations.

While September 10th became the National Day, two additional days were declared Public and Bank Holidays to honor two ethnic groups. They are November 19 declared in 1976 on behalf of the Garifuna for the whole country and in 1977 October 14 on behalf of the Mestizo. Essentially the declarations demonstrated the tightrope that the government was maintaining of forging national unity while recognizing the various parts within the national fabric. Belize has to be complemented for taking this step, which was undreamed of among neighboring countries toward the minority groups. But political expediency underlay the primarily populist nature of the move. The nationalist PUP was rewarding its far flung constituents and further legitimizing its hold on them not only as political but also as cultural leader. It was certainly not meant to proceed to a more meaningful level of decentralization - i.e. recognizing peoplehood of ethnic groups and honoring their claims for autonomy over their local government and natural resources.

CHAPTER 3

Micro-Level Social and Economic Development

3. 1 Introduction

Studies on development in the Third World usually end with descriptions of what is occurring at the national level. Such treatment would not do justice to Belize where, as in other parts of the Atlantic Coast, pluralism applies not only to people but also to the socioeconomic systems they form. I present four socioeconomic systems found in communities in different parts of the country. They include the use of mixed sources for sustenance, milpa cultivation, fishing co-operative, and sugar agro-industry. The following are brief ethnographic sketches that could be used for comparative purposes in other parts of the Atlantic Coast. They also pinpoint analytic indicators of development and underdevelopment, a topic that we will pursue in the following chapter.

3.2 Case Study No. 1 The Use of Mixed Sources

The coastal plain is one of the five ecological zones that Furley and Crosbie (1974) define for Belize. It is a thin strip extending inland for a maximum distance of three kilometers covered by patches of mangrove and fragmented by the estuaries of several rivers and creeks. The economic as against ecological significance of the coastal plain is more historical, having served as the site for the felling of logwood and as transit points for river traffic for mahogany and other hardwoods during the colonial era.

During the past thirty years as economic development shifted further inland toward agro-

industries accompanied by the building of roads, the coastal plain has lost much of its economic and strategic importance. It is most seen in areas south of Belize City. The towns of Dangriga and Punta Gorda have shown negligible growth in population between 1970 and 1980, with the former actually decreasing by four per cent (See Table 2). The surrounding villages have suffered an even worse fate. Several have been completely abandoned and, with the exception of a few, the rest are in varying degrees of depopulation. As the mere vestiges of previously successful days, the villages represent the end of the cycle when rural coastal communities could maintain themselves economically and socially.

One such village is Barranco. The following information comes from a study I did in 1978-1982. I take the liberty of retaining the ethnographic present in the narrative. Barranco is located in the Toledo District 18 kilometers by sea from the district town of Punta Gorda. The population of 229 persons consist entirely of Garifuna. The village demography is skewed in favor of two main age sets. Children up to the age of 15 are 58% of the total population and older folk pass the age of 50 are 24%. Men and women who are between 16 and 49 represent only 18%, most having left in search of wage labor.

They visit during off-work periods or at times of family crises. However, some retain children in the village with their parents. The children remain until they finish elementary school before joining their own parents. To appreciate the social structure we focus on the

allocation of specific roles to age sets within the village economy. Children, younger men and women, and older folk separately perform tasks that contribute to the running of daily life in the community. The children participate in household chores, such as fetching water and firewood, and carrying out errands. More importantly they are a primary intermediary of cash flow into the household through remittances that their parents send for their well being and that of the other members of the household. Later we shall see that cash remittances are a mainstay of the village economy. For a more detailed discussion of the importance of kin fosterage and remittances in the village see J. Palacio (1991: 119-146). Being of childbearing age the younger men and women between the ages of 16 to 49 are responsible for providing care for their own growing families.

There is sharp division of labor between the men and women within the household that derives from their activities within the wider community. The men earn cash through fishing and selling their catch at the neighboring town market. They also perform odd jobs in the village, such as house repair and clearing house lots and bush gardens. Women's activities are more circumscribed within the household. They engage in subsistence food production in their kitchen and bush gardens. Their main cash earning source is petty sales of home made foodstuff.

The older men and women control power in village politics and economy through their own numerical majority as well as having accumulated over the years much needed resources for survival in the village. These are capital goods and networks with influential persons in the outside world. Examples of capital goods are dories with outboard motors, nets and other fishing gear, and tools needed in the bush gardens and for manual trades. In

this category there could also be included the ownership of the two village shops, which double as the source of the food supply for the owners and as consumer goods for retail trading within the village.

The networks that older men and women cultivate are affiliation with influential persons and institutions, especially in government and the church. The village council is the local governing body authorized by the Ministry of Local Government. The chairman and other officers are older men. Through the village council they maintain their interactions with the ruling party in central government as a means of consolidating their power base in the village. For example, they can request funds for public work projects, such as repairing the wharf and cleaning drains. The village council officers supervise the spending of funds and hire men as they see fit.

Finally, the older women maintain the larger bush gardens, whose workload and produce they share with their younger women relatives. They are also the most knowledgeable about traditional folk culture in curing and ancestral rites. For these purposes the villagers often have to refer to them for advice.

The social structure features the allocation of differential roles according to age and gender. Because of the preponderance of older folk there is a form of gerontocracy in the formal and informal political structure. However, the significance of children, the other large segment of the population, cannot be overlooked. Within the village economy they are a main rationale for cash remittances.

Village Economy

Quite contrary to one's image of a coastal village as a place where subsistence economy predominates, Barrancorelies almost exclusively on cash economy. Men, women, and children engage in cash earning activities using local

Table 8

OUTLINE OF GARIFUNA VILLAGE ECONOMY		
AGE AND GENDER	CASH EARNING	SUBSISTENCE FOOD PRODUCTION
MEN:		
Younger men	Sale of Fresh Fish	Subsistence farming
Younger and middle-aged	Odd Jobs, Village Council, Public Works Salaries and Pension	
Middle-aged men	Sale of salted fish Ferrying Passengers	Subsistence fishing
WOMEN:		
Younger and middle-aged	Petty trading of sweets, pastry	
Middle-aged		Bush gardening and cassava bread production
Middle-aged and older	Remittances	
Older women	Government Social welfare assistance	
Middle-aged Men and Women	Retail trading and selling rum and lottery	

and non-local sources. A cursory look at Table 8 indicates the much wider range of cash earning activities over subsistence food production. Cash enters the village economy mostly through local sources, such as fishing, odd jobs, and petty trading of sweets, pastry, and bread. Among non-local sources the three contributing the most are salaries and wages, fish sales, and remittances.

Subsistence food production centers around fishing and gardening. Males of all ages fish. School boys wield fishing lines from the wharf on weekends and men go further out in dories when the family pot is most in need. In 1980

only about ten hectares of land was being cultivated and women did almost all of it. The yield of plantains, cassava, and other root crops was low due to soil exhaustion and depredation by wild animals. The most important food item forthcoming from the bush garden was cassava used to make cassava bread. However, there was so little supply of cassava that it gave way to flour as a daily staple.

The social relations that underlie economic activities in the village include kinship and friendship, seller-buyer ties, and direct participation in institutions tied to the outside world.

Kinship and friendship ties are validated particularly in subsistence production. Women who are relatives keep bush gardens adjoining each other. Companionship among them is a source of moral support and protection as they spend hours weeding and tending their crops. The processing of cassava bread is a two-day activity requiring the complete attention of at least three women. The women retain their work groups of relatives and friends for years. Line fishing and shellfish collecting are also tasks that require close interaction either through the borrowing of gear or dividing the workload.

Seller-buyer ties are important in retail shop trading but more so in the petty sales of sweets. At any one evening at least three women will send their children to sell homemade delicacies. With a limited market available and a multiplicity of sellers the women have perfected techniques that assure themselves of a certain number of buyers. They extend preferential treatment to select patrons, such as credit; advance warning that a particular item would be available on a given day; providing them with more generous portions than to other buyers; and asking for pre-payment for some items. The seller-buyer relationship stands on its own, although the persons themselves participating may be relatives and friends.

Kinship, however, is the underlying basis for the inflow of remittances, a primary source of cash reaching many village households regularly. Remittances are the material expression of the moral obligation enshrined in Garifuna belief system that one should provide for the needs of one's offspring and parents. Under the force of this obligation the older folk accept their grandchildren and other younger relatives to be their charge.

There are three institutions that function as sources of cash inflow into the village. For this reason the villagers maximize the benefits that

can derive from them by direct participation as members and strengthening their personal and official networks with representatives of the institutions. They are the village council, the church/school, and the credit union. Through the village council the government channels funds for public works projects, as we have already seen. The church/school system employs teachers, which was the job of seven residents and several others away from the village, who send remittances. In the credit union villagers, both those who are resident as well as absent, save money "for the rainy day". The bulk of the savings come from those who are away. More recently since 1983 the credit union has been the channel of funds from international agencies to be loaned to members for home improvement and construction.

Historical Background

The outflow of its sons and daughters and the increasing reliance on cash originating from beyond the village are two phenomena that together have spelled the decline of Barranco. Since its founding a little over one hundred years ago until the 1940's the economic orientation of the villagers was based on maintaining a close fit between the subsistence and cash economies. The strain in maintaining the fit became too burdensome after the 1940's and subsequently the demise of the village as a community became precipitous.

Between the 1860's and 1920's the villagers produced their own staples and sold the surplus in the town markets of Belize and neighboring Guatemala. That era stands out proudly in folklore as the period when villagers were closest to economic self-sufficiency. The lure of cash cropping began when the villagers started to produce banana. During the 1920's and 1930's boats periodically called at farm sites along the rivers for deliveries. After the collapse of the banana market in 1939, the next

attempt at cash cropping was rice in the 1950's. This, however, was abortive and lasted for less than ten years.

Intervention from the rest of Belize and the outside world disrupted completely the possibility of maintaining community self-sufficiency and extended social and economic growth. The weapons for disruption have been wage labor, the erosion of an agrarian base, and one-sided education system.

The use of the services of the menfolk as cheap wage labor took place in sites from as nearby as the neighboring towns to as far away as the United Kingdom. Some left during the building of the Panama Canal in the early 1900's. Others left to the United Kingdom, the U.S.A., and Panama during World War II as part of the contribution of Belize to the war effort. During the 1940's and 1950's others went to work at sawmills in neighboring camps in the Toledo District and at United Fruit Company operations in Guatemala and Honduras. Apart from these examples of large scale recruitment, employers also sent requests for men as they were needed.

The economic effect of the departure of the men was twofold. Their contribution to the clearing of bush gardens, the one task that women do not perform, suffered. Secondly, their experience abroad became a crash course in modernization during which village life appeared in opposition to the "good life" abroad. Many never returned and some of those who came hurriedly took the next boat back to town.

Despite the periodic heavy drain on manpower, the villagers repeatedly demonstrated that they had an agrarian tradition which could contribute to the food supply of the country. The last example was rice cultivation in the 1950's. The demise of rice cultivation arose from the failure of the Marketing Board to provide the necessary support, especially marketing. Villagers recount

the sad experience of leaving behind hectares of rice ready to be harvested in the fields because they could not sell it. The contrast in the abundance of support that the government provided to farmers in the north resulting in the growth of the sugar industry will become clear in discussing the fourth case study.

In the downward spiral of socioeconomic growth in the village, the young men realized that the best passport to success was to do well enough in school and become a school teacher. This way they could leave the village and acquire a job with a pension for later retirement. The education system, however, was cast in a British colonial mold with little relevance to the national much less the local context. As scores of villagers took up teaching, the uselessness of village life as a positive force for one's self-growth became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Subsequently, this value was passed from one generation to the other, pushing even more persons permanently away from the village.

Environmental and Related Constraints

The physical environment is not a constraint for social and economic growth in Barranco. There is abundant arable land adjoining the village. The villagers could lease large portions from the government for agriculture. The sea is also underutilized and could be fished far more than presently.

Currently the main constraint diminishing social and economic growth arises from strain in the social relations that villagers maintain with their relatives and others who are away. The root of the difficulties is an increasing disarticulation between remittances and fosterage. For further information see Palacio (1991: 119-146).

At the level of the sender of remittances there are two possible problems affecting his ability to send cash. He may renege on his obligations to support his offspring and parent. In such

eventuality the relative in the village will send letters and if possible visit the recalcitrant son or daughter to deliver her complaint personally. Secondly, he may be temporarily unemployed and not be able to meet his village commitments. The villagers are quick to respond to such misfortunes by exerting demands on other sons or daughters or increasing their own subsistence food production. Thus, we see the effects of fluctuations in metropolitan centers affecting daily life in small villages. Furthermore, we see the strengthening of social relations among kinfolk acting as a buffer to economic hardships whether within the village or further away.

At the level of the keeper of children, she may become disabled to care for children through illness or old age. She may also not be caring properly for the children and the parent may be learning about it. In either case the parent may hasten the removal of the children from the village to join her.

The worst that could happen is that the parents do not send their children to the village. In such cases the older folk suffer as they have less leverage to demand attention from their sons and daughters. My own observation is that more of the older folk are becoming unable to care for children and are passing away. It means the curtailing of fosterage relationship which in turn reduces the inflow of remittances. If the population is not replenished by villagers returning home, we may be witnessing the end of a village community. The viability of rural coastal communities in southern Belize is being put to test by a combination of factors originating from beyond the village.

SUMMARY

Throughout Belize and other parts of the Atlantic Coast there are villages which are being depopulated as they lose their economic base. The story of Barranco helps to capture some of the analytic moments of the decline. They

are a shift away from village subsistence production to cash cropping in the 1930's; the exodus of men for work sites in other parts of the country, neighboring countries, and as far away as Scotland since the 1940's; and the decline in cash remittances concurrent with a lessening of kinship fosterage since the 1960's. As substitute for cash coming from outside the village, the inhabitants engage in several mixed sources, such as artisan trades, petty trading, and periodic wage labor.

The gradual demise of such villages has to be seen in opposition to the tremendous strides in economic growth in other parts of the country. It confirms that coinciding with development there are pockets of abysmal underdevelopment within the same country. The fact that underdevelopment has occurred in several coastal communities in Belize, which itself is a littoral country, only pinpoints what is no doubt taking place in other countries which have had a more determined orientation away from the Coast.

Often such villages are written off by fiscal analysts and other economists as being nonviable. Indeed, the question of what type of development projects to introduce is very problematic. To a large extent it has to be seen within the global development plan for the whole country. But it would seem that the central planners have not given the adequate amount of attention to these communities of Belizeans that they truly deserve.

3.3 Case Study No. 2 Milpa Cultivation

The Settlement

Toledo is the district where the inhabitants of the next case study are also found. They are located not along the coast like the Garifuna but in inland villages. They share with the Barranco residents the most underdeveloped

district in the country. In this case study the use of milpa cultivation is the main form of livelihood. In it we see a pattern of coping with underdevelopment different from that of the Barranco residents. The information derives from Wilk's dissertation (1981) which was published in 1991.

The Maya and Ketchi are unique in Belize as the only indigenous cultural groups whose way of life remains anchored in centuries old tribal customs. They are descendants of the Ancient Maya who came a little more than a century ago to southern Belize from adjacent parts of Guatemala. In Guatemala they have been the victims of blatant racism. This together with escalated political violence and massive economic dislocation throughout Guatemala within the past decades has resulted in continued migration into Belize.

In Belize they make up 7% of the national population. They produce large proportions of the corn, beans, and rice consumed in other parts of the country (See Appendices IV and V). They have always been endogamous and traditionally did not venture too far away from their villages. However, within the past twenty years younger men and women have finished primary and secondary school and become school teachers. Some have taken the unorthodox step of migrating as families from the village to towns. Besides, others have migrated as whole village communities further north from the Toledo District.

Although they share the same Pre-Columbian roots, the Maya Mopan are culturally separate from the Ketchi in language, dress, and religious beliefs. Partly because of these cultural differences, the interaction between them has been limited, each living in separate villages. More recently there have been increasing numbers of mixed villages because of the larger inflow of Ketchi from Guatemala and the dispersal of the Maya further north in the Toledo and Stann Creek Districts.

Wilk (1981:57-123) subdivides Maya/Ketchi villages on the basis of economic zoning into northern and southern zones. The northern zone consists of larger villages "with much cash cropping and road contact with the rest of the country" (Wilk 1981:68). In the southern zone there are smaller isolated hamlets that rely on subsistence agriculture. Persons and groups move freely between the two zones. Market opportunities together with population pressure are, however, presenting major constraints limiting the spread of the Maya/Ketchi. Quite ironically they are re-locating from alluvial soils and heavily forested limestone hills to poorer quality soils located in the northern and eastern portions of the district. There they further deteriorate the ecological balance, which in turn leads them to search for newer village sites.

The Socioeconomy

In discussing the private sector in the previous Chapter we saw that of all the lands being used for agriculture in Belize only 15% were not mechanized. It shows the tremendous bias toward mechanized agriculture, most of which is directed toward export. The most common form of non-mechanized, agriculture in the country is slash-and-burn or milpa cultivation. It makes up most of the above mentioned 15%. Despite the small proportion, its impact on the production of staples is overwhelming. On it is grown most of the rice and half of the corn and beans for national consumption. The following is a description of the technology of milpa cultivation.

Slash-and-burn or milpa agriculture is the method of food production and cash cropping among the Maya/Ketchi. It functions within three cycles of production - a short term, medium term, and long term. The short term is the annual cycle during which the farmer clears virgin bush, burns, plants, and reaps corn, beans, and rice. During the year he may plant two crops of corn and beans at different plots -

one at a virgin site (or a site of secondary growth that has remained fallow long enough to be fertile) and the other at a site that had been used over two or more years. The latter plot, therefore, is one being used in the medium term, that is over a period of about five or more years on a more or less permanent basis. Being closer to the village, such a plot receives considerable attention in inter-cropping with such items as beans, plantain, rice, banana, root crops, and squash.

The farmer considers fifteen years the "minimum practical fallow period" (Wilk 1981:236), after which he could return to cultivate a previously used plot. This is the long term cycle of milpa cultivation when what was originally an unused plot, having remained as secondary growth, becomes usable again.

In the ideal situation of unlimited land, the Maya/Ketchi farmer is engaged simultaneously in all of the three above cycles. However, the reality of the shortage of land and increasing population forces him to adopt certain strategies. They include intensifying the rate of intercropping, lessening the fallow period, and experimenting with alternative cultivars, especially those which are cash earning (Wilk 1981).

Corn is the staple food of the Maya/Ketchi. The main cash crops sold to the Marketing Board are rice and beans. They sell several crops at the town market, including short duration items, such as plantain, banana, root crops and permanent tree crops - citrus, cacao, and other fruits.

A detailed awareness of their ecological resource is a major determinant of the Maya/Ketchi success in agricultural production. The resources include soil types, seeds, changes in weather patterns, and movement of predators. Such folk knowledge results from centuries of inherited experiences, hunches, impressions, and beliefs.

Within such a system of extensive land use, the question of land tenure becomes crucial. Traditionally the government has reserved lands adjoining each village for milpa. The head of each household pays a fee of \$5.00 per year to the government for usufruct rights. The use of milpa land with some residual ownership of crops over a period of years has created tension within villages. There will be a more detailed discussion of the constraints implicit in the reservation system further.

A final word should be said about a product that is significant both for local use as well as for the urban market. It is pigs. The Maya/Ketchi sell about 900 to be butchered in the town market at Punta Gorda during the year and ship an additional 4,000 to other parts of the country (Wilk 1981:322). Pigs are household products in which women and children participate. They consume corn no longer fit for human use and scavenge throughout the village.

The social relations built around economic activities follow the sequence of production from the village to the market. It is necessary to start with the reverence the Maya/Ketchi have for the deities who provide the land and all its bounty. Agricultural ritual is associated with corn cultivation during site selection, planting, and harvesting. The focus on corn for such attention as against the other crops underlines its significance within the culture not only as staple diet but also as an intermediary in the propitiation of deities. The owner of the milpa officiates at the ceremonies but all the workers participate in dietary and sexual abstinence for varying periods.

Milpa production requires the contribution of all of the members of the household as well as others from the larger village community. In order of need the latter consists of extended kin groups, such as siblings, older sons and sons-in-law. The principle of reciprocity dictates

villages are increasing in population.

Being in easy reach of services and commodities channeled through the rest of the country accelerates the process of acculturation for some Maya/Ketchi. The church and nation-state have been the main purveyors of acculturation among them. The influence forthcoming from both, however, is a double-edged sword that produces contradictory results.

The Roman Catholic Church has always been an agent of culture change in southern Toledo District, especially through pastoral care and education. It has also contributed to economic change. During the 1950's a priest had helped to form successful agricultural marketing co-operatives and credit unions in some villages. Those years are remembered as the period when the cash economy took an upsurge rarely seen before or afterwards in the villages.

The previous monopoly of the Roman Catholic Church has been shaken by the influx of scores of Protestant sects within the past twenty years. By the early 1980's they were so firmly rooted that they were competing not only against the Catholic Church but also among themselves for public attention. During a brief survey I did in one of the villages in 1983 there were at least five sects within a population of less than 250. The churches provide some basic material benefits to their adherents in the form of discarded clothing and other personal effects donated from the United States. Some also do training in musical instruments and artisan trades. However, they perpetrate sectarianism increasing the tension toward dispersal in the villages.

The government has maintained a policy of forging a national identity among the different ethnic groups of Belize. Some of the mechanisms it uses to accomplish this create the opposite effect especially among the smaller ethnic groups. Earlier we had seen the inappropriateness of the primary level education

taught in Barranco in lacking content about life in the rural environment. The same goes for Maya/Ketchi villages. We have also seen the major economic problems that the Marketing Board has brought upon the milperos that raise the question why they continue to use its services.

The government needs to review its methods of integrating the smaller, more remote ethnic groups into the national fabric. How do the Maya/Ketchi resolve the contradictions in the acculturation initiatives coming from beyond their village and their desire to maintain their own deeply rooted ethnic identity? The following are some avenues.

Some have left the village to re-locate in the nearest town or further north. Many are entrepreneurs who started as shopkeepers in the village but left when they needed opportunities for expansion. On the other hand, some have remained in the village and are applying suggestions from government agricultural officers about changes in their cultivation system. As a result, they are using new disease resistant seeds, intensifying the use of soils over an extended period, and growing more permanent crops. Some have formed a revivalist Maya movement called the Toledo Maya Cultural Council to counter the disruptions in their culture from western influences. The movement has international affiliation and members have participated in conferences with other Native Americans.

Summary

While the first case study demonstrates a socioeconomy dependent on migration, remittances, and cultivating social relations with those away from the village, the second is more inwardly oriented. There is a strong cultural tradition based on the use of land and on the marketing of its proceeds as well as on a social organization predicated on extensive

interpersonal relationships within the village community.

In their own manner the socioeconomic systems in the first two case studies are dependent on initiatives forthcoming from the nation-state. In the case of the Maya/Ketchi there are questions about improving the marketing system so they could increase their production. Land ownership is a most urgent matter, besides, the continuous migration further north raises other problems in terms of encroaching on more lands and interethnic relations with the traditional inhabitants in the newly settled areas.

Finally, the people involved in the two socioeconomic systems represent the ethnic groups with the most vibrant cultural heritage in Belize. Their socioeconomy arises from the strength of centuries of tradition. In the following case studies we see further decline in the salience of traditional cultural identity as cash production and market forces become more predominant.

3.4 Case Study No. 3 Fishing Co-operatives

Residents of communities located along the coast do fishing for leisure, to provide for the family pot, or as a main form of livelihood. In some communities it is the backbone of the economy. Examples are San Pedro Ambergris, Caye Caulker, and Placencia. The following information derives mostly from a study Gordon (1981) did in San Pedro.

It is necessary to focus on fishing as a case study for the following reasons. There are about 1500 men throughout the country who rely on it as their main income earner. Nationally, fishing contributed \$13 million or 4% of the G.D.P. in 1985 being second only to agriculture in the primary sector. Finally, the use of fishing co-operatives has become so successful as an example of grassroots

mobilization that visitors from within the region and beyond have come to study them for possible emulation.

Because commercial fishing is done in several areas - both urban and rural - it is not useful to describe the type of community in which it is most often found, as we have done in the previous case studies. Rather, we can pinpoint some prerequisites that originate in both rural and urban environments.

Commercial fishing relies a great deal on foreign markets. Outboard motors, fuel, accessories, and gear are imported and the fish are exported by airfreight. As the main point of entry and exit in the country Belize City has strategic importance for the industry. The most successful operations are based there or within a few kilometers radius. On the other hand, the supply of fish is being successively depleted near the city and towns and the men have to go further away, where they can have better catches. Later we will discuss the implications of the contradictory demands on the fishermen for urban based facilities while having access to rural areas remote from heavily populated centers.

Production Systems

Whether they are carried out in urban or rural communities, fishing methods in Belize are basically artisan, i.e. oriented for small scale production by individuals or small groups. The main targets in descending order are lobster, conch, and scale fish. Lobster is caught by trapping or diving; conch by diving and scale fish by nets, traps, and drop-line. To protect the different species the government has set aside certain periods for fishing - for lobster from mid July to March, conch from October to June, and shrimp from August to April. Since the 1960's government has maintained a policy that commercial fishing should remain within the hands of Belizeans and specifically co-

Table 9

MEMBERSHIP AND ASSETS OF FISHING COOPERATIVES IN 1986

NAME	DATE OF REGISTRATION	MEMBERSHIP	ASSETS	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
Northern Fishermen	5/9/60	421	4,604,254.19	Active	Belize City
National Fishermen	24/4/66	247	4,199,900.74	Active	Belize City
Caribena Producers	1/3/63	179	2,488,161.50	Active	San Pedro
Placencia Producers	20/6/62	98	832,337.65	Active	Placencia
Sarteneja Fishermen	2/7/68	186	606,956.00	Inactive	Sarteneja
Hopkins Fishermen	24/3/83	43	184,035.22	Active	Hopkins
Toledo North Fishermen	5/9/85	25	122,399.58	Active	Monkey River
Barranco Fishermen	8/5/80	26	19,625.07	SA (somewhat active)	Barranco
Central Fishermen	9/11/73	39	980.00	Active	Dangriga
Southern Fishermen	5/5/71	48	578.58	SA	Punta Gorda
Western Freshwater	11/1/74	36	150.00	Inactive	Scotland Halfmoon
Independence Fishermen	20/9/85	18	150.00	Active	Independence

operatives which pool the resources of the small producer. Only co-operatives are allowed to

export lobster and conch, the two main cash earning items. The government assists in the

formation of new co-operatives; registers them thereby formalizing their corporate status; and provides technical assistance for their continued growth. Table 9 has a list of the co-operatives showing date of registration, membership, assets, location, and whether they were active in the middle of 1986. Out of twelve, five were registered during the 1960's. The largest has assets of about \$5 million. The largest first three are located in Belize City or a few kilometers away on the cayes. Although co-operatives are found in scattered parts of the coast, the more successful ones are in the northern half of the country.

The co-operatives perform various services. They include marketing, credit, retailing supplies, and extension. Under marketing there is processing, grading, packaging, labeling, and shipping to the foreign market. The processing is basic cleaning and simple preparation, such as filleting and applying a solution of sodium bisulfate to meet USFDA (United States Food and Drug Administration) specifications. Presently, there is no secondary processing, such as canning, or further preparation for more immediate consumer use, such as smoking, pickling, and making fish patties or fish sticks.

Apart from providing a formal structure to facilitate mass production and marketing, the co-operative movement encourages group effort, a much needed virtue in artisanal fishing, which universally is an individualistic effort. It is to the advantage of the men to join forces to have access to resources that one or more may not have. The increasing cost of boats and the difficulty to replace them (partly because of the declining numbers of boat builders in the rural communities and the high cost of newer fibreglass boats) is one reason. Furthermore, outboard motors, fishing gear, and fuel also continue to escalate in cost.

Up to five men may form a working group who share the catch among themselves, after allocating some for the use of the boat owner.

With no ceiling on the amount that a member could deliver to his co-operative, such working groups are useful in increasing production. These groups are ideal for younger men who work with older family members before formally joining the co-operative.

Following the principle of maximizing the economy of scale, co-operatives at times work on joint ventures for their mutual advantage. The newly formed Toledo North Co-operative in Monkey River could not purchase its own storage and processing facilities. It agreed with the co-operative in the neighboring village of Placencia to accept deliveries from its members. It proved helpful on both sides. The members of the Toledo North could concentrate their effort on building production to be able eventually to acquire their own facilities. The Placencia Fishing Co-operative needed the additional supply at a time when its own production had been declining in the face of mounting charges for equipment maintenance.

Historical Background

As in the case of the other extractive industry which dominated the economy of Belize until the 1950's - namely forestry - fishing assumed importance on the basis of demands from the metropole. Up to the 1920's fishing was done only for subsistence or for sale within the domestic economy. Even then it was scale fish that was most in demand. Men in seaside communities migrated to other parts of the country to work at chicle and mahogany camps or stayed to care for the *cocals* of the large landowners.

In 1921 a Canadian, Captain R.E. Foote, started canning lobster for export which he purchased at low prices from local fishermen. Captain Foote's operation lasted until 1935. He survived the protests of fishermen and the women canners for the low income he paid, but ultimately succumbed to decline in the foreign market. Captain Foote played an

historic role in commercial fishing in Belize. He showed that it could be done as a business enterprise at a time when only land based resources were being exploited. Secondly, he introduced the lobster pot, a weir traditionally used in the Canadian maritime provinces. To local fishermen who were unaccustomed to catching lobster in large quantities this tool was most welcome. They subsequently adjusted it to meet local conditions.

Although Captain Foote opened the door for the predominance of lobster in the fishing industry, it was not until after the War that the demand rose with the overall improvement in the buying power of Americans. Several small scale buyers came with their refrigerated boats stopping at fishing villages to buy lobster. The boats became bigger and even a flying boat made regular runs.

By the 1950's some of the buyers had set up processing facilities in Belize City before exporting the finished product. A few joined forces with local businessmen to give the appearance of being part Belizean companies. However, in practice the producing fisherman carried the brunt of the workload but received the least in monetary returns. There had become entrenched the practice of keeping them in permanent debt through advances. The men needed cash to buy boats, motors, and ice boxes to go further away where the lobster supplies were more plentiful.

The profits from the industry were so enticing that competition among the buyers became intense. There were mergers and splits until one person succeeded in monopolizing the industry by owning two companies that bought from fishermen. This latest development presented to the fisherman even clearer than beforehand their disadvantageous position.

The stage was set for Belizeans themselves to assume control of marketing and subsequently of the entire production process. But it would come about only after overcoming

resistance from the colonial bureaucrats acting at the behest of the wealthy foreign buyers. The ray of hope came through the co-operative system which was introduced to Belize by the Catholic mission with the support of the government during the 1940's. In 1959 the men of Caye Caulker asked the Co-operative Department for help to start their own co-operative.

Gordon (1981) has documented in detail the growth of the fishing co-operative in Belize. There are three steps that have contributed greatly. By the mid 1960's the government had established the policy that export quotas would be given not to individuals but to co-operatives, thus limiting the exploitative practices of foreigners over nationals. Secondly, the government accumulated expertise in assisting fishing co-operatives. Thirdly, the men from different parts of the coast, on learning about the success of the co-operatives, were motivated to start their own.

Constraints on Production

Forces from the foreign market not only initiated commercial fishing in Belize, they have also caused it to be lopsided as it is. With lobster fetching up to five times as much as scale fish - an average of \$15.00 and \$3.00 for the pound respectively during the 1986-87 season - the incentives to the fisherman for the target product are quite clear.

On the other hand, the writing on the wall spelling diversification has become increasingly unequivocal. With the passing of every fishing season the men know that they have to go further to catch less lobster. The experience of the men is supported by research carried out by the government Fisheries Department which concludes that at the current rate of harvesting lobster is fast approaching its maximum sustainable yield. It no doubt accounts for the fact that the catch has remained at about

400,000 lbs. per season since 1960. Constantly rising market price has accounted for the dramatic increase in revenue and not increase in production.

Scalefish is presently under exploited and has the greatest potential especially through its availability in the deep seas beyond the reef. The co-operatives have received extensive assistance to be able to exploit this resource. Government has done research along with other institutions on the kinds of fish that could be caught at different depths. Cooperation for American Relief Every-where (CARE) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) have trained at least 50 men in navigation, the use of gear, processing, and other deep sea fishing techniques. At least one co-operative acquired a boat and the necessary equipment but withdrew after a few seasons.

The overwhelming monetary incentive of lobster for the basically artisanal nature of production detracts attention from scalefish. Catching scalefish even within the shallower waters before reaching the reef remains a supplementary source of income for co-operative members during the off-season. Only non co-operative members, who sell directly to local consumers, do it on a year round basis.

Despite the attractive monetary incentive, there are problems within the social organization of the co-operative movement that can limit production. As an autonomous corporate body the co-operative is empowered by law to run its own affairs with minimal supervision from the Department of Co-operatives. The fact of autonomy also carries with it the obligation to stem the divisive forces that are always present within any group activity particularly in small face to face societies. Let us follow the steps leading to a gradual demise in one of the fishing co-operatives. This story is reconstructed from the actual history of three co-operatives.

The Lucky (a pseudonym) Co-operative had operated smoothly for three years during which

time its impact on the village had been quite noticeable. Changes came after a new set of officers were elected at the last annual general meeting in 1984. Several men received large loans from funds that the co-operative had borrowed from a local bank under a proposed expansion programme. At the following season two paid back their loans but the vast majority did not. It continued the following season and got worse. After threats the bank finally used the law to place the assets under receivership.

With deterioration in the level of services the co-operative was offering, some members stopped delivering their catch and instead turned to another co-operative. It is illegal to belong to two fishing co-operatives simultaneously but the members of Lucky made arrangements to deliver under the names of members of the other organization. The lessened productivity deteriorated even more the position of Lucky. The worst came when members started to resign and demand their share capital. It marked the end of a dream to maintain the level of prosperity that the villagers had enjoyed earlier.

The story of Lucky pinpoints two of the causes of failures of co-operatives, lack of proper controls and the use of the co-operative to further existing dissension within the community. The methodological discipline of accounting for the operations of the organization - especially given the minuscule nature of the transactions - becomes a major hurdle for small co-operatives. It leads to lapses in control over finances and the few movable assets. Ultimately, what originally was group property becomes public property and ends up as nobody's property.

Tensions within the village community exist along several lines, including, age, kinship, neighborhood, and socioeconomic stratification. The co-operative could inadvertently become a factor that one group may use against another. This happened at Lucky. The group of officers who approved the large loans was made up of

younger men, who saw the co-operative as a chance to "even up" with the older men who traditionally monopolized the political and economic control in the village. We had seen a similar kind of gerontocracy in the first case study.

The physical environment is another major constraint on commercial fishing. The ecology of the sea extends from the coastal estuaries ...to the hundreds of cayes and ultimately to the barrier reef and beyond. Modern day interference within this fragile ecology is causing at least one noticeable effect, the migration of fish further out to sea. There are other more subtle effects that may be felt in the long run.

The physical environment is another major constraint on commercial fishing. The ecology of the sea extends from the coastal estuaries and swampland to the hundreds of cayes and ultimately to the barrier reef and beyond. Modern day interference within this fragile ecology is causing at least one noticeable effect, the migration of fish further out to sea. There are other more subtle effects that may be felt in the long run. The sources of interference include expansion in the coastal urban population, the building of tourist hotels and related facilities near the coast, and the recreational use of the sea, especially in the area of the barrier reef. The government needs to establish comprehensive regulation for the protection of maritime resources.

Finally, there is the regional component which affects the use of the sea. Neighbors from

Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras frequently poach on Belizean fish especially in the southern districts. They not only exploit what is not theirs but they also endanger the species by ignoring the fish seasons.

The success of commercial fishing has resulted from the hard work of the men, the structure provided by the co-operative movement, and a great deal of intervention from local and foreign sources. The scope of the intervention is comprehensive covering areas from planning to funding to training.

Table 10 is a diagrammatic representation of the sources contributing to the fishing co-operative movement. On the one side there is a hierarchy of organizations that the men themselves form. On the other there are various resources originating outside of the co-operative structure.

The most complex organization that the men form is the Belize Fishing Co-operative Association which includes as members four of the largest co-operatives Northern, National, Caribena, and Placencia Producers. It serves as a support group to lobby with government for the welfare of the co-operatives and to channel resources into training and other areas. It also provides technical advice and moral support to new societies.

Assistance comes to the co-operatives from the government, local non-government organizations, and foreign sources. Government has two departments with primary focus on fishing, the Fisheries Department and the Co-operative Department. Established in 1968 the Fisheries Department has a complement of 12 public officers. Their duties are research and development, extension, fishery management and quality control. Among their several tasks one of their current preoccupations is to establish 'no fishing zones' near the barrier reef which would become spawning grounds. The policing of these zones would be their responsibility.

Table 10
(Sources Contributing to the Fishing
Cooperative Movement)

- I. MEMBERS → Co-ops → Belize Fishing Cooperative Association
- II. GOVERNMENT
 - 1. Fisheries Department, research, extension, management, quality control.
 - 2. Co-op Department: training, management of co-operative laws, supervision
- 3. OTHER
 - Fisheries Advisory Board, National Fisheries Development Plan
- III. N.G.O.'S:
 - 1. Technical Assistance for production and management.
- IV. FOREIGN SOURCES
 - 1. Foreign Market
 - 2. Funding for research and to co-ops directly
 - 3. Training
 - 4. Contractual arrangements with companies

There is a Fisheries Co-operative Officer in the Co-operative Department whose function is to supervise all the fishing co-operatives and provide them with direct assistance in the field. The topics he covers include accounting, management, co-operative principles, and government legislation. He walks the thin line of respecting the autonomy of the societies while ascertaining that they remain within the law and the policy of the government.

In addition to the departments that are involved on a daily basis, the government has a Fisheries Advisory Board made up of eight persons representing a cross-section of interests. In 1983 the government drew up a National Fisheries Development Plan 1983-89. As a well thought out document it reflects a great deal of concern toward maintaining a methodological approach to fisheries in Belize.

Non-government organizations based in Belize offer service to fishing co-operatives. They are voluntary groups and intermediary

organizations that function between small income generating groups and foreign agencies with funding expertise. The services they provide include drawing up proposals for funding, training, and remedial services to organizations facing managerial and related problems.

From foreign countries, notably the United States and Canada, the interventions are critical. They are the market for the products. They also assist with funding, training, and research. Co-operatives on their own enter into contractual agreements with individuals and firms on the exchange of fish or their value for essential equipment and/or services. For example, a young co-operative with no processing equipment may enter into an agreement with a fish dealer to supply him with products in exchange for the equipment.

Summary

The case of the fishing co-operative presents the kind of success story in grassroots development that one likes to read about. It starts with men who did fishing more for subsistence than as a cash earning activity. Demands in the foreign market for lobster sent small scale entrepreneurs to the cayes who cleverly exploited the men. The men responded by seeking assistance from the government to help them set up co-operatives so they could by-pass the foreign middle-man. The co-operatives have become strong and are now some of the largest in the country. There has also been assistance extended to them by government, local non-government organizations, and foreign development agencies.

There is another side to the story that students of development should be aware of. We see the results of tension within the social organization of co-operatives that has led to the destruction of a few organizations. There is the self-imposed limitation by the co-operative members against extending their exploitation

to deep sea resources. The limits of their production are also seen in the case of lobster, which shows that the amount of tails caught has remained about the same for the last 20 years. Finally, there is the conservatism of the men with respect to their basically artisanal technology - methods that have been tried and have proven successful for generations.

It is worth noting that the above forces can be described as constraints on increasing production and wealth. Fishing is an economic activity but as a type of social group activity it would seem to have built in a capability to monitor its own growth against unbridled spurts of development that would be totally detrimental in the long run. It is an interesting case of a group controlling development for their welfare insofar as they are almost completely in charge of the production process.

In the following case study the systems of production, processing, and marketing are far more complex than in any of the previous socio-economic systems. Correspondingly the role of the small person as farmer and worker are greatly reduced.

3.5 Case Study No. 4 Sugar Agro-Industry

Introduction

The sugar industry has been the primary earner of foreign exchange in Belize since 1960. It dominates the economy of the two northern districts - Orange Walk and Corozal - whose combined population make up 31.5% of all Belizeans.

According to a 1985 BSI report, in 1984 the company paid a little more than \$4 million as taxes to the government, including income tax deductions from employees. Together with an estimated \$1 million that the cane farmers themselves paid as income tax, the combined

contribution of the sugar industry amounted to 7% of the total government revenue. The cash flow from BSI directly into the economy in the twelve months to September 1984 came up to \$66 million broken down as follows - \$39 million paid to cane farmers, \$14 million as gross wages, salaries, and fringe benefits to employees, and the rest going for purchases of goods and services (BSI 1985:17).

Additionally the sugar industry has been an example of the most complex industrialization in the country with massive inputs from multinational corporations, the government, and the farmer. The following description shows some of the interplay among these parties but with some emphasis on the socio-economic structure at the micro-level of the community.

Settlement Pattern

So far we have seen among the case studies a progressive need for the combination of resources originating from both the rural and urban areas as the level of productivity increases. The complexity of the sugar industry predicates the need to focus on activities that have to be carried out in specific socio-economic environments that are urban, rural, and a combination of both.

The cultivation of sugarcane is done best in the rural area where there is available land. The grinding and processing are done in huge factories located near enough to towns and transportation systems. There are two factories - one in the Corozal District and the other in the Orange Walk District creating their own communities which do not fit neatly into the rural/urban dichotomy. The social characteristics of these communities arise from the demand of the factories for personnel to reside nearby. As a result, the surrounding settlement pattern reflects the status of the workers within the factory hierarchy. Finally, the industry could

not function without access to urban services, such as banks, supply stores, and pool of seasonally available labor.

To ease the flow of one component of the industry to the other, particularly at periods of peak demand, a network of roads and communication facilities was built. The result has been that both districts have acquired the most numerous mileage of main and feeder roads, which are the best maintained throughout the country. Their supplies of public utilities - electricity, water, and telephone - are more evenly distributed than in other parts of the country. These amenities in turn have encouraged the concentration of rural communities with growing populations in contrast to the slowly depopulated villages in the southern coastal area or those with fluctuating populations among the Maya/Ketchi.

Since the rural/urban dichotomy is not suitable in discussing the type of community characteristics of the sugar industry, it is necessary to look for another paradigm. It is more appropriate to take a regional approach within which certain components, designed for the efficient running of the industry, are juxtaposed. The two northern districts fall into such a region, particularly the northwestern portion of the two districts between the New River and Rio Hondo. Other factors underline this commonality in both districts. They include similarities in topography, climate, and the dominant Mestizo ethnic group.

Production System

Unlike the previous socioeconomic systems the sugar industry has a complexity in the numbers and types of groups involved in production, processing, and marketing. Table 11 sketches what the groups are and their functions.

Production starts within the household where the division of labor required in the field for cultivation, harvesting, and delivery falls on the

shoulder of the menfolk. The increased manpower of unmarried sons is especially helpful in boosting the amount of tons of sugar cane that the family delivers. Together with the help of close kin they pool their labor to avoid paying for extra hands. Each farmer is allowed by the Belize Cane Farmers Association (BCFA) to harvest a certain amount during the season. Relatives assist with extra cane should one of them be in need.

Table 11
(Main Actors in the Sugar industry)

- A. COMMUNITY
 - Farmers and household members engaged in field production
- B. NATION
 - 1. Non-Government Agencies
 - I. Credit Unions-loans
 - II. Labor Unions-workers
 - III. BCFA-Support Services, Advocacy viz a viz BSI and GOB
 - 2. Government
 - I. Statutory Boards
 - II. Ministry of Agriculture
 - III. External representation to industry.
 - 3. Private Sector -MNC-owned
 - I. BSI & its affiliates
 - II. Service industries
- C. INTERNATIONAL-
 - International buyers

The amount of cane to be delivered at the factory is set for each community by the district branch of the BCFA. The competition thus becomes a village community undertaking with each one trying to outdo the other in the amount of cane (i.e. quota) it delivers to the factory. The village officers of the BCFA monitor the delivery of each producer. The importance of

meeting one's quota is that close to the end of the season one may be asked to deliver more, should the factory request additional sugar cane. Preference is usually given to smaller producers for such deliveries. Proof of increased capacity for production means that one could receive a larger quota the following year.

In the field the work is done by men and machines. Because of the demands at certain periods, there may be more work to do than that available from the household and relatives. The only alternative is to hire extra help in the form of Mexican migrant laborers or Central American refugee/migrants. Given their status as foreigners - and most probably illegal aliens - they are a source of cheap labor with no recourse to the law for redress of the exploitative practices meted out to them. Fieldwork in the sugar industry requires an available pool of cheap manual labor.

The revitalization of the sugar industry in the 1950's was a direct response by the government to address the depressed conditions in northern Belize. The hand of support coming from the government has been responsible for the continued growth of the industry together with the intervention of the multinational corporations themselves. In discussing the sequence of interventions we start with the government whose numerous programmes range from the level of the farmers to that of negotiations at the foreign market. The government provides land support services to the farmers. Coinciding with its long established policy of making land available to the small farmer, the government periodically bought unused land from large land owners to pass on to small farmers under a lease agreement. It was done throughout the 1960's and 1970's as the rapid expansion of the industry demanded more land. Between 1971 and 1982 the government had acquired some 525,000 acres of land from big landowners, most of which

went to sugar cane growers (Shoman 1987: 36-37).

Further government support services come from the Agriculture Department in the form of outreach and research. The Department keeps track of the diseases and pests that affect cane plants and advises farmers about improved varieties. In selling Belize sugar on the world market the government assumes a bargaining position in consultation with other sugar producing countries, e.g. the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) group that receives quota allocation from the European Economic Community. It also takes its own initiative to arrange for sales through bilateral arrangements with individual country buyers. To reinforce its selling price the government with the help of BSI maintains keen interest in fluctuations in the international sugar market.

Within the country the Belize Sugar Advisory Board is the overall watchdog of the industry. Senior government officers and appointees of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry sit on the board to represent the government's input in its deliberations.

Private sector intervention comes from two sets of multinational corporations that undergird the industry, namely Belize Sugar Industry (BSI) and the commercial banks. Apart from owning the two factories, the BSI transports sugar and molasses to the Belize City Harbor. At each of the above stage the company pays for services provided as labor or rental of facilities. Hence the effect of the industry is spread from the north to Belize City. In 1985 the company employed 115 men in its operations in the field, factory, marine services and storage. The employees are unionized with the Belize Workers Union covering factory workers and other unions the remaining workers.

Credit plays a major role in the financing of cane cultivation and delivery. At the beginning

of the growing season farmers borrow money from the bank using the prospective crop as lien to meet the costs of clearing fields, fertilizer, and pesticides. Brockman (1979:54) found that 79% of the town farmers and 64% of the village farmers took loans every year. The bank not only provides loans they are also the source through which farmers are paid for deliveries. BSI borrows money to pay farmers pending the receipt of cash from international buyers. There is a standing arrangement whereby the company informs the bank how much to disburse to each farmer. Before disbursal the bank makes deductions on amounts owned to itself, the company, and the BCFA. The advantages of these transactions to the bank are the various charges they levy for their services as well as the ease by which farmers could maintain their accounts. The result on the farmer was the growth of dependency on the bank to carry through his annual operations.

Two parastatal agencies that contribute to the sugar industry are the Development Finance Corporation and the Belize Sugar Advisory Board. The Development Finance Corporation (DFC) is a statutory organization that receives money from outside sources to lend for specific schemes. Since agriculture - and cane production - was a priority for the government, it received a large amount for loans. The advantage that the DFC has over the bank include longer repayment periods and lower interest rates.

Earlier we mentioned the supervisory role of the Sugar Advisory Board. Like the DFC its corporate status originates from a government ordinance. Among its several functions it is appropriate at this point to mention three related to the field operations of the industry. It determines when the yearly grinding season begins. It supervises elections held for positions in the BFCFA. It collects specified returns from the operation of the

manufacturers and BCFA that enable it to maintain an overview of the industry.

Another source of input into the sugar industry is non-government organizations. Several non-government organizations contribute to the strength of the industry. They include various branches of the credit union scattered in the northern districts. Given their small scale and community orientation, their savings and credit functions cater to needs not served by other institutions, such as the banks and DFC. Mention should be made of the labor unions formed by the workers in the factories. They deserve greater attention than that possible within the scope of this paper.

On the other hand, there is a need to elaborate on the Belize Cane Farmers Association. Like the Advisory Board, it was brought into being by government ordinance. Unlike the Advisory Board, the ordinance allows the farmers control over the Association. Thus, it functions more as a grassroots organization to promote the interest of its members.

The Association has two divisions, one for each of the districts. Each has its own elected management committee. Three members for each divisional committee are elected to form an overall committee of management whose chairman alternates yearly between the two districts. Each division has eight local branches with each having its own elected management committee. The local branches are scattered within the two towns and villages in the two districts. The democratic framework at each level of the hierarchy together with the channels of communication insures that input from the village farmer can reach the highest decision making body of the Association.

Some of the functions of the Association include trading in agricultural supplies for the benefit of its members. It negotiates yearly the price to be paid for sugar cane with the manufacturers. The basic formula used is

subdivision of the factory's net revenue on a 66/33% basis between the farmer and the company respectively (Hulse et al. 1971:11). On a daily basis the Association determines how much sugar cane each member should deliver. The decision filters down to the village branch and each farmer has to consult with the officers how much cane he could deliver. Finally, the Association seeks permission with the government to bring in foreign fieldwork on behalf of its members.

With the Association carrying out such a wide range of activities simultaneously and servicing large number of client groups, over time it developed its own machinery of operations. A detailed discussion of this topic - namely the actual organization as against the ideal, programmatic structure - needs another effort. Jones covers it adequately in his 1971 monograph but only up to 1967 (Jones 1971).

Historical Background

In providing an overview of the sugar industry we can isolate three mileposts - the arrival of Tate & Lyle, land divestment by BSI, and the closure of the Libertad factory.

The arrival of the British firm Tate & Lyle (which later became BSI) in the Corozal District in 1963 was not the beginning of the sugar industry in Belize. Tate & Lyle bought the factory from Corozal Sugar Factory Ltd., which had been in operation from 1935. Previous attempts at sugar manufacture had taken place in different parts of the country since early in the last century. The Tate & Lyle takeover marked the introduction of large scale production that has had the most crucial effect on the economy of the country since the decline of forestry during the 1950's.

Attracting the giant multinational corporation to invest in Belize was a major achievement for a government that was still under the strong grips of its British colonial masters. Incentives were given to the company under the policy

of industrialization by invitation, including extensive tax holidays, duty free importation, repatriation of profits, etc. (see Chapter 2) on attracting investments.

While jealously maintaining the confidence of the company, the government had to assure the masses that they would acquire maximum benefits from the fruits of the industry. The need to maintain a dual orientation was the tightrope the government would walk throughout the remaining years of the sugar industry. In building the legal base of the industry in the Sugar Control Ordinance of 1959 it set up the Sugar Advisory Board which would be overall watchdog and the BCFA which would be the representative organization for the farmers. Besides, three funds were established to cater to specific needs of the cane farmers and, in some cases, the company workers. These are the Sugar Price Stabilization Fund, the Sugar Rehabilitation Fund, and Sugar Labor Welfare Fund. In adopting these measures the government provided a structure with some overlap to allow communication between itself, the company, and workers, and more especially to protect the welfare of the cane farmer.

The government guaranteed start up loans that the BCFA requested from 1962 to 1965 (Hulse 1971:84) for current and prospective members. Lands were made available to the farmers. Roads were built to provide access. Bulldozers and tractors were made available to the farmers on a rental basis. These were infrastructural forms of intervention apart from those that we have already seen earlier.

B. S. I. expanded in 1964 adding to its Libertad factory in the Corozal District a newly built factory at Tower Hill, Orange Walk District which started operations in 1967. The entire northern portion of the country was then brought fully into the sphere of the sugar industry. Whatever BSI did from then onwards would have extensive repercussions on the

economy of the north as well as the rest of the country.

The second milepost in the history of the industry was the divestment by BSI of some of its lands. By 1973 BSI had divested 6,317.2 acres of its lands to Orange Walk District farmers and some of its workers, retaining 1,000 acres for research purposes. The significance of this move in the history of the sugar industry in Belize needs to be highlighted. The 148 men who bought the lands were selected by the BCFA with preference being given to smaller producers, if they met BSI credit rating (Brockman 1979). Hence, it was an attempt at equalizing the public participation in the industry.

The land that BSI divested was already under mechanized cultivation. Acquiring it was an additional advantage as the process of mechanization was already well pronounced among some cane farmers even at that time.

Before BSI divested, the government had already bought land from large land owners who were not developing it. The action by BSI gave added credence to government policy on giving the smaller man a chance to participate in the industry. But BSI had other reasons for divesting. They were losing about half million dollars annually on their investment of mechanizing cane cultivation (Hulse 1971:27). They no doubt were foreseeing the trend in the downward fluctuation of world sugar prices, which would hit the industry in full force less than ten years afterwards.

The third milestone was BSI closing down the Libertad factory at the end of the 1985 grinding season. The reason was the low price that sugar was fetching internationally. The Corozal farmers would have to deliver their cane to the Tower Hill factory. Besides, 422 workers lost their jobs. Farmers throughout the north took their cue and cut back their production or stopped altogether. A boom period that started in 1955 had come to an end.

The rise of the sugar industry brought in its wake fundamental changes in the socio-culture of the inhabitants of the north. It had repercussions within the region as well as in their interactions with other Belizeans.

In describing changes in the village of Xaibe after ten years of growing sugar cane, Abrams (1974:1) said, "Xaibequenos have, in almost dramatic fashion, left their previous life of subsistence agriculture and part time wage labor to become, for the most part, independent small farmers of sugar cane." This statement could be said about most communities in the two districts both rural and urban. Indeed, it is significant that commercial cane production in Belize, unlike so many industrial "developments" in other parts of the Third World that are confined to urban communities and their adjoining plantations, took place among residents of towns and villages. Notwithstanding the historically deep rooted socioeconomic and ethnic cleavages between large and small farmers that Jones (1971) so aptly describes, the early years of cane cash cropping saw marked economic benefits throughout the sugar belt for all cane farmers.

Increases in sugar price in the 1960's caused the inflow of relatively large amounts of cash to cane farmers. One's performance in the cash economy became a major indicator of rank within the stratification system of the community. The pattern it took differed from within the rural and urban community.

In the villages that had previously relied on subsistence economy supplemented by wage labor, rank had not been associated solely with cash income. Rather one's rank was a configuration of advanced age, knowledge of traditional Maya ritual and customs, and proven qualities of leadership within the village *alcalde* system. The intrusion of cash heightened the conspicuous display of wealth as another index of differentiation within face to face communities. For further discussion of the

implications of the incipient socioeconomic stratification within the village see Abrams (1974).

In the towns, on the other hand, there were greater opportunities for the rise of a petty bourgeoisie that could provide the services required by the industry. With quickly rising fortunes they along with the remaining older families became the nucleus of a socioeconomic class. Jones (1971) describes the methods they used to gradually impede greater participation of smaller farmers in the sugar industry.

Another effect of the cash economy in the north was to lose elements of the Maya socioculture needed for communal self-sufficiency especially with respect to food. Abrams observes that there was compatibility between milpa agriculture and cash cropping when he studied Xaibe in 1974. It was probably a phase in transition to the marked decrease in the cultivation of corn and other staples observed in other communities (Brockman 1979, Stavrakis 1978, and Jones 1971). The lure of sugar money led farmers to dedicate their cultivable land to cane. Along with cutbacks in corn milpa production went traditional agricultural rituals similar to those we have already seen among the Maya/Kekchi.

Simultaneously, there was occurring a loss of village level communal identity, the Mexicanization of Maya culture, the breakdown of community functions, and local social institutions (Jones 1971:59). The changes came naturally as pressures mounted in each village and town to break down the community barriers traditionally characterized by inwardly oriented subsistence production and instead to regard themselves as one socio-cultural region bounded by Mexico on the north and the rest of Belize on the south.

From the north (i.e. Mexico) came the dominating culture perpetrated by the mass media, the availability of consumer goods and services, and the ease of transportation for visits

to friends and relatives on either side of the border. Also from the north came the Spanish language whose rise to dominance in the Orange Walk and Corozal Districts coincided with the growth of the sugar industry. The relationship with the rest of the country was more ambivalent culturally than with Mexico. While disinherit their Maya roots the *cañeros* adopted the Spanish language and other Mexican cultural trappings as a method of common identification, and to separate themselves in their newly acquired wealth from the rest of poorer Belize.

As we have seen, the economic impact of sugar came through the intervention of the government acting on behalf of all Belizeans. Through their participation in the industry and especially the intermediary of the BCFA, the farmers realized their political strength *viz a viz* the rest of the country and they used it to their own advantage. They made repeated representations to the government through resolutions passed at meetings of the BCFA, demonstrations, and sending delegations to meet face to face with government ministers. Internally the agitations became the rites of passage of some local politicians to rise in prominence at the national level of the House of Representatives. The combinations of economic wealth and political might augured for a disproportionate representation of the residents of the north in the power structure of the entire country.

Another impact of the sugar industry was in making the north a magnet to attract population from the rest of the country. The depopulation of the south, that we have already seen, resulted from the exodus of large numbers of young men and women to the north in search of wage labor.

Physical and Socioeconomic Constraints

The current retrenchment within the sugar industry that eventually came in the shocking

closure of one of the factories in 1985 underlines the vulnerability of sugar within the world market. Ultimately, it is the primary constraint on the industry, a classic case of dependence of a Third World primary producer country on the metropole.

Even if the company had not curtailed operations within the sugar belt, there had been gradual changes taking place that over time were restricting who would be producers. Two anthropologists have analyzed this process. Brockman uses the metropole/periphery model where the extent of dependence of the latter (i.e. the small producer) capitalizes on his position of dominance. Jones describes the historical basis of domination and traces the political mechanism that the main actors use to maintain it. Both Brockman and Jones feature a process of increased polarization resulting in two distinct classes. On the one hand, there are the large producers owning large tracts of land and machinery to work it. On the other, there are a rural proletariat increasingly marginalized through their inability to produce cane and completely dependent on hiring their labor. Cutbacks in processing capacity ironically prevented the progression to this phase of increased inequality. The seeds of polarization arose from the allocation of licences and daily quotas. From the time of the revitalization of the industry in the early 1960's there had been a bias on the selection of licences towards the large farmers under the self-fulfilling prophecy that only they could deliver the cane needed to meet the factory's grinding capacity. Indeed, at that time the largest producer was a company called Plantation Limited. Tate & Lyle took over the industry with the condition that they produce one-third of the sugar cane needed for processing.

The attempts to liberalize delivery were fraught with intense social and political problems. One of them was the vexed question of how to increase one's delivery quota. The

formal method of granting additional quotas to small producers worked well only on paper. But the ability of the small farmer to deliver relied on such variables as the availability of credit, the number of boys and young men in the household, and his position in the life cycle of the household. As a result he could lose in one year the increased quota given him the previous year. Such was the conservatism built into the quota system that it could not accommodate the upward mobility inevitable in the growth of the population and the shortage of available land.

Apart from the above socioeconomic constraints directly affecting cane delivery, there were also those arising from the physical environment. There were seasons when the crop was devastated by smut disease and the froghopper. The response was the application of chemicals and the introduction of more disease resistant varieties with help from the B. S. I. research facilities and the Agriculture Department.

The premature onset of the rainy season caused great difficulty to deliver cane, although the government built several miles of main and feeder roads. To minimize this problem the farmers acquired lands as close as possible to the roads. However, these were usually the first tracts to be issued to owners and the newer ones had to be satisfied with more remote tracts.

SUMMARY

The sugar industry has dominated the economy of Belize for the past 30 years. In the late 1950's, the newly elected nationalist government inherited from the British colonial administrators the plans to invite the Tate & Lyle Co. to establish in the Corozal District. Visualizing it as bringing industrialization, modernization, and the much coveted development to an impoverished part of the country, the government did all it could to consolidate the industry. The long term results have been

some overall improvement relative to what the condition had been, notably in infrastructure - roads, electricity, and telecommunications. There was tremendous increase in the cash flow not only in the north but also in other parts of the country. However, it came as part of a classic case in the exploitation of the natural resources of a Third World country by multinational corporations acting at the behest of the government which itself provided a great deal of fiscal and other types of support. As the owners of their own land and crops, the farmers fared considerably better than rural peasants in other countries. They received cash payments for their harvests and they could mobilize through their association in advocating their welfare.

However, as in other cases where there is considerable cash flow into a context where it had been sparse beforehand, there occurs the additional problems of knowing how to use it. There have been no studies of the financial advantages to the northerners accruing from sugar. However, it was plain to see that foreign consumer goods bought in Belize, the United States and Mexico were quickly adopted. On the other hand, the production of staple foods declined, which in turn necessitated their purchase. There was also a lessening in the status of women in the household as their function in the subsistence and cash economy declined relative to that of the men (see Stavrakis 1979).

Nationally, the newly acquired wealth of the *cañeros* and experiences in flexing their muscle against the government and company served as a platform for participating actively in national electoral politics. Such visibility has upset the balance of power among the ethnic groups of Belize resulting in a process of realignment that is still ongoing.

Finally, this overview of the sugar industry has given us a brief glimpse of the cyclical nature of an industry controlled by multination-

als and reliant on the primary production of a fruit crop. By 1980 the spectacular prices obtained for sugar in the 1960's and early 1970's had fallen. The decline in the market resulted in the need for BSI to close down one of its factories in 1985.

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CHAPTER 4

Development/Underdevelopment Lessons Learned

4.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I analyze patterns forthcoming from the narrative description in the case studies to better understand the development process within Belize. I also make references to lessons applicable to understanding development within the Atlantic Coast of Central America in keeping with the objective of the CSUCA Atlantic Coast Project.

4.2 Indications of Development/Underdevelopment

Table 12 presents a profile of the four case studies as socio-economic systems using four variables - setting, national significance, historical background, and environmental and other constraints. The following discussion describes differences among the systems. It also introduces a sub grouping of two as being underdeveloped and the others as developed. The differentiation uses the common assumption of the latter being more complex, modern, and generating more cash returns. There emerges, therefore, a series of indicators of what could be termed development/underdevelopment in Belize.

I should bring up the *caveat* that the case studies themselves are certainly not exhaustive of socioeconomic systems found in the country. The selection was limited by the paucity of micro-level economic studies in Belize. However, as main forms of livelihood in various parts of the country, they provide a fairly wide distribution - one on which we can draw the following conclusions.

The setting to a large extent determines the level of development. The rural village is the type of settlement pattern for the two

underdeveloped systems, whereas a combination of towns and villages, preferably within a geographical region is more appropriate for the developed systems. Concurrent with settlement pattern is the ethnic groups that are resident therein. For the underdeveloped minorities it is the Maya/Ketchi and Garifuna and in the others it is Creole and Mestizo.

Furthermore there are some community diagnostics that fall into the two categories. In the case of the underdeveloped there is depopulation resulting from the exodus of the working age adults and the periodic movement of groups from one settlement to another. In the developed systems further north there are communities that are growing in population not only from natural reproduction but also from internal migration, originating from - among other places - towns and villages in the south.

The subheading in Table 12 entitled "national significance" is worth emphasizing, as we need to look within the broadened context of the country where some communities may have little sustained local economic production. But in the case of the Garifuna, for example, such communities serve as places for the socialization of offsprings of villagers who have left in search of wage labor and as retirement locations for those who return during their old age. The Maya/Ketchi villagers are a main source of grain for the rest of the country. The two developed socioeconomic systems contribute much needed foreign exchange into the national economy. Indeed, each system in its own way contributes to the cumulative development of the nation. What contributes to the developed /underdeveloped dichotomy is the presumed lessened economic contribution of the latter to the welfare of the nation.

TABLE 12
Main Characteristics Among Socioeconomic Systems

Characteristics	Underdeveloped		Developed	
	Mixed Source	Milpa Cultivation	Fishing Co-op	Sugar Agro-industry
1. Setting a. location b. ethnicity c. community diagnostic d. settlement pattern	Southern coast Garifuna population: 2 age sets dispersed village	Southwest Toledo Maya/Ketchi Periodic re-location village clusters	coastal urban/rural Creole/Mestizo modest population growth towns and villages	northern districts Mestizo strong population growth towns and villages in one region.
2. National significance	socialization of children and retirement of senior citizens	source of grain, beans and pork	source of foreign exchange	Foreign exchange and extensive multiplier effect
a. mode of production	Use of cash remittance, wage labor, subsistence food production	subsistence and cash cropping	artisanal fishing	intensive cultivation and factory work
b. social relations	kinship, institutional ties, petty trading; buyer/seller ties	religious/ceremonial, group reciprocity, trading relations	individual activity, small group, marketing co-op	household males action groups, casual field labor, labor unions in company operations

TABLE 12 Continued
(Main Characteristics Among Socioeconomic systems)

Characteristics	Underdeveloped	Developed
3. Historical background	cycles of emigration; increasing reliance on wage labor and stifling agriculture; neglect of the area by government; self-fulfilling prophecy of underdevelopment among natives	before 1950's men do wage labor and subsistence fishing; 1940's & 50's selling to American middlemen; after 1960's form coop. revitalization of industry 1950's BSI land divestment, 1973 pullout from Libertad 1984.
4. Environmental and other constraints	demands for wage labor and decline in fosterage. land shortage; contradictory initiatives from nation-state: acculturation vs. national identity	over exploitation of lobster; weakness in coop-social organization; degradation of marine ecology; poaching by fishermen from neighboring countries. fluctuations in international market; increasing polarization: small/large farmer; land shortage; increasing need for roads.

The alignment of statements of "national significance" within developed and underdeveloped contexts also implies a relative placement within the national value system of Belizeans. The fact that the socialization of children and retirement of senior citizens currently provide *raison de etre* for one of the least developed communities indicates how little the nation's social services system provides in support for these two important phases in the life cycle. The working population has to provide for their young and aged. Those who cannot do so within their own immediate household have to send them "back home" to their relatives. Garifuna villagers who are away on wage labor have become accustomed to doing this over the years.

The mode of production is a main indicator of development. In the underdeveloped systems we see reliance on subsistence production through milpa cultivation and small scale intensive cultivation in bush gardens (among the Garifuna). There is also the use of cash remittances derived from labor done away from the village location but sent there to consolidate kinship ties. In these examples the mode of production remains limited with minimal scope for growth because of excessive constraints from the larger nation-state, the underdeveloped marketing system for grain among the Maya/Ketchi and the pull of wage labor among the Garifuna.

In the developed systems the mode of production extends from household based activities, to local group labor, to operations that could be supplied only by multinational corporations. Household based activities include fishing, cane cultivation, and retail trading. The most significant example of local group activity and control is the fishing co-operative. Within the sugar industry, on the other hand, multinational corporations take control of factory operations, banking transactions, and transportation/communication

networks. In contrast to the limitations in the mode of production in the underdeveloped systems, in the developed systems the capacity to produce at the level of the local community is extended by processing and selling to the foreign market.

The social relations of production follow the sequence from the pre-capitalist to the capitalist mode. In the underdeveloped systems the types of social relations are those often described by anthropologists for primitive societies. They are kinship, dyadic patron/client ties, group reciprocity, and deference to the deity expressed through rituals during the agricultural cycle. In the developed systems the social relations are built on the use of cash as the basis of all transactions. Interactions at the group level exist but they are circumscribed by the needs of production. Hence, they are formally institutionalized as can be seen in the co-operative, the BCFA, and the labor unions formed by BSI workers.

The discussion on the historical precedents has been limited to specific time periods and to pre-conditions that gave rise to the socioeconomic systems. Indications are that the ground work for the current developed /underdeveloped dichotomy in Belize was laid during the 1950's and early 1960's. The economic depression of the southern coast, which earlier in this century had seen more successful times during banana and saw milling days, became pronounced during the 1950's. The Maya/Ketchi started to intensify their production for the national market at that time, after consecutive stints with wage labor had increased their need for cash bought goods. The fishing co-operatives began in the early 1960's and the revitalization of the sugar industry in the late 1950's.

Another indication arising from an analysis of the historical background is that the development process has its own internal cycle specific to a socioeconomic system. Thus,

within a period of less than thirty years we have seen the sugar industry go through the full cycle of beginning, climax, and decline; since 1987 it seems to be on another upswing. In the fishing co-operative the harvesting of lobster reached its plateau of about 400,000 pounds in the 1960's. Finally, reliance in the southern coastal communities on remittance will last only until relatives need to continue sending their current amount of cash or can do so. We are seeing that as men and women bring their children to join them at their work place they send less cash remittances, thereby constraining the fragile economy of the village. In short each socioeconomic system has main forces that impacts in its own internal dynamic at specific times.

Finally, the case studies show clearly that the process of development is dependent to a large extent on the direct intervention of the national government. The impetus for growth in the fishing co-operatives and the sugar industry came directly from government action. Similarly, the stagnation among the Maya/Ketchi and the Garifuna has to be blamed on government's direct action as well as continued neglect. In the failure of the government to balance the regional inequality there follows a gradual process of consolidation resulting in greater concentration of population together with economic and political power in one region. The early 1980's down turn in the sugar industry saw a hiatus in this process in Belize. But we could assume that a similar protracted situation took place in the history of other Central American countries resulting in the present underdevelopment of the coastal area.

4.3 Linkage between the Macro/Micro-levels

An analysis of characteristics along developed and underdeveloped patterns raises afresh the need to discuss how linkages are worked through (or not) between the micro-level of

the community and the macro-level of the state. Here we are not looking at the institutional intermediaries such as banks, statutory boards, and non-government organizations; rather on the implementation of policy, projects, and other initiatives that determine what development takes place.

In focusing on technocrats of development in the Belizean bureaucracy between 1960 and 1980 we see the insufficient attempts to coordinate community level with state development. Their training and world view were oriented toward unilineal growth visible in monetary terms. As a result, their language spoke more of large scale investment instead of community initiated income generation. They found it difficult to target fishing co-operative members and cane farmers and much less milperos and villagers relying on mixed sources for their livelihood. They especially had difficulty to factor into their programme Barranco and similar coastal communities. Indeed, some recommended that they be permanently relocated to hasten their economic viability.

Such "development specialist" type of growth with minimal accountability by the political directorate to a cross-section of its constituents prevailed to a much greater degree in the neighboring countries than in Belize. The reason is that the political framework necessary to overhaul the economy was being put in place as part of the constitutional reform concurrent with British decolonization between 1960 and 1980. Even though there was some restructuring of government planning bureaucracy in the other countries to include the Atlantic Coast, there was not a simultaneous effort to adjust the political structure, except in revolutionary Nicaragua. As a result, there has been in Belize a far greater fit between popular demands for development and what the government actually planned. It no doubt accounts for the high emphasis on physical

infrastructure and social services in the 1960-1980 plans as we saw in Chapter 2.

Notwithstanding the prevailing atmosphere for comprehensive development in Belize relative to the other countries, we have already described some pockets of persistent underdevelopment. It brings up a twofold need. One is for greater circumspection within the field of development to better understand its own internal relativity. The other is to stand ready to encourage community self-enhancement, which CSUCA had projected as a sequel to this phase of the research in the participating countries.

There is another form of linkage between the macro and micro levels that is informal, does not have anything to do with policy, but portrays an underlying current of integration between both levels. It is the constant movement of people from small "underdeveloped" communities to "developed" urban areas. We have already seen the pattern of migration in age sets by the Garifuna to and from Barranco and other parts of Belize. The performance of vital activities such as caring for the young and the aged while working away to send remittances shows how people have combined both environments for their own well being. My own hunch is that this type of interface is taking place throughout the Central American Atlantic Coast and between it and adjoining parts of the subcontinent. The result is increasing social and cultural interdependence, with either environment strongly influencing the other.

4.4 Towards the True Enclave

The linkage existing between the macro/national and the micro/community levels brings to light the linkages between those in the enclave society in the Atlantic Coast and others further away in the hinterland of the

nation-state. We can now re-examine the usefulness of the enclave society model that the CSUCA Project Document used in its conceptual framework.

Firstly, we had concluded that Belize country as a whole fits the stereotype of the true enclave society. In this regard it is homologous to the Atlantic Coast regions of its Central American neighbors. The Belize case has shown convincingly that contrary to one's initial impression, the enclave society has several internal variations negating the view that it is a homogenous unit. Furthermore, there are parts that are more developed than others. In other words, any analysis of the enclave society should start with its multifaceted nature. The corollary is that the type of developmental intervention would also have to be properly pre-studied to fit the several parts.

Secondly, the status of being an enclave society is not absolute but relative. That Belize as a politically independent nation-state is still in pervasive dependency is a microcosm of the situation that affects all its neighbors. Probably the most decisive lesson to be learned by all Central Americans during the 1980's - no matter in which country they are in - is the diminished viability of their statehood. The structural adjustment measures that the countries have had to undertake pinpoint more strongly than ever before that decisions taken in the financial capitals of the industrialized nations affect, for example, the nutritional status of children in the most remote hamlets. In other words, the type of enclave society long existing in the Atlantic Coast region is analogous to that of their nation-state relative to the powerful countries of the world. Belize is only one embodiment of this indictment. Therefore, development within the Atlantic Coast depends on the countries resuming their growth path and on the availability of assistance to recapture the strength of their own potential.

POSTSCRIPT

In the Foreword I described pre-determinants of state initiated development during the pre - 1960's period but for lack of written information included very little on community initiated development. This study has shown that between 1960 and 1980 the state - even as it was struggling to achieve political independence status - promoted large scale growth in agroindustry, enforced central government planning, and initiated some social and community development. During the same period communities undertook several efforts at economic development either in assistance with or in spite of macro-level state efforts. The following is an outline of what has taken place between 1980 and 1993.

If the hallmark of the pre - 1960's was the determination to gain political independence, after 1980 it was to spread into the larger society the fruits forthcoming from independence. The stage shifted from the United Nations, the locus of power struggles toward Belize's independence, to the electoral constituencies all over the country. The players were no longer the allies at the Commonwealth, Caricom, and the Non-aligned Movement but members of the two parties vying for control over the political economy. It meant in other words, leaders of both political parties attempting to improve the economic well being together with access to physical infrastructure and social services for their constituents. Generally, the results have been mixed with successes far more at the macro-level than the micro-level of development, replicating the pattern that had taken place in the 1960-1980 period.

An immediate offshoot of political independence was access to international de-

velopment assistance at an unprecedented scale. It included bilateral arrangements extending from exchange of scholarships with Mexico, Panama and Costa Rica towards large scale financial and technical assistance from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Mexico and Taiwan. Belize was entitled to membership in organizations like the United Nations, World Bank, IMF, OAS together with the wide ranging services that accrue. On the other hand, privileges that Belize had long enjoyed such as preferential trading for its exports remained at the EEC, while the United States and Canada extended similar privileges. By accessing the above new openings Belize was able to provide a basis for its specular GDP growth in the late 1980's of an average of 9% (MED n.d.:4). Also contributing were improved commodity prices and local fiscal measures such as privatizing national assets and the sale of economic citizenship.

Among the assets being privatized were statutory boards controlling the electricity and telephone services which had been painstakingly consolidated under state ownership in the 1960-1980 period.

Central Government Planning which had started in the early 1960's was more a beneficiary than a cause of the macro economic growth between 1985 and 1993. The Ministry of Economic Development planning staff grew in number and training and participated in the ample technical assistance that was available. But it remained highly centralized and sectoral. It exerted little attempts to address micro community level initiatives especially in the more underdeveloped parts of the country. On the other hand, especially commendable were some initiatives coming from UNICEF at integrated community development in urban

and rural areas at risk (see J. Palacio 1990:52-67). UNHCR and UNDP have followed suit but with more focus on refugees.

While UN agencies have been able to nudge the government with their aid muscle to become more conscious of micro level underdevelopment, international NGO's have generated their own constituency of client grassroots groups mostly in the region around Belmopan. The beneficiaries have been agricultural co-operatives and other income generating groups in the rural area. Other NGO's have worked in both the urban and rural areas in micro-credit (NDF) and consciousness raising, research, and publication (SPEAR). But by any measure of success the impact of the NGO's at the micro level has been limited. Furthermore, the stimuli on the government and NGO's for community development have been external with very little sustained follow up in terms of local support.

In its 1989-1994 Development Plan the government was aware of this problem and prescribed bottom-up community development to enable the smaller man and woman to take advantage of the contemporary macro economic growth. There has been no review whether that aim was accomplished; and with a change in government in 1993 there will inevitably be a new plan.

The inertia to target community development for decades has had a disastrous effect on urban and rural poverty. The scourge of unemployment and unemployability, drug abuse, violence, greater risks in public health and nutritional status, homelessness, teenage pregnancy, etc have taken over large segments of all urban and many rural communities. The goodwill remedies of temporary shelter, soup kitchens, periodic medical care (given by foreign student doctors), and the local social welfare organizations need to be supplemented by concerted action which has been very slow in coming. For more discussion on these topics

see Catzim (1992:101-126) and, J. Palacio (1992:38-54).

One final word on what has taken place within two aspects of development - strengthening interethnic relations and neutralizing the Guatemalan claim. The momentum created within the 1960 and 1980 period on both fronts continued afterwards. Strengthening interethnic relations while forging national cultural has been targeted through several symposiums; providing government assistance to artistes; and increasing the staff and overall scope of the National Arts Council. The premiere achievement has been starting construction on the proposed national museum in Belmopan in 1993.

With respect to the Guatemalan claim dialogue continued resulting in the official recognition of Belize by President Serano in 1991. Taking the credit for the above achievements are the regimes of the two political parties, institutions of higher learning, voluntary organizations, highly committed individuals and the international goodwill that Belize has generated within the region and beyond.

The demographic aspect of national identity has probably taken the most toll from continued emigration and massive immigration of refugees from neighboring Central American countries starting in the early 1980's. Also coming by the hundreds have been East Indians, Chinese from Taiwan, Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China. While the East Indians and Chinese have entered into economic niches in the urban areas, the Central American refugees remain with relatively little assistance to minimize the drain that they are exerting on social services. The additional development needs that they are demanding are currently one of the most urgent challenges toward overall development in Belize (J. Palacio 1993).

The massive settlement of approximately

30,000 Central Americans in Belize makes it attractive to revisit the enclave society concept one more time. To a large extent their arrival is part of the "invasion" of the coast by highlanders, which had precipitated the need for the CSUCA Project. Salvadorans and Guatemalans have come to "reclaim" the subcontinent's Atlantic Coast in a manner not unlike Costa Ricans and Nicaraguans to their own respective coastline. The difference is that Belize country is an enclave society *viz a viz* the rest of the subregion much more so than the coastal provinces of the respective countries. Once settled in the country the new immigrants will inevitably adopt and internalize themselves as citizens of their own newly adopted state. In short, re-settlement is transforming them to become socially a part of Belize. As most refugees throughout the world they will value Belize for the radical improvement it has bestowed on their lives. Ironically such radical improvement could only come about through the enclave society nature of Belize. □

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APPENDIX I**Abbreviations in the Study**

BCFA	Belize Cane Farmers Association
BSI	Belize Sugar Industries
CARE	Cooperation for American Relief Everywhere
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSUCA	Consejo Superior de Universidades de Centroamerica
DFC	Development Finance Corporation
EEC	European Economic Community
EDF	European Development Fund
ODA	Overseas Development Administration of the United Kindgom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States of America Agency for International Development

APPENDIX II

MAJOR PLANS AND PROJECTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT DURING THE PERIOD 1964 - 1983

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
1. 1964 - 1970 Development Plan Office of the Premier Belize City.	i. Increase National Income ii. Increase Employment Opportunities iii. Balance Recurrent Budget and have surplus for capital projects iv. Increase Exports to cover consumption goods v. Establish a Planning Unit (All objectives were achieved except iv above)	Agriculture: i. Citrus: increase acreage from 7000 to 12000 ii. Livestock: increase herd from 22,000 to 100,000 iii. Sugar: increase production from 27,000 to 40,000 tons Tourism i. increase tourist hotel rooms from 66 to 500 ii. improve airport and port facilities Forestry i. develop forestry by-products e.g. plywood, resin and lesser known secondary woods ii. improve forest roads both for extraction of woods and for fire protection.	I. Acreages reached 9000 ii. Herd reached 40,000 iii. Production increased to 66785 tons i. Rooms increased to 600 ii. improvement did take place. i. Secondary woods were improved and marketed, locally but not forestry by-products fully implemented ii.
NOTE: This Plan was prepared on basis of UN survey prepared in 1963.			

SOURCE: NOTES COLLECTED BY CLARENCE BORLAND

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
1964 - 70 contd.		Fisheries: i. establish a Fishery Unit for research purposes. ii. expand catches and export of scale fish Communications: i. improve major highways and link up Toledo District ii. provide feeder roads for farmers	i. fully implemented ii. only limited success because of prices i. partially completed, passable in dry season ii. partially implemented, mainly in Toledo and Stann Creek.
		Industrial Development i. Establish among others the following industries: brewery, tyre recapping, flour mill, leather tannery, fish meal ii. Establish industrial promotion Unit in DFC.	i. All completed except tannery and fish meals ii. Limited progress

NOTE: The increase in the output of citrus and sugar were due mainly to export marketing arrangements at preferential prices in the USA and the UK respectively.

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
1966 - 1970 contd		Communications i. increase feeder roads for farmers ii. lengthen airport runway to 7000ft. with LCN of 60 iii. realign Northern Highway iv. investigate technical possibilities for Deep Water Port (Belize City) Manufacturing i. increase agricultural processing (beef, pork, canned foods vegetable oils) ii. develop brick and tile manufacture and wood products for tourism	i. good progress ii. implemented iii. only study started iv. study completed i. several studies completed ii. very limited success in tile and wood, no bricks.

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
2. <u>Tripartite Economic Survey 1966 - 1970</u> Study was prepared by Experts from UK, USA and Canada as part of a Caribbean Regional Project	i. Analyse Belize Economy and suggest guidelines for development for period 1966 - 1970. ii. Review objectives of the Economy iii. Review 1964-70 Development Plan generally iv. Make projections for growth of various activities public and private. (the objectives did provide policy guidelines to Government but action taken were more spontaneous than deliberate.)	Agriculture: i. Citrus: output to move from 1.2m boxes to 1.9m boxes ii. Sugari: output to move from 42,300 tons to 85,000 tons. Tourism: need for a 40-rooms resort hotel with marina at cost of \$1.0m to generate \$220,000 per annum Forestry: i. development of pine regeneration on coastal plain. ii. improved works on pine forests e.g. thinning and control of hardwood shrubs iii. study of regeneration of mahogany in Chiquibul forests iv. study feasibility of pulping operations and other wood products Fisheries: i. need for qualified fisheries officer ii. tapping of Caribbean markets for dry/salted scale fish	i. output moved to average 1.0m boxes ii. output moved to 66,800 tons No action on resort hotel (not possible to attract investors) but several small hotels built by individuals i. Very little success ii. little action due to shortage of funds iii. no action taken iv. study incomplete i. implemented ii. limited success due to shipping services

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
3. 1972 - 1975 Development Plan Belize (draft) prepared by Central Planning Unit (Ministry of Finance and Development) (Unpublished) Plan was prepared after consultation with all other Ministries.	i. A higher growth rate of real output originating from industrial production for export and import substitution, and farm output for export and import substitution. ii. Increase in national savings. iii. Reduction in current account deficit iv. Increase employment opportunities v. Diversification of the structure of the economy (All objectives were partially met: import substitution and reduction on current account deficits did best).	Agriculture: i. Increase acreages in crops and pasture from 218,000 to 330,000 - mainly the case of pasture, corn and rice. ii. Construction of feeder roads for rice iii. New rice mill for Toledo iv. Increase farm credit through DFC v. Bring research and extension more in line with immediate needs: Tourism: i. Greater national participation and ownership ii. integration of local inputs e.g. food items, crafts and arts etc. iii. Increase promotional activities.	i. Increases only up to 240,000 acres, mainly of corn and pasture; rice acreages declined. ii. progress made mainly in Toledo iii. negotiations with CDB iv. DFC obtain small farmers loans from CDB v. limited progress in soya beans i. Nationals increased their ownership (small hotels) ii. some progress in crafts iii. Limited successes

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
1972 - 75 contd.		Forestry: i. maintain and improve existing assets e.g. roads, equipment, plantations ii. reforestation with fast growing species iii. enumeration of forest resources Fisheries: i. ensure adequate supplies to the local market ii. increase exports through deep-sea fishing, fresh water fish and fish farming. Communications: i. improve main feeder roads ii. provide deep water port at Belize City and Commerce Bight iii. improve and expand parking area at the Airport Industrial Development i. establish industrial estate at Ladyville ii. establish investment promotion Unit in Ministry of Trade iii. study industrial Free Zone feasibility	i. implemented ii. Limited success with Gmelina iii. implemented in some areas i. implemented fully ii. limited success with fresh water fish only, no fish farming no deep water fishing i. good progress mainly in Western and southern districts ii. still under study iii. in progress but incomplete i. completed ii. only a nucleus was established iii. no action taken

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
4. Government of Belize Development Plan 1977 - 1979 Prepared by the Central Planning Unit NOTE: The Plan included submissions made from almost all other Ministries	i. increase the rate of growth of real output ii. increase employment opportunities iii. diversify the economic structure iv. reduce dependence on few crops raise living standards through greater participation of Belizeans in social and economic development (except for iii above the other objectives were largely achieved self-help schemes and private enterprise i.e. small business)	Agriculture: Citrus: i. increase yields per acre from 150 boxes to 250 boxes through improved farming practices ii. estimated production should reach 1.9m boxes from present 1.2m box iii. improve marketing with CARICOM, North America and Mexico Sugar: i. sugar-cane production should reach 1.1m tons from present 66,000 tons ii. increase credit and extension facilities to small growers iii. rationalize transport and harvesting facilities	i. yields increased on average to 200 boxes per acre ii. production declined to 0.8m boxes due to hurricane in 1978 iii. arrangements with some CARICOM countries con-cluded especially Trinidad & Barbados i. production remain stable smut and grasshopper problems ii. implemented through the Development Finance Corporation iii. some progress in harvesting but little in transportation; most farmers owned individual trucks

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
1977-79 Contd.		Livestock: i. increase national herd from 53,900 to 61,700 Fisheries: i. provide adequate supplies to domestic market ii. provide credit for modern equipment to increase efficiency iii. further processing of fish products to include canning and smoking Communications i. improve various sections of main highway and establish road maintenance units ii. install handling capacity at Belize City Port iii. extend Commerce Bight Jetty iv. expand airport apron and extend runway.	i. no increase in herd due to high production costs and controlled prices for beef i. implemented ii. Implemented through DFC and Credit Unions iii. no progress, technology not available and markets not identified. i. reasonable successes in both areas ii. near completion iii. under construction iv. reasonable progress made on apron but none on runway.

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
5. Economic Plan of Belize 1980 - 83 Prepared by Central Planning Unit, Belmopan, BELIZE, April, 1980 NOTE: The Plan was prepared with little consideration from other Ministries	i. To promote a balanced development between rural and urban areas ii. To continue the process began earlier in laying the basis for development iii. To enable Belizeans to share in the process and benefits of development. (This was apparently a difficult period as very little if any progress was made in reaching these objectives)	Agriculture: 1. a. <u>Citrus</u>: rehabilitate 4000 acres of old trees with seedling provided by the Ministry of Natural Resources b. <u>Sugar</u>: To replace all fields with smut with resistant varieties c. <u>Livestock</u>: Increase herd by importing breeding stock d. <u>Grains</u>: establish the breeding of rice seeds and increase corn production to meet local needs.	a. Due to shortage of seedlings only 1000 acres were rehabilitated b. little progress due to falling sugar prices c. Herd moved only from 46000 to 56000; no stocks imported d. no seeds were bred but corn production exceeded local needs due to price increases
		2. Tourism: a. improve hotel training and entertainment facilities and provide marketing plan for tourism b. Restoration and consolidation of ancient monuments	a. some progress made in both areas but not fully implemented b. Shortage of funds allowed only for maintenance

PLANS & PROGRAMS	MAJOR OBJECTIVES	MAJOR PROJECTS	COMMENTS AND RESULTS
1980-83 Contd.		3. Forestry: a. Complete forest inventory and prepare management plans b. Upgrade sawmilling industry 4. Communications a. Reconstruct mile 1-16 on Western Highway b. Improve other highways c. Complete on-shore facilities at Belize City Port d. extend airport runway and extend apron and construct new terminal building. 5. Industry a. Establish small import substitution industries e.g. oils & fats, dairy brick making etc.	a. little or no progress due to staff shortages b. The industry in fact declined because of low prices and high costs of production a. no action taken b. little progress c. almost completed d. apron completed, no action with runway and new building a. No progress, in fact some existing industries declined e.g. flour, cigarettes, milled rice and sawn timber.

APPENDIX III

Major Crops Produced in Select Years between 1970 and 1984¹

YEAR	CORN '000 LBS	RICE PADDY '000 LBS	BEANS '000 LBS	BANANA 42 LB. BOX	ORANGE 80 LB. BOX	GRAPEFRUIT 80 LB. BOX	SUGAR LONG TONS
1970	35,000	7,700	5,174	not yet	558	257	66,785
1975	23,000	10,700	2,500	30,780	801	535	82,874
1980	41,500	19,000	3,073	784,885	1,109	408	103,300
1984	34,700	10,800	1,632	523,000	1,124	344	103,148

¹Source Abstract of Statistics 1985, published by the Ministry of Economic Development

APPENDIX IV
Marketing Board Purchases of Various Commodities

YEAR	Local Paddy		Local Corn		Local R.K. Beans		Local Black Beans	
	Value	Lbs	Value	Lbs	Value	Lbs	Value	Lbs
1978	498,696.00	3,465,343	178,062.06	1,374,202	297,426.50	672,475	2,498.94	6,505
1979	721,012.51	4,886,398	61,237.74	468,608	172,659.75	298,087	-	-
1980	706,749.03	4,529,305	122,187.14	826,750	10,575.02	178,441	-	-
1981	907,672.89	4,665,939	403,799.67	2,157,721	197,103.11	300,724	2,549.65	4,581
1982	1,498,064.60	6,251,124	1,261,687.18	5,487,378	549,974.81	556,139	-	-
1983	852,024.86	4,117,690	117,392.94	623,343	444,835.91	480,100	33,455.07	52,952
1984	633,526.92	3,141,817	112,276.51	1,180,513	32,620.00	67,269	-	-
1985	836,835.86	3,705,652	174,305.96	1,199,628	118,206.47	208,661	-	-
NOTES	Toledo District 95% Cayo & S/Creek Districts 5%		1978-83 50% Toledo District 50% Cayo District 1984-85 95% Toledo		1978-82 Toledo & Cayo Districts 50% each 1983-85 Toledo 80%		Stann Creek Dist. 10% Toledo 90%	
YEAR	Local Blackeye Beans		Local Peanuts		Local Pinto Beans			
	Value	Lbs	Value	Lbs	Value	Lbs		
1978-79	-	-	-	-	-	-		
1980	2,129.40	3,276	-	-	-	-		
1981	11,572.51	17,887	25,557.10	32,710	11,234.43	18,128		
1982	-	-	69,393.50	69,393½	-	-		
1983	35,108.89	51,938	1,743.50	1,731	-	-		
1984-85	-	-	-	-	-	-		
NOTES:	Toledo 90% Stann Creek 10%		Cayo District only		Toledo 90% Stann Creek 10%			

Marketing Board Purchases from Toledo District and the Country

R I C E P A D D Y

YEAR	Toledo Acreage	M.B. Purchases Lb	Total Purchase (Country)	Price/100 lbs
1969/70		3,597,480	4,669,824	6.50
1970/71	3,388	4,999,553	5,377,800	7.50
1971/72	4,600	4,305,513	4,984,963	7.50
1972/73	3,792	4,644,377	5,214,572	7.50
1973/74	3,732	3,796,215	3,886,384 Drought	8.50
1974/75	4,000	4,148,100	4,390,819	14.00
1975/76	2,941	2,394,686	2,469,990	16.00
1976/77	5,581	3,270,975	3,346,140	16.00

C O R N

YEAR	Toledo Acreage	M.B. Purchase (lb)	Total Purchase (Country)	Price 100/lb
1969/70	-	18,478	62,860	4.00
1970/71	5,752	Nil	173,260	4.00
1971/72	3,346	Nil	360,500	4.00
1972/73	4,335	835	53,320	4.00
1973/74	4,890	1,143	174,240 Drought	6.50
1974/75	5,933	436,434	1,449,190	16.00
1975/76	4,391	148,300	588,550 Drought	16.00
1976/77	5,785	1,200,371	8,599,349	16.00