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The Grenada
NEWSLETTER

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COCOA RETURNS FALL

"We produce one of the best cocoas in the world, but we do not produce enough".

MR RAYMOND RUSH

IN A RADIO BROADCAST ON February 21st, Mr Raymond Rush, Interim Chairman of the Cocoa Association, told cocoa farmers that their financial returns for the crop year 1987/88 are not as good as for the previous year.

Production fell by nearly 2% from the 1986/87 figure of 3,747,360 pounds, he said, while, at the same time, the average price per pound declined by 11.9% from the 1986/87 figure of EC$2.86.

Declined

"As a result of these factors", he said, "total revenue for the year declined by EC$1,401,686, or 13% from the previous year."

Mr Rush said it had been possible to reduce the Association's operating expenditure by 3.4% as compared with the previous year, and the overall situation had been improved by a grant of EC$702,407 from the European Economic Community under the "STABEX" fund set up to assist shortfalls in agricultural export revenues.

As a result, the Chairman said, the total price per pound to the farmer in the 1987/88 year is EC$1.71, a decline of 12% from the 1986/87 figure of EC$1.94

Because of surplus world production, the international cocoa market continues to be depressed in the current year, Mr Rush said, and in the European sector of the market, the Association expects to receive an average price of only EC$1.87 per pound, a drop of EC$0.65 per pound from the previous year.

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On the brighter side, the Association has been able to negotiate a contract, at a price of EC$3.20 per pound with the United States company of World Finest Chocolates.

"Despite the surplus cocoa on the world market", the Chairman said, "the demand for Grenada's cocoa is increasing. We

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IRC COCOA SEMINAR

Mrs Pauline Andrew

"What we would like to help with is to improve the export performance in the producing countries".

MRS PAULINE ANDREW, Acting Minister For Agriculture, opened, on February 13th, a two day Cocoa Marketing Seminar conducted by personnel of the International Trade Centre (ITC) based in Geneva, Switzerland.

Mrs Andrew referred to the importance of the Cocoa Industry to the economy of Grenada and expressed pleasure that the seminar had attracted such a wide cross section of the community.

"Government thinks that, in the restructuring plan of the Cocoa Industry", she said, "an informed and well educated cocoa farmer, together with everybody in the cocoa industry, makes the industry one which will remain in Grenada for a long time".

Leader of the ITC team was Mr Bertil Byskov, ITC Senior Market Development Advisor, and with him were Mr J J Scheu, President of the Cocoa Merchants Association of America and Mr Oscar Sigg.

Advisor

Mr Sigg has had 35 years experience in the international Cocoa Market as a purchaser for one of the largest chocolate manufacturers in the world, and is now attached to ITC as an advisor to developing countries on the marketing of their cocoa crops.

Addressing the opening ceremony, Mr Byskov said the seminar organised in Grenada was of a type which has already been held in a number of small developing countries. It is based on an ITC handbook,

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produce one of the best cocoas in the world, but we do not produce enough".

The Cocoa Board does not expect the prevailing low market prices to continue for very long, he said, and he encouraged farmers to do everything to meet the current demand.

In a Report circulated to Cocoa Farmers on February 23rd, the Cocoa Board says the international cocoa market is in a period of uncertainty because the Ivory Coast, "the main producing country" is attempting, single-handedly, to force an increase in prices.

Depressed

The strategy of the Ivory Coast, the Board says, is to refuse to sell until the price is "right" and this has produced an artificial shortage of cocoa. Prices remain depressed, however, the Board says, because buyers know there are supplies of cocoa which can be sold "once the price is right".

With reference to the planned integration of the Grenada Cocoa Association and the Cocoa Rehabilitation Project, the Board's Report says, this is expected to take place during the 1988/89 year and will coincide with the start of a five year assistance package financed by the Canadian International Development Agency.

End

BRIZAN CALLED "WICKED"

"You cant be an educationist and look only at the narrow results"

Mr George McGuire

MR GEORGE McGUIRE Minister for Education in the Grenada Government, charged at a press conference on February 17th that Mr George Brizan, Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, is "wicked".

Mr Brizan, an educationist himself, has, based on published examination results, been critical of Grenada's education system, and the Minister's charge is a reaction to this.

Wicked

"Any one who uses the results of examinations to condemn the present educational system in Grenada is wicked", he said, "because you cant be an educationist and look only at the narrow results of having 30% pass rate and say the whole education system is a failure".

Mr George Brizan

Education is far more than examinations, Mr McGuire said. It deals with the total human being, his feelings, aspirations, goals, intentions and strivings for life.

The Minister said he is surprised to see that the majority of people look at the results of the Cambridge Ordinary (O) Level examinations and condemn the education system as a failure.

Giving results of the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) examinations, Mr McGuire said Grenada had achieved pass rates of 41%, 39.1%, 34.5% and 35.1% respectively in 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988.

The Cambridge O level examination results are 27.5%, 32.1%, 32.2% and 36.6% respectively in 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988.

Changes

One of the changes he had introduced in the Ministry of Education, Mr McGuire said, was to allow a greater volume of students to attempt the Cambridge examinations

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MBPM CABLES MANLEY

"We all rejoice at your resounding victory"

IN A CABLE SENT ON FEBruary 10th to Prime Minister Michael Manley of Jamaica, the left-wing Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) expressed "hearty congratulations to you and the Peoples National Party (PNP) on a well deserved and expected victory" in the recent Jamaica elections.

Signed by Dr Terrence Marryshow, MBPM Political Leader, the cable said Manley's policy of "putting the people first" should be an example to all.

"This is a victory, not only for the Jamaican people but for all the struggling people of the Caribbean", the cable says, "and we all rejoice at your resounding victory".

Mr Manley was a close friend and strong supporter of the late Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and his communist Peoples Revolutionary Government (PRG), and some political observers see Mr Manley's election victory as creation of a rallying point for the left in Grenada which was routed by the murder of Bishop and dissolution of the PRG in 1983.

The MBPM cable lends weight to this view and Dr Marryshow's cabled wish for his party's "continued relations with the PNP" is read as an indication of a possible resurgence of Mr Manley's solidarity with the left in Grenada which existed during his last term of office.

End

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"Cocoa - A Trader's Guide", he said, and the seminar would focus on the functioning of the international cocoa trade and how Grenada can benefit from it.

"It is not that we are travelling around the world with a specific message", he said. "What we would like to help with is to improve the export performance in the producing countries".

Offspring

In an interview with NEWSLETTER, Mr Byskov said ITC was started in 1964 as an "offspring " of the General Agreement on Trade & Tariffs (GATT). Four years later, ITC became involved with the United Nations Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTAD) and the Centre is now funded by both GATT and UNCTAD.

"Today we are an independent organisation", he said. "UNCTAD is part of the United Nations, GATT is not, but we consider ourselves within the UN family".

Mr Bertil Byskov

ITC's aim is to work with developing countries to set up effective trade promotion programmes for expanding exports and improving import operations. The Centre's operations are world wide, he said, and cover the application of technical assistance to a variety of products.

Excellent

Before coming to Grenada, the ITC team held similar seminars in Jamaica and Haiti, and a seminar was scheduled to be held in Trinidad before returning to Switzerland. Mr Byskov said the response to the team at the seminars already held had been excellent and he expected that the seminars in Grenada and Trinidad would be equally successful.

Both the travel expenses to the Caribbean, and publication of the handbook, were financed by the Government of Sweden.

End

EXAMINATION RESULTS POOR

"We have the will to change the system and we see the system moving positively in the right direction this time."

MR GEORGE McGUIRE MINister for Education, said at a press conference on February 17th, that the basic cause of the high failure rate in the Primary School Leaving Examinations is a deficiency in reading skills.

The Minister said this finding comes out of a Report of a Committee appointed by him to look into the poor results in the these examinations.

Improve

"We now have four reading specialists", he said, "We are paying a lot of attention to English, mathematics and science and there are workshops, almost weekly, in various areas of the country, to address the need to improve in those basic areas".

According to statistics of the Ministry of Education, the pass rate in the School Leaving Examinations over the years 1984 to 1987 has been, respectively, 5.6%, 14.6%, 15.7% and 11%.

The Committee appointed by Mr McGuire found that the standard of teaching at the Primary level has dropped and that a fast turn-over of teachers on the staffs of schools has resulted in a lack of experienced teachers and a high percentage of inexperienced teachers.

Another finding of the Committee is that Examiners are not aware of what is happening at the Primary level, and a thorough examination of the whole education system is urgently needed.

The Minister said the problems in this situation are complex and his Ministry is already moving to overcome them, but changes in education take time to be effected.

Mr George McGuire

"We have the will to change the system", he said, "and we see the system moving positively in the right direction this time."

Need

There is a need to strengthen the curriculum at both primary and secondary levels, he said, and deep and incisive changes have been made so that those curriculum changes can be reflected.

End

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through the Continuing Education Programme.

"We gave private candidates the opportunity, in droves, to write the O level examinations" he said, "and some people are lumping the results of private candidates with results of the schools and using the consequent decrease in the statistics to state that the educational system is a failure.

If the results of secondary schools only are considered, the Minister said, the O level results are as high as 45%.

Mr McGuire expressed his "total rejection" of anyone who claims that, based on results of the Cambridge O level examinations, Grenada's educational system is a failure and is in a state of chaos and confusion.

End

BANANA QUALITY IMPORTANT

"If it is not good quality, it just wont be sold"

BANANA FARMERS IN GREnada and the Windward Islands must produce a high quality of fruit if they wish to retain their market in the United Kingdom after 1992 when the European Community enters into free trade arrangements.

This was stated by Baroness Trumpington, Parliamentary Secretary in the United Kingdom Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods, at a press conference in Grenada on February 22nd .

"It is very important that you lobby for yourselves", she said, "and it is very important that you keep your quality up because, if it is not good quality, it just wont be sold".

Protection

As to whether Windward Islands bananas will continue to have protection on the British market after 1992, the Baroness said she cannot be optimistic or otherwise at this time. No discussions in any depth are taking place on these matters in the European Community, she said.

"What I do say is that now is the time to keep pressing", she said, "We know the situation, we are definitely doing our best for you, but you've got to do something about it yourselves".

Baroness Trumpington, who spent a short holiday in Antigua before visiting Dominica and then coming on to Grenada, said the purpose of her visit to the Caribbean is to "lay a trail for British businessmen" to see what the opportunities are.

Her intention, she said, is, on her return, to meet with the London Chamber Of Commerce when she will report on her Caribbean trip. Her report will include the possibilities for joint ventures, for setting up offices in the Caribbean and, generally, for promoting two-way trade.

Expertise

The British Government has a great deal of expertise which might be useful to Grenada, the Baroness said, and, in every field, that Government is anxious to be as helpful as possible.

"We may be able to help ..... in advice on diversification.....and those sorts of things are what we expect to receive from Grenada"

"We may be able to help in marketing and in advice on diversification (of crops)", she said, "and while diversification is difficult, there is a very big and growing market for exotics. The paw-paw trade has grown enormously since 1970 and those sorts of things are what we expect to receive from Grenada".

The Baroness was scheduled to meet with both Prime Minister Herbert Blaize and Acting Minister For Agriculture, Mrs Pauline Andrew, before leaving on February 24th for Guyana, the last country she would visit before returning to London.

The Baroness, the former Mrs Jean Barker, was made a Life Peer in 1980.

End

SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS

Dr Keith Taylor

While there may be enough doctors serving the developed world, in most parts of the undeveloped world, the population is not properly cared for.

DR KEITH B TAYLOR 65, Vice-Chancellor of the Grenada based St Georges University School of Medicine, said, in an interview with NEWSLETTER on February 20th, that there are now far too few doctors and health professionals in the world.

While there may be enough doctors serving the developed world, he said, in most parts of the undeveloped world, the population is not properly cared for.

"This is just one example", Dr Taylor said, "of the fact that the affluent societies have not yet been able to contribute in an appropriate way to the poor societies of the world"

Parochial

The statement has been made by the medical establishment in the United States and other parts of the western world, Dr Taylor said, that too many medical doctors are being trained, but, in his opinion, this is a parochial view because, considered internationally, there is a serious short supply of medical doctors.

And that sort of statement, he said, is having adverse effects. Its impact, on parents and their offspring who are potential students, is to keep those students out of medical schools in the fear that, as medical doctors, they will not be able to make a living

This has affected the St Georges University School of Medicine. The student body has dropped in numbers from some 1000 to about 400, the Vice Chancellor said, enrollment has fallen off considerably, and Dr Taylor did not anticipate that, in the near future, there would be an improvement in the situation.

"I doubt if the number of North American students will increase again, certainly not in the next three or four years", he said, "because the situation is the same in North America, that the number of applicants for places in medical schools has fallen quite sharply in the last three or four years".

International

St Georges Medical School has the potential to become truely international, Dr Taylor said, and efforts will be made to draw students from all parts of the world. Already, there has been some enrollment from Shri Lanka and he would like to see students coming from all over South-East Asia.

Traditionally, he said, academics are not keen on marketing and the School's efforts in this direction have been very low key, but this will have to be taken more seriously with advertisements being placed in appropriate periodicals, possibly in Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia.

The Vice-Chancellor was doubtful that the training of students from the developing world will assist appreciably in providing doctors for the countries from which those students are drawn.

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"Experience indicates that, because of human nature, if you train people out of their environment, a few will retain that desire to go back to where they are needed, but an awful lot wont", he said. "Fifty percent of the graduates of India leave India and work mainly in the United Kingdom or United States".

"What we need is an increasing understanding by Grenadians that this is essentially their School"

The reason for this, Dr Taylor said, is only partially financial and he believes that no proper "career structure" is offered these graduates in their home countries

This is different from the lure of money, he said, and is related to the need the graduates have to know that, as professionals, they belong in the structure.

Relinquish

Dr Taylor is currently Professor of Medicine at Stanford University, California, U S A. Next August, he will relinquish that post to take up full time duties as Vice Chancellor at the St Georges School of Medicine, replacing Dr Geoffrey Bourne who died last July.

The new Vice Chancellor was in Grenada to attend the first meeting of the Alumni Association of St Georges Medical School. That meeting was on February 18th and took the form of the launching of a course in Continuing Medical Education sponsored by the Association.

Expenses for this course are being paid in part by the Association, Dr Taylor said, and there has been support from some drug companies and from the Medical School.

Dr Taylor sees a bright future for the School and would like Grenadians to think of the School as their own.

One of his plans, he says, is to develop a nutrition course as it relates to the health of the Grenadian community. Teaching of nutrition, to date, has been in a formal sense, he says, and he would like the course to have an increasing content relevant to the practice of medicine.

There must be nutritional surveys in Grenada, Dr Taylor said. There is no structure established yet for this but it is to be discussed with the health authorities whose co-operation will be sought.

"What we need is an increasing understanding by Grenadians that this is essentially their School", he said, "It is a Grenadian Medical School, not an American one".

Bridges

The School should play a role in enhancing the quality of health care in the island, he said, and hopefully, in the entire south Caribbean. However, he continued, the School has no desire to "tell everybody what to do" and his aim is to generate co-operation by "building bridges" to the Grenadian community.

End

MILESTONES

A strange legend did much to stimulate exploration of Guyana after that country was discovered in 1499.

About 1535, Europeans learned of the legend which was that "El Dorado", the "guilded man", an Amerindian king, appeared once or twice a year before his people at a lake-side high in the mountains, his naked body covered with gold dust.

The king would paddle himself to the centre of the lake and, before plunging into, and washing himself off in the water, throw hugh quantities of gold into the lake.

This legend led Sir Walter Raleigh, among others, to hunt for a golden city, Manoa, and a golden king called El Dorado.

The legend of El Dorado was not disproved for over two centuries.

POLITICIANS SET BAD EXAMPLES

"Everybody knows whose wife is not sleeping in the same bed with who"

EXAMPLES SET BY CARIBbean politicians in their private lives have been a hindrance to development of stable family life in the region.

This opinion was expressed at a press conference in Grenada on February 13th by Mrs Blossom White, Director of the Medical & Skills Training Centre in Kingston, Jamaica, and a teacher at the Jamaica Theological Seminary.

The private lives of politicians are, in fact, public, she said, because "everybody knows whose wife is not sleeping in the same bed with who".

"Sometimes our politicians do not set good examples", she said, "sometimes they pay lip service to 'family life', and that's where we need moral values."

Team

Mrs White, a sociologist, was in Grenada as part of a three-women team from "A Woman's View", a programme aired on Trans World Radio in Bonaire.

The other members of the team are Mrs Faith Lindon, an educator who serves on the Board of Family Life Ministries, and Mrs Janet Ludlam, programme co-ordinator of "A Woman's View".

The team arrived at Grenada on February 9th, and Mrs White said that, in addition to speaking to youth and church groups, she had had the opportunity to meet many individuals on a "one-to-one" basis. While she could not generalise her findings, she said, it was her opinion that there has been a serious breakdown of family life in Grenada, as there has been throughout the Caribbean.

One of the reasons for this, she said, is the absence of premarital counseling. Young persons enter marriage purely on the strength of passionate love she said, and, when the personalities clash, the marriage cannot survive it.

Counselling will assist in three vital areas, Mrs White said. It will teach the need for adequate communications between the marriage partners and it will provide needed education with reference to sex and to the management of money.

Another problem, she said, is that the older generation of parents is ill informed on family life and has been unable or unwilling to pass information on to their children. There has now been an effort by family planning organisations to make good this deficiency, she said, but information must be given in a responsible way.

Impression

"When we started in Jamaica", Mrs White said, "we got the impression, when the Family Planning Board was giving out its advertisements, that what they were saying is, 'you dont have to get pregnant' "

Those advertisements said nothing about morality, she said. They did not say one had the choice to abstain and that abstinence will not "drive you crazy".

The Church has failed to play its part in providing counseling and information, she said, but there has been an awakening to this defect and a growing desire for expertise in this area.

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NEWS SHORTS

Tourist Arrivals Grow

According to the Department of Tourism, Tourist arrivals at Grenada grew by 7% during 1988.

The Department of Tourism says that, in an effort to boost that growth, Grenada is taking part in eight promotional ventures covering the major markets of the United Kingdom, Europe and North America.

Project Hope To Stay

Dr William B Walsh, Founder and Chief Executive of the United States based Project Hope, has denied press reports that his organisation will soon sever connection with Grenada.

Dr Walsh made the denial, on February 17th, at a handing over ceremony of an X-ray unit, valued at EC$350,000, donated by Project Hope to the General Hospital.

Project Hope will continue to assist Grenada's Health Services for as long as the Grenada Government requires that assistance, he said.

Project Hope is a philantropic medical assistance organisation founded by Dr Walsh in 1958. Following the military intervention in 1983, and departure of the Cuban doctors from Grenada, Project Hope came to Grenada's assistance to fill the gaps left in the Medical Service.

Dr Walsh arrived in Grenada on February 15th for a five day visit. During his stay, he had discussions with Mr Danny Williams, Minister for Health.

Chinese Ambassador Visits

Chinese Ambassador to Grenada, Mr Lu Zongqing, arrived in Grenada on February 13th for an official five day visit.

During his stay, the Ambassador signed a Protocol on Economic & Technical Co-operation between the Government of Grenada and the Government of his country. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs, Mr Ben Jones, signed on behalf of the Grenada Government.

Ambassador Zongqing paid courtesy calls on Governor General Sir Paul Scoon, Prime Minister Herbert Blaize, Mrs Pauline Andrew, Minister of State for Agriculture and Tourism, and Mr Oscar Hernandez, Charge d'Affairs of the Embassy of the Republic of Venezuela.

End

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In this connection, she said, it was planned to hold interdominational retreats for pastors and for young people who are contemplating marriage.

"I have been speaking to some of the younger pastors" Mrs White said, "They have been trying to deal with these matters with a holistic approach, not just a spiritual aspect, not just telling people to abstain before getting married, but also in terms of getting energies diverted to other areas".

With reference to AIDS, Mrs White said, younger people in Jamaica are listening to the warnings advertised, but the homosexual population is paying no attention.

End

Alister Hughes Cynthia Hughes

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