

# Rural Livelihood, Return Migration, and Remittances in St. Vincent

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## INTRODUCTION

Eastern Caribbean countries, with the possible exception of Trinidad and Tobago, can be summarily categorized as microstates: small in size with open, dependent economic systems and populations resulting from migration. Throughout Caribbean history migration has played a dominant role in the origin, development, and current status of the region's sociopolitical economic systems (Patterson 1978). As a complex phenomenon exhibiting innumerable varieties of human spatial mobility, however, the consequences of migration to the contemporary Caribbean have been difficult to assess in their entirety.

This paper discusses one important consequence of migration, namely, the impact of remittances: The homeward transfer of cash and kind sent back to eastern Caribbean societies by emigrants who have left to live, study, or work overseas. These migrants may undertake permanent or temporary emigration, but it is widely accepted that a "return ideology" prevails (Rubenstein 1979), and that international circulation and return migration are enduring features of the mobility of Caribbean peoples (Chaney 1985; Conway 1986a.) Specifically, return behavior, return and non-return expectations, together with remittances obligations, greatly influence the homeward transfer of funds and other resources from eastern Caribbean emigrants to their home communities. If we are to assess the impact of these transfers of cash and kind on societal development, however, the structural contexts in which remittances occur must be recognized as important determinant conditions. Field research in rural St. Vincent provided a basis for an initial examination of this issue (Glesne 1985).

## DO REMITTANCES COUNTER DEVELOPMENT

Most microlevel research on the impact of remittances has focused on the effects of this transfer of cash and kind on the emigrant returnees themselves, their family remaining behind, their kin, or their local community. Detailed case studies of communities in several Caribbean microstates have underscored the importance of such remittances to family survival and support (Frucht 1968; Hill 1977; Myers 1976; Philpott 1973; Richardson 1983; Tobias 1975). On the basis of such community-level investigations, several commentators have preferred to dwell on inductive generalizations concerning the agricultural, economic, and societal consequences of remittances. They invariably have concluded that impacts of remittances have been disappointing in terms of inducing societal development or what is perceived as much-needed socio-structural change in these countries' problem-ridden agricultural sectors (Brana-Shute and Brana-Shute 1982; Palmer 1974; Rubenstein 1982, 1983; Swanson 1979; Watson 1982).

The Brana-Shutes (1982) have provided a veritable litany of negative consequences of remittances in the Caribbean. In terms of agricultural consequences, remittances (1) lead to declines in agricultural activity and productivity, (2) cause land to be removed from cultivation, (3) encourage half-hearted efforts by those left behind as laborers or overseers, (4) encourage land speculation for housing rather than agricultural sites, and (5) alter previous demands for fresh, local produce via purchasing preferences for imported canned goods. In terms of economic consequences, while living standards increase for individuals and households [end p. 3] as remittances are used to improve their material quality of life, the following negative impacts appear more important for "development": (1) general community standards may decrease as the gap widens between the masses of the "haves" and the "have-nots," (2) recipients may avoid low-status labor such as farming, (3) part-time labor is used to supplement remittances rather than vice-versa, (4) dependency on imported food may become excessive, and (5) as the main source of growth at home may be income earned abroad, a boom or bust economy develops where progress is experienced during the industrial metropolis' prosperity in good years, but retrenchment and hardship

occur over a long adjustment period in the lean years. In terms of social consequences, remittances were felt to (1) undermine village relationships, gender roles, and traditional labor arrangements, (2) foster social stratification based not on local efforts but on external sources of wealth, (3) underwrite expenses for the entire social system in some extreme cases, and (4) lead to the development of a "migration mentality" (Brana-Shute and Brana-Shute 1982).

In addition to this list of woes, claims have been forwarded that remittances contribute to a perpetuation of external dependency: Maintaining the existing system of societal inequality, maintaining poor rural families, and, accordingly, perpetuating the retention of small and economically marginal farm plots, while the receiving countries derive greatest benefits from a flexible immigrant labor force (Manners 1965; Swanson 1979; Watson 1982). Charges also have been leveled that remittances have contributed to improvements of some individuals' material quality of life to the exclusion of productive investments in any capital generating activity; "conspicuous consumption" is manifest in consumerism of imported goods, imported foodstuffs, in elaborate housing construction, and in choice of expenditures in marginally productive enterprises like rum shops, taxis, and boutiques.

The overall tenor is negative. The disappointing record of nonproductive investment, of declining agricultural productivity or even agriculture abandonment, of inflation impacts, of conspicuous consumerism, and of encouragement for continuing patterns of out-migration is bemoaned. But is it not possible that such commentary has been somewhat unrealistic in its expectations of the impacts of remittances? After all, remittances are only one feature of migration-related effects on eastern Caribbean development, albeit a significant feature. Furthermore, it may be premature to generalize on remittances' negative impacts across the range of eastern Caribbean territories and insular societies. Although all can be categorized as microstates, there are size differences, significant variations in environmental resource bases, and considerable variation in degrees of complexity and differentiation of their economies (Richardson 1983). Such geographical and structural differences might be expected to provide divergent opportunity fields for remittances and, accordingly, might be the more relevant determinants of investment priorities than the capricious volition of the people involved.

Drawing upon evidence from rural St. Vincent, we question the presumption that all, or most, impacts of remittances counter development and progress in the eastern Caribbean. We suggest that (1) remittances should not be expected to be catalysts of program transformation in eastern Caribbean agricultural economies and (2) remittances' investment priorities are constrained by a limited set of opportunities. Our anticipation is that the recipients base their investment behavior on rational criteria and that (3) remittances contribute fundamentally to family survival and support but do not unequivocally further a "welfare mentality."

### **ST. VINCENT'S STRUCTURAL LIMITS**

The island of St. Vincent is barely 18 miles long by 11 miles wide (Figure 1). No roads completely circle or cut across it, however, because of the steep and rugged terrain. The estimated population of the island approaches 115,000. Statistics vary, but as many as two-thirds of the labor force are still involved in agriculture; this is in spite of a consistent drift out of the sector over the past twenty-five years (LeFranc 1980).

The volcanic soils, warm temperatures, and bountiful rainfall are ideal for growing a variety of tropical produce. Bananas, arrowroot, coconut oil, tuber crops, and fruits such as limes, mango, and avocado make up 90 to 95 percent of the nation's exports. In spite of disadvantages that small farmholders face in terms of limited land space, they are the principal producers of both domestic and export crops. The most recent agricultural census reported that farmers with up to 5 acres grew more than half of each of St. Vincent's major crops in 1972-73 (LeFranc 1980). These same smallholders make up 78 percent of all holdings in St. Vincent, yet they only control 22 percent of the cultivated land on the island. Much of the land continues to be held in private or government-managed estates. The labor force of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is estimated at 40,000, or 30 percent of the total population. Of that labor force, approximately one-third are women and almost half are under 25 years of age. Unemployment figures vary from 20 percent to nearly 40 percent when underemployment is included (Labor Commissioner interview 1982). Projections put the annual growth of the force at a minimum of 3.5 [end p. 4]

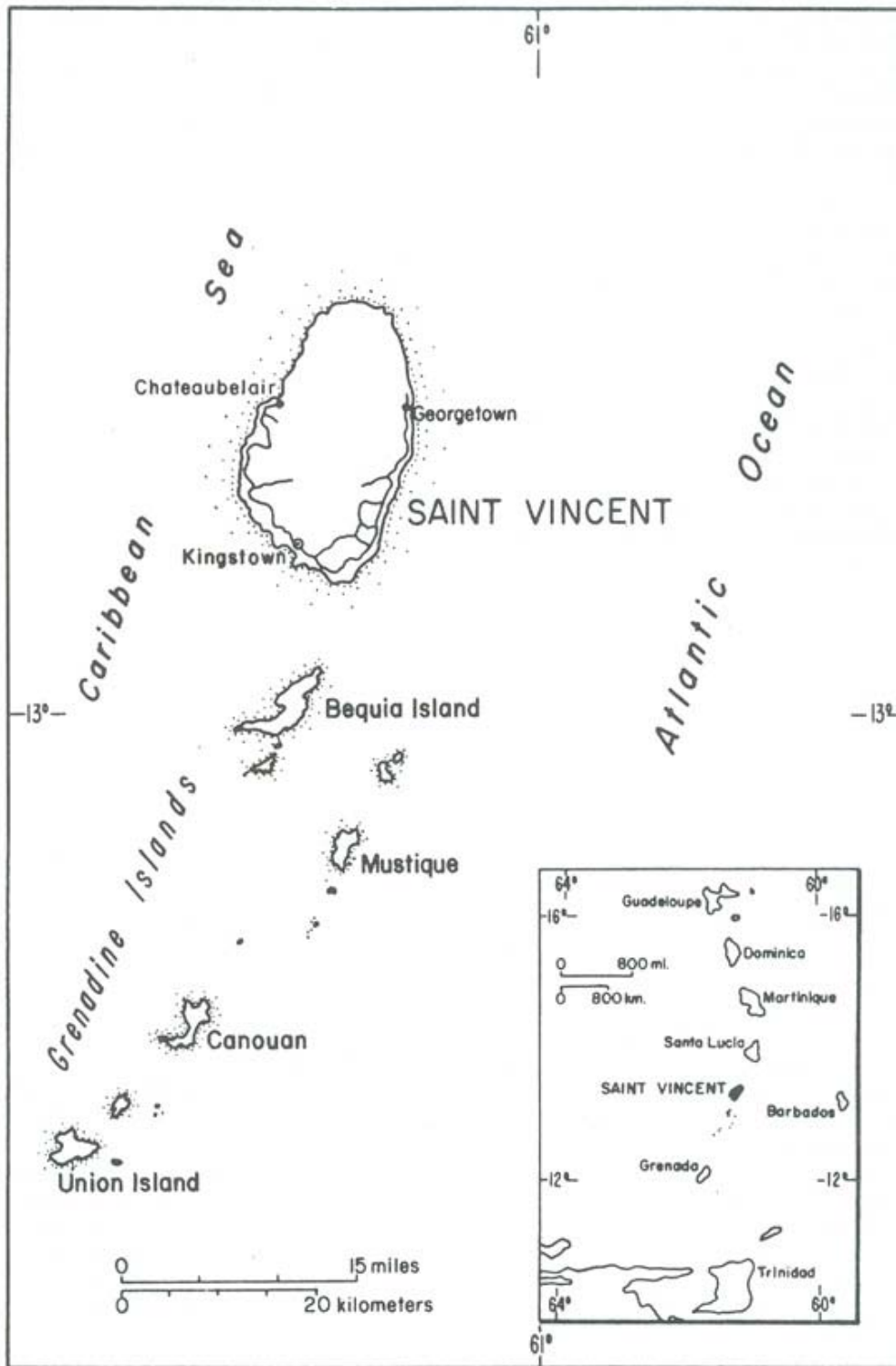


Fig. 1. St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

[end p. 5] percent, assuming that emigration continues at relatively the same level as in the past. This suggests that at least 1,100 young people will enter the labor market each year.

For the majority in St. Vincent, options for generating an income other than through agriculture are limited. The government is the largest permanent employer, particularly of those with the highest educational credentials. The industrial-manufacturing sector, furnishing some 2,000 positions, contributes proportionately few jobs. Before

1982, industrial production consisted primarily of processing edible oil, rum, lime juice, soft drinks, cigarettes, and of cottage-type industries that made jams, jellies, peppper sauce, and the like. Since then, a number of light manufacturing industries have been established by foreign investors. Most are assembly operations where the materials are imported, assembled primarily by women paid the minimum wages of \$3.87 a day, and then exported. Although the government and private developers are making efforts to increase tourism, particularly in the Grenadines, that sector generally provides only seasonal jobs for at most 1,500 people (Glesne 1985).

### **MIGRATION, RETURN EXPECTATIONS, AND REMITTANCES**

"Times rough," say many a young Vincentian. " Yes, times rough," agrees one young woman, "but it's up to we to see our way through." And an obvious "way through" is to emigrate to another Caribbean island or, if possible, to the United States or Canada, and make enough money to assist those back home and to return with enough to "set up oneself. " This is a livelihood option initiated in colonial times and continued as an adaptive strategy potentially available to each Vincentian. Each family has its own migration traditions. Many have lived portions of their childhood with a mother or relative working on a neighboring island. All have close relatives working somewhere abroad. Migration and the resulting remittances have been part of traditional Caribbean life since emancipation (Connway 1986b; Richardson 1983).

The following data on migration behaviors and remittances were gathered through a series of in-depth open-ended interviews with 30 Vincentians--9 women and 21 men--ages 18 to 28 (Glesne 1985). All resided in a rural village on the leeward side of St. Vincent. <sup>1</sup> They were categorized into two groups according to their relative levels of socio-economic standing, but overall they were lower class rural Vincentians. In addition, evidence from shorter interviews with 65 others in the village and in Kingstown lend support to the theme of this paper, which questions an unqualified negative portrayal of remittances contributions to Caribbean development.

Table 1. Young rural Vincentian motives for migrating or staying.

Reasons to Migrate	---- Relative Socioeconomic Standing <sup>a</sup> ----		
	Lower SES	Higher SES	Total
experience	5	4	9
work	6	0	6
education	0	5	5
family & friends	2	0	2
TOTALS	13	9	22

Reasons to Remain in St. Vincent	----- Relative Economic Standing <sup>a</sup> -----		
	Lower SES	Higher SES	Total
one's land	1	1	2
too involved	1	1	2
like their life	0	2	2
would leave only if had to make money	1	1	2
TOTALS	3	5	8

<sup>a</sup>Relative socioeconomic standing is based upon (1) having a household with facilities such as electricity, indoor plumbing, and a refrigerator and (2) education beyond primary schooling. Higher SES should be construed as higher than Lower SES.

Source: Author field data.

Two-thirds of the informants indicated a desire to live abroad. Their reasons fell into four categories: experience, education, work, and to be with family and friends (Table 1). Those who wanted the experience of living elsewhere preferred leaving St. Vincent for several months up to several years and to visit a variety of countries, including America, Canada, and Africa. Socio-economic standing did not seem to play a part in this particular reasoning. The typical response was, "I wouldn't want to go abroad to live, but I would like to experience different countries, to see what the outside world is like."

Those who wanted to study abroad generally mentioned the United States or Canada as their desired destinations. This group belonged to the higher socio-economic strata. Almost all had some sort of formal education beyond primary school. Earning money was the primary migration motivation for youth of the lower socio-economic

group. Many, with no more than primary schooling, viewed migration as the only way to improve their life chances. On the other hand, such an admission did not mean that emigration was necessarily a preferred option. In terms of destination choice, Trinidad and America or Canada were mentioned as the possible places where these poor youth would go to make money. [end p. 6]

Those who did not want to leave St. Vincent at all gave the following reasons: (1) they have land to work, (2) they are too involved in what they are doing, or (3) they like their life in St. Vincent (Table 1). The two situational factors underlying this desire to stay appeared to be the interviewee's possession of a fairly good source of income or an ideological dedication and commitment to a group or project in St. Vincent.

Table 2. Young rural vincentian sources of remittances.

Source	-----Relative Socioeconomic Status-----		Total
	Higher SES	Lower SES	
siblings	3	2	5
mother	0	3	3
uncle/aunt	0	3	3
“relative”	1	2	3
boyfriend	0	3	3
“friend”	2	1	3
father	1	0	1
spouse	1	0	0
TOTALS	8	14	22 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Five interviewees mentioned more than one source for remittances

Source: Author field data

Table 3. Young Vincentian variety in sources of income.

Source	---Respondents Reporting Source Importance---		
	Major	Shared	Minor
Salaried Job	10	3	0
Agriculture (own, squat, sharecrop)	6	7	8
“Scrunting” and occasional wage work	3	1	0
Full-time Wage Work	1	1	0
Trades	1	0	3
Remittances	1	4	12

Source: Author field data

In support of Rubenstein's "return ideology," a theme pervading all categories of answers was the intention to return to St. Vincent even if work, study, or experiences abroad were undertaken. Not one of the interviewees wanted to leave St. Vincent permanently. Those who wished to go abroad for work saw themselves returning with enough money to buy a plot of land and to build a house. "If I can't make it in St. Vincent," stated one young man, "I would go where I could make it and then return to St. Vincent and live in my own yard." A young woman replied, "I'd make money so I could build a house. Even if I did stay for a while, I would come back when I was old and relax in my house." Many older Vincentians have provided models for such behavioral intentions. For example, a village shop owner who was interviewed spent 20 years in England before returning to St. Vincent to "get away from the rat race, build a house, and slow down." He saved enough money not only to build his house, but also to set up a small grocery shop and to buy a portion of land to farm.

Frequently, interviewees would say, "I love St. Vincent, the life here is very nice" or "St. Vincent a nice place." They view the island as a peaceful place without the violence and crime reported in many of the larger Caribbean nations. There is a widely held perception that people have more freedom in St. Vincent than in other countries. At the same time there is a general admission of the island's lack of opportunities for income generation and for education attainment. St. Vincent is their home. Therefore, they intend to leave--but, "leave to return."

Almost without exception, those who leave the island assist family and dependents at home through remittances. More than half of the young respondents received bank drafts from family or friends overseas (Table 2). This repatriated money was the major source of income, however, for only one respondent, a female (Table 3). For several others, remittances were as important as other ways of generating income. For the majority, however, remittances contributed only sporadically, generally around Christmas and birthdays, to a Vincentian's welfare. If the sender were either the receiver's mother or boyfriend and father to a child, the contributions tended to be more regular. Stated one woman who made about \$50 U.S. a month as a domestic: "My boyfriend (and her child's father) in Tortolla sends money every two months, sometimes it's three months. He sends at the most, U.S. \$50.00.

Most of the informants had tried their hand at several means of income generation and continued attempts to earn money through various means (Table 3). Young men of lower socio-economic status participate in various trades such as masonry, carpentry, or mechanics. They work land and are truck hands and van conductors or drivers. They also do road work and agricultural labor. Working women in the same class clean houses, cultivate land and

do agricultural labor, and work in factories.

The money earned or received by these young Vincentians primarily goes toward "satisfying the basic financial requirements of life" or, as another respondent stated, "don't nothing come free." In most cases, life's basic financial requirements means food first, then clothing and household needs such as cooking fuel, kerosene, and soap. Although rural and, to some extent, town people obtain much of their food from gardens, they must still purchase certain staples such as rice, flour, and oil (other than coconut oil).

For many, the money does not meet their needs. Roselle, with three young children, works land, [end p. 7] markets produce, and receives remittances from the children's father now in Trinidad. She lamented, "I don't even know [where my income goes]. I have small children, I have to help my mother. Sometimes before the week is gone, the money is finished. " Finding the means to earn sufficient money in St. Vincent is a constant struggle and the economic reality for many is multiple jobs (Table 4). Vincentians like Roselle do not reduce their workload because of the remittances received. Remittances are simply another contribution to household survival.

Roselle, although poor and unschooled, has ten mountain acres to farm (nearly rent free); some people have much less. Many young men live day to day because their lack of land, capital, and skills leave them with few alternate choices. In addition, they generally assume little responsibility for others. They can get work as agricultural laborers and do so when they absolutely need or want cash. Generally they prefer not to, since agricultural labor in contrast to working one's own land or even sharecropping is considered "slavin'." As one young man said, "My father worked on the estate for over 40 years and to the end, he received nothing. I would not do that. I'd rather [be] dead." In these cases, remittances would appear to assist such young men to resist permanent entry into the agricultural labor force as casual employees.

In contrast to those with little education and no land, Vincentians who have both land and at least some secondary schooling usually make enough surplus through their farming, often a salaried position as well, and with remittances, to "put some money back" into their agricultural operations (Table 4). They hire workers, pay produce transportation costs, or buy agricultural inputs. This group is also able to establish a savings account for specific purposes such as land improvements, education, travel, or home building. Several of the lower socio-economic status respondents also reported attempts to save money, but as often as not their savings were "down to the ground."

### **INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND IMPACTS OF REMITTANCES**

In general, remittances are just one of several unstable sources of income for Vincentians. Nevertheless, they are an important source of revenue because the alternative means for generating any income in St. Vincent are severely limited (Table 5). Remittances particularly flow toward women, old and young, many with several children under their care. Remittances also enable the poor to perhaps to increase their options through education and skill acquisition, to purchase land, or in the creation of a small business venture.



Table 4. Young rural Vincentians' agricultural participation.

	--- Relative Socioeconomic Standing ---		
	Higher SES	Lower SES	Total <sup>a</sup>
laborer	0	4	4
sharecrop/rent	4	5	9
rent-free	5	1	6
help on family land	1	4	5
control family/own land	6	4	10
none	1	4	5

<sup>a</sup>Many of the respondents are involved in more than one mode of agricultural participation. The total is therefore greater than 25.

Source: Author field data.

Evidence from St. Vincent suggests that the effect of remittances is dependent upon the socioeconomic situation of both the country and the individual. St. Vincent does not have the industrial or tourist options that are available in Barbados or Trinidad; however, unlike the drier Leewards, it has considerably more agricultural potential. The government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Vincentians who control large amounts of land might perceive remittances as contributing to a decline in agricultural activity because those who traditionally are hired to perform casual labor will refuse to work, their necessities cared for by the remittances. The past 25 years have indeed seen agricultural labor increasingly shunned by Vincentians unless there were no other way to acquire money. From the perspective of those who control smaller portions of "non-marginal land", however, whether it is family-owned or rented, remittances enable them to influence and possibly increase their agricultural efforts. Our evaluation is that the impact of steady influxes of remittances on sharecropping depends on the amount of land, viability of the land, and the type of share-cropping agreement with the landlord. Remittances do not necessarily remove land from cultivation unless (1) the land is marginal land, difficult to work, and some distance from the village, or (2) the land is estate land that depends upon hired labor to bring it into production.

The charge that remittances encourage half-hearted efforts by those left behind as laborers or overseers is overly general. This condemnation assumes a private ownership tenure system and does not acknowledge the important role of "family land" in a Caribbean island like St. Vincent. The family land system functions to prevent successive division of a family's most significant resource, its land, as well as, at the least, to symbolically provide resource access for everyone in the extended family. If a person is working five acres of non-marginal family land and then leaves to work in the Virgin [end p. 8] Islands, someone else in the family would continue the cultivation--not as a laborer or overseer, but as a family member who "controls" the land for the time being.

The general assertion that recipients of remittances avoid low-status labor such as farming is also extending a homogeneous characterization beyond reality, as it describes all forms of working agricultural land as "farming." In St. Vincent, "farming" implies owning enough land to employ others. The ability to do so has been a status symbol since plantation times. Sharecroppers or agricultural laborers do not generally refer to themselves as "farmers," nor do they call what they do "farming." Rather they "work lands." People who tend small plots of family land generally say they have been "in the garden" or "up mountain." They do not necessarily consider themselves to be farmers either. Sharecropping, laboring, and gardening are low in profitability as well as in status (Table 4). If remittances provide avenues to make income in other ways, then Vincentians will venture other means. To many, a priority is to gain access to enough land so they can become a genuine "farmer."

Table 5. Work opportunities for young rural Vincentians.

Group	-----Position-----		
	Salaried or Full-time wage	Self-employed	Nonpermanent Wage
Female and Male	teacher	farmer (own/sharecrop)	agricultural laborer
	police officer town jobs —other civil service jobs —store clerk —office work	trafficker shop owner	road worker
Female	nurse secretary factory worker	huckster street vendor	smocking domestic <sup>a</sup>
Male	driver conductor	tradesman trucker minibus man fisherman	sailor <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>These positions are sometimes permanent wage employment.

Source: Author field data.

True, remittances may encourage land speculation for housing because Vincentians hold their homes in great esteem. A dream of most Vincentians is to own a nice home, and they will invest in this priority whenever they can. Home pride is shown in the care and effort put into maintaining and renovating the house and "yard." However, having a plot of land for a house does not preclude gardening a portion of that land. Nor does it mean that the owner is not also interested in owning a piece of land for agriculture.

Remittances are not necessarily responsible for an increased demand for imported foods by Caribbean people. The importation of food began with the colonial exploitation of the islands. Imported foods such as salt fish became staples for the slaves and continue to be a part of the Vincentian diet. Plantation masters imported other foods for themselves. These products, such as whiskey rather than local rum, became status items. Although remittances permit the purchase of such status goods, they also contribute to the purchase of other imported household staples of the poor; for example also creating an increasing market for fresh greens and vegetables.

In terms of economic consequences, remittances widen the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots." Our view is that remittances may be indirectly assisting an equalization of wealth in St. Vincent. Estate holders who cannot hire laborers to work their land turn to less labor-intensive crops, begin to pasture animals, leave lands idle, and sell off more marginal pieces. Therefore, the poor labor situation (perhaps assisted by the remittances) may put land on the open market that was previously held in private estates. Remittances may then help prospective small farmers in the purchase of land, while at the same time reducing the total pool of assets of the estate owners and increasing the proportion of small land holders.

Evidence from St. Vincent suggests a complexity of factors influence investment patterns of remittances. We see a situation where remittances do contribute to family survival, but do not thereby preclude household economic

activity. We would concur that one effect of remittances in eastern Caribbean microstates with marginally productive cash-crop agricultural sectors has been to exacerbate further declines in productivity. Our evaluation of this impact diverges, however, from that of most previous commentators, the exception being Philpott (1973), in that remittances expenditures are as much a consequence of the unproductive and marginal state of these stagnating or declining agricultural sectors as they are one contributory factor to further decline. The impact of remittances on marginal agricultural productivity is circumscribed by the "economic rationality" of remitters and remitees, together with their preferences to be self-employed with a certain degree of financial independence, but more importantly by the dearth of opportunities therein for remunerative investment. In short, it is [end p. 9] precisely because livelihood in cash-crop agriculture was so hard, labor-intensive, and arduous without just reward, yet so dependent on the exploitative tactics of plantation, transportation, and wholesale agents, the vagaries of climate and the fickleness of local and international markets, that feelings of powerlessness together with economic reality has led to avoidance of this laboring livelihood for themselves and their children. Little wonder remittances provided the wherewithall to finance flight from a livelihood in beleaguered agricultural economies that appeared to offer little or no hope of prosperity. Remittances just could not "buy" what such "marginal" agriculture needed: fair prices for produce, reliable and affordable supplies of intermediate goods-fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide, and pest-resistant seeds and root stocks, feed for live and, most importantly, reliable markets and efficient access (transportation) to markets (Caribbean Development Bank 1980).

There are also limitations in the opportunities for investment of remittances outside the agricultural sector which mean that a further impact is the diversion of expenditures into productive activities other than the formally recognized sectors. Philpott (1973) suggests investment channels are culturally defined and accordingly are limited. We believe that limitations are a consequence of the degree of diversification of the economy and strongly circumscribed by societal stratification. Given the open, dependent natures of the economic systems in the eastern Caribbean, relatively large scale foreign and local merchant capital dominate investment climates, notably in the areas of commerce and trade, tourism, and import-substitution or export-oriented light manufacturing. In less-diversified economies like St. Vincent, commission agents still monopolize trade and commerce and agriculture remains the unyielding master of waning fortunes.

#### **AN AGENDA FOR REMITTANCE RESEARCH**

The general dearth of empirical assessments of the impacts of remittances on particular eastern Caribbean economies should caution us against premature acceptance of ideological "truths" or sweeping inductive generalizations. Much more research is needed to go beyond concerns of impacts of remittances at the family or community level and consider how the structural contexts constrain or facilitate patterns of expenditures of remittances. The abstract "theoretical" discourses on dependent relations and world-system inequalities of the likes of Rubenstein (1983) and Watson (1983) may be intuitively appealing, but until tested by substantive analysis, they merely stand as initial constructs, scarcely theoretical explanations.

In order to gain a better understanding of the impacts of remittances on the development of eastern Caribbean countries, we need to further investigate the character and nature of their patterns in relation to the geographical, social, and political-economic contexts in which such remittances occur. This paper has focused on remittances in St. Vincent, has demonstrated their importance in rural livelihood strategies, and has exposed the limitations of opportunities for productive remittance investment except in certain areas of small farming. A recent study of migration impacts on human resources, income, and savings in St. Vincent by Marshall (1985) also confirms these findings.

Until remittances research addresses determinative factors and is able to estimate relative sizes of capital flows, then assessments of the impacts of remittances on eastern Caribbean island economies will remain speculative rather than substantive. One tentative hypothesis, however, does emerge from this initial inquiry. We are persuaded that within the eastern Caribbean, comparative analyses of remittances' impacts in island economies should be conducted in which the relative size and degree of diversification of the formal and informal economic sectors are major discriminating factors influencing investment patterns and expenditures of remittances. Our anticipation is that where such diversity and size are indeed limited and inflows of remittances relative to the domestic circulation of capital are large, the net effects of remittances in such microstates may indeed be counter-productive. On the other hand, in a Caribbean country like Barbados where diversity of opportunities is much greater but where remittances, although substantial, are not an overwhelming proportion of the domestic circulation of capital, the net effect of remittances is more likely to be positive. This alternative hypothesis on

differential experiences among eastern Caribbean countries remains to be tested.

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#### **NOTE**

1. Since the sample is small, to honor confidentiality we have withheld information on the name of the village and the specific whereabouts of the respondents' residences. **[end p. 11]**