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THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF BELIZE CITY

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Editorial - 1986

Since 1973 Belizean Studies has published a wide variety of articles on Belize's history and culture. The journal, founded by Frs. Richard Hadel, S.J. and Richard Buhler, S.J., was continued under Herman Byrd, S.J. throughout 1985.

In 1985, following several meetings with the Belizean Studies Advisory Board and the St. John's College Board of Trustees, a decision was reached that St. John's College itself would assume sponsorship and ultimate responsibility for the journal and that the journal should continue to publish short, well-researched and highly informative articles on Belize's rich history and culture.

It was also felt that in addition to publishing research studies the journal could play an important role in an independent Belize where there is still a great need to develop and enhance national awareness of things Belizean. A special effort is being made to increase subscriptions in secondary and higher educational institutions throughout the country, which suffers from a scarcity of relevant teaching materials.

In its first editorial of 1973 this journal recognized the difficult task of trying to discover our true Belizean identity. Twelve years later, despite many political and economic gains, this challenge is no less daunting. Forces alien to Belize have increased their presence here while the introduction of new communications technology threatens to overload our capacity to absorb information. It is against this background that Belizean Studies will continue, in its own small way, to expand the frontiers of knowledge on a subject about which we still, in 1986, know very little ourselves.

Belizean Studies is very proud to share with you: The Growth and Development of Belize City by John C. Everitt, Ph.D. of Brandon University, Canada. This study gathers together much scattered information about our old capital, Belize City, from the days of its origins in the latter half of the 17th century when buccaneers sought logwood for the textile industry in England to more modern aspects of today's city – the King's Park Area, St. Martin dePorres and Port Loyola.

Lita Hunter Krohn
Andrew Lopez

Foreword

Although Belize City has almost always been the centre of population in Belize, few studies have been devoted to its historical geography -- or indeed to the urban geography of the country as a whole.(1) The purpose of this paper is to gather together much of the scattered material on Belize City, in the hope that this codification will help the reader to understand the growth and present status of the city, and perhaps inspire others to do further research on this, still the major urban centre of Belize.

Introduction

Some of the most striking and intractable problems of colonialism can be seen in the urban geography of the countries that were colonised, with perhaps one of the most noticeable patterns of this urban development being the primate city which was constructed as an administrative and commercial outpost for the colonial power. "In direct consequence of the dependent position of the country, (these) large cities tended to have coastal and port locations."(2) In addition the primate city usually became the centre for hierarchical diffusion throughout

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the country, as well as a node for deleterious 'backwash' movements -- such as the exploitation through monopolies — which amplified the inequalities between the core areas and the peripheral regions.(3)

Belize is no exception to many of these generalisations, with its primate city of Belize City, which is nearly five times the size of the next largest urban centre of the country, and which houses nearly thirty percent of the nation's population (Table One). Belize City is located in the central coast of Belize, and has been the dominant city of the country since its inception (Figure One). It is through Belize City that most overseas trade has taken place, and thus through this city that the resources of the country were channelled to North American and Europe.

Table One: Urban Populations in Belize 1970 and 1980

	1970	1980
Belize City	39,050	39,887
Corozal Town	4,682	6,862
Orange Walk Town	5,539	8,441
Dangriga	6,967	6,627
Punta Gorda	2,131	2,219
San Ignacio	4,327	5,606
Benque Viejo del Carmen	1,903	2,466
Belmopan	274	2,932
Total Urban Population	64,837	75,040
Urban % of Belize Population	54%	52%
Belize City % of Belize Population	32.6%	27.5%

Source: Census of Belize 1970 and 1980

The Origins and Early Growth of Belize City

The beginnings of Belize City and thus Belize — for the two were virtually synonymous for much of their early history — have been a subject of great debate. This is in part because interpreters of the country's history have wanted to see different patterns in the facts(4), and in part because the 'true facts' if they were ever recorded, have often been lost to the vicissitudes of the environment, which have continuously deteriorated documents, or completely destroyed them in hurricanes.

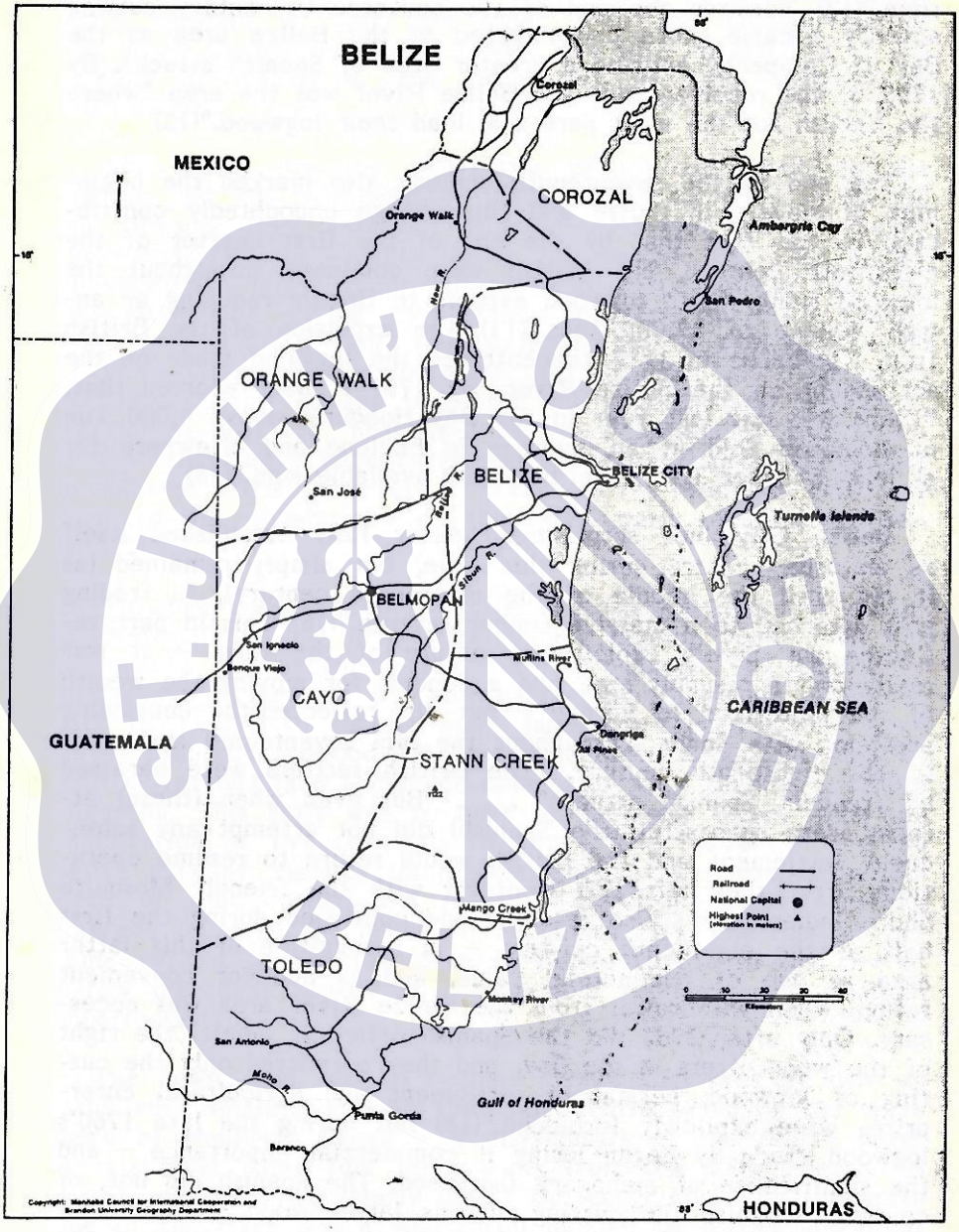
The name Belize (and thus Belize River, and Belize City) al-

most certainly dates back to the early Maya inhabitants of the country who called the river the Baliz ("muddy waters" — an accurate description of the river during the rainy season).(5) Although greatly reduced in numbers from their earlier Classic period densities, there were Maya present in Belize when the first Europeans arrived, and a number of place names are derived from this source.(6) Although little is known of the Maya of the central coast of Belize in the 17th century it does, however, seem unlikely that the settlement at the mouth of the Belize River is on a Maya site.(7) Belize City thus grew as a new central place and has kept its uniqueness ever since.

"The long coastline of Belize is mostly swampy, with thick mangroves, and is punctuated by frequent rivers, the most significant of which are the Belize, New, and Sibun Rivers, and the Rio Hondo, which forms the northern boundary"(8) of the country. From the start these rivers have played a significant role in the development of Belize. In addition to their destructive effects (such as flooding) they have been important as transportation links up until quite recently, as sources of supplementary food, and as factors in the development of coastal settlement, and in particular, ports. "The dominant role of Belize City bears witness to this fact despite its poor site for handling ocean-going vessels. Further, its position at the mouth of the Belize River has given it command over a hinterland of importance."(9)

Most historical sources now seem to agree that the origins of Belize City are to be found in the mid-to-late 1600's (an earlier date of 1638 being rejected for a lack of primary evidence). The earliest settlers at the mouth of the Belize River may well have been buccaneers who sought refuge from the Spaniards, but the raison d'etre for remaining in the area soon became logwood. Logwood, a dyewood which grows prolifically in the Bay of Campeche, Cape Catouche at the northern tip of the Yucatan, the Mosquito Shore, and the Belize River(10) area, was one of the early objectives of the buccaneers when they raided Spanish vessels. From "plundering logwood vessels it was but one step to going ashore . . . and clandestinely cutting the logwood . . . Buccaneering thus merges almost imperceptibly into logwood cutting; but this process was hastened after 1670 when, by a treaty with Spain, the British Government agreed to suppress buccaneering."(11) The logwood trade was by no means an easy way of life for these British cutters who remained in a very ambiguous political position. Once the importance of the Belize area as a source of the valuable logwood trade was established, "Governor Modyford of Jamaica urged the Brit-

Figure One: Belize.



ish Government to officially recognise the settlement. But recognition as a colony was not forthcoming for some considerable time."(12) Towards the end of the seventeenth century cutting activity became more concentrated in the Belize area as the Bay of Campeche became a greater area of Spanish attacks. By 1705 it was reported that the Belize River was the area "where the English for the most part now load their logwood."(13)

The end of the seventeenth century also marked the beginning of slavery in Belize and this change undoubtedly contributed to the fact that by the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the British were dominant throughout the logwood trade, "with logwood exports to Britain reaching an annual volume of 18,000 tons."(14) The expulsion of the British from Campeche in 1717 concentrated the logwood trade on the settlement on the Belize River. By 1751 it was reported that: "There was cut last year in the Bay Honduras above 8,000 Tun of Logwood Sold at an Average in England and elsewhere for at least £20 per Tun, Total £160,000 available sum."(15)

Belize City (not surprisingly) never fully established itself as an urban centre during this time, but simply remained (as it did until the middle of the nineteenth century), "a trading post attached to a massive timber reserve."(16) This in part reflected the purely exploitative nature of the town — it was really only a resupply area and a conduit for moving the wealth of the hinterland to Europe — but also reflected the continuing problems with Spain. Throughout the late seventeenth and much of the eighteenth century, "The British settlers were harassed by frequent Spanish attacks" . . . "But even when (these) attacks were successful (the Spanish) did not attempt any subsequent settlement and the British would return to resume operations after they left."(17) Contacts with the friendly Mosquito Shore Indians were also resumed and continued during the first half of the eighteenth century — in recognition of this latter area as one of commercial value, and as one for convenient refuge when withdrawal from the Belize River area was necessary. Only after 1763 did the Spanish officially admit "the right of the woodcutters in the Bay, and they permitted only the cutting of logwood; permanent settlement and agricultural enterprises were explicitly forbidden."(18) But during the late 1760's logwood gradually began losing it commercial importance — and the significance of mahogany increased. The Spanish did not, of course, recognise the cutting of this latter wood — which was to substantially replace logwood as the main export item of the settlement within the next fifty years. "Between 1782 and 1802

the average annual export of logwood was 1750 tons, while that of mahogany was 3,615,000 feet."(19) The settlement on the Belize River had found a new raison d'etre. It had also found some measure of law and order with the introduction of 'Burnaby's Code' in the mid 1760's, and with an attempt by the settlers to regularise the boundaries of their woodcutting works.(20)

1779 again saw the destruction of the settlement by the Spanish and the movement of the captured survivors to Merida and Havana. They were not released until 1782 and the Belize settlement remained empty during this period. The 1783 Treaty of Versailles, however, proved to be of more positive value to the settlement, giving the settlers usufruct rights to extract logwood, and these rights were extended by the 1786 Convention of London. This later agreement also extended the area where cutting was allowed and permitted the extraction of mahogany. Agriculture was still prohibited as was a system of government (which might have been taken as essentially colonial status).(21) In addition Britain gave up all claims to the Mosquito Shore and most of the inhabitants of this area were removed to Belize.(22)

Although not immediately affecting the incipient settlement of Belize City, one other change was coming about that was to have a considerable effect on the country. The change to mahogany, because of the new extraction techniques associated with it, tended to require more land, more capital, and more slaves than did logwood.(23) This encouraged a concentration of both slaves and land under the control of what became a timber oligarchy. This shift was to have an immense effect upon the exploitation of the country's resources, and indirectly affected Belize City by assuring its pre-eminence as the primate settlement of that country.(24) A small merchant class eventually emerged to serve the needs of the plantocracy, and this too became evident in the landscape of Belize City with the rise of a few merchant houses of considerable economic and political importance.(25)

The town that was to become Belize City was by now an established settlement with the main centre being on the north shore of Haulover Creek — a distributary of the Belize River at this point some four miles away from the main stream. "A sketch map of 1787 clearly marks the court house on the north side of the river and a substantial number of houses and other buildings."(26) The Fort George area of today was at that time

"a small island separated from the mainland by a stretch of shallow tidal water,"(27) with a defence work (which gave it its name) at one end.

At an earlier time the centre of activity had been St. George's Cay, which lay some ten miles offshore from the river mouth, and this location temporarily also became the administrative area of the British.(28) The cay was particularly favoured for the settlers' "places of abode while the settlement at the mouth of the Belize River contained their warehouses, docks, business places etc."(29) By 1784 the administrative centre had, however, moved to the mouth of the Belize River, as a result of the ravaging of St. George's Cay by the Spaniards in 1779, and the restoration caused by Article 6 of the Treaty of Versailles in 1783."(30) Housing was maintained on the Cay until 1797 when "in order that the Spaniards might find no cover if they seized it, the houses on the Cay were destroyed."(31) After the battle of 1798 the Cay was garrisoned, and also lived upon until Colonel Gordon prohibited settlement in 1805. The Baymen petitioned for permission to move their residences back to the Cay in 1807 as this right was believed to be "essential to the health of the community."(32) Permission was given in July 1807 "on condition that those availing themselves of the privilege make a formal declaration that – should the building be destroyed by the enemy or for military reasons, they will not consider themselves entitled to any compensation."(33) It would appear that few people moved permanently back to St. George's Cay, as the settlement had by this time outgrown its origins on this island. The cay was retained, however, as at least a second home by some of the wealthy Baymen.

One further consequence of the diplomatic activity at the end of the eighteenth century, as mentioned earlier, was the evacuation of the other British settlements on the Mosquito Shore, Ruatan, and the other Bay Islands, as part of the 1786 Convention of London. The 2214 settlers who were removed to the Bay of Honduras mostly settled in Belize, many of them in 'Convention Town,' the area created by the new Superintendent, Colonel Marcus Despard.(34) This 'Town' was located on the south point of Haulover Creek, near what was then Fort Balcarres.(35) Internal problems arose as a result of this resettlement scheme. The newcomers outnumbered the Baymen five to one,(36) but few held rights to land in Belize, and the entrenched and powerful interests that controlled the Belizean situation tried to avoid losing ground to the newcomers. A further source

of problems for the administration was the largely slave (or free coloured) population which had no control over the administration or economy. It was feared that members of this group might side with the Spanish — and certainly some tried to escape to Spanish Territory. Only ten percent of the Belizean population at this time was white — and even this group was not a unified force, being stratified both socially and economically.(37) Problems still abounded in Belize.

The population of Belize City at this time is uncertain, but any figure might be misleading. The total population of the Belize settlement was 2,656 in 1790 (Table Two), but much of this was of intermittent nature — varying greatly with the woodcutting season. There was apparently little in Belize City that offered employment independent of the timber trade — or its support services. In the nineteenth century — and probably also in these years of the 1790's — the hiring season for mahogany work was December and the "recruiting of workers was done solely in Belize City and both employers and workers aggregated" there at that time.(38) By January, however, many of these people would have moved out into the hinterland and the permanent population of Belize City was probably quite low — and quite sexually skewed. Although there were relatively few women in the Belize area during its early growth, most would have lived in Belize City, whereas the woodcutting labour force would have been predominantly male. Belize City was thus quite typical of resource extraction settlements and still lacked a greater degree of permanency. It had at this time only "about one hundred houses built of good timber as well as huts constructed from poles and palm leaves . . . there were four shops which supplied essential provisions such as salt meat, flour, biscuits, gunpowder and needles."(39)

Slow growth appears to have taken place over the next few years. In 1792, this growth was shown by the need for a new burial ground — an earlier one on the south side having become inadequate. James Dundas Yarborough, a magistrate (and thus a power in the community) "offered a piece of his plantation for a new cemetary"(40) and this remains a landmark in the contemporary city. Its location undoubtedly reflects the growing prominence of the South Side. This newer area of the settlement is also reflected in its street patterns. The streets of the older North Shore are irregular, perhaps conforming to early trails on drier land. The area to the south of Haulover Creek has a grid-like pattern for most of its extent. Place name evidence is less satisfactory, as the naming of streets is tempora'

Table Two, Populations of Belize and Belize City, 1790-1980*

	Belize	Belize City
1790	2,656	**
1803	3,959	**
1806	3,526	**
1816	3,824	**
1823	4,107	**
1826	4,163	**
1829	3,883	**
1832	3,794	**
1835	2,543	**
1839	2,946	**
1841	8,235	**
1845	9,809	**
1859	**	6,000 (Clegern, p.4)
		7,000 (Ashcraft, p. 43)
1861	25,635	**
1871	24,710	**
1881	27,452	5,767
1891	31,471	6,942
1900	**	10,000 (Clegern, p.4)
1901	37,479	9,113
1911	40,458	10,478
1921	45,317	12,423
1931	51,347	16,687
1946	59,220	21,886
1960	90,505	32,867
1970	119,645	39,257
1980	144,857***	39,887***

* Source of most of this data, Bolland, 1977, p.3
** Not available
*** 1980 Census

ly uncertain, although place name changes have occasionally been recorded.(41) The names of South Side streets are, however, themselves more regular, and perhaps reflect a more planned environment.

The last major event of the eighteenth century which further solidified the position of Belize City came in 1798 and was the Battle of St. George's Cay. Although this is not the place to further the many debates about this battle, its effect on Belize City is less controversial. For although the settlement remained in an uneasy state for sometime afterwards,

and although the battle did not change the legal status of the settlement (which did not become a colony for another 64 years), 1798 "provided the last physical challenge to the British possession in Belize"(42) and was the beginning of a period of growth and stability for Belize City. The battle seems to have given the Baymen new heart, a greater sense of belonging, and hope for the future. The British government in its turn, no longer attempted to enforce all provisions of the 1786 agreement. Consequently the exploitation of the hinterland was able to increase with a resultant improvement in the status and growth prospects of Belize City.

The Consolidation of the Settlement

Once again, population data if taken at face value can be misleading. Between 1790 and 1835 there was little change in the population of Belize (Table Two), but Belize City was more directly affected.(43)

Belize City has a very recognisable pattern of growth mainly because the physical environment is such that it lends itself to piecemeal exploitation. Originally the site was less extensive and more fragmented than it is now. The majority of what is now relatively solid land was once mangrove swamp, and some of it was open sea; the area has now been slowly reclaimed. Old maps, field work, and the present day street and canal networks, however, enable the researcher to divide up the city into a number of major districts, and some minor residential areas (Figure Two). All of these have some cultural and social validity, considerable historical background, and many are recognizable to the contemporary citizens as being local areas.

As mentioned earlier, Belize City grew in an area that was physically disadvantageous. It is based upon a delta of alluvial detritus leaving the city surrounded on three sides by water, and having no point more than a few feet above mean sea level. The North Shore is, in fact, an island within the Belize River delta. High tides coupled with strong onshore winds often leave parts of the city underwater, drainage is nowhere ideal, and is frequently non-existent. The small area above sea level has been built up partly by natural processes but largely the the laborious filling-in of mangrove swamps over the years by the Belizeans, with some governmental action consolidating this largely piece-meal reclamation.

The efforts of the citizens have been good, but have been frustrated by the natural conditions of the area, and more par-

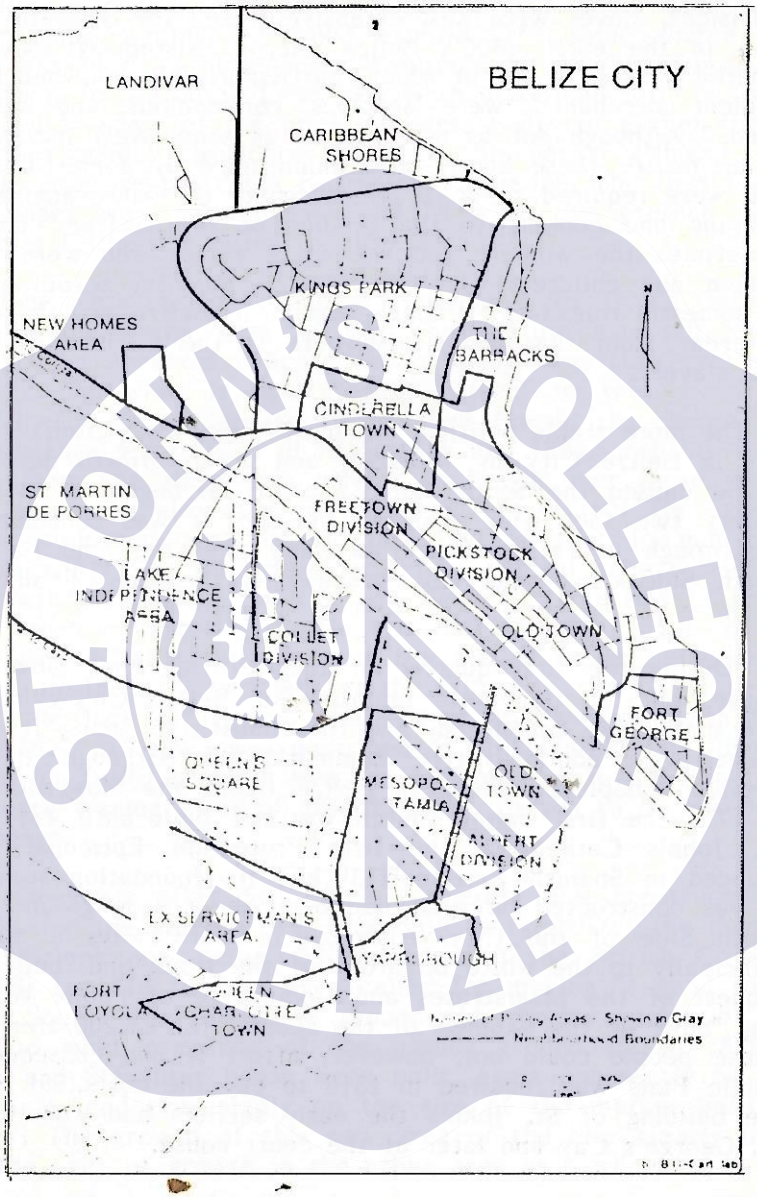
ticularly by the drainage problem. In early times, the woodcutting that was the reason for Belize City also helped to more literally form its base – as the loggers used the area to prepare wood for the English market, which most often took "squared, or so-called manufactured logs."(44)

"The logs were hauled out onto the mud, and the chips and cut-off ends formed a deposit which gradually sank in and solidified the swamp. The workers were most expert but thirsty souls, and working in that hot, moist temperature found it necessary, in order to quench their thirst, to resort to the excellent but fiery Santa Rita rum, a product of the north of the colony known locally as 'white-eye'. The empty bottles sank among the chips and log ends, and it is possible now to put down a boring 60 feet, and to find mahogany chips mixed with rum bottles, with surprising regularity."(45) Although perhaps exaggerated, this story by Governor Swayne in 1917 does perhaps identify some of Belize City's literal foundations.

On a more systematic basis, "ditches were dug in an initial effort to try to drain the land, but because of its minimal elevation this proved to be quite unsuccessful. A pattern of reclamation (then) began which has changed little to date. This takes the form of cutting the mangrove, laying it over as a mat, then hauling in coconut husks, sawdust and other absorptive materials as filler. The pipeshank coral is brought in from the lagoon areas and placed as the second lift as base material for the final layers of sand."(46)

By these means, the settlement began, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, to take on a more permanent appearance. Once again its growth was, however, very much affected by external conditions, and by the ability of powerful Belizeans to take advantage of them. "From the turn of the century until Mexican and Central American independence in 1821 the mercantile community in Belize developed steadily. Indeed the Belize merchants succeeded so well in that twilight period of Spain's empire that a governor of Spanish Honduras urged the final destruction of Belize, "warehouse of our misfortune and sponge of our mines."(47) Spain's inability to control her Empire was fully taken advantage of by Belize merchants who developed a trade with Central America and Mexico. The peace of 1814-15 only briefly slowed the city's position as an entrepot port and trade continued to expand after Central American independence in 1821.(48)

Figure Two


BELIZE CITY
LANDIVAR
CARIBBEAN SHORES
KINGS PARK
NEW HOMES AREA
THE BARRACKS
CINDERELLA TOWN
ST MARTIN DE PORRES
FREETOWN DIVISION
PICKSTOCK DIVISION
LAKE INDEPENDENCE AREA
COLLET DIVISION
OLD TOWN
FORT GEORGE
QUEEN'S SQUARE
MESOPOTAMIA
OLD TOWN
ALBERT DIVISION
EX SERVICEMAN'S AREA
YARBOROUGH
FORT
GREEN
CHARLOTTE TOWN

Belize City in the early nineteenth century had only a small proportion of white residents in its permanent population, for in addition to the extraction of timber, and the cultivation of provisions, slaves were also extensively used for domestic work. Thus in the early 1800's Belize City consisted of about two hundred houses, "many of which, particularly those owned by the 'opulent merchants', were 'spacious, commodious, and well finished.'" Although not as ostentatious as some West Indian plantation houses these homes were maintained by domestic slaves, who were required to do a great variety of tasks ranging from cleaning and cooking to the tending of the masters' children. Sometimes the women, and the house slaves who were mostly women and children, were required to perform sexual as well as domestic roles.(49) Although slavery in Belize may have been different from that found elsewhere in the Caribbean, it was still slavery.

The more stable political situation led to land grants of town lots in Belize City by 1809,(50) and urban growth during this period caused the South Side Canal to be begun in 1810 as a twenty two foot wide drainage channel. It was continued into Yarborough in 1817.(51) In this same year the nine foot wide North Side canal was dug, perhaps on the site of an earlier ditch.

"During the first quarter of the 19th century, Government House, one of the most imposing of Belize City's historical structures, was completed, and for almost 175 years, it has remained "an administrative landmark."(52) Although the first Anglican chaplain arrived in Belize (from the Mosquito Coast) in 1776 the first major church was not built until 1812, when St. John's Cathedral, "the first Protestant Episcopal Church founded in Spanish America"(53) had its foundation stone laid. It was constructed on what had been the parade ground on the South Side of the City. Although in many ways a memorial principally to the white oligarchy of the time, and "built at the request of the Magistrates and Committee of Public Works" it was "built at the expense of the people" for £1,200 sterling.(54) These people could not, however, affort it and consequently a Public Fund was required in 1816 to pay the costs.(55) Prior to the building of St. John's the early settlers had worshipped at St. George's Cay and later at the court house.

The slave population built the church, and the records of many of them remain within the church — giving interesting insights into a situation which is often poorly documented. This

church is also significant as in it Kings of Mosquita were crowned from 1815 to 1845, thus maintaining one of the country's earliest overseas links. The woods in the church were local (sapodilla, mahogany etc.) but the bricks were imported as ballast in ships coming for wood exports. The same source for bricks was used to build some dwellings in the Old Town and the Prison in Gabourel Lane. Slave shackles can still be seen embedded in some of the brick remains, a sign of earlier times. St. John's school also dates back to this period although the present structure postdates Hurricane Hattie.(56) The first Catholic chapel was opened in 1840(57) with the present Holy Redeemer Cathedral dating to 1858.(58)

At the time that Government House and St. John's Cathedral were built, the area of the construction was still quite swampy. The Archives indicate that a bridge was built over this swamp (from what is now Regent Street) to the church in 1815.(59) The ground around Government House, the church and the parsonage were filled in 1815, 1816 and 1824, probably using ballast from the ships that arrived in Belize over those years. This ballast was also used for repairing streets.(60) The streets were a continual problem at this time and let to numerous complaints.(61) The slow development of a legal code to reflect the growth of Belize City was also shown in a variety of problems – such as wayward cattle and the "shameful state of the Burial grounds"(62) until at least the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1833 the problem of the filling of the city lots (or rather, the lack of it) was cited as a "problem to health"(63), and in 1837 the town was described as "dilapidated" and "dirty," and the lot filling problem was again emphasised.(64) Belize City was clearly having a lot of growth pangs, to add to its extended birth pangs.

A few years after St. John's Cathedral was constructed a barracks for the garrison was also built, a symbol of the continuous relations now being maintained with the British Government.(65) In 1818 tenders were called for making "a good road" on the South Side of Belize around the southern edge of St. John's to what remained of the parade ground.(66) In 1820 a Market and Slaughter house were built, again apparently on the South Side, and presumably on the site of the market built in 1803.(67) The growth of this new area of the city clearly indicates the pace of growth in the urban area as a whole.

The Crown did not, however, have control over Belizean events, and in fact the Superintendents were often at odds

with the "monied cutters." Despite the attempts of these officials, for instance, a handful of the settlers between 1765 and 1817 "divided between themselves almost all of the land defined within the limits of the old treaties with Spain."(68) Belize City was growing but it was growing no more egalitarian. The strength of the social rift in Belize was clearly demonstrated in the early 1820's when many blacks fled to the Central American area when the new government of this region abolished slavery.

The proportion of slaves in fact dropped during the first third of the nineteenth century. The abolition of the slave trade, the escape of slaves, and the inability and refusal of the slaves to reproduce themselves all contributed to the drop.(69) The free black proportion increased and the white percentage remained at about ten percent. "The Eboes or Ibos appear to have been particularly numerous in Belize. One section of Belize Town was known throughout the first half of the 19th century as Eboe Town and was said to consist of 'numerous yards, flanked with long rows of what one called negro houses, being simply separate rooms under one long roof, which used to be appropriated to slaves, and now accomodate the poorest labourers".(70) Physically Belize City continued to consolidate itself and by the 1830's a clearer pattern of place names reflected this.(71) In 1836 money was voted to build a road to the Haulover so that cattle from the hinterland of Belize City could be brought more easily to market.(72)

The economy of Belize was still very much tied to the trade in wood products — and particularly mahogany — and to slavery, and the mahogany 'houses' were the real governing bodies in Belize.(73) The fortunes of the settlement thus fluctuated with lumber prices, and also with British attitudes towards the country — its lack of legal status often causing it problems.(74) They also varied with the abolition of slavery,(75) the following apprenticeship period (during which many left the country) and indeed, throughout the period of colonialism because of the different pattern of slavery found in Belize as compared to elsewhere in the Caribbean.(76) But these factors often only indirectly affected Belize City.

The mid nineteenth century saw the decline of mahogany, and with a few fluctuations, the continued decline in the logwood trade. At the same time there came a severe drop in the entrepot trade enjoyed by Belize City, occasioned by the opening of the Panama Railway in 1855, and later the Panama Ca-

nal.(77) Despite an increase in agriculture in the country, and an influx of new settlers, in Clegern's words "The colony was becoming obsolete."(78) That is to say it was no longer a source of great income for Britain and the British.

The new settlers were, however, to have a major new influence on the country. They came to the south of the settlement (some East Indians, and Caribs/Garifuna); to the west and north (mostly Maya and Mestizo), as well as to Belize City and the central portions of the country. These latter settlers were often of 'African origin' and moved to Belize from the Caribbean and particularly Jamaica. This latter influx was particularly strong at the end of the nineteenth century. There was also natural increase of population as the earlier resistance of the populace to childbirth disappeared and the proportion of women increased. Between 1841 and 1861 these varied but improving conditions had led to a more than threefold population increase in Belize to nearly 26,000 (Table Two). It is ironic that these better times came just before a deterioration in the economic status of the country was to ensue, for Belize finally gained colonial status in 1862.(79) The rise of agriculture in the north was one reason for the British government assuming full sovereignty over the settlement. It was also a situation which led to at least the relative decline of Belize City – in numbers if not in terms of power. At this time the Spanish speaking town of Corozal rivalled Belize City in size(80) – with the latter settlement having only some 6000 inhabitants.(81)

A further boost to Belize's fortunes, however, that came when mahogany trading was in decline, was the U.S. Civil War.(82) This conflict allowed Belize to reassume its position as an entrepot port – trading goods from Europe and elsewhere to the Southern States.(83) But this was only a temporary situation and simply gave the colony some breathing space.(84)

These economic and political changes did not stunt the growth of Belize City, but rather controlled it. From a position of great dominance in 1800 Belize City had only some 23% of the country's population in 1861 (Table Two). The city managed, however, to maintain this same proportion of the Belizean population forty years later.(85) But in 1901 this was a quarter of a total population which had risen by fifty percent during these decades. A major political change came in 1865 when Belize City obtained a municipal board, which eventually evolved into a city council.(86)

This growth, however, was often slowed by fire — a major hazard in this small wooden town, and recorded as early as 1806.(87) Major fires have been recorded throughout Belize City's history and at times have had disasterous effects. In 1852 "provision was made for the better protection of the Town of Belize from fire"(88) as the Volunteer Fire Brigade set up as a result of an 1849 resolution at a Public Meeting clearly was inadequate.(89) One fire in 1854 destroyed the goal and much of the surrounding area and another in 1856 destroyed much of the north side including the Catholic Church.(90) Each of these fires caused an estimated £100,000 in damage. One of the problems appeared to be "incendiarism" (arson), and there were several arrests and one execution for this crime.(91) As a consequence police services were also improved.(92)

Despite these precautions, there was another major fire in 1863 which was one of the most devastating in the history of Belize City. Only two died but 90 acres were devastated and 500 houses (including the Wesleyan Chapel) were destroyed in the "Back Street and Overpond District".(93) As a result a law was passed in 1863 to assure the erection of fire proof buildings — apparently to no avail.(94) In 1876 new fire equipment was purchased,(95) in 1879 a Fire Brigade was appointed,(96) and attempts were also made to provide an adequate fresh water supply. Despite this another fire occurred in 1918 which destroyed, among other things the Court House.(97)

In a more positive vein, the road network of the settlement was imporved with the constructing of a road to the Sibun in 1862 (now Faber's Road)(98) and a request in 1864 for $10,000 for a road from the Haulover to Labouring Creek.(99) In addition the fire of 1856 gave the opportunity for the town to widen the streets and alter the "system of streets on the Northside of the town . . . greatly for the better."(100) It also had the effect of moving the houses further apart as the close packed nature of the housing had been cited as a cause of the fire of 1856.

Another difficult problem for the citizens of the city and the settlement as a whole was one of disease. Smallpox was often recorded (e.g. 1853) as was cholera (which caused 580 deaths in 'the Colony' in 1868, and Yellow fever (e.g. 1852, 1860-61 and 1869). Although these diseases were imported to Belize, the environment and shortage of medical attention and public health knowledge often fostered their spread and difficulty of eradication.(101)

The years between 1862 and the turn of the twentieth century saw the gradual increase in agriculture and particularly the growth of sugar production, which was to prove critical to the future of Belize, and to some extent this had a positive effect on the capital city. Although sugar production took place chiefly in the north, warehousing, office facilities, and the export trade all took place in Belize City and some financial benefit could be derived from it. Its choice as a major primate city was still justified as no other port rivalled it, and no other river had as good a hinterland as did the Belize River. It should of course also be noted that such a trade affected relatively few people in Belize City — the majority of the working class retained its orientation towards the declining trade in wood products. "Needless to say, the changes in the market brought no benefits to the labouring class. In fact, the declining demand for labour meant that many more were unemployed, some had to seek work abroad, and those who were able to secure work in the colony were exploited as badly, if not worse than before. In 1868 fifty-five employers hired 2,273 labourers in Belize town . . . and in 1869 twenty-two employers hired 1,169 labourers. While the median cash wage in 1868 was eight dollars per month, it had fallen in the following year to six dollars, and the mean cash wage fell from nine dollars to seven dollars and fifty cents."(102) This unemployed population has been an increasing feature of Belize City since the 1860's and remains important in the contemporary scene. Surprisingly perhaps, givent the descriptions of the 1830's and those to be made in the 1880's, Belize City was described as being in excellent (physical) shape in the 1860's and visitors commented on how clean, substantial, and well built it was.(103) It was some time it seems, before the effects of the depression would be seen in the landscape.

In 1872 between 900 and 1000 people arrived in Belize "flying for their lives".(104) The exact cause of the flight is not known, but it stems from the 1859 cession of the Bay Islands to the Republic of Honduras which had left the remaining inhabitants of these islands as British subjects. It is not known if these Islanders settled in Belize City and if they did so, whether they settled in a particular area of the capital.

One last attempt at economic salvation came in the 1880's and 1890's with an attempt to have a railway built from Belize City to the Pacific Ocean, but this eventually came to naught, as did attempts to attract more immigrants to Belize from China and elsewhere. The last twenty years of the nineteenth

century were perhaps more noted for their conflicts – both within the colony and between it and the metropolitan government in England. It was a time of both crisis and depression.(105)

One of these conflicts particularly affected Belize City and centered on the Siccama Plan of 1880. This was a comprehensive plan of municipal improvements devised by an engineer, Baron Siccama. It proposed filling low-lying lots, increasing water storage facilities, building a pier and dredging the canals which had not been cleared since the 1860's.(106) Because of poor administration and a suspicion of patronage, however, the work was either not done or poorly done, and Belize City sank back into its assumed pattern of squalor and debt. From 1886 there was a movement on the North Side towards King's Park, once a target range behind the Barracks. But further extension on the South Side was still inhibited by the poor environmental conditions.

Other conflicts such as the decline of woodcutting and the general economic despondency affected the whole country. Thus the "rottenness of the entire Crown Colony government" as well as the fact "that Belize town was isolated and decaying" were revealed to the world.(107) It became increasingly clear that new measures, such as the further development of agriculture, would be needed to make Belize "a real colony instead a mere timber reserve surrounding the trading centre called Belize" City.(108) Some attempts were made by the Colonial Office to effect change but at the end of the century Belize remained obscure and unimportant in London – a Colonial Dead End.(109) Belize City was in slow decline. Dr. Gann once described the city as "a picturesque little place; its white walled red roofed, broad verandahed houses, standing in spacious grounds filled with palms, fruit trees, and flowering shrubs bathed in perpetual sunshine, and cooled by almost constant sea breezes render it one of the most delightful spots in Central America. Wide Canals, spanned by picturesque bridges and traversed by dugouts and other small craft which run the whole length of the town, have given it the title of the 'Venice of the Caribbean' by which it is sometimes known."(110) It seems unlikely that this was ever a truly accurate picture of Belize City, but it was to become even less true as the capital progressed (or failed to progress) into the twentieth century.

Twentieth Century Belize City

"The dawn of the Twentieth Century was somber along the

Belize waterfront. The tide of prosperity which would double the colony's exports and triple its imports in the few years before World War One, was still three years away."(111) Many members of Belize City's population were unable to find work and the depression was the most severe in the colony's history.

In 1900 Belize City had 9-10,000 inhabitants living principally in the Old Town, but also in Yarborough and Queen Charlotte Town on the South Side, and the Barracks and possibly parts of what are now Fort George on the North Side (Figure Two).

The Old Town site is in many ways a geographical entity with a consecutive history, but culturally and economically it has always been segregated into a number of sections. The sea front areas on both sides of Haulover Creek where not devoted to warehouses, have no doubt long been areas of upper-class settlement. These are the areas that most closely approximate those described by Gann, with clean white houses and freshening winds. The areas to the north of the river are the oldest. The shorefront areas south of the present swing bridge were mostly reclaimed from the sea during the Victorian period and as mentioned earlier what was South Front Street is now Regent Street. The narrowness of this street pattern eventually led to a 'one-way' system being imposed on much of the Old Town.

In the late nineteenth century Yarborough cemetary became filled, and a new place of interment became necessary. As a result, in 1882, Queen Charlotte Town (once called 'Coolie Town' or 'Calcutta' as the area was the home of Belize City's East Indian population until the destruction of the 1931 hurricane(112)) gained a certain notoriety, albeit short lived, when 'The Vaults' were opened in order to bury the dead of the city above ground level.(113)

This practice, although apparently much easier, and possibly healthier in a city with such a high water table, led to a riot in the town, with the superstitions of the people being revealed. They demanded an area for below-ground burials and the Vaults were soon closed and Lord's Ridge Cemetary was opened at what is now the western edge of the city.(114)

Neither Yarborough nor Queen Charlotte Town were centres of population in the early twentieth century, despite the fact that a sandy ridge that runs in this area might have proved a better location than some places that were settled.

North of the river the Old Town was more densely settled and a number of institutional buildings also existed (e.g. Goal). The Barracks had only a few inhabitants, but there were people living in Freetown (the area around the present Technical School) which was probably the edge of the settled area at this time. Freetown was possibly once settled by refugees from the Mosquito Shore, although until the 1920's it remained mostly grass and bush.(115) The Fort George area was still separated from the Old Town by the sea.

By the very nature of the resources of the country, it is not surprising that most of the buildings of Belize City were (and largely still are) made of wood (although wood for building has also been imported from the United States and elsewhere).(116) This can of course be disadvantageous in an area of hurricanes, and also leaves the city very susceptible to fire. In order to help prevent this hazard, there had been attempts since the beginning of the nineteenth century to encourage the use of shingles, and later sheet metal, and discourage the use of thatch and wooden floored kitchens.(117) Kitchens were usually separate from the main housing structure for the same reason — still a characteristic of many parts of the Belizean landscape. Probably the most noticeable characteristic of the buildings of Belize City, for the outsider, is their tendency to be built with their floors above ground level, and a number of explanations have been put forward to account for this method of building upon 'stilts' or 'posts'. In large part, however, it seems that climatic and other environmental features have had the major effect on this building style although culture has carried this form of architecture elsewhere in the country where flooding, insects, and heat do not demand it. The method of building does not preclude the construction of large houses, and in the contemporary Old Town and Fort George areas there are three storey buildings, often with the roof being used as a dwelling site also, on top of five or six foot stilts.

Soon after the beginning of the twentieth century, economic conditions improved in Belize, and "with the aid of the expanding American market, the trade in forestry products held much promise for the future of the colony."(118) Mahogany remained the main export, but chicle became of secondary importance. Despite this the country failed to thrive, because the continued concentration on a mono economy left the country open to external whims and trade fluctuations. The lack of domestic production led to a continued dependence upon imports and metropolitan control meant that Belize had an unfavourable trade bal-

ance much of the time Belize was being underdeveloped.(119) Fortunately the price of wood remained relatively high and "for the first three decades of the twentieth century the colony remained in a fairly sound financial position".(120) During this time the population of Belize rose by about forty percent, and that of Belize City by over eighty percent. About half of the colony's population increase thus took place in its capital (Table Two) and Belize City continued its dominant position that it retained until recently.

This population increase was reflected in the physical growth of the capital. Canals were again the key, and the Collet Canal was completed in 1919, and as a consequence Mesopotamia was laid out and settled between 1919 and 1928. This area is characterised by its street names as well as by its own name.(121) It was settled by returning veterans of the First World War who had fought chiefly in the Middle East. Many of the houses were built by the re-vitalised colonial government, which no doubt wanted to forestall any more riots such as those of 1919 when returning soldiers destroyed parts of the town as a protest against unemployment, homelessness, and high prices.(122) Mesopotamia has become an area of very high density housing with some 1000 dwellings housing some 6000 people on 70 acres. It is surrounded on three sides by canals, with its northern edge merging into the Old Town at Orange Street.(123) There is also a grid-like pattern to the streets of Mesopotamia, which vary in both width and direction for no obvious reason. That part of the area which flanks the Southside Canal is not truly Mesopotamia, having been built up at an earlier date, and it reflects this different age in its street plan, the routeways being closer together than in the 'more modern' part.

On the North Side there was also a reclamation project with most of the Fort George area being reclaimed (299 acres) between 1923 and 1926 with concrete quays being built on the river side.(124) The point of this area is now dominated by the Baron Bliss tomb and lighthouse which was built shortly after the death of Baron Bliss in 1926. He was an Englishman (with a Portuguese title) who died within sight of Belize, but without ever having set foot in the country. He left a large bequest to the colony in his will, receipts from which have been put toward numerous projects in the country. In part this Trust paid for the Burdon Canal which was completed in 1929, and which opened a more easy and safe connection with Belize City for the inhabitants of the Sibun River settlements and southern Belize District.

"Since the colony relied on the small revenue gained from trade, especially import trade, the Great Depression threw the country's finances into a shambles."(125) The dependence upon the U.S. market particularly hurt Belize, and the export trade came to a virtual standstill. Agriculture was still undeveloped and with imports still coming into the colony the country was soon in a desperate situation. "Despite every effort to settle them on the land hundreds of labourers, normally employed in mahogany and other forest operations, poured into the capital, where there was no chance of obtaining employment. Driven by poverty the labouring community overcrowded into small shacks and condemned houses and so set the stage for the next catastrophe, the hurricane of September 1931."(126)

Belize City was struck by a hurricane of short duration but considerable intensity on September 10th. The "wind velocity exceeded 132 miles an hour. Roofs were torn off and houses swept off their supports. The sea was driven into the town in a swirling flood some five feet deep carrying with it scores of large and small seacraft which added considerably to the terrible destruction wrought by the wind and the water."(127) The hurricane also had a severe impact on the logging industry, and chicle production — exacerbating the effects of the Depression.(128)

The Mesopotamia area was hardest hit and was reduced to a few heaps of tangled wood packed with dead bodies. The worst of these piles were turned into huge funeral pyres as other methods of clearing the area failed. The East Indian Community in Queen Charlotte Town was wiped out as was the Women's Poor House at the Barracks. Much of the rest of the city suffered severe, but less total damage.

Ironically, the hurricane may have had its good points, as a loan from the Imperial Treasury aided the rebuilding of the capital, and a few years later Belize City was "better built and drained than it was before the hurricane, and the streets (were) better surfaced."(129) Indoor sanitation became common (for the middle and upper classes) and a number of new buildings, such as a library and museum, were constructed. In addition the Belize Estate Company constructed a controversial sawmill on the North Side of the City in 1933 — the first in the colony's history! The controversy centred on the use of Hurricane Loan funds to finance this project for the country's largest landholder and major conduit of underdevelopment.(130)

The depression, the hurricane, and the continued pattern of underdevelopment all helped to cause strife in Belize City, and most notably the 'disturbances' of 1934-1937 which have become most closely associated with the activities of Antonio Soberanis and his followers.(131) The fact that a collective reaction to the problems of the capital "did not surface until 1934 was a reflection of the powers of endurance of the populace and not the reality of the distress itself".(132) These disturbances spurred the government to provide employment (in roadbuilding, away from the capital) but caused few other immediate changes in the country — although they did lay part of the groundwork for labour legislation that was implemented in 1943.(133)

Belize took part in the Second World War as one of Britain's colonies, contributing both money and manpower to the defense of the Empire. In addition forestry workers were sent to Scotland and later the United States, and "a very large body of men also worked on the wartime improvement and extended fortification of the Panama Canal."(134) The drain of men even threatened the local woodcutting industry which had been partially revitalised by wartime demands. In 1943 Belize Town finally became Belize City, but there was little other change in this urban area until the end of the war.

Post War Belize City

The end of the war meant an increase in unemployment and this was particularly evident in Belize City. Over 3000 men had worked abroad during the war; only some 600 remained abroad in 1946. In addition the ex-servicemen were returning to the colony.(135) Chicle production had dropped to a level from which it has never recovered; mahogany was again in decline, and the production of pine (which had begun during the war) did not make up for these difficulties. The post war period has seen a spectacular drop in the significance of forestry to the economy. In 1945, forest products accounted for 90% of the country's total exports. In the late 1970's only 2% of the country's export value was in wood products. The period of adjustment has been difficult and is not yet complete.

The city of Belize "had grown as an administrative centre and port, and a strong body of merchants had entrenched their position in the society, adding their weight to the forces who militated against any agricultural development. The mahogany lords, the merchants and the British administrators together exercised a tight grip on the economic and political life of the country. Forestry continued to dominate the economy, with its

extreme vulnerability to external markets and prices. Most of the goods consumed – not excluding food-stuffs – were imported, primarily from the United States of America. The British had built up a core of typical colonial civil servants, mostly drawn from the creole group centred in Belize City, but with top posts held by Englishmen or West Indians."(136)

The Belize City of 1946 still only consisted of the Old Town, Mesopotamia, and Yarborough in the south, and the Old Town, Fort George, and the Barracks to the north. A couple of roads ran into what are now King's Park and Cinderella Town. The surrounding swamps were (and are) owned by the government. Belize City was (and still largely is) a Creole town and also the home of the majority of this group. The city "was not industrial but a commercial town which lived on the merchant business connected with the forest industries, by arranging and financing exports and providing for imports of food supply. The industrial centre was (still) the forests."(137) The population of Belize City resisted all attempts to resettle it in the rural areas, having a prejudice against farming and against locally produced food – a prejudice that the timber barons and merchants had fostered over the years. In addition little real thought went into resettlement schemes, with the result that "under the slightest pretext the farmer forsook his agricultural holding for the relative comfort of Belize City."(138) It was also growing – particularly in Belize City which grew by thirty percent from 1931 to 1946, and a further fifty percent between 1946 and 1960 (Table Two). Inevitably trades unionism increased, and formed the basis for the "first mass political party, the People's United Party (PUP), which was organized in 1950."(140)

During the late 1940's a number of attempts were made to relieve this increasing pressure on Belize City. In particular the built up area of the city was extended and the water supply improved.

Until the Second World War Belize had depended for its water supply on rain water collected from the roofs and stored in wood or steel tanks and vats.(141) "This furnished excellent potable water but storage capacity never succeeded in providing sufficient reserve to tide the town through the dry season".(142) During the war it was discovered that potable water could be obtained from deep wells in a pine ridge about eleven miles from Belize City; this water was then piped into Belize City after a distribution network was laid down. It could not, however, cope with the continued growth of the capital. Currently

a new water system is being built (largely funded by the Canadian International Development Agency) in which water is taken from the Belize River, near Double Run on the Northern Highway. It is treated here and then piped to Belize City.(143)

Beginning during the mid 1940's the government used a suction dredge to fill the areas of what are now Cinderella Town, King's Park, and Caribbean Shores, with sand and coral from the sea bottom, in recognition of the acute housing shortage that existed in Belize City.(144)

Cinderella Town (apparently so named by the city council)(145) was developed as a government scheme during the early 1950's and the houses show their similar origins despite later alterations by their inhabitants. These were the first 'hire-purchase' houses in Belize. Cinderella Town is today a small area dominated by the Technical College, but is one of the most distinctive local areas of the city, being most easily recognised and located by the inhabitants. Its street names (e.g. Nurse Seay and Matron Roberts) follow a Belizean tradition of naming roads after famous people, which has been encouraged by the governments since the war, perhaps as an attempt to instill a sense of history into the landscape.

Caribbean Shores has grown up as an area of better class housing, with private architects and builders constructing most of the buildings in stone. Once proposed to be called King's Park this area was for a long time known as Hone Park, in honour of E. D. Hone, once Colonial Secretary and Acting Governor of the colony. The most recent name change reflects a desire to avoid this colonial connection in an age of independence. Government ministers, merchants, and independent businessmen live in this somewhat exclusive area which is cooled by the sea breezes of the Trades. It is an area which is easily distinguished from the rest of the city. Its place names (of religious type) differ from the immediately surrounding areas,(146) its spacious lots are in direct contrast to those of most of the city, its inhabitants are of a higher income bracket, its architecture is distinctive (but alien to the traditions of the country), and it is still physically separate from the sprawl of Belize City. It was conceived and designed as an exclusive area and has most certainly achieved this somewhat dubious distinction.(147) Immediately to the west of Caribbean Shores lies a horse racing track, and to the west of this is Landivar or St. John's College.(148) This was built in the early 1950's by the Roman Catholic Church to replace St. John Berchman's College

which was destroyed in the 1931 hurricane.(149)

On the South Side, Ex-Serviceman's area compares in origin at least to the Mesopotamia district. Built for veterans of the Second World War (who this time saw little military action) it is a wedge between Queen's Square and Queen Charlotte Town, giving the appearance of a token for the soldiers, perhaps in the hope of forestalling new riots. The place names follow no particular theme, but again often commemorate well known Belizeans.(150) Much is still undeveloped mud-flats, with most development going on at the moment along Neal's Pen Road, and Faber's Road,(151) with little apparent supervision or control, and few service facilities. Much of the area still floods badly during the rainy season. The area between Caesar Road and South Creek is now often called Loyolaville.(152)

Expansion continued quite quickly in the late 1940's and early 1950's and the Queen's Square district was pushed out from the Collet Canal.(153) Much of this part of the city also consists of government built housing and there is still an air of expansion and newness, with the nearby mangroves providing plenty of room for an extension of housing. At present there is little development to the west of Central American Boulevard, the main artery that runs roughly north-south from the Belcan Bridge over Haulover Creek to (eventually) Faber's Road and perhaps Caesar Road.(154) The place names of Queen's Square are of interest as they represent another new trend in Belize — the recognition of the environment — and in this case include Pelican, Iguana, Gibnut, and Antelope Streets.(155) This convenient way of naming many new streets in a short period of time has also proved useful in the Lake Independence Area (types of hardwood), and in Belmopan, the new capital, where a number of such schemes have been used.

Lake Independence Area is another area of slow encroachment by the city upon the mangroves. It is a large area in between Cemetary Road and Haulover Creek. It is again an area of recent expansion, with development still going on the west of Central American Boulevard. The street names — mostly wood varieties — distinguish this area from others, as Lake Independence is itself a sludge and weed filled pond which is bypassed by the populace without a second glance.(156) These problems in many ways symbolise the difficulties of Belize City. There are good ideas and grand nomenclature, but there is no capital to do these ideas justice. Queen's Square was named to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II. Lake Independence was never built.(157)

Although a Housing and Planning Department was set up in Belize in 1955, it had no major effect on Belize City at this time. Its existence did recognise, however, that Belize City needed several hundred houses for new population and slum clearance. At this time the "lack of expansion space coupled with high lands costs" were already causing "considerable congestion or 'over-building'". In addition there were "factors of overcrowding, structural decay and inadequate sanitation aggravating the problems." These problems were made all the worse by the necessary divergence of resources north, to Corozal, to help that town and the surrounding district rebuild after Hurricane Janet which hit in September 1955.(158)

One major problem was the cost of building houses and reclaiming land. In addition there was also a "greatly increased cost of labour" which also apparently discouraged "private enterprise from erecting new houses, and landlords from properly maintaining new ones". Landlords claimed in the mid 1950's that rents had not gone up at the same rate as taxes and the costs of upkeep – although the rents had gone up by several hundred percent since the pre-war years. "A wooden house which before the war could have been built for $3,000 would in 1954, cost around $8,000 or $9,000, and the quality of the materials would have been inferior."(159)

It was not, therefore, surprising that private enterprise was discouraged from the extensive construction of housing – particularly for rent to people with lower incomes, although they had, at this time, the greatest need. Housing for these people, however, was deemed to show "the least return" because of the great "uncertainty in collecting rents" from the poorer people.(160) Clearly the housing problems of Belize City were increasing, despite the token construction of the housing in Cinderella Town and elsewhere.

Given these problems (and others with the metropolitan government in Britain), it should not be a surprise that between 1950 and 1960 the major action to be seen in Belize City was of a political nature, marking as it did the growth of the People's United Party from oblivion to a majority position. It made this transition by being closely affiliated with the labour movement, and by making considerable use of the Belize City population and its proximity to power. Despite many internal problems George Price, the leader of the PUP, led the country to internal self government in 1963 and independence from Britain in 1981. Recently the power base has become less oriented

towards Belize City and more towards the rest of Belize, and in part this is a result of the construction of the new capital at Belmopan.

Perhaps the most momentous event in Belize City's varied and colourful history occurred in 1961 when Hurricane Hattie struck the colony. This tropical storm inundated the capital with a fifteen foot wall of water. One third of the buildings were completely demolished, one third were heavily damaged, and the remainder suffered partial damage, — thus the government set up committees and sub-committees to study the possibility of moving the present capital to a new site inland.(161). Although six years were to pass before work began on Belmopan, the decision to build the new capital has undoubtedly had a great effect on Belize City.(162)

This effect has not been, however, to draw a large number of people away from the old capital. For as Odaffer observed in 1969, the majority of people in Belize City "at present, even with the destruction of periodic tropical storms, overcrowding, narrow streets, open sanitary sewers, poor health conditions, inadequate water supply, continual subjection to insects, rats, pests, invasions of land crabs, extreme heat, and high humidity are not willing to leave"(163) to go to the new capital.

Between 1960 and 1980, the population of Belize rose by sixty percent. Between 1960 and 1970 the number of people in Belize City rose by twenty-one percent and in the following decade it rose by only one percent (Table Two). But this small growth of Belize City was mainly the result of a significant migration of the Creole population to North America, rather than the drawing power of Belmopan.(164) In fact, the slow progress made on Belmopan after Hurricane Hattie enabled Belize City to grow back to prominence, where it has remained.

One part of this regrowth was the reconstruction of the existing areas of the city — albeit in a somewhat ad hoc fashion as funds were diverted at times to the new capital. As a result, Belize City has become more squalid and run down than ever — having been "regarded as a dying city on which no more than minimum maintenance should be done".(165) Despite such problems, however, it is now generally agreed that it "is unlikely that Belize City will (ever) lose its importance as a trading and mercantile centre of the country."(166) The advantages of location and inertia are simply too great to be overcome by the paucity of resources available to Belize.

A second aspect of the change since Hattie has been the extension of housing on the fringes of the city, and most particularly the growth of the King's Park area.

King's Park, the old target range behind the (West Indian Regiment's) Barracks was partially filled in the late 1940's and early 1950's, but has only recently been built up. The east side was constructed in the late 1960's and the west side during the 1970's. There are still many vacant lots and still some of the area consists of swamps. The modernity and rapid development of the area is shown in its road pattern and street names. The eastern area consists mainly of short, angled and numbered streets, although some streets in the older southern area bordering Cinderella Town have names commemorating various religious figures (e.g. Landivar, Archbishop Dunn, Bishop Hopkins, and St. Peter). The western zone (west of St. Thomas Street) differs principally in the street names. More time and thought was put into these and they commemorate famous Belizeans. Thus streets are named after an ex-Minister of Education (Lizarraga) and ex-Senator (Leslie) and other important personages.(167)

The houses of King's Park are principally of two types: there is one group built of concrete, on the Cinderella Town border as part of a government scheme.(168) Most of King's Park, however, consists of relatively large houses on high stilts built by various forms of private enterprise. The King's Park area is connected to the South Side by the Belcan Bridge which connects Princess Margaret Drive with Central American Boulevard. This bridge was completed in the early 1970's. It was financed with a loan from the Canadian International Development Agency — hence its name.

There are other areas of settlement, but they are of lesser importance. The boundary of Belize City, a two mile radius around the Supreme Court, currently encompasses all of it.(169) The environment which has proved to be so disadvantageous to the growth of Belize City for the past three centuries, at least places some useful restraints upon unplanned sprawl.

There are, however, in the north some houses to the west of Landivar, as well as on the Haulover Road on the way out of town in an as yet unnamed 'New Homes' area. To the south of Haulover Creek there are some dwellings to the west of Lord's Ridge Cemetary, a few more around the St. Martin dePorres Church, and others in Loyolaville. But in general the settlement patterns are well marked by the edge of the man-

grove swamp, and most people seem content (or resigned) to continue the process of construction in areas already too crowded. Consequently Belize City continues to be the biggest drag on the economy of Belize, its great size and relative importance enabling it to soak up much of the country's income, but providing little in return.

Conclusion

The reasons for many of the contemporary problems of Belize City seem manifold. The city has grown in numbers but not in services, or at least not in service area, and the Downtown area is still very dominant both for the buying of goods and services, and for the social life of the people.(170) There is only one post office and a handful of banks and all are to be found within two thousand yards of the swing bridge. Indeed most of these are within one hundred yards of the river crossing. The outlying areas are deficient in services and transport, although the urban bus service instituted in the late 1960's has proved extremely successful. But all routes lead to the city centre and there is only one market, at the bridge-foot.(171)

The population of Belize City is poor, unemployed and under-employed, and many families only survive thanks to remittances from relatives in the U.S.A.(172) There have been periodic food crises in Belize City during this century,(173) often because of the high cost of imported food,(174) but still, ironically, there has been no success to the attempts to move the people of Belize City out to the countryside or to Belmopan.

Consequently Belize City has a run down look, with a decline in housing standards, and with peeling and faded paint-work. In addition, the cost of clearing and filling land is still prohibitive and the inhabitants of Belize City are not in an easy position to get any kind of wealth.(175) The empty outlying areas are more difficult to drain, as they do not have the canals of the more easterly parts of the city, and during the rainy season some of the people on the western borders have to use dugouts to reach their homes. It is not at all surprising that the tradition of building houses on stilts has been continued, and those with two stories rarely have much furniture on the ground floor. Sanitary arrangements are bad in the Old Town and Mesopotamia, but they are more or less non-existent in the poorer areas elsewhere. It might not be a bad thing if the growth of the city were to be grossly curtailed, but attempts to do this have proved to be quite unpopular. Because of its policies which included the restriction of the growth of Belize City,

the PUP party has seen its traditional base in this city drop away, and it has on occasion lost control of the city council — as it recently lost control of the country.(176) It is also notable that the two city seats in the Legislature that were not held by the PUP prior to the most recent election were Albert and Mesopotamia. These wards basically cover Mesopotamia, Loyolaville, and the Old Town south of Haulover Creek — namely the poorer and most squalid parts of Belize City.

Even the new national government will find it difficult to completely represent Belize City, but it is also true that this city no longer can be correlated with the country, as it could perhaps until 1950.(177) Economically, socially, and culturally, Belize City is no longer representative of Belize, as timber extraction, resource depletion, and the Creoles no longer dominate the country as they have in the past. The big question mark is to the city's future.

In the past Belize City was a "disgrace to the administration" of the country,(178) but now the administrative system has changed, and the locus of control has shifted from London to Belmopan. It is to be hoped that the country's phoenix-like qualities, immortalised in its motto, will enable it to survive and indeed prosper in the contemporary world; it is also to be hoped that Belize City can be a constructive part of this future, rather than the drag on the economy that it has been for much of the past half century.

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FOOTNOTES

1. One major exception is "The Three Capitals of British Honduras" by D. G. Odaffer, an M.A. Thesis at San Francisco State College in 1969. This study was, however, never published. Throughout the present paper the contemporary name for Belize will be used, rather than the earlier name of 'British Honduras'; the name Belize City will be used for the subject area of this paper, even though it was only recently made a city, and was known simply by the name 'Belize' for most of its history. There is no certainty that this solution will solve the potential problems of the varied nomenclature, but a consistent approach will hopefully eliminate some of the difficulties.

2. D. G. Epstein, Brasilia, Plan and Reality (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1976) p. 41.

3. D. B. Freeman, "The Geography of Development and Modernization: A Survey of Present Trends and Future Prospects", Discussion Paper No. 22 (Toronto: York University, Department of Geography, 1979) pp. 4-5.

4. Compare, for instance, the analyses of S. L. Caiger, British Honduras, Past and Present, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1951) and O. N. Bolland, The Formation of a Colonial Society: Belize from Conquest to Crown Colony, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

5. J. Eric S. Thompson, The Maya of Belize: Historical Chapters Since Columbus (Belize, The Benex Press, 1972) p. 31.

6. e.g. Xibum (Sinbun) and Sayte (Sittee) Rivers, Thompson, op. cit. p. 32.

7. Moho Caye, off the main mouth of the Belize River was, however, a Maya fishing site. See A. H. Anderson, Brief Sketch of British Honduras (Belize, Government Printing Office, 1952) p. 11 and M. Ester, "The Cayes of Belize: An Archaeological Resource", Belizean Studies, Vol. 9, Nos. 5 and 6, 1981, pp. 10-17.

8. Bolland, 1977 op. cit. p. 1.

9. P. A. Furley (ed.) Expedition to British Honduras – Yucatan 1966 (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1968) p. 45.

10. N. Dobson, A History of Belize (Trinidad and Jamaica, Longman Caribbean Ltd. 1973), pp. 53 and 56.

11. D. A. G. Waddell, British Honduras: A Historical and Con-

temporary Survey (London, Oxford University Press, 1961) p. 8.

12. The Belize Issue, (London, The Latin American Bureau, 1978) p. 9.

13. Dobson, op. cit. p. 59.

14. N. Ashcraft, Colonialism and Underdevelopment: Processes of Political Economic Change in British Honduras (New York, Teachers College Press, 1973) p. 27. Female slaves were also imported to sexually service the Baymen, as the woodcutters earlier source of supply for women — the Maya villages — was cut off when the Indians fled to the interior (Brukdown Nos. 6 and 7, 1979, p. 21).

15. O. N. Bolland and A. Shoman, Land in Belize 1765-1871, Law and Society in the Caribbean No. 6 (Mona, Jamaica, Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1977) p. 3. At times the price of logwood climbed to L100 per ton.

16. Bolland 1977, op. cit. p.6.

17. Bolland and Shoman, op. cit. p. 3. For instance in 1754 a force of 1500 strong descended the Belize River as far as Labouring Creek, and then retired. The Spanish regarded the Belize City settlement as being "only fit for the English". Burdon, Volume I op. cit., pp. 80-81.

18. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 59.

19. Bolland, 1977, op. cit. p. 28.

20. Dobson, op. cit. pp. 87-89. Details of Burnaby's Code can be found in Sir John A. Burdon (ed.) The Archives of British Honduras Volume I (London, Sifton Praed, 1931) pp. 30-33.

21. The people of the settlement did not rely exclusively on imported foods — but also made 'plantations' to grow subsistence products along many of the river banks in Belize. There was no export production, however (see Bolland and Shoman op. cit. pp. 22-25).

22. Dobson, op. cit. p. 73. Burdon, Volume I, op. cit., p. 162.

23. O. N. Bolland, "Slavery in Belize", B.I.S.R.A. Occasional Publication No. 7 (Belize, The Benex Press, 1979) p. 4.

24. Bolland, 1977 op. cit., Chapter Three.

25. Ashcraft, op. cit., Chapter Nine.

26. Dobson, op. cit. p. 68. The map in question is Map D in Burdon, Volume I, op. cit. between pp. 162 and 163.

27. Anderson, op. cit. p. 2.

28. L. H. Bradley, "Barrier Reef Country: Its Administrative Centres," Belizean Studies, Vol. 6, No. 4, July 1978, pp. 1-7.

29. Bradley, op. cit. p. 3.

30. Bradley, op. cit. p. 3.

31. Sir John A. Burdon (ed.) The Archives of British Honduras Volume II (London, Sifton Praed, 1934) p. 103.

32. Burdon, Volume II op. cit. p. 103.

33. Burdon, Volume II op. cit. p. 105.

34. Bolland, 1977, op. cit. p. 42. The Mosquito shore settlers consisted of 537 white and free persons and 1,677 slaves. Burdon, Volume I op. cit. p.162.

35. Bradley, op. cit. p. 4. This was presumably named for the Jamaica Governor of the time, Lord Balcarres. A Sketch of the Haulover can be found in Burdon, Volume I op. cit. Map E.

36. Dobson, op. cit. p. 68. An account of many of these problems can be found in Burdon, Volume I op. cit. pp. 160-169.

37. Bolland, 1977, op. cit.

38. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 35.

39. Dobson, op. cit. p. 68.

40. Odaffer, 1969(1) op. cit. p. 11. In August 1791 the Grand Jury recommended that this land be obtained (Burdon, Volume I, op. cit. p. 194). This was to be a "Public Burial Ground with provision of space for those not entitled to Church rites."

41. By 1819 Front Street had become Regent Street, and in 1863 Back Street became Albert Street. (Sir John A. Burdon, Archives of British Honduras Volume II (London, Sifton Praed, 1934) p. 20, and Vol. III p. 250.

42. Waddell, op. cit. p. 12.

43. Belize City was still the "only regular establishment which the English settlers" had formed by 1809 in Belize. (Captain Henderson, An Account of the British Settlement of Honduras (London, R. Baldwin, 1811) p. 15.

44. Sir Eric Swayne, "British Honduras," The Geographical Journal, Volume 50, No. 3, September 1917, p. 166.

45. Swayne, op. cit. p. 167.

46. D. G. Odaffer, personal communication, 1969 (2) p. 7.

47. W. M. Clegern, British Honduras: Colonial Dead End, 1859-1900 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1967) pp. 6-7.

48. Clegern, op. cit. p. 7 and pp. 58-59.

49. Bolland, 1977 op. cit. p. 57.

50. Bolland and Shoman, op. cit. p. 13.

51. Odaffer, 1969(1) op. cit. p. 35. These canals were quite different in the early nineteenth century from how we see them today. Although in roughly similar locations to when they were first dug, these canals were by no means as straight in 1820 as we find them now. A map of 1829 (reproduced in Dobson, op. cit. as plate 6) shows the South Side canal almost as circuitous as a river, and the North Side canal little more than a ditch. In 1859 a new canal, and essentially the one we see today, was opened. It was 30 feet wide, 4 feet deep, and had 20 foot wide embankments on either side. "The old canal is presumably the now closed up Richard's Canal which has been converted into a street" (Burdon, Volume III op. cit. p. 212). There were constantly problems with these canals as their dirt sides tended to collapse into the water and the owners of lots along the old canal were once required to stake them to prevent this slumping (Burdon, Volume II op. cit. p. 201).

52. Bradley, op. cit. p. 4.

53. The Very Reverend D. Gareth Lewis, Dean of Belize, The History of St. John's Cathedral, Belize (Belize, Cubola Publications, 1976) p. 2.

54. Lewis, op. cit. p. 2. The bridge across the Belize River built from public subscription in the first years of the century, the goal, and the Church were cited as being in a state of decay at this time (Dobson, op. cit. p. 115). A suitable system for financing public works in Belize was not found for some time, repairs commonly being completed on a piecemeal basis. A new bridge across Haulover Creek was often called for (e.g. in 1856, see Burdon Volume III, op. cit. p. 188).

55. Lewis, op. cit. p. 2.

56. Lewis, op. cit. p. 13.

57. Richard Buhler, S.J. "A History of the Catholic Church in Belize", B.I.S.R.A. Occasional Publication No. 4 (Belize, the Benex Press, 1976) p. 7.

58. Buhler, op. cit. p. 10. An 1829 map (Dobson op. cit., plate 6) also shows a chapel, seemingly shared by Baptists and Methodists, the other major religious groups in Belize at this time. These groups represented the first non-established clergy in Belize, both arriving during the 1820's. (Brukdown, Nos. 6 and 7, 1979, p. 53.) A Presbyterian Church was built in the middle of the nineteenth century. A major, but almost invisible, change in the past century has been from a dominance of Anglicans to a majority of Catholics in Belize, despite the fact that the first Roman Catholic priest did not permanently settle in Belize until 1835 (Brukdown, Nos. 6 and 7, 1979, p. 53). Protestants are still most numerous in Belize City, but the Catholic proportion of the population is also increasing here.

59. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. p. 180. The swampy nature of the city also led to a great problem with insects — particularly at the extreme north (Barracks) and south (Government House) ends of the city. (Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 312.)

60. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. pp. 178, 186, 187 and 224. Material dredged from the river bar and harbour was also later used to fill lots (Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. p. 406). In 1854 an Act making the filling of lands in Belize City compulsory was passes — in part to help keep down the problem of disease — a cholera outbreak was related to the swampy nature of the town in that year (Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 17). In 1877 free soil for filling was offered after a steam dredger was purchased in 1876 (Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 43).

61. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit., pp. 262 and 340.

62. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. pp. 146, 169, and 403, and 346. Volume III, op. cit. p. 81

63. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. p. 347.

64. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. p. 392.

65. Waddell, op. cit. p. 49. Probably in the area known as Newtown Barracks today. Colonel Barrow had chosen this area as a Barracks in 1798. (Burdon, Volume I, op. cit. p. 244.)

66. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. p. 213.

67. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. pp. 226 and 64.

68. Bolland and Shoman, op. cit. p. 5.

69. Bolland, 1979 op. cit. p. 8. The settlement's most bitter slave revolt took place in 1820 (Brukdown, Numbers 6 and 7, 1979, p. 48).

70. Bolland, 1979 op. cit. p. 6. This area of town was destroyed by fire in 1819 but still appears on the 1829 map (Dobson, op. cit. Plate 6). It was located between South Street, the South Side Canal, Berkley Street, and Albert Street West (the Back Street).

71. By 1929, Front Street (now Regent St.), Back Street (now Albert Street), South Front Street (Regent Street West), West Street, Water Street, Orange Street, Church Street, Bishop Street, King Street, Prince Street, Dean Street, and South Street were established onthe South Side of Belize City. The Goal (completed 1827) and Courthouse (1818) were also to be found here in addition to Government House and the Church and related buildings. On the North Side, North Front Street, Gabourel Lane, Eve Street, Hyde's Lane and Pickstock Street were to be found. Bradley Military Road (now Barrack Road), Haulover Road (now Freetown Road), and Widow's Lane (now Queen Street) are also on the 1829 map as is a road 'from New Orleans', now New Road. New Orleans is now Freetown (L. H. Bradley, personal conversation). Also on the North Shore were a public hospital (near the present hospital site), a Baptist/Methodist chapel (near the present Baptist Church), and a Pensioners Hospital close to where the North Side Canal now crosses Barrack Road. Potts Point, near the present Bonded Warehouse, was the end of the peninsula as Fort George was still a small island about 1000 feet offshore.

72. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. p. 383.

73. Dobson, op. cit. p. 118

74. Dobson, op. cit. Chapter 7.

75 As pointed out in Belize: New Nation in Central America, slavery was officially abolished in 1834, but continued in a different form with the colonial exploitation of the non-white peoples by the British (Belize, Cubola Publishers, 1976) p. 4. It is clear that the majority of the wealth was still being withheld from the majority of the population.

76. Bolland, 1979, op. cit.

77. Clegern, op. cit. p. 9.

78. Clegern, op. cit. p. 9.

79. Fifty seven percent of the 1861 population had not been born in Belize, and 85% of these foreign born persons had come from the neighbouring republics (Bolland, 1977, op. cit. p. 4). The country was made a colony in 1862 but did not achieve Crown Colony Government until 1871 (Waddell, op. cit. p. 54).

80. Bolland, 1977 op. cit. p. 4; Burdon, Volume III, op. cit.

81. Clegern, op. cit. p. 4.

82. Clegern, op. cit. p. 41.

83. Clegern, op. cit. Chapter Two.

84. Although the mahogany trade was in the decline, the power structure that had evolved with it was still in place. Thus a few companies and individuals still owned most of the private land in the country, and these land owners were soon to some under metropolitan control. They could affect both the possibility of increased agriculture as well as government policy toward the land (such as taxation). The change from slave ownership to land ownership as the chief means of holding property had taken place quite quickly, as did the elimination of the white settler class in favour of overseas control. (Bolland and Shoman, op. cit.).

85. In 1845 four percent of the population was white. By 1881 this had dropped to one percent — mostly transient males. "At the same time that 'British Honduras' became a colony, therefore, it ceased to be a place of settlement for whites" (Bolland, 1977, op. cit. p. 188).

86. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 28.

87. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. p. 96.

88. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 153.

89. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 117. In the same year the "pay of Firemen" was withheld, probably for budgetary reasons, as the city was in constant financial trouble (Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 10).

90. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. pp. 17 and 19.

91. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 191.

92. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 204.

93. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. pp. 25 and 249.

94. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 316. In 1869 there was a demand for the prosecution of people not complying with this law.

95. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 336.

96. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 341.

97. Bradley, op. cit. p. 4.

98. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 245.

99. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 255. During this period a variety of currencies were legal tender. During the middle of the century dollars became the adopted currency — in lieu of pounds sterling.

100. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. pp. 190, 192, and 215.

101. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. pp. 162, 168, 175, 238, 299 and 316.

102. Bolland, 1977, op. cit. p. 153.

103. C. Sweet, A Trip to British Honduras and to San Pedro, Republic of Honduras (New Orleans: Price Current Print, 1868), pp. 77-80.

104. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. pp. 41 and 330.

105. Clegern, op. cit. Chapter 4. In 1883 a "light railway" was even proposed for Belize City (Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 351). One further crisis was a Labourer's Riot in 1894 which followed the devaluation of the dollar as Belize switched its currency backing from Guatemala's SOLS to American gold. Wages were raised, as a result of the uprising, to compensate for the rise in the price of imports (Bruk-down, Numbers 6 and 7, 1979, p. 50).

106. Dobson, op. cit. pp. 279-280; Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 344).

107. Clegern, op. cit. p. 87.

108. Clegern, op. cit. p. 92.

109. Clegern, op. cit. p. 93.

110. D. Carr and J. Thorpe (eds.), From the Cam to the Cays (London, Putnam, 1961) p. 15.

111. Clegern, op. cit. p. 162.

112. The East Indians came to Belize in the last 30 years of the nineteenth century. Although most originally worked on sugar plantations in Toledo, some moved elsewhere including Belize City. Queen Charlotte Town is now part of what is being called Loyolaville.

113. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. p. 348.

114. Anderson, op. cit. p. 3.

115. Odaffer, 1969(1), op. cit. p. 12.

116. Dobson, op. cit. p. 264.

117. Burdon, Volume II, op. cit. p. 11.

118. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 4.

119. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 47.

120. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 47.

121. Such as Euphrates, Tigris, Allenby, Cairo and Amara Streets.

122. Caiger, op. cit. p. 148, gives this date as 1918. Brukdown, Nos. 6 and 7, 1979, p. 50 gives and account of the riot, and gives the date as July 1919.

123. This street may reflect an old protestant influence in the colony, possibly dating back to times when the Orange Lodge was a significant force in the country.

124. Odaffer, 1969(1), op. cit. p. 49.

125. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 50.

126. Anderson, op. cit. p. 32. Many of these workers were displaced by the Depression, but mahogany cutting had also been hard hit by overexploitation and mechanisation (Ashcraft, op. cit. pp. 52-54).

127. Anderson, op. cit. p. 32. There have been some 15 major hurricanes since 1787 that have caused destruction along the coastline of Belize and caused damage to Belize City.

128. P. D. Ashdown, "Antonio Soberanis and the 1934-35 Disturbances in Belize, Part I" in John Maher, S.J. (ed.) Readings in Belizean History Volume One (Belize City, BISRA, 1978) p. 45.

129. Anderson, op. cit. p. 3.

130. Dobson, op. cit. p. 263.

131. Ashdown 1978, op. cit. p. 45. See also Brukdown, Numbers

6 and 7, 1979, pp. 50-52.

132. P. D. Ashdown, "Antonio Soberanis and the 'Disturbances' in Belize: 1934-35", a paper presented to the Fourth Annual Conference of the Society for Caribbean Studies, Swanwick, England, May 1980, p. 2.

133. Ashdown, 1980, op. cit. pp. 6-7

134. Anderson, op. cit. p. 34.

135. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 57.

136. Assad Shoman, "Birth of the Nationalist Movement in Belize", BISRA, Occasional Publications No. 7 (Belize, the Benex Press, 1979) p. 41.

137. C. H. Grant, The Making of Modern Belize: Politics, Society and British Colonialism in Central America (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976) p. 68.

138. Grant, op. cit. p. 72.

139. Waddell, op. cit. p. 98-99.

140. Waddell, op. cit. pp. 99-100.

141. Burdon, Volume III, op. cit. pp. 6 and 147.

142. Anderson, op. cit. p. 4.

143. This distribution system is now over twenty percent complete. The next stage is to use C.I.D.A. money to develop a sewer system for Belize City.

144. British Honduras 1950, Colonial Report (London, H.M.S.O., 1951) p. 31.

145. L. H. Bradley, Personal Communication, 1980.

146. St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, St. John, St. Edward and St. Charles Streets.

147. J. C. Everitt "Terra Incognita: An Analysis of a Geographical Anachronism and an Historical Accident or Aspects of the Cultural Geography of British Honduras C.A.", an M.A. Thesis at Simon Fraser University, Department of Geography, 1970.

148. Landivar is named after a Jesuit priest in Guatemala.

149. St. John's College can trace its history to 1887. It was transferred to Loyola Park in 1917, an area to the south-west of Queen Charlotte Town. This area took the full force of the 1931 hurricane.

150. Such as Waight, Haynes, Young and Rivero.

151. Faber refers to J. H. Faber, the Crown Surveyor in 1862 when the road was constructed.

152. This area is actually one of considerable confusion in terms of its nomenclature. Many people simply say they live in the 'South Creek', 'Neal's Pen Road', 'Faber's Road', or 'Caesar's Road' area. Others refer to Queen Charlotte Town, the Vaults or Ex-Serviceman's area. It would seem that an attempt is being made to call the whole of this area Loyolaville (after Loyola Park, the site of the old St. John's College). Historically, however, it is far from being a unit.

153. Queen's Square itself was once a market but could never combat the power of the Downtown area. It is now largely disused.

154. It would thus form a boundary to 'Loyolaville' which is to encompass the old areas of Queen Charlotte Town, Ex-Serviceman's Area and presently unused areas to the west of these developments.

155. Also Racoon, Armadillo, Hiccatee, Dolphin, Bocotora and Curassow Streets.

156. Such as Ziricote, Pine, Logwood, Mahogany, Nargusta, Ebony, Mayflower, and Cedar.

157. L. H. Bradley, Personal Communication, 1980.

158. British Honduras 1955, Colonial Report (London, H.M.S.O., 1957) p. 47.

159. British Honduras 1954, Colonial Report (London, H.M.S.O., 1956) pp. 68-69. Ten units were completed in Belize City in 1981 at a cost of $13,000 per unit. But these were cited as being particularly 'low cost' housing because palmetto was used in the construction (The New Belize Vol XI, No. 8, August 1981, p. 16).

160. British Honduras 1954, op. cit. p. 69.

161. Odaffer, 1969(2), op. cit. p. 10.

162. J. C. Everitt "Belmopan, Dream and Reality: A Study of the other planned capital in Latin America." Revista Geografica, No. 99, January-June 1984, pp. 135-144.

163. Odaffer, 1969(2) op. cit p. 14. An exception to this statement are the people who moved out to Hattieville, a settlement set up by the government for the homeless of

Belize City after Hurricane Hattie.

164. The U.S. Consulate in Belize City estimates that between 35,000 and 50,000 Belizeans now live in the United States. The majority of these are Creoles from Belize City and its hinterland.

165. Belmopan: An Ex-Post Evaluation (London, Ministry of Overseas Development, 1974) p. 36. Housing projects are being intermittently completed in Belize City. For instance, one was finished in 1981 in the Pinks Alley area, but only consisted of ten units (The New Belize, Vol. XI, No. 8, August 1981, p. 16).

166. Dobson, op. cit. p. 284.

167. Gentle, Vasquez, Smith, Lottie Waight, and Meighan.

168. Everitt, 1970, op. cit. p. 125.

169. A current proposal is to extend this boundary to a line which would be a one and a half mile radius from the intersection of Cemetary Road and Central American Boulevard.

170. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 88 and Chapter 9.

171. There has been a Central Market in Downtown Belize City since at least 1803 (Bolland, 1977, op. cit. p. 60).

172. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 164-166, and U.S. Consulate, 1980.

173. Ashcraft, op. cit. p. 84.

174. Bolland and Shoman, op. cit. p. 64.

175. Much of the population of Belize City may be viewed as what A deSouza and J. B. Foust term the Proto Proletariat. The proto-proletariat is a peripheral social group which makes up a substantial proportion of the occupational structure of cities in most underdeveloped countries, and gains its income mainly from informal opportunities (World Space Economy, Columbus, Ohio, Charles E. Merrill, 1979, pp. 585-604).

176. In December 1984 the United Democratic Party took 21 of the 28 seats in the Belizean parliament — ending thirty years of rule by the Peoples' United Party. Prime Minister George Price lost his seat in the constituency of Freetown, Belize City.

177. Ashdown, 1980, op. cit. p. 1.

178. Ashdown, 1980, op. cit. p. 1.

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GARIFUNA TRADITIONS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

THE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATORS OF BELIZE:
SIR ALFRED MOLONEY
(1891-1897)

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Editorial

Scholars have viewed historical research in various ways. Some saw it as discovering and describing events that happened in the past. They kept looking back, totally absorbed in "gone by days" while inadvertently missing the realities of the present. For them historical research meant trips to moldy archives and delicately handling brittle records that could crumble under very litle adacemic scrutiny. Over the years the purpose of research has been changed considerably. It has acquired, what I have chosen to call, a more sophisticated purpose; the interpretation of the present. Realistically, historical research can provide a perspective for understanding customs, traditions and facts of the present by studying events in earlier times. Characteristics of our present society may be traced to earlier practices and influences. Historical research into the past can also often be useful in formulating predictions.

The two articles in this issue of Belizean Studies – Garifuna Traditions in Historical Perspective by Nancie Gonzalez, and The Colonial Administrators of Belize – Sir Alfred Moloney (1891-1897) by Peter Ashdown, clearly prove that Belize was a "meeting place for strands of history." For example, it appeared difficult for other segments of the society, besides the Garifuna, to work as teachers in the remote areas of Belize. According to one writer, the fact that the Garifuna could easily be persuaded to do so "confirmed their low status and (low) social aspiration." Reading Gonzalez's article gives one a different impression. These people have never been timid or cowardly to adapt to change in order to survive. Instead, the Garifuna have been and continue to be a proudly disciplined, hard working, and adaptable people with relatively high social aspirations.

Belizeans possess their own brand of aggression. This unique aspect of Belizean life probably misled many outsiders or visitors. The casual observer referred to the Belizean as being "apathetic." He predicted that "apathy" presented the greatest threat to our existence. Ashdown's article seems to have suggested that Belizeans did not only see themselves as passive recipients of favours from the colonial powers, but as active participants in their own affairs. Sir Alfred Moloney, in spite of his apparently good intentions, had an unusually difficult time administering; he did not understand the people!

History can obscure, but it can illuminate as well. These two articles dig deep into our past roots; but more importantly they help us to understand our present identity and open the way for decisive thinking about the future.

--- Rev. Lloyd Lopez

PETER ASHDOWN

THE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATORS OF BELIZE:

SIR ALFRED MOLONEY (1891-1897)

In August 1891 Belize was in the throes of a constitutional crisis brought about during the disasterous administration of Sir Roger Tuckfield Goldsworthy (1884-1891). Goldsworthy, by his high-handed and arrogant manner had brought into being a 'People's Committee' of wealthy and influential Belize City residents who were demanding an end to Crown Colony government and the creation of a majority of unofficial seats on the Legislative Council. Goldsworthy's unpopularity and the embarrassment of the government defeat which Stevens v. McKinney[1] had produced had sapped the resolve of the Colonial Office to resist the People's Committee – that bunch of "disloyal and jobbing traders".[2] It now sought to effect a compromise by appointing to the Belize station a moderate and conciliatory governor.

The level-headed administrator warranted by the circumstances was an Irishman, Sir Cornelius Alfred Moloney. Moloney, like his predecessor, was a Sandhurst trained soldier who had previously spent most of his career in the African colonies. After a spell as the civil commissioner in the Quiah district of Sierra Leone and one as the aide-de-campe to the maverick Pope-Hennessy[3], he took part in the Asante War of 1873-1874, subsequently being promoted to the Secretaryship of the Gold Coast.

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In 1884 he was transferred along the coast to take over the administration of the Gambia Settlement and after two years in Bathurst became Administrator in Lagos until 1890 when he left West Africa to come to the West Indies as Governor of Belize.[4]

A new governor's arrival was always a grandiose civic affair for the inhabitants of Belize and on 17 August 1891 Moloney was welcomed at the Court House Wharf not only by his Colonial Secretary, George Melville and the members of the Legislative and Executive Councils but also by deputations from the combined friendly societies of the capital.[5] His Roman Catholicism and his avowed policy of "consideration, conciliation and culture", enunciated in his welcoming address, was well received but this auspicious start was quickly dealt a serious setback when, two weeks after her arrival, the Governor's wife, Constance, died of yellow fever.[6] The pain of loss was aggravated by Moloney's knowledge that he was in part to blame for his wife's demise as Carlos Melhado had warned him to leave her in London.[7] The Governor's sense of desolation turned to despair at the end of September when his private secretary, W. E. Saunders, died of "pernicious malarial fever" in Punta Gorda[8] and he himself came to realise that the constitutional crisis he had inherited would not be so easy of solution as he had first thought.[9]

Such was his conclusion after a meeting with the People's Committee in the Council Chamber on 4 September for at that conclave, J. M. Currie, the Committee's chairman, in speaking for his members, rejected Moloney's proposed compromise. The Governor had been instructed by the Secretary of State, Lord Knutsford, to agree to the renunciation of the Governor's casting vote on money bills unanimously opposed by the unofficial members but Currie informed the Governor that the Committee would accept nothing less than an unofficial majority. With the Committee's intransigence Moloney expressed some sympathy as he believed its members had been driven to their stance by the "disastrous administration" of Goldsworthy and "were not revolutionaries but men having the interests of the Colony at heart."[10] It was this expression of support for the Committee's view which finally convinced the Colonial Office that it would have to capitulate — if Moloney, an old, experienced and moderate administrator could not convince the People's Committee to compromise then it was decided that he should be informed that Lord Knutsford would agree to the withdrawal of the Inspector Commandant of Constabulary from his ex-officio seat

and would allow the appointment, in future, of five unofficial members of Council.[11] On 21 January 1892 Moloney conveyed the Secretary of State's surrender to the People's Committee assembled in the Council Chamber and in the celebrations which ensued was suitably feted for his part in the 'People's Victory'. In reporting the festivities however, he was careful not to take too much of the credit for himself, preferring to congratulate Lord Knutsford for finding "so felicitous and generally satisfactory a solution of our local political difficulties".[12]

Before his departure from Belize, five years later, (experience having made him more aware of the power relationships in the Colony) Moloney was to regret the solution he had helped fashion, but in 1892 he was prepared to concede a political point in exchange for the economic development he believed he could instigate. It was his contention that Belize "had all its eggs in one basket"[13] and that two hundred years of a forest dominated economy had produced a situation whereby Belize City "was British Honduras" and in consequence enjoyed "an unfair proportion not only of what comes out of the pocket of the general taxpayer, but also of the attention of the government."[14] To remedy this inbalance it was necessary to diversify the economy as Moloney was "convinced that the future prosperity of this Colony depends on the development of its agricultural resources."[15] If agriculture was ever to replace forestry as Belize's source of overseas earnings however a railway and roads would have to be built, an agriculturally orientated labour force would have to be imported and some experimentation with plants best suited to local conditions would have to be carried out. The latter deficiency was quickly remedied in 1892 when Moloney employed a European 'horticulturalist', one McNair, to set up a botanic station in the grounds of Government House[16] but the other problems proved more intractable. Plans for the recruitment of Krumen and Jamaicans in 1892,[17] East Indians in 1893[18] and Barbadians in 1895[19] all came to nothing as did the Governor's schemes for the improvement of communications in the Colony. In 1892 he proposed that a road be constructed from Belize City to Corozal but this idea was belittled by the Colonial Office "because no produce will come this way".[20] A year later he suggested a comprehensive road system to be paid for by an increase in the land tax[21] but with the landowners in control of the Legislative Council this proposal stood no chance of acceptance. Frustrated in these activities Moloney was forced into supporting the various projects for a trans-colonial railway being mooted by private enterprise at the time as it was his opinion that "if

a railway is not built" there was "no hope for the future of the Colony of British Honduras" and the British occupation of the country would "have left no traces behind it".[22] Consequently he gave his blessing to the idea of a line from Belize City to Alta Vera Paz until Starkey's survey of 1892 declared the south western route impracticable[23] whereupon he switched his support to those schemes advocating the use of the line from Belize City to Cayo delineated by Shelford's survey of 1896.[24] By 1895 he was pressing the Colonial Office to "do something"[25] but privately recognised that its caution was understandable as all the schemes proposed by British and U. S. capitalists demanded unacceptable and exorbitant land grants. With his superiors in Whitehall he recognised that the "past policy" which had allowed "the centralisation in the hands of a few" of the Colony's land had been "comparatively barren" and it was

> open to serious consideration and doubt whether any wholesale alienation of Crown Land, even for a railway, would not continue to prejudice the general interests of the Colony if it eventually had to look to and depend upon, its agricultural development.[26]

Such an eventuality was brought no nearer by the agricultural experiments established during Moloney's administration. His brainchild, the botanic station, despite becoming the subject of a laudatory pamphlet,[27] quickly became the object of some derision and its curator, McNair, resigned in 1896.[28] Thereafter it was stigmatised as "a rose and cabbage garden"[29] and, after Moloney's departure, was transferred to Bolton's Bank on the Belize River where it quickly reverted to bush. Likewise the only line of communication constructed during Moloney's tenure of office — the five mile Melinda tramway up the Stann Creek valley which the Governor opened in a blaze of publicity in June 1892[30] — never fulfilled the expectations claimed of it. Built solely to transport the bananas and henequen of the British Honduras Syndicate's plantations to the coast, it barely recouped its capital outlay and was dismantled in 1906 when the government bagan the construction of the Stann Creek railway. The third agrucultural project conceived under Moloney, the British Honduras Mutual Fruit and Steamship Company (B.H.M.F.S.Co.), was an even more disasterous failure. Set up in 1893 with a government subsidy by a group of Belize City merchants and fruit growers,[31] it planned to use its own boat to ship the Colony's bananas to New Orleans as the existing carrier, the United Fruit Company, only took Belize fruit when it could not obtain adequate cargoes in Honduras and Guatemala. Faced with competition however, the United Fruit Company immediately re-

commenced taking all the Colony's fruit and by undercutting the B.H.M.F.S.Co. at the southern ports drove the venture into liquidation in 1896.[32]

Moloney's one apparent success – in the field of labour legislation – proved shortlived and only brought about a transitory cosmetic change in the relations between the employers and the forest labourers in the Colony. The Governor, from the outset, had appreciated that the 'advance' system under which forest labour was employed was responsible for the state of chronic indebtedness in which most labourers permanently lived[33] but faced with the employer's hostility he suggested not the aboliton of 'advance' payments but their amelioration. He proposed therefore that the traditional three months advance be reduced to one month. In debt themselves to Moloney for his part in their constitutional victory in 1892, the unofficial members could hardly refuse this request and in April 1894 allowed the passage of a bill to effect that reform.[34] Unfortunately however labourers still demanded the traditional payment and the employers, desirous of maintaining the system which provided them with a captive and pliable work force, needed little encouragement to break the law. As the legislation itself contained no penalty clause should its provisions be abused, it was widely evaded and in 1897, after Moloney's departure, was scrapped altogether – the three months advance recoverable at law being re-introduced.

The Governor's attempts at the conciliation of the Colony's opposing factions were counter-productive and only served to make him unpopular with all sections of the community. His mildly reformist predilections worried the merchants and employers while his failure to practise what he preached angered the Colony's few educated radicals. Chief amongst these men was Frederick Maxwell (later Sir Frederick), a talented Bahamanian barrister[35] who went into print against Moloney in 1893 when the Governor took disciplinary action against a Second Class Clerk in the Treasury. Carl Alexander Metzgen, it was alleged, had disposed of the Colony's unsold overprinted stamps in the USA for his own personal profit and it was decided to dismiss him from the public service[36] until Maxwell took up Metzgen's case and in a memorial to the Secretary of State denounced Moloney as an autocrat tyrannising his subordinates.[37] There seems little doubt, in fact, that Metzgen was guilty and the Governor's action quite justified but the publicity engendered by Maxwell's polemics was unwelcome and, in order to bring about its cessation, Metzgen was re-instated albeit at

a lower grade.[38]

No governor of Belize was less of an autocrat than Moloney (who doffed his hat to urchins in the streets of Belize City) but the reputation established for him by Maxwell in 1893 refused to die and was rejuvenated by the Governor's handling of the change of currency of October 1894 and the Constabularly Mutiny and Labourer's Riot of November and December of that year. The change of currency (from the Guatemalan sol to the US gold dollar) was forced on the government by the savage depreciation of silver which took place after 1891 but the effects of the change when it came on October 15 were considerably aggrevated by the government's negligent failure to revise the customs duty schedules in terms of gold. Consequently the Colony's merchants began to double their prices citing, in justification, the increased duty, and these increases, coupled with the constables' dissatisfaction with their new wage in gold, led to a revolt of the constabularly detachments at Orange Walk and in Belize City between 1 and 4 November. Moloney's response was to summon a warship but before its arrival he was forced to capitulate to the constables' demands for their honourable dismissal "seeing that there was no Force by which the mutineers could be coerced and that they undoubtedly would be supported by the mob in case of resort to violence." The presence of HMS Partridge in Belize harbour proved invaluable however a month later when on December 11 a group of forest labourers, angered by the employer's reduction of the wage offered for the 1895 season, attacked the stores of the major merchants. At the height of the rioting Moloney called in bluejackets from the Partridge to restore order but in this action only succeeded in incurring the wrath of both capital and labour. He explained to his superiors that he believed his function was "to hold the scale impartially between employers and employees and avoid allowing the Government to appear to be favouring the one or the other" but his failure to land a preventive force and nip dissatisfaction in the bud enraged the merchants while his ultimate use of force against them convinced the labourers that he was indifferent to their legitimate grievances. In fact he recognised the truth of the arguments enunciated in their 'Petition' delivered to him on December 8 but could not free himself from the laissez-faire doctrines impressed on him by the employers at a meeting with them on December 10. In his reply to the labourer's 'Petition', read to them on the morning of the 11th, he explained that the government had "no control over wages" and even if he had it would be "unwise and improper" to coerce employers into raising the

monthly wage. It was Moloney's conviction that "to compel employers to pay wages which are beyond their means would be equivalent to the suppression of trade on which the existence of so many labourers depends" and the labourers had to look "to the revival of trade rather than any action of the Government" for the wages they demanded.[39]

After this unabashed support for the law of supply and demand Moloney could hardly blame "the rioters and those who sympathise with them" for regarding "all Government action as being prompted by or connected with the interests of the merchants"[40] but towards the end of his administration he came to realise that he and his officers existed largely to carry out the wishes of the Colony's landowners and businessmen. In 1895 he had come to the conclusion that real power in the Colony lay "in the hand of [unofficial] members who are not within the control of either the Crown or the People"[41] and to remedy this situation asked to be allowed to add four elected members to the Council. The Colonial Office, however, was still oblivious of the consequences of its 'defeat' in 1892 and rejected this "sudden and gratuitous demand" on the grounds that Belize was "about the least suited of any West Indian Colony for the pretence of representative responsible government."[42] The demand, it believed, sprang from Moloney's inability to effect the economic reform he had promised. Having in 1892 "grovelled"[43] before "that clique of Belize merchants and shopkeepers [the People's Committee] he was now on his belly in obeisance to "Mr. Maxwell and the other elect of the 'people'."[44] What the West India department failed to appreciate was that while the 1892 'victory' was indeed a victory for a self-interested oligarchy, Maxwell's 1894 campaign was truely undertaken on behalf of the people. By belittling Maxwell's objectives and Moloney's endorsement of them, the Colonial Office only succeeded in entrenching the position of the elite to which it had surrendered power in 1892.

In January 1897 Moloney left Belize with his original plans for the Colony unfulfilled. If however his administration had proved sterile it was because his first act had been to transfer the substance of power to those in the Colony who were averse to any change in the status quo. Thereafter his policy of conciliation only served to excite in the Colony's reformers and labouring class expectations which, in the last resort, the Governor could not satisfy and which, when they were expressed violently, he was forced to supress. A dignified, courteous man, Moloney became the victim of his own policy and ended up by

incurring the displeasure of all sections of the community in Belize and of his superiors in Downing Street.

Sir Cornelius Alfred Moloney remarried in 1897 and from that year until 1900 served as Governor of the Windward Islands. His last post was as Governor of Trinidad and Tobago from 1900 to 1904. He died at Fiesole, near Florence in Italy at the age of 65 on August 14, 1913. In Belize he should be remembered as the governor who unwittingly surrendered the Crown's right to rule to the self-interested oligarchy of landowners and merchants who passed themselves off as 'the People's Committee' and the administrator who forsaw Belize's agricultural potential but who could do nothing to realise that potential.

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11. CO 123/197, minute of Edward Wingfield dated 25 Oct. 1891 on Moloney to Knutsford, 29 Sept. 1891.

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14. CO 123/200, Moloney to Ripon, 5 Oct. 1892.

15. CO 123/203, Sweet-Escott (OAG) to Ripon, 29 June 1893.

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17. CO 123/200, Moloney to Ripon, Sept. 7, 1892.

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19. CO 123/213, Sweet-Escott (OAG) to Chamberlain, 13 July 1895.

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21. CO 123/202, Moloney to Ripon, April 18, 1894.

22. CO 123/213:13457, minute of Selbourne dated Aug. 15, 1895.

23. Colonial Guardian, May 6, 1893.

24. CO 123/218:14560.

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26. CO 123/217, Moloney to Chamberlain, Jan. 3, 1896.

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35. For Maxwell's career see P. D. Ashdown, "Sir Frederick McKenzie Maxwell", Belizean Studies, 7 No. 3 (May 1979), 1-8.

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37. F. Maxwell, Crown Government in British Honduras or A Letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies Respecting the treatment of a subordinate officer in Government employ by Sir Cornelius Alfred Moloney.(np:np, 1893).

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40. CO 123/211, Moloney to Ripon, March 22, 1895.

41. CO 123/210, Moloney to Ripon, Jan. 24, 1895.

42. CO 123/210, W. I. dept. minutes on Moloney to Ripon, Jan. 24, 1895.

43. CO 123/220, minute of E. Wingfield dated 20 Dec. 1896 on Moloney to Chamberlain, Dec. 3, 1896.

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45. Who Was Who (1897-1916), 498 and Moloney's obituary, op. cit..

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GARIFUNA TRADITIONS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

On June 10, 1796, the Carib-French allied force on St. Vincent formally surrendered to the British after more than a year of nearly continuous bloody warfare. The French were accorded the standard treatment for prisoners of war and deported to Guadaloupe, and thence to Europe. Some were later allowed to return. The Caribs, however, were required to surrender unconditionally, which for them meant loss of their entire homeland, their culture, and perhaps their lives. When they refused, they were hunted down without mercy, over 1000 of their houses destroyed and their stores of food confiscated. Starvation and disease took their toll as the summer wore on. By October, 1796, 4,338 "Black Caribs," plus 44 slaves said to belong to them, and 102 "Yellow Caribs" had been captured and sent to the island of Balliceaux, one of the Grenadines. One hundred and forty-six in the last two categories were returned to St. Vincent. Between October 1796 and March 1797, some 2400 of those interned died

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of a mysterious "malignant fever," presumably yellow fever, aggravated without doubt by malnutrition, for the Carib death rate was 85%, compared with only 5% for the Negro troops, who also suffered from the disease.

On March 3, 1797, the remaining 2248 were loaded onto eight ships, which set sail for Roatan, on March 13. After a stopover in Jamaica, the convoy arrived at Port Royal, Roatan, on April 11. Off the coast of Guanaja one of the ships, containing 289 Caribs and a small contingent of British soldiers, became separated from the others and was captured by the Spaniards and taken directly to Trujillo. After securing the surrender of the small and poorly equipped Spanish force on Roatan, the British landed the remaining Caribs, who now numbered only 2026 – many having died on the journey and others having been captured. Provisions and supplies of firearms and ammunition, tools, cloth and seeds were left with them, but many of the latter were ruined by sea water which had leaked into the holds of the ships. The quantities of food provided, even if entirely edible, could not have lasted more than about 2 to 6 months.

On April 26 (or 27th) the British sent three ships to Trujillo to retrieve the frigate named "Prince William Henry," with the Caribs aboard. These cannonaded the town for several hours, but did not succeed in taking it. On the 27th (or 28th), having reached an apparent stale-mate, the Spaniards released the ship and its human cargo, and the small convoy set sail for Roatan.

But before they arrived, the captain of the fleet saw "strange sails" approaching, and ordered all his ships to sail immediately for northern waters -- destination Nova Scotia. The Caribs were left on board the "Prince William Henry," and being unfamiliar with both its complicated steering and sailing mechanisms, as well as with the dangerous reefs of Port Royal, they ran aground and wrecked the ship. It is not known how many lost their lives in this incident.

Apparently Roatan had other inhabitants in 1797, for

when the British were pushed off the Mosquito Shore, starting in 1779, many sought refuge there, along with several hundred slaves. Later, the slaves were freed and allowed to remain on the island, where they settled -- probably on the north shore near what is today called "Camp Bay" or "Gambe." Some of the early accounts also speak of a group of "Republican Negroes" being on the north shore of the island. The term usually meant French-speaking negroes from one of the former French Caribbean colonies, but it is not clear from the evidence available whether these were the Caribs themselves or some other group of French-speaking blacks. There is no mention of any of those who fought on St. Vincent having been deported in the same convoy, but it is possible that some of them were inadvertently included, only to segregate themselves after arrival in Roatan.

In any case, our known record of events on Roatan picks up again on May 18, when Don Jose Rossi y Rubi, Commandante of Trujilo, arrived (some records suggesting at the invitation of the Caribs), received their surrender and took possession of the island. Censuses made at that time and upon their arrival in Trujillo in October account for some 1700 persons. It is not known whether the others had by then succumbed to illness and starvation, or whether some remained on Roatan. Residents of the present-day village of Punta Gorda on the north shore of the island claim that their ancestors founded it toward the end of the 19th century, returning there from Santa Fe, near Trujillo. Archaeological reconnaissance on the island tends to confirm this.

Upon their surrender of the island, the Caribs clamored to be taken to Trujillo, and the Spaniards gladly acceded. At that time there was a desperate shortage of food and labor in that town, for the white Spanish colonists who had been brought in to settle the coastline had been inept in agriculture and generally unsuccessful in coping with the climate. Most foodstuffs were shipped in from Havana. The Caribs were encouraged to plant provisions of all kinds, and very soon they were the mainstay of the local market.

In addition, Trujillo's inhabitants lived in constant fear of attack by the British, while the latter in Belize were equally terrified of being annihilated by the Spanish. Ironically, the Caribs were soon being looked upon with suspicion and fear by both sides, for they were willing to work and fight for whomever would pay good wages. In Trujillo the men and boys were immediately conscripted into the standing army, and soldiering became one of the special skills for which they became known. In this they were well tutored by the renowned "tropas de morenos Franceses" -- a group of tough and sophisticated Haitians who fled their colony and joined the Spaniards in 1793, arriving in Trujillo in 1796. I believe it probable that the Caribs joined forces with these people in Trujillo. Not only did they all speak French, but the Haitians had few, if any, women, and the Carib females outnumbered the males, in spite of having suffered even greater mortality than the men during the epidemic. Livingstonians claim their town was first settled by a Haitian and I think it likely to have been a group led by one of these soldiers.

While this was happening in Honduras, the Belizean woodcutters were becoming desperate for labor, since their slaves increasingly were deserting to nearby Spanish territory, where upon declaring themselves seekers of the faith, they were baptized Roman Catholic, set free and then conscripted as soldiers. The town of San Benito in the Peten is one place where many of them settled. Less well known is the fact that hundreds filtered into the Rio Dulce and Lake Izabal area, as well as into the Motagua River valley from Chiquimula to its mouth. By 1800 a considerable settlement already existed near Gualan.

Slaveholders were also nervous about events in the Caribbean area following the French Revolution and the 1794 declaration of freedom for all French West Indian slaves. So-called "Republican Negroes" and those who had participated in rebellions in the British holdings were carefully excluded from Belize. But at the same time, the British had no hesitation about deploying their own slaves as soldiers. In 1797 they had anticipated using the Caribs left on Roatan in such service, but were thwarted

by the latter going over to the Spaniards. A year later they gave the uniforms intended for the Caribs to slaves serving locally with the King's troops.

No wonder then, that in 1802, when permission was sought to bring in 150 Carib laborers for the new wood-cutting operations near Stann Creek and Punta Gorda, there was controversy as to the wisdom of the move. R. Basset, then the Superintendant of the settlement, allowed them to enter, but the magistrates considered it a mistake (or perhaps opposed it because they disliked the Superintendant).

At the same time the Spaniards in Trujillo had reasons to worry about the Caribs' loyalties to his Catholic Majesty and the Spanish cause. By 1804 some Caribs at Trujillo had declared their dissatisfaction and hatred of the Spaniards to the captain of a visiting English sloop, and in 1805 the latter crown instructed Belizeans to encourage friendly relations between the Caribs and the Miskitos, hoping that the latter would attack Trujillo and "free the Caribs from their situation there."

Happy at first to be in Trujillo, the Caribs soon found their lot there intolerable. Their treatment by the Spaniards was oppressive enough that in 1807 they fled the town en masse, joining the Sambo Miskitos near the Patuca River under General Robinson. As they became friendlier with the Miskitos east of Trujillo, the Caribs were influenced in favor of the British, who had long enjoyed an alliance with the former.

Yet, in this same year, when Caribs were hired as lookouts on Caye Caulker, a new Superintendant (Barrow) sent a government boat to remove them, and in 1811 all Caribs were expelled from the settlement altogether. It appears that at this time many were already settled around Omoa, and they returned there, but others returned to Trujillo. But their huts were increasingly dispersed along the shorelines near the major ports. In addition to fishing both for sale and subsistence, the men cleared land for roads and plantations, cut wood, transported goods

and passengers in their dories, and hired themselves out as soldiers.

References to Caribs as workers turn up in British, Spanish, French, Guatemalan, and Honduran documents. Even the Belgians who tried to colonize Santo Tomas in the 1840s stated that the Caribs commanded higher wages than Indians, but that their superior productivity warranted it. Women were employed in bagging and stacking cohune nuts in the Stann Creek district early in this century, but their primary productive work lay in agriculture. Many accounts refer to the foodstuffs, fowls and pigs they raised for sale in Belize. When bananas became an important export, some of the men joined them in establishing plantations.

Contraband had always been an important activity along this shore, for the Spanish king had imposed harsh duties and had restricted all trade with foreign countries. But the British occupation of the Bay and Shore of Honduras made this difficult to enforce, and British-made goods were always available, much of which found their way to the highland cities where the Spanish and Creole elites preferred to live. The Caribs were quick to immerse themselves in this traffic, and their skill in maneuvering small craft and their initmate knowledge of the entire coastline soon made them the topmost smugglers in the area, commanding respect among the merchants and citizenry, and exasperation among government authorities.

But it was in matters of warfare that they received the highest acolades and status. By 1819 a Carib colonel had been named commander of the garrison at San Felipe in the Gulf of Dulce, and in 1820 two Caribs died heroically in the defense of Trujillo, receiving rewards posthumously from the King of Spain. The Guatemalan general Manuel Garcia Granados claimed in 1824 that Carib soldiers recruited in Trujillo and Guatemala were well disciplined and skilled, far surpassing the Belizean slaves who daily crossed the frontier to gain their freedom.

A good bit of attention has been given to trying to establish the exact dates of the founding of this or that settlement, both in Belize and elsewhere. Much of this is a futile exercise, for Caribs in Central America seem not to have lived in towns or villages in the earliest days. There were very few people then, and their habitations tended to consist of only three or four houses, scattered here and there all along the coastline, and sometimes a short way up the more navigable rivers, such as the Queheuche. They sought the obvious advantages such as a good water supply, fertile, well-drained soil for their gardens, and some protection from the elements, as well as from suspicious authorities. Finally, they preferred sites near enough to wage-paying jobs that they could get back and forth in their dories within a few hours, if possible. In time, the latter sites drew more numbers, and as they came to depend more and more upon wage labor, they gradually became concentrated in the towns and villages where they live today, although a few still live in the old manner, especially in Guatemala and Honduras.

An 1809 census for British Honduras lists fifteen Carib males in the whole settlement. But, since woodcutting began in the Stann Creek area about 1799, I suspect there may have been a few Caribs there even then. As the area expanded in importance, more and more came, including women and children. By 1823, when the European "Poyais" settlers arrived in Stann Creek, Caribs were already there and were hired to clear land for them.

The most well-know immigration episode occurred in 1832 when Caribs from the Central American republican federation fled to Belize after the failure of the Dominguez revolt at Trujillo and Omoa, for which they had fought. The Belizeans had sympathized with that cause, much to the irritation of the Central American government, and perhaps for this reason the Caribs felt safer here. Some may have gone as far as Stann Creek, though the evidence is that most only went so far as Punta Gorda.

But if there had been ill-feeling against the Caribs

in the Central American territory, it was soon forgot, and the succeeding government went to great lengths to get them to return, for their labor was indispensable. So in 1836, many of them accompanied Marco Monteros, an emissary of the government, to Livingston and Santo Tomas. The records do not make it clear whether Monteros was a Garifuna.

The first Methodist missionary arrived in Belize in 1825, and by 1828 or earlier they began to visit Stann Creek, or "Carib Town," as it was then often called by the settlers. They were as appalled by the Roman Catholic beliefs they found among the people as they were by the indigenous rituals they occasionally stumbled across. Unable to convert them to their strict Wesleyan behavior code, they nevertheless found the Caribs eager for basic schooling in English. The missionaries sometimes mistook enthusiasm for their schools as evidence of a religious conversion, only to be disappointed as they saw people continue their polygamous unions and what the Methodists called "devil dancing." Even their most valued "native preacher," who remained loyal for many years, eventually returned to the ways of his people, much to the disgust of the missionaries.

Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries Carib men journeyed to wherever they could find wage labor, returning home when they had enough money to satisfy their immediate needs, or to build a house and settle down. As early as 1854 it was said that Caribs from Gracias a Dios in Nicaragua went as far as Guatemala to work (probably in woodcutting). But widespread, long distance migration began during World War II, when many Caribs manned U.S. and British merchant marine and other vessels left with diminished crews because of the draft. Once colonies had formed in cities such as New York, New Orleans and London, migration continued. At first most of those who left must have planned to return, and many did as before, building houses and accumulating goods to enable them to retire in style. But increasingly life overseas became the final objective, and return trips to Central America became temporary vacations, if they occurred at all.

Today in Belize, to a lesser extent in Honduras, and hardly at all in Guatemala, there is a movement which anthropologists call "revivalistic". This consists of efforts to preserve, if not to maintain as daily behavior, much of the ancestral culture. As has been so in many other documented cases, including the Highlanders of Scotland, certain West African kingdoms, and the modern "Aztec" culture of Mexico, a good bit of this is the product of a creative romantic urge. Tradition-making is probably indulged in by every people who feel their collective ethnic identity on the verge of collapse, and in the absence of documented evidence (and sometimes even when this exists), some traditions are made up out of "whole cloth," while others are elaborations upon dimly remembered events, or things passed down as folklore through the generations.

Uncritical ethnographers have sometimes unwittingly assisted in this myth-making process, dutifully writing down the remembered "traditional" culture, as told to them by the elders. This has usually happened in cases where there have been no indigenous written records, and in which the ethnographic study population cannot be precisely linked with those described by the occasional missionary or traveler. The Garifuna are somewhat unusual in that their beginnings are known and were reasonably well documented, (even though many of the records upon which this paper is based were lost, unknown, and unobtainable without intensive scholarly research.) Furthermore, until recently the group was small and fairly coherent, so that regional differences were few and relatively minor.

The above account has been put together from bits and pieces of evidence from various European and American sources. It may be argued that these were not Garifuna records, and thus do not give a well-rounded view. I would heartily agree with that judgement, and have therefore attempted to temper what I have read with the knowledge and understanding obtained through my on-going ethnographic research. Ironically, the beliefs about the past which some contemporary Garifuna will insist on

maintaining, are sometimes themselves of European provenience, and often not very old. I am here trying to set the record straight in terms of what happened, where, and when. Explanations are more difficult.

But the search for origins eclipses the fundamental fact that all cultures are constantly undergoing change, although the rate at which this occurs, and the domains affected vary. Meanings are always reinterpreted by each generation to fit the times. It is also probably the case that custom among non-literate peoples is more flexible and adaptable than we have previously thought. Proper traditions, on the other hand, once articulated as such, become more rigid prescriptions for behavior, especially when they are written down in guide or rule books. Even when written, however, changes continue to occur, which necessitates new "revised" editions from time to time.

But whether traditional or merely customary, all societies have preferred ways of doing things and certain ritual or ceremonial observances which serve to externalize and communicate the values by which their members live. Regardless of the length of time a tradition has been in existence, it is the belief that it is old which gives it authority. And in turn, those who have authority can invent and impose new traditions, for whatever purpose. That purpose usually has an element of control in it, as when elders wish to control the young, men to control women, or the state to control unruly population segments, including recently conquered or absorbed ethnic groups. The latter, in turn, may invent their own traditions in order to counter or hold the others at bay.

In the case of the Garifuna, the ethnic group came close to dying out altogether when it was deported from St. Vincent. The few who remained there have all but lost their identity; the language and ancient rituals have been entirely forgotten. What gave the Central American Garifuna their vitality -- the ability to expand from the 2,000 who landed on Roatan to the perhaps more than quarter million alive today?

In my opinion, it was the ability to be flexible, to adopt what was needed from any source whatever, and to incorporate it into their world view, their design for living, or what anthropologists usually call simply the cultural pattern. They took both European Catholicism and African ancestral spirit possession and blended them into Arawak/Carib beliefs and rituals relating to the afterlife and spirit world. In St. Vincent they added poultry, sugar, and pork to their diet, and in Central America, the rice-and-bean complex, as well as Christmas tamales. All of these added nutritive value and enhanced food availability in their new environments, and very soon they became "traditional," and thus highly valued. The process of incorporation continues, as can be seen today in the extraordinarily rich variety of foods (including imported, commercial items) offered to the ancestral spirits at a dugu.

In dress too they have been adaptable. Up until the 1830s or 1840s the women clung to St. Vincent modes, which innumerable observers state was "nearly naked." This probably meant that, as in indigenous tropical societies all over the world, their upper torsos were bare, and that they wore only some kind of cloth about their loins. The cotton checks and plaids made into loosefitting gowns, covered by a separate overskirt for more "formal" wear, was probably adopted in Central America, where "Scotch cloth" (also simply called "checks") had long been imported to clothe the slaves. Yet this is now glorified as having been "traditional." And indeed, it has served to distinguish Carib from non-Carib along the Central American north coast for more than 100 years.

Men, who more often went out into European social situations, wore trousers and shirts made of osnaburgh, a white canvas-like cloth also used for sails. One observer as late as 1850, however, stated that when at home in the villages men too wore only a loincloth. But all agree that for special occasions, the men adopted elegant and fashionable European styles -- sometimes complete military uniforms, including swords.

But by 1830 some travellers distinguished between Caribs and Miskito by the way in which the former had adopted European table and household furnishings. English stoneware, glass and even porcelain dishes were in common use, and white tablecloths were set out for company. An archaeological survey done in Guatemala and Honduras in early 1984 turned up evidence of fine tableware even in remote beachside habitation sites.[2]

It should be clear from these examples that the individual elements of what is today considered Carib or Garifuna culture have, for the most part, quite recent "origins," and that they have been freely borrowed from European, Afro-American, and Amerindian sources. The process continues today as new ideas and artifacts are brought back from the United States, Guatemala City, London, or elsewhere. But it is also true that the slate was never wiped clean, as it were. Each new item was grafted on to or blended into a pre-existing pattern so that the whole, to use a simile adopted by Douglas Taylor (1951), may be said to be a Garifuna cake, made up of ingredients from many cultures.

NOTES

1. The author, an anthropologist and ethnohistorian, has spent thirty years studying the Garifuna culture, first conducting ethnographic studies in Livingston, Guatemala in 1955. She has been in continuous contact since then with Garifuna in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, New York, and Boston. Since 1975 she has examined in minute detail old documents and letters in various archives in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, the U.S. and England. Among other items of interest she read letters from Methodist missionaries to Belize covering nearly 100 years, from 1826 to 1920. She also discovered previously unknown accounts of the St. Vincent period, especially some relating to the actual deportation, which are here described for the first time.
This is an abbreviated excerpt from a book now in progress on the history of the Caribbean coast of

Central America since the beginning of the 19th century.

2. In collaboration with archaeologist Charles Cheek and a group of students, the author has conducted further research on this near Trujillo, Honduras, during 1985. The work was financed by a Fulbright-Hays Group Research Abroad award and supplemental funds from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. The writer's ethnographic work during 1984-85 in Central America was made possible by a Faculty Research award from the University of Maryland and by a Senior Faculty Fulbright Research Award. Grateful acknowledgement is made to all of these sources.

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GARIFUNA LAMENT 1797-1985

Oh my siblings; cry for us!
Cry for us, as we cried for you
Left on the shores of Balliceaux.
Your dying moans are with us yet,
In Dangriga, Labuga, Masca, Trujillo.
Cry with us now in continuing sorrow.
Cry for our past and cry for tomorrow.

(Refrain)

Cry for us, as we cried for you!
Dance with us, as we dance for you!
Eat and drink, refresh yourselves.
Stay with us, wherever we go.
Return to us, til we come to you.

Oh, my father, come dance with us!
Dance with us and remember the guns.
Our hearts and bodies throb with the drums,
While spilling our blood on the month-long trip,
Each day farther from the island we loved,
Losing each other to the hungry sea,
Our hunguhungu is in memory of thee.

(Refrain)

Oh, my mother, come eat with us!
Eat with us and share our drink.
Accept these offerings as our sacred link.
Just like you, we hunger and thirst
Searching for a homeland we have yet to find,
Seeking a niche our people can fill
We cannot rest, we wander still.

(Refrain)

Oh, my grandparents, come to us!
Be with us, the ninth generation.
There is no death -- just transformation.
Share what we have, though it not be much.
Eat that our children may live and remember.
Eat for those in their watery grave,
Eat that our children be strong and brave.

(Refrain)

Oh my children, remember your past!
Garifuna roots are short but strong.
Forget not your people, to whom you belong.
Many are those who have formed our race,
But few are the records recounting their tale.
They live in our memory and in the dugu.
If you believe, they will come to you.

---Anonymous

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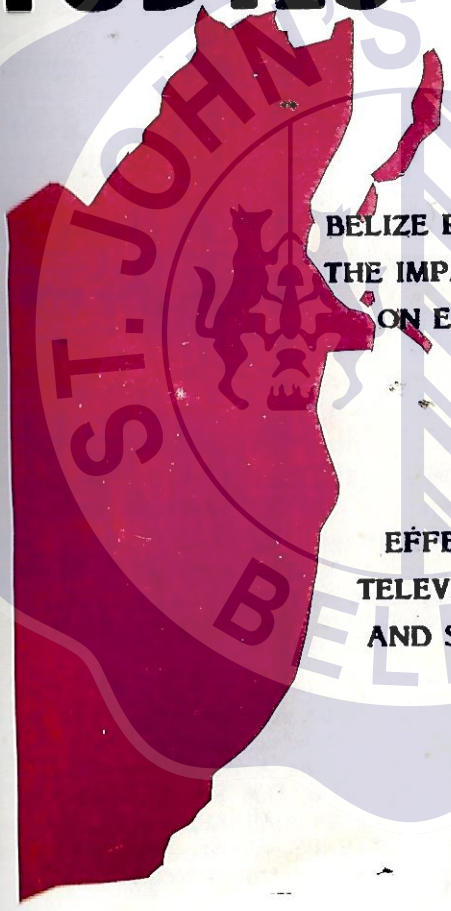

BELIZE RELEASE ME, LET ME GO: THE IMPACT OF U.S. MASS MEDIA ON EMIGRATION IN BELIZE

EFFECTS OF TRANSBORDER TELEVISION IN COROZAL TOWN AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES

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Editorial

In a special issue of the mass media, Caribbean Quarterly recently editorialized: "The much longed-for new international information order has not materialized and the situation is further exacerbated by many Third World countries who at their own expense and volition invite into their homes the out-pourings of the electronic media of the world, mainly those of North America via satellite transmissions which they 'pirate' to the inexplicable annoyance of copyright holders who still surprisingly believe that it is they who are being robbed. It is in fact the Caribbean countries who pay: they pay with the loss of identity, increased consumerism which their economies can ill afford, and with mimicry in their national lives and mores" (CQ Vol 27, Nos 2&3, p iii). That is a good summary statement of the present position of the mass media in our area.

Still more recently was the concern expressed when the Caribbean Conference of Churches, Intermedia of New York, and the World Association for Christian Communication held their consultation last September under the title "Claiming Common Ground" in Barbados. This Regional Consultation on Communication for Human Development considered "New Communications Technologies and Development in the Caribbean." Participants were drawn from the Caribbean and North America. They included Church leaders involved in culture and communications, Communicarb graduates active in peoples' media and other media persons.

The feature address was given by the Rev. Allan Kirton, General Secretary of the Caribbean Conference of Churches. His topic was "Communicating for Human Development--Clearing Common Ground." His thesis was that because of the improvements in communications technology and the mindlessness of those in the private and public sectors in the Caribbean, people in the area have become slaves to foreign values and the major challenge which the church faces now, is to correct that condition.

He spoke of 'the Caribbean man' or more wisely of 'the authentic Caribbean person', a person respectful of himself

and of others. "I believe", he said,) "that it is true to say that assumptions and aspirations such as these fuelled the engine which accelerated the movement in favour of regional integration, of an increasing measure of self-respect among our people, of the increase in creativity and a growing appreciation and celebration of what is ours. To be sure the movement was far from perfect."

"It is my thesis that this movement was probably mortally wounded over the last two years or so, as the will to be authentically Caribbean was bent until it snapped under the impact of superior technique and technology. My judgment is that the principal weapons were the Media of communication and that the result of it all was to plunge this region into nothing short of a new era of colonialism."

Later on he summed up the idea this way: "Like the elements, the media of communication can be good servants but terrible masters. It is probably true to say that the most astonding and significant and earth-shaking event in our century has been the explosion in communication. No other single factor has influenced the life of the world as profoundly and as irrevocably as communication, whether by megaphone or by microchip. But we in the region have become more victims of a model of development that is exploitative, that requires frontiers to push back, lands to conquer, people to enslave, riches to grasp..."

"There are millions more TV addicts than drug addicts being demoralized daily by the seductions of the picture tube. But no rehabilitation programmes are being devised for them. There are millions of young persons whose culture has been so homogenized that all of them are satisfied to be carbon copies (in more ways than one) of Boy-George and other anti-heroes whose images are blazoned before us in constant procession, and whose life-styles are held up as the patterns of success, prosperity and enjoyment.

The churches of the region are challenged to join in the quest of a model of development which is non-exploitative, and especially non-destructive of our culture and personhood. To act deliberately in offering heroes worthy of our emulation. Christians in the region

are challenged to say "no" to much of the bilge that is polluting our air waves and claiming legitimacy and our attention simply because Jesus is supposedly being peddled. Caribbean people, generally, must shake off the spell which makes zombies of us, and opens us up to be mesmerized and manipulated" (Caribbean Contact, October 1985, p-9).

Such language is no stronger than that of the First Joint Letter from the Bishops of the Antilles Episcopal Conference some ten years ago. Speaking of "Justice and Peace in a New Caribbean" the bishops had this to say: We believe the chief remedy must be a complete revolution for each of us in our attitude to material goods. A never-ending search for more and more consumer goods can only serve to degrade us. We are in danger of becoming slaves: slaves of high-pressure salesmanship, especially by radio and television, which makes us feel in want when we have enough; slaves to greed which drives us to accumulate possessions that begin as luxuries and end up as necessities; slaves of snobbery which judges a man by what he has and not by what he is ... We call upon Christians to set their face against this tide of consumerism and to preach to the world by the simplicity of their lives" (page 13,#36).

The New Belize in its January issue for this year expresses a similar viewpoint in "The pitfalls of Unrestricted TV." Here is how the same concern is expressed: A survey prepared by Resident Tutor of the University of the West Indies Dr. Joseph Palacio for the National Council on child abuse and Neglect has confirmed a long held suspicion: Children are increasingly devoting more and more of their time to the 'boob tube' as North Americans cynically refer to television. An equally long held suspicion, the more and more adults are coming under the mesmerising grip of television is yet to be confirmed by a scientifically designed and applied survey. We believe that if and when such a survey is conducted it would show that what applies to children is also valid for adults in this case," (page 3).

It must be noted, here, that this issue of Belizean Studies publishes two surveys of the mass media situation in Belize: Roser, Snyder and Chaffee's 'Belize Release Me, Let Me Go': The impact of U.S. Mass Media on Emigration

in Belize," and Omar Oliviera's "Effects of Transborder Television in Corozal Town and Surrounding Villages." Even in a country as small as Belize the studies are somewhat restricted in length of time spent on fieldworks and the rather small areas covered. They definitely side-step the cultural complexity of Belize's multiracial make-up. And one desiderates local consultation. Nontheless, these studies do break ground on a subject of relevance that will continue to have a significant impact on the Belizean society at all levels.

In conclusion, this editorial has shown the urgent concern about the Mass Media being expressed by authentic Caribbean persons and by expatriate students. What remains to be done is for "broad discussion particularly between parents and teachers and ideally in the form of parent-teacher associations" (The New Belize, page 3). Parents, too, must discuss the media with children and teachers with students. In an article "Interpersonal Versus Mass Media Channels as Influences on Tourism in the Caribbean" Dr. Cuthbert points out that "the individual is likely to be more affected by inter-personal communication than by mass media." (Caribbean Quarterly, Vol 22, Nos 2 & 3, page 21). For parents and teachers--for all of us in the Caribbean and in Belize--that is surely a heartening thing to hear.

The Editors

The following is an extract from Connie Roser, Leslie B. Snyder and Steven H. Chaffee's "Belize Release Me, Let Me Go: The Impact of U.S. Mass Media on Emigration in Belize" submitted to the Institute for Communication Research - Stanford University. January, 1985:

BELIZE RELEASE ME, LET ME GO:

THE IMPACT OF U.S. MASS MEDIA ON EMIGRATION IN BELIZE

Introduction

Among the troubles Third World nations face today are two "flow" problems -- the flow of foreign culture and values into developing nations via mass media; and the flow of population out of these countries and into the more developed centers of the North. Both have been studied separately, and a connection between them has been hypothesized (Katz and Wedell, 1977), but the relationship has not been explored empirically.

The recent introduction of television into Belize, a new Central American/Caribbean nation with a high emigration rate, provides an opportunity to examine possible links between these two problems. Specifically, we can explore the association between exposure to U.S. mass media content and the desire among young Belizeans to leave home and move to the United States.

If, as many critics believe, exposure to television, movies and news from more developed countries encourages unfavourable comparisons with life at home, then exposure to foreign media may promote emigration to the wealthier nations, depriving developing countries of needed talent and manpower. Katz and Wedell (1977) recognized this possiblity when they wrote:

> The acceptance of broadcasting has marched with other concomitants of development, such as geographical mobility ... to lead those suffering to believe that conditions in other parts must be better.

Thus has come about the migration from village to the town, from rural areas to industrial areas, and from poor countries to richer countries (Katz and Wedell, 1977: 5).

The forces promoting this emigration may be divided into two categories: those that "push" the emigrants from home, and those that "pull" them to a new place (Lee, 1966). The pushing forces are environmental while the pulling forces are informational, communicated through both mass and interpersonal channels, and ranging from letters from the brother-in-law who found a job in a factory to U.S. situation comedies that bring images of double-door refrigerators into Third World villages (Rafaeli, 1980). The reception and effects of this information and the validity of charges that it pulls people toward new homes abroad are the topic of this research.

MIGRATION THEORIES AND INFORMATION

While much research on migration has been done in economics and demography, there has been less concern with the role of information than with the economic conditions influencing the flow of people (Connell et al., 1976; Shaw, 1975). Lee (1966) classified the factors affecting the decisions to move as conditions in the country of origin and destination, intervening obstacles, and migrant characteristics. Factors "pushing" people away from rural areas or less developed nations included high population growth, unstable prices, land displacement, lack of basic services, and social conflict. "Pulls" abroad or to urban areas include expected income, high employment opportunities, and "cultural factors." Relative networks and transportation systems may facilitate the pull. Another focus in migration literature is class relationships, determined by the international division of labour and unequal development within and between countries. (For reviews, see Wood, 1982; Bach and Schraml, 1982; or Shaw, 1975.)

But while the pushes are the result of direct experience, the pulls can only come through information about the destination (Rafaeli, 1980). Interpersonal communication is hypothesized as the important channel,

according to Rothenberg (1977). Pessar (1982) in the Dominican Republic, and MacDonald (1968) in Venezuela document the prevelence of kinship ties to the destination before migrating. Tienda (1980) found that among Mexican immigrants, less than three percent had no family or friends in the U.S. at the time of their entry.

The role of family and friends abroad is varied. They often send letters and money back home; they may help new emigrants get jobs; and occasionally they visit or return to their homes. Their actions, appearance, and words convey images of life abroad. But perhaps they influence more the choice of destination rather than providing the inducement to migrate (Connell et al., 1976).

Tobias (1980) urges consideration of the social context of the communication; men who emigrate from Grenada, he states, tailor their news home to fit local expectations. Migration is promoted by the value system among lower class men as a "manly" trait, bringing general social skills, sexual experience, self-confidence, dependability, cleverness in work, and skills in speaking "proper" English or other languages.

In addition to class differences in values, class can affect migration pulls through differential access to communication. Connell and others (1976) report that informal networks for urban jobs are used more by the rural poor, while the prosperous groups in India use more formal means -- media, officials, and employers -- and are generally more informed. Differential access to job information suggests that, in this context, the better-off villagers are more likely to migrate (Connell et al., 1976: 26). Another rural-urban study in Sao Paolo, Brazil found that among classes with high-status first jobs (1) the literacy rate is higher, and (2) the probability of knowing someone in Sao Paolo before moving there is higher (Hogan and Berlinch, 1976).

The role of media in migration is rarely separated from interpersonal influences. One three-continent study of rural flows to five urban centers states that migrants get 80% of their information from relatives and less than 1% from mass media (ICDR, 1973 in Connell et al., 1976).

But rural-urban migration is different from moving to a new country, and may involve different communication patterns. It is not clear that a similar study on emigration to the U.S. would have similar results.

In the light of media dependency theory, we might hypothesize that among those lacking the interpersonal sources of information, exposure to foreign media images congruent with class and local values would facilitate the pull abroad. The condition of social conflict is met by the economic push toward emigration of low socio-economic status and class, and media dependency is measurable by the amount of foreign interpersonal contacts and foreign media exposure.

The Research Setting: Belize

In Belize the problems of foreign media importation and emigration intersect with particular force. English-speaking Belize (formerly British Honduras) had been independent from Great Britain for only one year when we were there in the summer of 1982; the tiny country is underpopulated, with 145,000 people spread over an area of about 250 miles by 75 miles (roughly the size of El Salvador and Massachusetts).

Bordered on the north by Mexico and on the west and south by Guatemala, the country combines Latin and Caribbean cultures. We concentrated our efforts in the Caribbean towns, principally Belize City, the largest city and former capital (pop. 40,000); Dangriga, a fishing town (pop. 1,400); and Punta Gorda, a town just north of the Guatemalan border (pop. 2,400). In tiny Belize, all three major towns, and the latter two are the capitals of the states in which they are located.

During the previous decade, the population of the country had increased by only 25,000 -- despite the fact that the typical family has five to ten children -- mainly due to a high rate of emigration to the United States. The annual birth and death rates of 3.9% and .5% respectively (1980 census) would indicate that the population should grow by 3 to 4% each year; in fact, the growth has only been about 1% annually, due to heavy emigration. There

are now at least 30,000 Belizeans working in the United States -- about as many as there are working in Belize.

Belize differs from many other developing countries because, despite a stagnating economy, the terrible disparities in distribution of wealth common in the Third World are not visible there. Per capita income in 1980 was $950; unemployment and underemployment are serious problems, but most families fish or have a vegetable garden, and fruit trees are everywhere.

Racially the country is fairly evenly divided between Blacks and Hispanics (about 47% Black and 43% Hispanic and Indian), with some East Indians, Chinese, U.S. settlers, and people of mixed race. But this ethnic balance is threatened by recent waves of peasant immigrants from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, coupled with Black emigration to the United States. The resultant Latinization of the country is creating political and social tension, according to some Belizeans. This tension arises in part from Guatemalan claims on Belize, and the fear of many Belizeans that Latinization increases the probability of a Guatemalan takeover. Emigration is, therefore, a political, as well as an economic issue.

As a result of a well-established British colonial school system, Belize has a high literacy rate. The official figure is 95%, the reality perhaps 85%. This makes newspapers and books accessible to most segments of the population in a way that is rare among developing countries.

Despite the high value accorded reading and literacy, the country lacked a four-year university at the time of our survey. St. John's College offered the equivalent of a two-year degree, the country had a teachers college and a technical institute, and a branch of the University of the West Indies was planned. Students desiring a bachelor's degree, however, had to emigrate, at least temporarily.

In terms of media, Belize had a few local sources to compete with the television, movies, books, magazines and newspapers pouring in from abroad. There was no local daily newspaper (although the Miami News was available every day); only two Belizean magazines (competing with

more than a dozen magazines from the U.S. alone, as well as magazines from other Central American and Caribbean nations, and from Europe); a small handful of books written by local authors; no indigenously produced movies or television.

U.S. television had taken the country by storm. Prior to independence, some Belizeans living near the country's borders watched programming from Mexico, Honduras or Guatemala, and others in the central areas rented and traded video cassettes. At about the time of independence, however, a Belize City entrepreneur bought a used satelite dish antenna, set it up in his backyard and began re-transmitting the signal to subscribers. The pirated signals brought Chicago news, weather and used-car salesmen into Belizean living rooms. While government figures weren't happy with this newest cultural inundation, the imported programming was too popular to be prohibited.

The local media available to combat the influx of foreign culture consisted of the national radio station, the weekly newspapers and monthly magazines. There were seven weekly newspapers, all of them small tabloids ranging from 2 to 16 pages. Most were connected with a political party, and focused on local political and development issues carrying little or no international news. One of the most popular and widely read of these papers employed one reporter.

By far the most pervasive mass medium in Belize was the national radio station, Radio Belize. The station is government-owned, getting its news from British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) broadcasts, from the American magazine Newsweek, from Voice of America, and from local stringers. It did not pick up any wire service. Thus, Belizeans were completely dependent on foreign news sources, even their national radio station, for their international news.

We have described Belize in some detail here so that our study will be more comprehensible to those unfamiliar with the country. We hope, however, that our findings are relevant for other developing countries as well. While Belize currently may feel the problems of extreme

emigration and foreign media importation more acutely than other countries, the advent of satelite transmission of television and movies means other small, poor nations may soon share some of the same problems.

Study Design

Because the decision to emigrate is particularly salient to young people as they finish school, the question of willingness or aspirations to emigrate is appropriately addressed to adolescents. We focused, therefore, on 14- to 16-year-olds who were just completing their mandatory eight years of schooling.

Data gathering took place over a six-week period during the summer of 1982. Respondents were recruited in several ways: half from a sports camp, a Peace Corps summer school and St. John's College; and half by going door-to-door. Half the sample came from Belize City, with the rest divided between Dangriga, Punta Gorda and their environs (N=342). Teenagers who could read sufficiently well filled out the questionnaire themselves; we individually aided those who had difficulties.

Media Use. Much of the questionnaire dealth with information sources and media exposure. In addition to standard mass media exposure measures, (e.g., hours of TV watched daily), we asked about interpersonal sources of information about the United States, i.e., frequency of talking to or corresponding with foreigners, having relatives who live abroad, and receiving money that these relatives send to the family in Belize. For mass media sources, we gathered data both on the amount of exposure to the source and on the country originating the content.

These individual information sources were summed into indices of three types of exposure to U.S. information: news, entertainment and personal contacts./2

Demographics. Demographics in which we were interested were age, sex, race, presence of parents in the home (many families are divided), and socioeconomic status (S.E.S.) as an indicator of class./3

Perceptions. Another series of questions focused on

the respondents' perceptions of life in the United States. We asked the adolescents to estimate what percent of people in the United States fall in each of the following categories: rich, poor, black, Caribbean, unemployed and owners of cars.

Emigration. While these perception items can provide insight into our cognitive effects of a heavy influx of foreign media, our main analysis aims at determining how mass media exposure and interpersonal contact are related to emigration to the United States. It is, of course, impossible for us to identify in advance those individuals who will eventually emigrate. An ideal research design would follow the adolescents we have interviewed for the next five years or so, and contrast those who actually do move to the United States with those who stay in Belize. In the meantime, our study uses as the principal dependent variable the responses to the question, "Do you think you would like to live in another country?" and "If so, where?" The first two countries mentioned by each respondent were coded. While this item does not literally distinguish those adolescents who will leave Belize from those who will not, it is at least a probabilistic estimate and picks out the young people who feel willing to consider emigration while still at home or in school.

Hypotheses and Analyses

Our principal goals in this study have been:

1) to measure exposure to foreign and local mass media among Belizean adolescents;

2) to test the direct relationship between media exposure and willingness to emigrate;

3) to exaimed the role of perceptions of the United States as a mediating variable between exposure and willingness to emigrate; and

4) to test media dependency theory by treating SES and interpersonal contacts as intervening variables between mass media exposure and emigration. In the terms of our earlier discussion, low SES is regarded as a conflictual

state, and low contact with people living in the U.S., as an indicator of Media dependency. Our hypothesis is that both conditions must be met for foreign media content to influence adolescents' aspirations to leave Belize.

We expected to find that those adolescents who had personal contact in any form with someone living in the United States would be much more inclined toward emigration. The effect should be strongest among the adolescents with family members abroad who send money back to Belize, because these relatives are models of successful emigration with whom the adolescent can easily identify. Among this group, use of U.S. mass media, and particularly news, is probably strongly influenced by their close personal ties. Interest in U.S. news is naturally higher if that is where, say, your father is living. But attention to the news under this circumstance undoubtedly plays a much smaller role in encouraging emigration than parental modelling does.

Teenagers without interpersonal contacts in the United States, however, may be more affected by exposure to U.S. mass media. If films, television and newspapers constitute the adolescents' sole sources of information about the United States, then we can expect their readiness to emigrate to be predicated upon the images these media have provided them.

These two predictions are tested using logistic regression. The indices of exposure to U.S. information sources are first dichotomized by splitting at the median. Dichotomies are used to minimize the effects of error in the data. Our respondents, unaccustomed as they were to filling out questionnaires, did not provide the level of accuracy in their responses needed to create meaningful variance in the data. We choose, therefore, to use the simpler but more accurate dichotomies. This leads to more conservative tests of our hypotheses.

The three dichotomies of interpersonal communication, mass media use (either news or entertainment) and SES are then used in a logistic regression to predict desire to emigrate. Other models are also fitted to the data, following methods outlined by Knoke and Burke (1980). We

compare the joint effects of the three independent variables to the effects of each variable alone to examine both direct and contingent effects of mass media on emigration. Likelihood ratios are used to compare the fits of the different models.

News and entertainment are separated in these regressions because we anticipated that their effects might be very different. Using both variables in the same equation would have been desirable, but our number of observations was too small. With five dichotomus variables (four independent, one dependent), the average cell size would be ten, and some cells would have no entries, making analysis problematic.

Results

Characteristics of the sample

The adolescents ranged in age from 11 to 19, averaging 15 years old. Fifty-two percent were females. Their mean years of schooling were 9.3, ranging from 4 to 14 years. Mandatory education ends in Belize at 14 after 8 years of school; we were, therefore, catching the adolescents at the point at which they were deciding whether to go on in school, look for work, start a family, or leave home and emigrate.

Seventy-six percent of the respondents were Creoles or Garifuna, the two Black subcultures, and 7% were Hispanic. The sample overrepresents Blacks for two reasons: Emigration is more prevalent among this group, and foreign media are more available to them, since they tend to concentrate in the larger towns and English is their first language.

The division of families, produced at least in part by emigration, was evidence in several ways: 44% of the adolescents did not live in the same house as their fathers; 23% did not live with their mothers; and 61% said they had a relative living in the United States.

Our SES index was normally distributed, and, despite our unusual method of measurement, the index seems to

have captured the diversity we found in the population. The wealthiest familes in the country send their children to St. John's College, and these adolescents scored highest on the index. Similarly, the Ketchi Indians we interviewed in one-room abode homes with dirt floors had the lower scores. Reliability of the index, as estimated by Cronbach's alpha, was .81, an acceptable level./5

Figure 1

Exposure to Indigenous and Foreign Media Content Among Belizean Adolescents

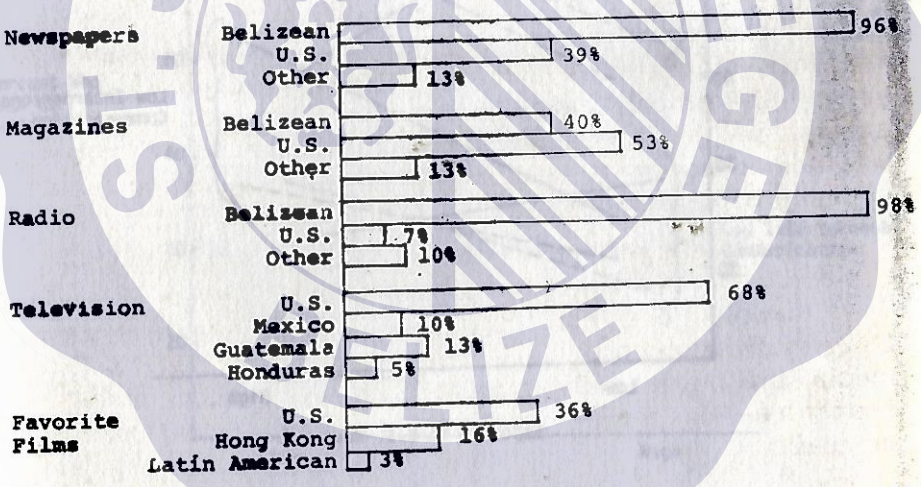

Figure 2

Desire to Emigrate by SES, Interpersonal Communication and U.S. News Exposure

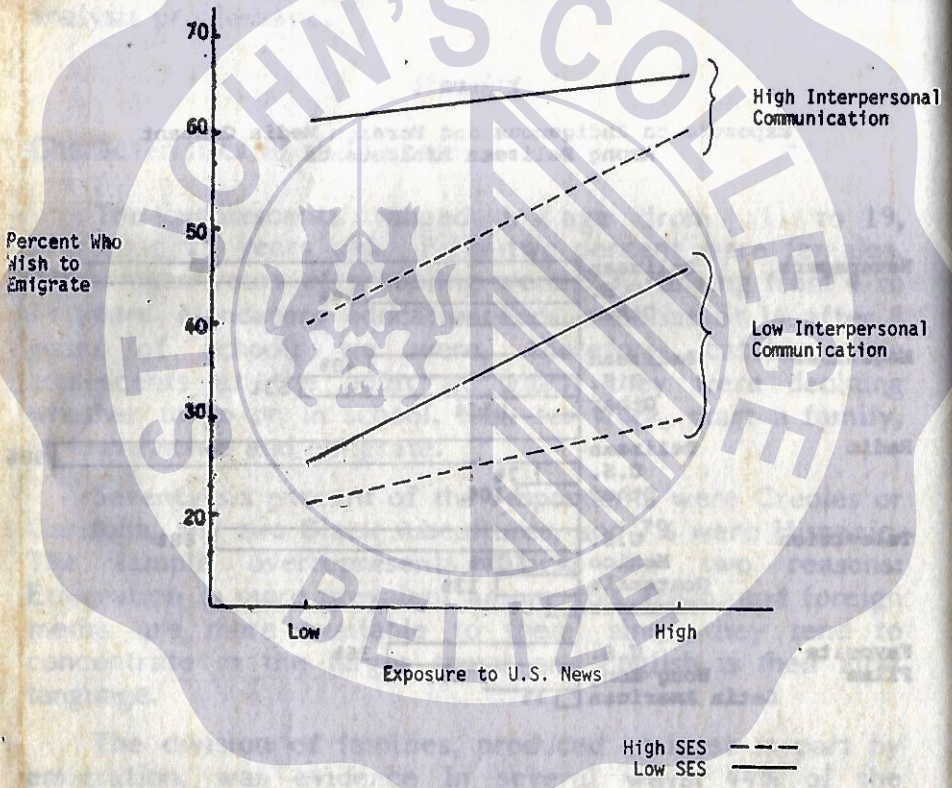

Figure 3

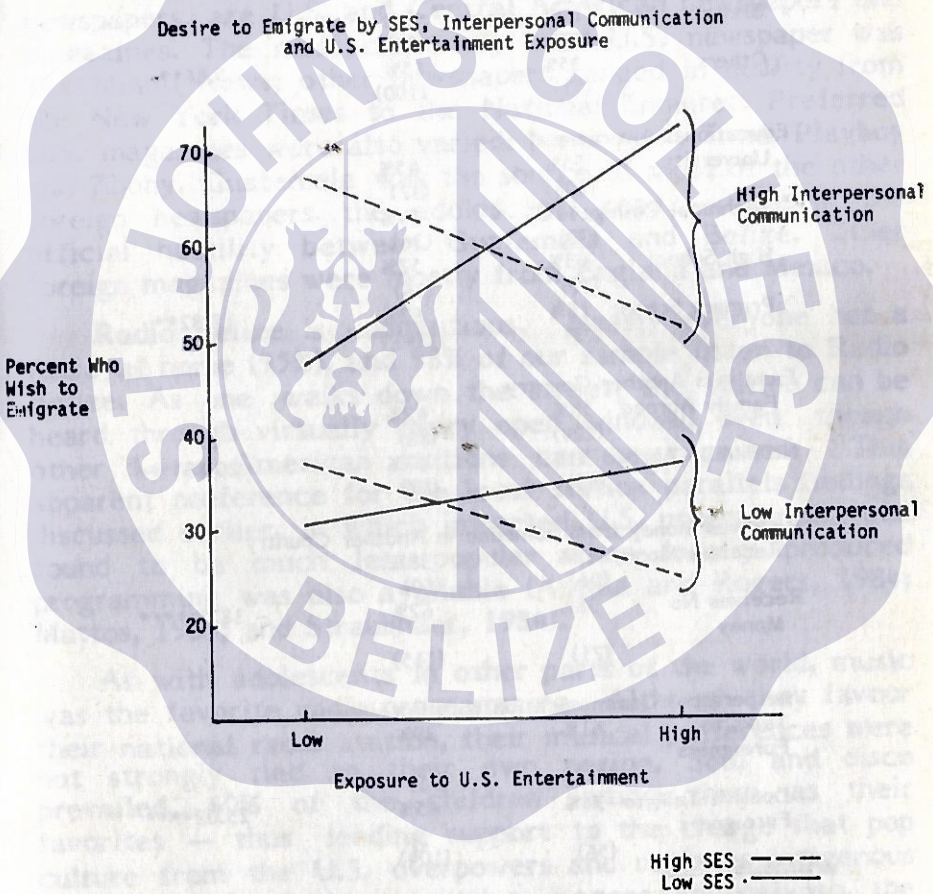
Desire to Emigrate by SES, Interpersonal Communication and U.S. Entertainment Exposure
Percent Who Wish to Emigrate
70
60
50
40
30
20
High Interpersonal Communication
Low Interpersonal Communication
Low
High
Exposure to U.S. Entertainment
High SES
Low SES

Table 1

Intention to Emigrate, by Demographics and Communication Variables, Among Belizean Adolescents

Category	Emigrators	Non-Emigrators	chi-square
Sex			
Males	54%@ (86)	46% (74)	2.77*
Females	45% (80)	54% (99)	
Race			
Creoles	49% (82)	52% (86)	
Others	35% (55)	65% (100)	5.86**
Educational Aspirations			
University	55% (108)	45% (87)	
Technical College	46% (30)	54% (36)	
High School	43% (12)	57% (16)	
Primary School	18% (3)	82% (14)	18.82**
Family in Another Country			
Family Abroad	58% (124)	42% (88)	
No Family Abroad	33% (43)	67% (87)	20.83****
Receives Money from Someone in Another Country			
Receives Money	62% (96)	38% (60)	
Receives No Money	38% (71)	62% (115)	18.54****
Interpersonal Communication with Foreigners			
Talks to Foreigners	61% (111)	39% (71)	
Doesn't Talk to Foreigners	35% (56)	65% (104)	23.02****

@ Row Percent
(N)

*pΔ.10 **pΔ.05 ***pΔ.01 ****pΔ.001

Mass Media Use

Figure 1 shows exposure to Belizean and U.S. mass media content. In both cases for which local media are easily accessible -- newspapers and radio -- the local products are used much more than the imported. The Belizean magazines were read less, perhaps because they were not widely distributed. For the two media not produced in Belize -- television and film -- the sample preferred U.S. material above other foreign programs.

Most sources of print information, other than Belizean newspapers, are U.S. and Central American newspapers and magazines. The most commonly read U.S. newspaper was The Miami News; other newspapers ranged in quality from the New York Times to the National Enquirer. Preferred U.S. magazines were also varied: Newsweek, Time, Playboy and Ebony. Guatemala was the source of most of the other foreign newspapers the adolescents read -- despite the official hostility between Guatemala and Belize. Other foreign magazines were mostly from England and Mexico.

Radio Belize is unbiquitious. Nearly everyone has a radio at home (95%), and 98% of our sample listen to Radio Belize. As one walks down the street, the station can be heard through virtually every open window, even though other Latin American stations can be received. This apparent preference for the local station parallels findings discussed earlier, in which imported U.S. programming was found to be much less popular when locally produced programming was also available (Antola and Rogers, 1984; Mattos, 1984; and Straubhaar, 1984).

As with adolescents in other parts of the world, music was the favorite radio programming. Although they favour their national radio station, their musical preferences were not strongly tied to their own region. Soul and disco prevailed, 60% of the children listing them as their favorites -- thus lending support to the charge that pop culture from the U.S. overpowers and replaces indigenous cultures in developing countries. Reggae and calypso, the Caribbean musical forms, followed with only 14%, as did rock (13%), and country and western (10%). Salsa and Garifuna music, also local ethnic products, had only a few fans.

Table 2

Saturated Logistic Regression Model, Predicting Desire to Emigrate by SES, Interpersonal Communication and Mass Media Use@

Variable	df	news chi-square	entertainment chi-square
SES	1	4.11*	.21
interpersonal communication	1	16.99***	21.02***
mass media use	1	5.09*	0.0
SES x pers.comm.	1	.07	.03
SES x mass media	1	.08	6.83**
pers.comm. x mass media	1	.17	.67
SES x pers.comm. x mass media	1	1.14	.53

@ Mass Media refers to news use only for the first column of chi-square figures, and to entertainment use only for the second column.

*pΔ.05 **pΔ.01 ***pΔ.001

Table 3

Percentage of Emigrators
Within Groups Meeting
"Push" and "Pull" Criteria

Group	News (N)	Entertainment (N)
Push + interpers. pull	62% (21)	48% (21)
Push + mass media pull*	46% (46)	36 % (47)
Push + no pull	25% (77)	30% (76)
No push + interpers. &/or mass media pull	43% (138)	41% (134)
No push + no pull	20% (20)	37% (24)

* Mass Media refers to news use only for the first column of percentages, and to entertainment use only for the second column.

Films are another popular form of entertainment. Half the sample said they had attended a movie in the week prior to completing our questionnaire. Most of the movies shown in Belize during our survey featured Karate or other violent themes such as war, so it is not surprising that these were the favorite films.

Violence was not the prefered television content, however. Their favorite television programs were situation comedies (equally divided between those featuring Blacks and those with Whites), followed by children's shows and adventure programs like Wonder Woman or The Incredible Hulk, music shows, and movies or novelas. An example of the excitement generated by U.S. television came from the children and the sports camp, in Belize City who told us enthusiastically of their dedication to the Chicago Cubs -- their "local" TV baseball club.

Thirty-two percent of our respondents have yet to become TV viewers, with fewer non-viewers in the capital where television is more available. All but 15% of the adolescents sampled in Belize City watched television, demonstrating a swift penetration since TV's introduction a year earlier; half the sample had television sets at home.

Perceptions

The perception items proved difficult for many of our respondents because they were not sufficiently familiar with percentages. Answers concentrated at the high end of the scale, and the responses should, therefore, be judged simply in comparison to each other, rather than as realistic estimates of the percent of people in each category. The median estimates were as follows:

-- 76% of people living in the United States own cars;

-- 54% are rich;

-- 36% are from the Caribbean;

-- 34% are black;

-- 30% are unemployed;

-- 27% are poor;

Three of these estimates merit comment. First, the estimated percentage of rich people is twice as high as the percent who are poor -- clearly the United States is a very wealthy place in their eyes. And more than a third of the people living in the United States are thought to be from the Caribbean; this is the third highest estimate, when in fact it should be the lowest. The overestimation no doubt reflects the world in which they live, where almost everyone knows Belizeans who live in the United States.

The Emigrators

In response to the item asking if they would like to move to another country, 47% said they would not like to live anywhere else; 45% said they would like to live in the United States; nine percent mentioned various other countries in Europe, Central America and the Caribbean. Put another way, of the 54% who are willing to move to another country, 86% would choose to move to the United States.

The reasons most often given for wanting to move to another country were: education (27%); more or better job opportunities (24%); more money (11%); and recreational possibilities (8%), such as visiting amusement parks, skiing, or seeing (probably for the first time) snow. These reasons are predominantly utilitarian and not obviously related to media content. On the other hand, 11% of the teenagers volunteered the response that there was nothing they could do in another country that would make them willing to leave Belize.

Breaking down the group who said they are willing to move from Belize, we found that "emigrators" tended more than non-emigrators to be Creoles, male, to hold high educational aspirations and to have

Table 1 about here

family members already living in the United States. As shown in Table 1, they also talked to foreigners more often, and were more likely to receive money in the mail from someone living in another country. In fact, any form

of personal contact with people who live in another country greatly increased the likelihood that the respondent would express an interest in living outside Belize.

Respondents did not, however, differ on the six items measuring perceptions of life in the United States. Nor were any simple and clear relationships between media use and willingness to emigrate found. Neither Belizean nor U.S. newspaper reading was significantly related to the dependent variable. The same is true for use of Belizean and foreign radio, foreign magazines, foreign movies, and, most importantly from our perspective, U.S. and Latin American television. The trend was in the direction of television effects, however. Of the adolescents who watch U.S. television, 45% would be interested in moving to the United States, while only 36% of non-viewers said they would like to move (chi-square=3.03; p=.08).

(A) Another media relationship that approached statistical significance was between emigration and reading a U.S. newspaper. Of those who read a U.S. newspaper, 48% would like to live in the United States, whereas only 38% of non-readers are similarly inclined (chi-square=3.66; p=.06). Interest in U.S. news also is associated with willingness to emigrate; 49% of those interested in U.S. news were migrators, in contrast to 38% in the group not interested in U.S. new (chi-square=4.51; p(.05). Given that the correlation between exposure to U.S. news and the number of personal contacts with people living in the United States is .28 (pΔ.001), these relationships may perhaps be traced back to the prevalence of family contacts in the U.S. among the migrator group. This possible confounding effect is addressed by the multivariate analyses discussed below.

Logistic Regression Analysis

Results are reported in Table 2 for the logistic regressions of desire to emigrate on SES, interpersonal communication and U.S. mass media use. Separate models are estimated for news and entertainment exposure. These saturated models yield likelihood ratios of zero, because the cell frequencies can be exactly reproduced when all possible interaction terms are included in the equation.

Examination of the chi-squares for the model including news shows that while all three independent variables are significantly related to emigration, interpersonal communication is by far the strongest predictor ($p \Delta .001$). None of the interaction terms, however, reached statistical significance.

The model using entertainment exposure contained only one significant main effect for interpersonal communication, and one significant interaction between SES and entertainment exposure.

These results lend little support to our hypotheses, and support neither a media dependency nor a direct effects model. The first regression finds straightforward main effects, and these variables do not interact to heighten or diminish the probability that an adolescent will wish to leave Belize. The second model shows an interaction of "push" and "pull," but this interaction is not contingent on media reliance, as evidence by the lack of a three-way interaction.

Examination of a plot of the news model (Figure 2), however, shows not only the main effects of each independent variable, but also the three-way interaction we expected. Among the adolescents with high personal contacts in the United States and low SES, news had little relation to desire to emigrate; in the absence of interpersonal contacts, however, a relationship is evident between news exposure and willingness to emigrate. The group with low interpersonal communication and low SES also showed a stronger association between news use and desire to emigrate than did the group that is reliant on media for information (low interpersonal communication), but lack a push (high SES).

A plot of the second model (Figure 3) is more difficult to interpret. Adolescents with low SES show a positive association between desire to emigrate and exposure to U.S. entertainment. This association, however, is stronger among adolescents with high interpersonal communication, and, curiously, the association is negative among adolescents with high SES.

The failure of the three-way interaction terms to

reach significance in the logistic regression may be attributed in part to an insufficient number of cases. Three-way interactions may be particularly difficult to detect if the interaction occurs only for certain subggroups, as we have hypothesized here. To test this possibility, we weighted all cells in the contingency tables, multiplying each cell frequently by four (Hodge, personal communication). This weighting changes none of the parameter estimates, but increases the chi-squares.

In the weighted model containing news exposure, none of the two-way interactions approach significance, but the chi-square for the three-way interaction is significant at p Δ .05. Results for the entertainment model are unchanged, i.e., no additional terms reach significance when the N is increased.

This suggests that news exposure may be more strongly related to willingness to emigrate for media reliant adolescents, but that entertainment effects are contingent only on SES -- not on media dependency.

We cannot, however, draw conclusions from the weighted solution. To detect differences among subgroups masked by the two-small N, we divide the sample and estimate separate models for high and low interpersonal communication groups. Starting from the saturated model, terms are successively dropped from the equation, testing for the interactions in which we are interested.

Regressions partitioning the sample by interpersonal communication show that among adolescents with high personal contact in the U.S., neither SES nor use of U.S. news nor their interaction is related to desire to emigrate (chi-squares=2.42, 1.58 and .85, respectively). For this same group, however, entertainment exposure and SES interact (chi-square=4.69, pΔ.05). This seems to imply that factual information sources about the United States carry little weight in comparison to personal sources, but that the very different kind of information presented by entertainment media can still have an additional impact over that of personal communication, i.e., if the adolescent is being "pushed" from home, U.S. entertainment media can function as another "pull," even if the adolescent is not

media reliant for information.

Among adolescents with low interpersonal communication with people living in the U.S., a very different picture emerges. Curiously, exposure to U.S. entertainment shows no relation to emigration for this group, either alone or in interaction with SES (chi-squares=.45 and 1.98, respectively, n.s.).

Exposure to news programming from the U.S., however, is a significant predictor of desire to emigrate for low SES, low personal communication adolescents (chi-square=5.63, pΔ.05). Among high SES adolescents with low personal contacts, there was no relation between emigration and U.S. news exposure (chi-square=.68, n.s.). This, then, constitutes some support for dependency theory.

Returning to our earlier discussion of "push" and "pull," Table 3 summarizes our findings, showing that, while the news media are not as strongly related to desire to emigrate as is interpersonal communication, those who watch U.S. new broadcasts are more likely to want to emigrate.

In terms of entertainment content, however, the hypothesis is not supported: among media reliant adolescents, U.S. entertainment does not appear to act as a "pull." The difference in effects of different media content implies that the media reliant adolescents may be using each for the purpose for which it is intended -- news for information and entertainment for simply that -- rather than making large inferences about opportunities in the United States based on scenes from Dallas.

With cross-sectional data such as these, however, inferences about casuality must be limited. The very real possibility remains that our potential emigrators seek out U.S. news broadcasts because they already wish to leave Belize. The most accurate model would probably be non-recursive, with foreign news exposure and desire to emigrate affecting each other over a period of years prior to emigration.

Summary

In a comparison of direct effects and media dependency theories the contingent conditions of low SES and media reliance were found to mediate the effects of U.S. news exposure on desire to emigrate. News exposure was not significantly related to desire to emigrate if the adolescent did not meet these conditions. Exposure to U.S. entertainment, however, was associated with desire to emigrate among high SES adolescents only, a finding incongruent with either direct effects or media dependency theory. These findings point to the importance of considering contingent states for media effects, particularly in other cultures, where our ignorance of local custom may encourage simplistic analyses.

NOTES

1. Theories of media and cultural imperialism arise from economic dependency theory, an area we choose not to discuss within the text to avoid confusion with the dependency theory of DeFleur and Ball-Rockeach (1975), on which this paper focuses. Dependency theory holds that the increasing wealth of the growth-oriented prosperous nations depends directly on keeping the poorer nations poor. Theorists note diminishing terms-of-trade for the "periphery"; technological progress and advertising always give the "center" the edge (Prebisch, 1962); and the class conflicts that Marxists believe characterize capitalistic societies are extended to the international arena in the conflict between center and periphery nations (Lee, 1982).

Analogies to these economic arguments are drawn in analyses of cultural and media imperialism (Lee, 1982; Fejes, 1982), although Fejes believes the links between the two approaches have not been sufficiently developed.

2. These indices capture, we hope, most of the sources of information about the United States to which the adolescents are exposed, but clearly not at all. Listening to the news on Radio Belize, for example, was not included as a U.S. source because the selection of stories is made by a

Belizean and local as well as international news is reported. Yet most of the sources for international news used by Radio Belize are American or English, thereby making Radio Belize in some sense a U.S. source as well.

3. Because of an underground economy, money sent by relatives working abroad, high unemployment, and the unreliability of the data the adolescents could supply, we did not ask for parent's income directly to measure SES. Instead we asked the adolescents about the number of rooms and presence of costly possessions in their homes. We developed a formula for an SES index that combined the number of rooms in the respondent's home with the number of items the family owned. The items were: running water, hot running water, flush toilets, gas, electricity, carpeting, a record player, a phone, and a car. The list was based on personal observations of the items families did and did not have, as well as conversations with Belizeans about the articles they associated with wealth and status.

The groups are certainly not comparable to SES classifications in the U.S. -- the high SES group are probably closer to middle-class Americans, although they also lack many of the conveniences most Americans have. For example, only 13 percent of the respondents had hot water in their homes -- an unnecessary luxury perhaps in a country with a tropical climate -- 29 percent had telephones, 63 percent had running water, and 25 percent belonged to a family that owned a car.

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OMAR SOUKI OLIVERIA

EFFECTS OF TRANSBORDER TELEVISION IN COROZAL TOWN AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES

Introduction

Close relationships between media exposure and attitudinal change in the Third World were first observed by Lerner (1966). His modernization model identified the mass media as significant agents of change toward modernity in developing societies. Subsequent studies uncovered significant associations between individual exposure to the media and social mobility. Social mobility was assumed to encourage the movement away from traditional inclinations (Rogers, 1969; Frey, 1973; Inkeles & Smith, 1974).

Another perspective, however, identifies contextual influences linked to media effects. Hornik (1980), upon reviewing communication projects in Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Tanzania and India, concluded that "communication intervention must complement or be accompanied by changes in resources or environments," in order to have effective social results. And Chaffee (1974) suggested that the total media environment is a significant factor in the study of effects. In media-poor settings effects may be hightened, due to the limited number of media outlets available. But in media-rich societies there is a variety of sources of information, and individuals seem to be in control.

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While modernization theory emphasizes the impact of radio, television and the press, the contextual influences approach stresses the relevance of the communication environment in the possible social influences of mass communication. A combination of these two perspectives provide the theoretical framework for this survey, which addresses questions related to the relationships between television exposure and viewers' attitudes in the Third World.

This study examines the associations between exposure to transborder television and traditionalism, and attempts to demonstrate that those relationships may be significantly affected by different communication environments (rural versus urban).

Theoretical Background

More than twenty years have passed since Lerner (1966, p. 178) first suggested exposure to mass media has the potential of changing people, making them more available to new ideas. Several studies on the associations between mass media exposure and identification with new ideas and social mobility in Third World societies were carried out during this period. Media, acting independently from other socioeconomic variables, were thought to play a significant role in the process of social mobilization toward moderization and economic growth (Rogers, 1969, p. 334).

During the late 50s and early 60s the concept of modernization greatly impressed mass media scholars. Modernization, described as a movement from traditional society through a "take off" stage into a situation of self-sustained growth, seemed to have the potential for helping less developed nations (Rostow, 1965). In this process the mass media were seen as essential, with messages capable of influencing attitudes (Schramm, 1964).

Human beings were viewed as the prime agents of development. The willingness to participate and acquire new skills was considered as fundamental for the process of socioeconomic growth. Youth and women had to be

liberated from the authority of the elderly and join the others in the nation building process. Any country that sought to project its own development goal and path should pay careful attention to the Western model of development (Lerner & Schramm, 1967).

Deutsch (1961) defined seven different stages in the process of transition from the traditional to the modern status. The first stage was exposure to different aspects of modern life such as machinery, buildings, installations, consumer goods, show windows, rumor, government, medical or military practices; the second stage comprised the exposure to mass media; the third, change of residence; the fourth, urbanization; the fifth, change from agricultural occupations; the sixth, literacy; and the seventh, increased income per capita.

Inkeles & Smith (1974) claimed that attitudinal transition toward modernity is accompanied by behavioral change. They saw the process as beneficial for political and economic institutions. Along with it, exposure to the mass media and education was of paramount importance in the formation of the "modern" man. The "modern" man, as defined by those authors, participates significantly more in society being part of political organizations, often contacting political authorities. The major obstacle for development was thought to be psychological resistances to change, which would tend to hinder social and economic growth.

Frey (1973) reviewed several studies which presented empirical evidence linking mass media exposure and political participation. He defined variables related to the development process such as education, mass media exposure, and degrees of identification with new ideas. Socio-economic growth and cultivation of new skills were suggested by Schramm (1964, p. 54) as being enhanced by exposure to the mass media. And Pye (1963, p. 10) saw the media as instrumental in bringing people together in the search of common goals.

Rogers (1969, pp. 33-34) defined some of the characteristics of a traditional setting as follows:

1. Lack of favorable orientation to change.

2. A less developed or "simpler" technology.

3. A relatively low level of literacy, education, and understanding of the scientific method.

4. A social enforcement of the status quo in the social system, facilitated by affective personal relationships, such as friendliness and hospitality, which are highly valued as an end in themselves.

5. Little communication by members of the social system with outsiders; lack of transportation facilities and communication with the larger society reinforces the tendency of individuals in a traditional society to remain relatively isolated.

6. Lack of ability to empathize or see oneself in other' roles, particularly the roles of outsiders to the system; an individual member in a system with traditional norms is not likely to recognize or learn new social relationships involving himself, he usually plays only one role and never learns others.

He also typified a modern social system (Rogers, 1969, p. 34):

1. A generally positive attitude toward change.

2. A well developed technology with a complex division of labor.

3. A high value of education and science.

4. Rational and businesslike social relationships rather than emotional affective.

5. Cosmopolite perspectives, in that members of the system often interact with outsiders, facilita - ting the entrance of new ideas into the social system.

6. Empathic ability on the part of the system's members, who are able to see themselves in roles quite different from their own.

In order to transform the previously described

traditional setting into a modern one, exposure to the mass media was considered essential. The role of the media as social mobilizer was also mentioned by Shils (1966) who suggested that the gap between individuals with higher income and education and those with less would be gradually decreased. Fagen (1966, pp. 108-9) saw new developemnts in communication channels and content, together with socioeconomic growth as leading toward changes in the way individuals perceive the self and the environment. Fagen accepted, as Inkeles & Smith (1974), that an attitudinal change of such proportions would lead to behavioral changes. These according to Deutsch (1961, p. 494) induce a gradual .weakening of traditional links with indigenous cultures and between individuals and families.

In the aforementioned studies the mass media would gradually encourage people to leave their traditional frame of mind, and question the exisitng values around them. This would in the long run promote the search for alternative ways of life, and eventually, to personal identification with the new ideas of industrial societies. The order normally suggested was urbanization-education-industrialization-mass media exposure. Societies undergoing this transformation would gradually "take off" and finally achieve affluence under self-sustained growth. In sum, the mass media was viewed as a powerful influence in moving individuals away from their traditional outlooks.

The contextual influences model, however, highlights the environment in which the process is observed, and identifies some limitations to media effects. Even during early observations the "virus of inertia" was identified by Lerner (1966). Inertia was defined as a model principle of personality which resisted change and opposed new ideas. The remedy prescribed was a "modern" attitude, which included mobility, empathy, and participation. At that time it was thought that inertia identity had to be changed and substituted by empathy. Empathy means the ability to see oneself in others' roles (Lerner, 1966). It was presumed to be more frequently found in "modern" persons, who were also seen as more socially mobile. Yet, the desirability of extensive social mobility has been questioned by some scholars (Coldevin, 1979; Rogers, 1978; Schramm, 1967).

Coldevin (1979) identified some negative effects of mobility in northern Canada. Eskimos exposed to Canadian television were found to be more inclined to leave their villages. Mobility in this case though, was not necessarily connected with national development. The school system in those areas is designed to prepare children for local activities and participation in local administration. If media were actually encouraging eskimos to move away from their land into overcrowded Canadian cities, then television was defeating the purpose of the school system.

In "An Overview of the Past Decade," Schramm (1976) reviewed the socioeconomic conditions in less developed areas of the world. The situation in world affairs had not changed as expected by many mass media scholars during the 60s. Two thirds of the world then had no more than 1/5 of all the world's radio receivers; less than 1/5 of newspaper circulation; less than 1/10 of television sets; and about 1/16 of the world's telephones.

A shift in emphasis from industrialization to agricultural output was clear by the mid-1970s. Rogers (1978) suggested the need for more research in smaller communities in less developed areas with the potential for agricultural production. The mass media, according to him, had to be examined under the context of the Third World, where traditional patterns of production and consumption often seem more appropriate. Attention to specific environments was considered of great importance in media effects studies. Mass media, as viewed under the contextual influences approach, are considered as integral part of a larger system of communication, very seldom having the power that once was thought.

This analysis combines the two theoretical perspectives reviewed above and examines some of their assumptions. The associations between transborder television and traditionalism are tested in two different settings (rural and urban).

Importance of this Study

This seems to be an important historical movement for analysis of the impact of imported television programs on

consumer attitudes in the Third World. There is a generalized economic crisis now underway with devastating implications for most developing regions. The majority of less developed nations have a tremendous shortage of foreign exchange, whose reserves are depleted when they buy Western products or when they pay off foreign debt. Many media planners and government authorities in Third World nations worry about the economic consequences of imported television programs and the resulting effects on traditional consumption patterns (UNCTAD, 1978).

In most cases, the choices these authorities have in the Third World are (a) to buy programs from the industrialized countries (U.S.A., Western Europe and Japan); (b) to buy programs from other more advanced Third World nations such as Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela (Schement, 1984); or (c) to produce them at home. Because local television in poorer Third World nations is too expensive, the bulk of television programming has to be imported either from the West or form other Third World countries. The percentage of imported television programs is nearly 61 percent in Zimbabwe, 55 percent in Tunisia, and 70 percent in Ecuador (Varis, 1984, pp. 146-7), to name a few.

Obviously, if Western television actually encourages a shift away from traditional product choices and increased importation of consumer items, it is a matter of global concern. Should this same concern be extended to television programs received from other Third World nations? The crucial question is then: Does exposure to imported Western or Third World programming have a significant impact on consumer attitudes?

Characteristics of the Study

This study was conducted in the Central American nation of Belize, where there is no local television production (UNESCO, 1982). But the population of Corozal District in Northern Belize is exposed to both U.S. and Mexican television on a daily basis. U.S. programming is relayed through a small earth station in Corozal Town. Spill over from U.S. domestic satellites reaches the station and are subsequently rebroadcast to the regional population.

Mexican television service is transmitted from Chetumal, Mexico.

The large majority of Mexican and U.S. television services received are commercial in nature. The staple of Mexican commercial television is the telenovelas (soap operas) and the variety shows. The U.S programs generally selected from the satellite transmissions are news, action shows, movies, sports and soap operas (S.B.S., 1984; Silva, 1984; Tele-Guia, 1984).

Audiences in Northern Belize are offered approximately 18 hours of Mexican television a day. "Guadalupe," "Amalia Batista," "Tu Eres Mi Destino," and "La Fiera" are among the well-known Mexican telenovelas running at the time this study was conducted. "XE-TU" and "Siempre en Domingo" are popular variety shows (Tele-Guia, 1984). A 19-hour daily diet of U.S. television programming is also available. "Another Life," "Solid Gold," "The 'A' Team," and a variety of U.S. films received from HBO, Cinemax and the Movie Channel stations are among the programs that reach Belizeans (S.B.S., 1984; Silva, 1984).

With a tiny population of less than 150,000 inhabitants, Belize became independent from Great Britain in 1981 (Abstract of Statistics, 1981). The lingua franca is English, and inhabitants of Northern Belize speak Spanish also, due to the proximity to the Mexican border. Hence, those television services are not only widely available, but can also be understood in the region.

The rural setting necessary for comparative analysis is found in villages close to the Mexican border. And Corozal Town, the commercial center of Northern Belize, has the urban characteristics needed for the study. In the countryside, used, black & white television sets are widely available. They have to be powered by car batteries though, due to the lack of regular power supply. Access to the area is not easy, and hitch hiking, or walking, are the most reliable means of reaching the villages. There are no restaurants or hotels. Telephones are only available either at the police station, or at the local shop, and running water is a rare commodity.

1. A recent letter sent to the Author indicates that both

the government and the private sector have now started television production on a limited basis (Krohn, 1986)

Corozal Town, on the other hand, presents a typically urban enivronment. There are hotels and restaurants; regular bus services to Belize City and Chetumal, Mexico; two supermarkets and a variety of other stores; a post office; extensive availability of telephones; a movie theater; a public library; and a variety of other urban services. In essence, most of the facilities of modern life are available in the town. With the exception of television sets, which were found almost everywhere, the two environments seem to have little in common. Consequently, ideal conditions for comparative empirical tests on the possible effects of transborder television were available in that region.

Research Hypotheses

The population of Northern Belize was surveyed on the relationships between exposure to transborder television and traditional product choices. The tested hypotheses spring from the effects suggested in both modernization and contextual influences studies. It was hypothezised that U.S. television exposure and traditional product choices would be negatively associated. Conversely, it was proposed that Mexican television viewing and traditional product choices would be positively correlated. Further, as suggested by the contextual influences perspective, the itensity of the associations was expected to vary according to the communication environment. Correlations were predicted to be significant in the (media-poor) villages, but not in the (media-rich) city. The following hypotheses were tested.

1. Exposure to Transborder Television and Traditionalism:

(a) U.S. television viewing is negatively correlated with a person's choices of traditional products.

(b) Mexican television viewing is positively associated with a person's choices of traditional products.

2. Exposure to Transborder Television in Rural/Urban Contexts:

In the rural setting, correlations between exposure to transborder television (U.S. and Mexican) and traditional product choices are more likely to reach statistical significance than in the urban environment.

Interview Schedule and Sampling

An interview schedule, with four categories of questions, was used to collect data in Belize. The first category was exposure to television. Respondents were asked three questions about the number of hours per week spent watching television. One of the questions referred to total exposure, while the others related to U.S. and Mexican television viewing.

The second category of questions tested bilingualism. Since bilingualism was a prerequisite of the sample, each respondent was tested on his or her knowledge of English and Spanish. A set of idiomatic expressions in English and Spanish was used to check knowledge of both languages.

The third set of questions, which measured traditionalism, was based on a scale originally suggested by Biu (1980) in Nigeria. A group of paired choices between objects with either modern or traditional applications was used. Individuals were asked to select from each bipolar alternative the element they would rather use. Traditional options were added and constituted a measure of a person's degree of traditionalism as related to product choices. The pairs of choices were between the following products: horse/motocycle, donkey/bicycle, guayabera[2]/suit, home-made juice/Coca-Cola, cushion chair/tape recorder, fish from the market/canned ham, table cloth/plastic mats, ticket to a Boom & Chime[3] concert/ticket to a rock concert, pocket knife/wrist watch. The scale's range was 0-10. The measurement correlated with age in pre-test situations. Older people tended to choose a large number of traditional items. And since it is reasonable to assume that older people frequently are also more traditional, this further contributes to the reliability of the scale, as a measurement of traditionalism.

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2. Guayabera is the traditional shirt that may substitute the suit for formal occasions.

3. Boom & Chime is a well known Belizean band, which uses traditional instruments and plays indigenous tunes.

I In the last category of questions, respondents were asked about demographic variables such as age, family size, income, and education. Sex was recorded in the interview schedule.

The number of respondents who contributed with data was 96, roughly one percent of the regional population. The population in Corozal Town is approximately 6,000 inhabitants, while the population in the surrounding villages is close to 4,000 (Abstract of Statistics, 1981). The task of sampling involved selection of adult respondents fluent in English and Spanish, randomly selected from Corozal Town and surrounding villages. Villages located within a radius of six miles of that town were considered as surrounding villages for the purpose of this study. Six miles is the reach of U.S. television broadcasts originated in the transmission tower located in Corozal Town (Silva, 1984). Mexican television covers all of Northern Belize.

Forty eight randomly selected respondents were interviewed in Corozal Town, and the same number of individuals were interviewed in the rural areas. Men and women were interviewed alternatively, thus the sample had an equal number of male and female respondents. Data were collected during July and August of 1984. This researcher, who is fluent in English and Spanish, carried out all the interviews. The answers to the questions were recorded on a standard interview schedule, which was read to each individual.

Statistical Tests

Partial correlations, removing the effect of total television viewing time, were calculated to test the working hypotheses formulated. Significant correlations were set at a minimum of .05 level confidence.

Total television viewing time was partialled out of the correlational analysis because selection of traditional

consumer items could simply be a reflection of total exposure to television, regardless of content.

Results

The negative correlation between U.S. television viewing and choices of traditional items was significant in the villages (r=.391, p .050), but not in the city (r=.083, n.s.). And the positive association between exposure to Mexican television and selection of traditional products was verified in the countryside (r=.409, p .050) but not in the urban setting (r=.014, n.s.). Both hypotheses (1.a) and (1.b) were supported by the data. Hence, in the villages, individuals more exposed to U.S. television tended to have lower degrees of traditionalism, while those that viewed more Mexican programming were more likely to have higher degrees of traditionalism. And, as predicted by hypothesis (2), relationships between transborder television and traditionalism in product choices were significant only in the countryside. Therefore, all hypotheses were supported by the data.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and t-test calcualtions, while Table 2 displays correlation coefficients between demographics and major variables. As indicated in Table 1, the rural and urban samples were similar in their television viewing habits, degree of traditionalism, and demographic variables.

According to results in Table 2, total television viewing as well as exposure to U.S. television were inversely correlated with age in the villages only. In the countryside, the older the person, the less he tended to watch television.

In the city, income and exposure to U.S. television were significantly correlated, but the relationship did not reach significance in the villages. Education and income were significantly associated in both villages and city. And the largest correlation was observed between age and traditionalism. The older the respondent, the more traditional he tended to be.

Table 1

Mean Scores on Major Variables and t-tests Between Corozal Town Residents and Villagers

	Total Sample	Villages	Corozal Town	t-test
U.S. Television (hours/week)	10.313	8.938	11.688	1.148
Mexican Television (hours/week)	8.385	9.729	7.042	1.579
Total TV Exposure (hours/week)	18.198	18.042	18.354	0.099
Traditionalism	5.042	5.104	4.979	0.350
Education (years in school)	7.875	7.396	8.354	1.252
Family Size	6.708	6.979	6.438	0.097
Age	37.5	38.0	37.0	0.874
Income/Month (Per Family, U.S.$)	386	375	397	0.040

*Significant at pΔ.050

Table 2

Zero-Order Correlations Between Demographics and Major Variables (Villages)

	Education	Income	Age	Family Size
Total TV Exposure	0.051	0.069	-0.397*	0.093
U.S. Television	0.189	0.188	-0.343*	0.059
Mexican Television	-0.049	-0.098	-0.246	0.046
Traditionalism	-0.228	-0.080	- 0.542*	0.129
Education	1.000	0.315*	-0.211	-0.243
Income	0.315*	1.000	0.000	-0.157
Age	-0.211	0.000	1.000	0.161
Family Size	-0.243	-0.157	0.161	1.000

(Corozal Town)

Total TV Exposure	0.094	0.180	0.012	0.180
U.S. Television	0.106	0.348*	0.053	0.217
Mexican Television	-0.099	-0.265	0.034	-0.079
Traditionalism	-0.280	-0.338*	0.569*	-0.309*
Education	1.000	0.312*	-0.590*	0.112
Income	0.312*	1.000	-0.336*	0.197
Age	-0.590*	-0.336*	1.000	-0.251
Family Size	-0.112	0.197	-0.251	1.000

*Significant at p Δ 0.050

Discussion

Relationships between television viewing and consumer variables tend to be significantly affected by the nature of programming and the communication environment. The associations were negative or positive depending on the kind of service watched, U.S. or Mexican; and only reached significance in the rural setting.

U.S. Programming and Traditionalism

Previous studies support the position that the larger the exposure, the lower the degree of traditionalism (Lerner, 1966; Inkeles and Smith, 1974; Rogers, 1969). Wells (1972, p. 5) emphasizes the negative effects of television in the Third World: Television now comes to the poor countries before factories or trans-country highways, and washing machines arrive in the modern sector before the widespread amenity of uncontaminated piped water." His study suggested that television advertising encourages the consumption of "modern" (Western) products and are not likely to stimulate the consumption of indigenous or traditional items (Wells, 1973, p. 139).

The negative relationship between U.S. television viewing and traditionalism might be explained by the exposure to Western values through the media. Those individuals who are more attracted by U.S. programs, might also have a larger identification with the values portrayed in those programs. That may be the reason why they choose to watch U.S. instead of Mexican television.

Yet, the number of traditional product choices of city dwellers did not correlate with U.S. television viewing. The significant difference between the associations found in the villages and those observed in the city might be explained by the variety of other modernizing factors present in Corozal Town, but not readily available in the countryside. The town offers a variety of "modernizing institutions" (Deutsch, 1961), such as supermarkets, post offices, telephones, movie theaters, restaurants, hotels, and frequent contacts with tourists. Possible negative connections between use of U.S. programming with traditionalism in the town might have been diluted by exposure to those other modernizing forces.

As Chaffee (1974, p. 368) noted, in media-rich societies "use of media is under the control of the audience . . . there are too many sources of information available for the media to control the individual's opinions and behavior," whereas in media-poor societies the few sources available are seen as having a hightened effect. For instance, among the motivations for rural-urban migration, the mass media are often cited as one of the most significant factors (Germani, 1971, p. 142).

Corozal Town may be thought of as a media rich environment relative to the villages. The different relationships highlight the importance of the media milieu surrounding the viewer. As expressed by Sarkar (1980, p. 65), it is important for research on media influence to be sensitive not only to the varying kinds of effects that they may produce, but also to the total communication environment."

It is plausible that urban dwellers, due to their lifestyle plus their extensive exposure to a variety of media, might be quicker in developing a "perceptual screen," than villagers (Ohlgren & Berk, 1977). Research results in the U.S. suggest that persons extensively exposure to a variety of commercials tend to develop mental resistance to such messages.

Inhabitants of the countryside, however, might be more susceptible to these commercial messages. They, more than residents of the city, might assign greater priority to the medium, being less critical. Thus, their lower media literacy, combined with the remarkable differences between lifestyles, might further explain why correlations were significant only among rural dwellers.

An additional remark on traditionalism: in both rural and urban samples there was a highly significant correlaiton between age and traditionalism, which would seem to give further validity to the traditional scale used in this study. It is logical to assume that older people are also more traditional.

Mexican Programming and Traditionalism

Mexican television viewing and traditionalism were positively correlated. Those persons in the villages, who

viewed more Mexican television tended to hold more traditional attitudes. Perhaps Mexican television presents a way of life similar to that found in Northern Belize. Given a choice of programming, it should be expected that persons more comfortable with traditional values, would also choose a service more in keeping with their beliefs.

Moreover, the communication environment seemed to have played a significant role in this relationship also, since the association was significant only in the villages. The probable reasons may again be found in the differential opportunities for media exposure in the rural and urban settings, as explained above.

The analysis supports Falcon's (1979, p. 66) suggestion that increased identification with traditional values could be cultivated by the media. He proposed that indigenous values could be enchanced by a systematic boost in the production of Third World popular culture. In such a situation, exposure to indigenous media would be conductive to the adoption of traditional cultural values. Similarly, in rural Belize, it was found that traditionalism is linked with Mexican television viewing.

Nonetheless, this finding contradicts those reported in the modernization literature. Generally, it has been indicated that exposure to the media (regardless of content) moves individuals away from their traditional frame of mind. The positive relationship between exposure to a Third World television service and traditionalism found in this study is contrary to some of the results presented in previous studies (Lerner, 1966; Rogers, 1969; Frey, 1973; Inkeles & Smith, 1974).

In spite of its potential importance, the impact of specific media content is seldomly researched, due to the methodological difficulties involved in separating the impact of Western from Third World fare. The relevance of television programming in possible media effects studies is apparent in the findings. The results showed that the type of television as well as the general context played a significant role in connections between television viewing and audience's responses.

The general assumption that exposure to television

(regardless of content) tend to decrease traditionalism, was not supported by the study. This presupposition may not apply to Third World programming.

Recommendations

Policy recommendations may be based on the findings. As previously explained policy makers in developing regions have been increasingly concerned with the media's direct or indirect impact on their balance of payments. They often wonder if larger exposure to Western television programs contributes to the rejection of indigenous goods (UNCTAD, 1978). The findings do not provide a conclusive answer to the problem. But, they indicate that, in rural Belize, exposure to U.S. television was inversely linked to choices of traditional items. On the other hand, Mexican television viewing was directly correlated with choices of regional products. So, the policy recommendation that might spring from this research, is that the increased availability of Third World programming in developing areas, might enhance the comparative demand for indigenous consumer items.

Conclusion

The study presents mixed support for the modernization approach. Exposure to U.S. television is negatively associated with traditionalism as predicted by the theory. But exposure to Mexican television is positively correlated with traditionalism in product choices, a finding that contradicts its assumptions. Moreover, the results apply only to the villages, an indication of contextual influences. Overall, the study points out that media effects may to a large extent depend on both the nature of programming and the kind of media context around viewers.

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