

PLANNED SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE IN A
BRITISH HONDURAN FISHING VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT

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By

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The problem investigated in this thesis is the successful, planned socio-cultural change in San Pedro Village, Ambergris Cay, British Honduras. Planned change, the result of thoughtful and logical deliberations of a centralized developmental agency, has often been rejected or resisted by a prospective host community. San Pedro did not, however, reject the innovation of cooperative lobstering activity, and it was my concern to understand how this particular planned change came to be successful.

The technique of participant observation was employed in the study of this problem. The technique involved residence in the subject community, interacting with village residents, entering into village activities, and scrutinizing the social, cultural, and environmental situation of the village.

Data consisted of census figures, inventories of material possessions, and interviews with villagers on the various aspects of village life. Interviews were synthesized to form composite statements on various subjects, and these were then recorded in the light of total impressions being formed of village life. Informants included special interviewees (selected on the basis of their importance in San Pedro), casual acquaintances, and

individuals who were situationally convenient as sources of information.

On the basis of my brief study (June to August, 1966) I came to the conclusion that success was achieved in San Pedro because traditional subsistence activities and economic arrangements were not disturbed or disrupted by change to cooperative lobstering. The technological and social organizational base already existing in San Pedro did not have to be modified in order to accomodate lobstering, nor did organization and technology in any way hamper implementation of lobstering. Furthermore, the success of lobstering was fairly well assured by virtue of an abundant resource base and outside capital being offered to San Pedranos for construction of a locally owned and operated processing plant. In the former case, lobsters were not difficult to obtain. In the latter case, the processing plant, which was built with no risk at all to villagers' funds, yielded relatively large profits to San Pedranos and at the same time eradicated several of the features which had been distasteful to villagers (such as dependence on and interference from outsiders). These findings indicate, then, the importance of ecology in the success of planned change in San Pedro. The adjustment which San Pedranos had achieved with their environment, and the ramifications of this adaptation throughout the total socio-cultural nexus of San Pedrano life, were not altered by planned change. The adaptation did not have to be modified to accomodate cooperative lobstering, and in fact appears to have lent itself to the easy acceptance of change in San Pedro.

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INTRODUCTION

RATIONALE FOR STUDY IN BRITISH HONDURAS

The small country of British Honduras (only 8,866 square miles in area) is the solitary holdout of British colonialism and sole possessor of non-Latin culture in Middle America today. Carved from the heavily wooded southern part of the Yucatan Peninsula, British Honduras first attracted the attention of Englishmen--sailors and entrepreneurs--in the middle of the Seventeenth century. Logwood and mahogany brought high prices in the Old World, and this unpopulated area near the Gulf of Honduras was rewarding to those who would risk an unhealthy climate and the rigors of lumbering for the wealth represented by the vast stands of timber. Gradually communities sprang up along the river networks used to transport logs from the back country to the sea. Attempts by the Spanish to dislodge the "intruders" were never wholly successful, and ultimately the sparse population of sylvan reapers came to constitute a colony of the British Empire. As Guatemala, Mexico, and the other Spanish colonies in the New World gained their independence, British Honduras remained under the Crown; in 1968, however, it will be her turn to attain the status of an independent polity.

The birth of an independent British Honduras, or "Belize", gives rise to myriad questions. It is important for already vital and animated governments to know "practical" things: such as how Belize will get along with its neighbors; or how much

financial aid it may seek from the Mother Country or elsewhere, for example. Answers to these and other questions have far reaching effects on the making of foreign policy, the signing of treaties, and like matters of international scope. Questions and answers from this quarter derive their importance from the smallness of the twentieth-century world. Communication and transportation networks link nations and peoples to the degree that economic, social, or political activities on one side of the globe are registered and reacted to on the other side with the greatest alacrity; "correct" reactions are hypothetically based on adequate knowledge of situations and conditions extant elsewhere--in fact, everywhere.

But, there are also strictly academic questions generated by creation of Belize, questions emanating from men curious to know how other men, within this politico-territorial entity, behave under certain conditions and in specific situations. Concern here is anthropological rather than diplomatic, and questions posed within this framework may be solely for the increase of general knowledge and understanding of the country, or to obtain insight into a definite "problem". By "problem" I mean a socio-cultural phenomenon such as, for example, why inhabitants of Seine Bight (a small village in southern British Honduras) support the government whereas people in another village may not; or what effect economic activity in Placentia (a fishing village) may have on its community organization. Interest in questions such as these drew me to British Honduras

in June of 1966. At that time very little had been written about the peoples and cultures found there, and the existing literature (Gann, 1918; Thompson, 1930, 1931; Fancourt, 1854, for example) dealt either with archaeology, general ethnology, or merely adventurers' experiences. Inasmuch as little anthropological work had been done in British Honduras, it would be possible to increase general knowledge of the country and its people by conducting a study there; moreover, the total condition of British Honduras would enable probing at some depth into any one of a number of "problems" (as defined above).

Basis of the Thesis Topic

British Honduras is unique in Middle America by virtue of the colonial status and the British cultural influence which it demonstrates. It is likewise the only country in Middle America whose existence is threatened by two relatively gigantic neighbors namely, Mexico and Guatemala. Guatemalan irredentism is, in point of fact, a major stumbling block in creation of Belize. British Honduras is not so unique when considered as another emerging nation; that is, one which is not self sufficient, and is underdeveloped (by Western standards) in terms of educated populous, technology, and general standards of living. In actuality British Honduras shares many features common to emerging nations throughout the world: it lacks trained personnel to fill demanding positions in both the public and private sectors of national life; adequate public works,

educational facilities, and transportation and communication systems to serve the people are absent; most importantly, a viable economic base from which a new country could survive and prosper does not yet exist.

To date, only small amounts of sugar, citrus, and forest products are exported from British Honduras (there are no mineral resources so far as is presently known). Practicing large-scale agriculture appears to be the only way in which British Honduras can feed its population (a sparse 120,000) and obtain the imports necessary for continued existence according to a United Nation's survey. The Government conceives of the national situation as one which ipso facto calls for action on its part to change present conditions which either impede or do not contribute to national development, and action seems to be efficacious only in terms of long range plans. It (Government) has been encouraging plantation agriculture, the influx of foreign investors, and any economic ventures which conceivably might reward the country and its people. Certain changes deemed necessary by Government to effect desired ends must, perhaps, be imposed on a resisting society, yet other changes may find ready acceptance and popularity by that same society. The question arising from acceptance or rejection of planned change is bipartite; how does it come to be that some changes are socially abbetted while others are hindered; and, what actually happens in a community and to a community where planned change is attempted.

My primary interest, then, was in the phenomenon of socio-cultural change in particular areas where that change was effected through some sort of logical, thoughtful plan designed and nurtured by a central agency working to coordinate planned changes in numerous areas. More specifically, I wished to know "why" planned change was accepted in whole or in part, and what residual effect such planning might have. It was to answer the immediately preceding questions that I directed my study during the summer of 1966. Due to the paucity of time, efforts were necessarily focused on a single community rather than British Honduras generally.

Choice of a Village

Having searched for a suitable community in which to work, my attention was ultimately drawn to San Pedro Village on Ambergris Cay (=island). San Pedro satisfied the prime criterion for study of planned change since villagers had been induced to switch from independent to cooperative fishing (fishing and other types of cooperatives are an important facet of Governmental development plans for British Honduras). Likewise, several secondary features made this community desirable as a site for investigation: San Pedro was characterized by mainland informants as the most rapidly "progressing" of fishing communities in the country; the ethnic composition was different from the bulk of mainland populations; San Pedranos were supposedly almost entirely dependent on the sea for their livelihood;

and its island location tended to isolate, or at the very least, insulate, San Pedro from the rest of British Honduras. These features were attractive insofar as it would be possible to ascertain the British Honduran concept of "progress" by "seeing" it, so to speak in San Pedro. Ethnic composition might, by virtue of a particular heritage of social institutions, norms, and values, have a peculiar effect on the differential acceptance or rejection of development plans, and on the direction of change in San Pedro. The ecological situation of the village might make some development plans totally impractical if, for example, no means of deriving subsistence were possible, other than fishing (in other words, precluding agricultural or some other type of development). Finally, many anthropological studies have been conducted as if subject communities existed in empirical isolation from all other communities. This procedure has been followed for analytical purposes, and is based on the assumption that a community (however this entity is operationally defined) may be more thoroughly and/or "easily" inspected without reference to its surroundings. San Pedro Village could most certainly be considered analytically isolated, but I wished to see how close, in fact, the island village came to being empirically isolated, and what effect, if any, this had on the problem I wished to study.

Personnel in the Social Development Department in Belize, through whom governmental plans are activated in British Honduran communities, could not explain apparent success of the

San Pedro venture. The most they could say was that cooperative fishing by the island dwellers had resulted in much improved living conditions for San Pedranos, and that the government was increasingly interested in the village. Peace Corps volunteers from the United States had, in fact, been sent to San Pedro to stimulate use of English and in other ways help bring the hitherto isolated community into full participation in national life.

Collection of Data

Descriptive material forming the basis of this thesis derives from field research executed by participant observation which involved residing in the subject community, interacting with its inhabitants, and taking part in San Pedrano activities as much as possible. Several techniques were employed in eliciting data: formal interviews, wherein specific questions were posed to key informants and occasional informants alike, and conversation was guided until the desired information had been obtained; informal interviews, during which key and occasional informants were allowed to talk without any guidance of the conversation; notation of conversation and other behavior of villagers in a wide range of play and work situations; and a schedule of questions directed to members of each household for the purpose of obtaining a census, house count and inventory of material goods owned by San Pedranos. Other sources of information were the village police blotter and fishing cooperative records.

Key informants were those figures in the community who had been identified by villagers, and mainland informants who were familiar with the village, as being important to the functioning of San Pedro. These included: members of the Village Council, Church Committee, and Cooperative Board; governmental functionaries in San Pedro (police constable, nurse and headmaster); merchants and barkeepers; the priest; and several of the job specialists, including workers at the fishing cooperative plant. Occasional informants were those acquaintances who were situationally employed (for example at parties and in bars) as sources of information. Contact with these occasional informants was less intense than with key figures and they were not visited periodically as were key informants. In addition, interviews were held with the American backer of the fishing cooperative who had advanced money for construction of plant facilities; the representative of the American firm engaged in developing Ambergris Cay for tourism; the two Peace Corps volunteers; one of the former land magnates in San Pedro; and whatever visitors came to San Pedro.

In order to establish the governmental conception of San Pedro as part of British Honduras and ascertain as clear a picture of government as possible, its plans and problems, a large number of directed interviews were conducted with individuals in Belize City: the manager of Anglican primary schools in the colony; the Minister of Education; director of the Social

Development Department; the government Marine Biologist; spokesmen for the two political parties; the Premier and Public Information Officer; Inspector of Cooperatives; representatives of Belize Rural North and Belize South electoral constituencies; and others.

I originally envisioned doing an ethnographic community study wherein data would ultimately be organized around the focal point of the fishing cooperative, and the finished product would be somewhat on the order of volumes published in the well known Spindler series of anthropological monographs. I did not intend to either "prove" or "disprove" any postulate or set of postulates regarding planned socio-cultural change or any other "problem". Field work techniques listed above (such as structured interviews) were therefore adapted so that I might gain as complete a view of San Pedro Village as possible in the fixed amount of time available for study. To be specific, a good deal of impressionism was utilized in my data collecting and, subsequently in reporting my findings. At the close of each days' work I recorded all that had transpired during that day by abstracting the numerous verbal and non-verbal behaviors of the villagers to formulate composite statements on various aspects of San Pedrano life. An ethnography of San Pedro was duly drafted and submitted to my guidance committee for appraisal. The result of this appraisal brought to light some definite propositions regarding the success of cooperative fishing in San Pedro which could be discussed in terms of my ethnography. The propositions listed below are therefore derived from what was to be primarily

descriptive material and for this reason I must emphasize the obvious; namely, that variant interpretation of my material, or a replication of my study, may well be difficult since no concrete elements can be inspected for their soundness (such as actual statements of the villagers) or perhaps replicated by another visitor to San Pedro.

Thesis

Success of planned socio-cultural change in San Pedro Village could conceivably be explained by three primary factors:

- 1) Cooperative lobster fishing is merely the amplification of an already existing mode of economic activity. That is: exploitation of marine resources did not require any basic changes in the life style and organization of San Pedranos since marine resources are abundant and can be obtained through implementation of technology and organization already present in the village.

Further:

- 2) The likelihood of continued, successful, cooperative fishing in San Pedro is enhanced by the fact that a processing plant is locally owned and operated which eliminates external interference in most situations, and
- 3) the fact that villagers did not have to jeopardize their own capital, initially, to finance the building and equipping of this plant made possible its initial, perhaps tentative, acceptance in the first place.

Strategy of the Thesis

The following pages are the result of a community study undertaken in San Pedro between June and August, 1966. Data are arranged in an ethnography, which constitutes the bulk of

the thesis, and a concluding chapter which draws on the preceding descriptive material to speak directly to the point of the study. The beginning of the thesis attempts to give perspective to the natural environment, population, and history of San Pedro Village and Ambergris Cay. The succeeding chapters deal with the social and cultural dimensions of the total community of San Pedro; maritime and non-maritime economy; family and residence patterns; community organization; San Pedro as part of British Honduras; and world view of the San Pedranos.

Chapter divisions are designed to preserve as much as possible the wholeness of the community as it appeared empirically--a complex network of functionally interdependent, inter-related, and highly integrated "parts"--yet at the same time avoid reducing the thesis to a hodgepodge of discreet facts unthoughtfully lumped under meaningless chapter titles. Finally, given the background provided in the ethnography, the antecedents and consequences of planned change in San Pedro are discussed. The focus here is on the overt and covert differences which now obtain in the villages as contrasted with conditions before the catalyst for change was introduced, i.e. cooperative fishing. While notice is duly given to the more obvious physical changes in San Pedro, more value is placed on the "hidden" changes within institutions. Although some attempt is made to include motives and other psychological factors involved in the change phenomenon, no psychological research per se was done, and material in this area is, admittedly, subjective. Moreover, in view of the short

time (five years) during which the old life style has been altered, much of the discussion in Chapter 8 is phrased in terms of the direction which change appears to be taking, and the ultimate result if that course is pursued.

CHAPTER I

PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

This chapter deals with the natural and human resources of San Pedro Village and its surrounding area. The inventory of topographical, climatological, floral and faunal features illustrates what San Pedranos' have to work with or against in interacting with their natural environment. It also illustrates the natural base which the Government had to consider in formulating developmental plans for San Pedro. Human resources are dealt with in a description of the village population and a brief history of San Pedro which extends from its origin up until the time of this study. The object here is to provide insight into the contemporary community by reference to the socio-cultural heritage of its inhabitants. Emphasis is placed on influences from the mainland and the nature of subsistence activities which San Pedranos chose to pursue. It is, likewise, the context wherein Government had to introduce planned socio-cultural change.

Location, Topography and Climate

Thirty-six miles northeast of Belize City lies Ambergris Cay, first of a chain of islands paralleling the entire British Honduran coast. Geographically the cay is part of the Chetumal Peninsula and, geologically, it is an extension of the larger Yucatan Peninsula. Having a post Pliocene, perhaps Oligocene, limestone base (Edwards, 1957, pg. 39), Ambergris is twenty-

seven miles long from tip to tip, and five miles wide at its broadest point. On the east and south it is bordered by the Caribbean Sea, on the west by Chetumel Bay, and on the north by a river (Boca Bacalar Chico) which has cut through the Chetumal Peninsula to connect Chetumal Bay with the Sea. The near-sea-level island exhibits soil types ranging from yellow or white sand along its perimeter to a relatively thin layer of dark, fertile loam or humus in the interior which is supportive of dense bush. Sandy areas are continually being replenished, or cut away, by sea action, and the more fertile soils are supplemented by decomposing vegetable matter, in turn undermined by the percolating effect of rain escaping through the porous rocky base. Throughout the island are numerous small ponds formed by rain water collecting in pot-holes which have been eaten into the limestone. In the northern part of the cay is a large fresh-water lagoon, coming very near the seacoast at Reef Point, not far from where the barrier reef touches the island. This reef (second in size only to the Great Barrier Reef near Australia, I am told) parallels much of the British Honduran coast and near Ambergris Cay roughly delineates the point where shallow water (extending between the reef and shore of the island) becomes deep with a sudden dropoff of the sea floor. Two large saltwater lagoons--in places nothing more than mangrove swamps--are located on the western side of the island, providing anchorage and fishing grounds for shallow-draft vessels. Of these, the southernmost lagoon is connected to the Caribbean

by a winding river (nameless, to my knowledge) and thus allows passage not only from one side of the island to the other, but also into Chetumal Bay to which the lagoon is likewise connected. It is this lagoon which offers some shelter for fishing craft if a hurricane should strike.

By virtue of its geographical position, Ambergris enjoys a sub-tropical climate, tempered somewhat by tradewinds. North, Northeast, and East winds appear to be especially effective in ridding the coasts of insect pests, and an East wind is especially desirable for travel either to or from the British Honduran mainland. Temperature ranges from an infrequent chill of around 60 degrees F. during the North American winter, to around 90 degrees F. during July and August. From December to February the weather is described as "cool" and "pleasant" with occasional rain showers. March to May is dry and comparatively warm, giving way in June to a "rainy season" which lasts until August. August and September are months of the second "dry season" when rain decreases appreciably and temperatures, as noted above, tend to be higher than during the other seasons of the year. Rainfall for the full seasonal cycle is approximately 50 to 60 inches (Edwards, 1957, pg. 55), differentially distributed as implied by the terms "rainy season" and "dry season". Unfortunately for Ambergris, and all British Honduras, is the fact that they lie in the path of hurricanes which originate in and/or traverse the Caribbean between August and October. The mainland has on more than one occasion suffered loss of life and great property

damage from this quarter (see Poey; 1855). But Ambergris Cay has escaped without fatalities since the late 1930's.

Flora and Fauna

Just as Ambergris Cay shares many climatic and topographical features characteristic of Yucatan, so too it has a similar floral and faunal inventory, modified only by the island setting or the hand of man. Lining the coasts of Ambergris Cay are large coconut palms which have been set out either as cocals (coconut plantations) or purely for ornamentation. In the former case, absentee owner-planters employ laborers to keep the ordered rows of trees free from undergrowth and to harvest and husk the nuts. In the latter case, developers from the United States utilize palms to create a stereotyped tropical island image for Ambergris and thus attract tourists or people who are seeking a congenial place to which they can retire. Cocals range in size from a fraction of an acre to thirty or more acres, and are generally restricted to the perimeter of the island due to the difficulty of clearing "bush" and keeping it cut back. "Bush" consists of scrub-type shrubs growing from five to six feet in height, creeping and hanging vines, patches of coarse grasses ranging from two to five feet in height, and trees of various subtropical genera. The bush, which covers perhaps 75% to 80% of the island, is a great tangle of heat and moisture retaining plant matter, providing excellent cover for iguanas, boa constrictors, scorpions, bush hogs, deer, quails, tiger-like felines, alligators, raccoons, a myriad of bird species; and, of course, flies and mosquitoes.

Human Population

Human occupation of the island is very sparse, only 850 or so people inhabiting the whole cay. The population density is thus approximately 6.3 per square mile versus 10.2 per square mile reported for all British Honduras (Manpower Assessment Report, 1964, ffpg. 8). Ninety-three percent of the 850 (or 793 people) are concentrated in the island's one and only village, San Pedro. The remainder live and work in the various cocals or work projects (land clearing and house building, for example) of those attempting to develop the island for tourists or who themselves have retired to Ambergris.

San Pedro Village is located on the eastern side of Ambergris Cay, roughly six miles from the southern tip of the island. Nestled between the Caribbean Sea on its front, a lagoon at its back, and private land holdings on either side, the village and its 793 people take up only 34.4 acres of land. More than 80% of the villagers are mestizos, descended from Yucatecan peoples who migrated to Ambergris Cay. The other 20% of the population is composed of Creole and Carib peoples who are either placed by Government in the village to perform certain tasks (keep the peace; head the village school; and operate the infirmary) or have been hired by the fishing cooperative to maintain mechanical equipment at the co-op plant, or are simply, fishing folk themselves. Present, therefore, in the village are elements of nearly all ethnic groups characteristic of British Honduras' population: mestizos (Maya Indian-European mixtures); Carib (Negro-Carib

Indian mixtures); Creole (Negro-European mixtures); and Creole-mestizo mixtures. Carib-mestizo mixtures, found on the mainland, are not present in the village.

Generally speaking, the village population can be characterized as "young" in that approximately 40% of the San Pedranos are school age or under (that is, infants to age 15), 45 to 50% are between 15 and 45, and remainder range in age from late forties to early eighties. Figures available for village births and deaths cover only a two year period (more extensive records held by the Government were unavailable) as recorded in the police blotter, but combining these figures with family histories it was possible to estimate an annual birth rate of 37.8 per thousand, and death rate of 2.5 per thousand for the last five to ten years. Both of these figures are lower than those reported for the country, namely 46.3 and 8.4 respectively (Manpower Assessment Report, 1964, ffpg. 8). There are no statistics on immigration or emmigration for San Pedro, but villagers told me that there is frequent coming and going of individuals taking their holidays in the village or visiting friends and relatives, for extended periods, who reside in San Pedro. Likewise, San Pedranos occasionally leave the village to visit friends or relatives in other locales, sometimes for periods of a week or more. I am told that variation in total population from permanent emmigration or immigration is not very great, however.

Language and Literacy

Given the ethnic composition of the village (80% mestizo) it is not surprising that Spanish is the language most widely spoken in San Pedro. Learned solely through the socialization process, Spanish is characteristically spoken in the home, in play groups, in small group interaction, in church services, and certain formal situations such as business meetings where only villagers are present.

English, the country's official language, is taught in the village school and all subjects are taught in that language. Use of English in non-classroom situations is largely restricted to formal meetings where government representatives are present, or in conversing with tourists who come to the village.

A third language, Creole, is also found in San Pedro. Creole developed in the West Indies as a hybridized language (LePage; 1958, pg. 55) composed of English, Spanish, Dutch, French, and African vocabulary, and was brought to British Honduras with the importation of slaves. As noted, Creole is also the label used to refer to a particular ethnic group (largest in British Honduras), but language and ethnic group are not necessarily coterminous i.e., populations other than Creole also speak this patois. Creole tends to be the least formal, least used of the three languages in San Pedro. It is largely restricted to use by Creole families in conversing with other family members. A number of Creole words and phrases are known and used by Spanish speaking mestizos, but Creole language outside of Creole families

is usually heard only in a joking or play context. Presence of the language is apparently explained by two factors: villagers being influenced by mainlanders in commercial and social interaction; and five or so Creole families living in San Pedro.

I was told by one informant, holder of a masters degree in Romance languages, that he detected "quite a number" of Maya words in village speech pertaining to the sea and names of various fishes. He did not give any examples however. Several village men, some of whom had been chicleros (gatherers of sap from the sapodilla tree which is then used in chewing gum), living in the Mexican and Guatemalan bush, claimed to be able to speak a dialect of Maya fluently.

As might logically be expected from the above inventory, San Pedranos (generally) are at the very least bilingual, and in some cases trilingual. Arising from this situation is a capacity possessed by many villagers to switch rapidly from one language to another, and more than once I overheard conversations beginning in Spanish and ending in English. There has likewise been a good deal of vocabulary borrowing from one language to another. In the event that villagers professed inability to speak English (which happened several times in my interviewing) closer query showed that they could often understand the language but declined to speak it because they were "afraid of making mistakes".

With regard to literacy, perhaps 80 to 90% of adult San Pedranos can read and write Spanish and English. Villagers are

voracious readers of Spanish-language Westerns and magazines featuring stories on sensational crimes, love stories and the like. Writing letters or reports in English or Spanish is sometimes difficult for them, both in spelling and clear use of grammar, and the results are occasionally confusing to both themselves and to outsiders. Creole is not, to my knowledge, either written or read in the village.

Beginnings of San Pedro

The history of San Pedro Village is a relatively short one in comparison to that of Yucatan or other nearby areas. Natives agree that the oldest of them was born in San Pedro, and that their parents and perhaps grandparents were likewise residents of the village. It is also agreed that most villagers are descended from people who had lived in Yucatan and come to Ambergris Cay to escape the "Revolution". Fr. Robert Raszkowski, Jesuit visiting pastor to San Pedro, told me that there is record of the Church being in San Pedro since 1860, and probably since around 1840--an institution brought by settlers of the village and not the result of missionizing activity. This scanty information, taken altogether, leads to some interesting interpolations when measured against facts presented by Nelson Reed in his book on the Caste War of Yucatan. Indeed, it would appear that the "Revolution" mentioned by informants in San Pedro is the same Caste War which wrecked havoc in Yucatan from 1847 until the beginning of the Twentieth Century.

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Briefly, in 1847 Maya Indians of Yucatan rose in rebellion against the Spanish and Ladinos (Europeanized mestizos) who dominated the politics of the Peninsula and exploited the indigenous population. The revolt against de facto feudal masters had the properties of both guerrilla and conventional warfare, and for a time went totally against the enemies of the Indians. The extreme sanguineousness of the revolt led to an equal and opposite reaction by those attacked, and the Indians were forced to flee to the southern part of Yucatan where they held out in the forests until the forces of attrition and constant harassment finally led to their submission. During the prolonged period of warfare, thousands of lives were lost on either side, and there were significant relocations of peoples to avoid being caught in the maelstrom. San Pedro might have been settled or founded by some of these evacuees (if the "revolt" mentioned by San Pedranos is actually the Caste War of Yucatan).

Exactly which side settlers may have been on during the Caste War is unanswerable. Certainly the vast majority of surnames in the village are Spanish, which indicates perhaps that they were Ladinos. But it is equally possible that they were simply indios (i.e., Maya Indians) or non-Europeanized mestizos who had taken surnames from their rulers. In addition, there are a number of surnames which are most definitely Maya: Cocom, the name of a Maya family once ruling all Yucatan from Mayapan; Chan, the Mayan word for "little"; Tzul, which more than likely derives from the Mayan "dzul" which means white, or white man, for example. Although I have no examples, the

possible presence of Maya words for fishes (noted above) might indicate, perhaps, a century-old link between villagers and ancestral Indian populations of Yucatan.

On the 8th July, 1893, a treaty between Mexico and Great Britain--establishing the boundary between Mexico and British Honduras--settled Ambergris Cay on the British. Prior to that time Ambergris was part of the state of Yucatan and, later, Quintana Roo (Humphreys, 1961, pg. 148). The importance of the date is that it serves as a breaking point in describing the history of the village; the point when San Pedranos turn towards the southwest for direction rather than Mexico.

To summarize briefly, sometime between 1847 and 1860 San Pedro was settled by Mexican nationals who were, at least partly, of Maya Indian origin. Many questions regarding this settlement must remain unanswered, however, due to lack of historical records. It is not known what life style settlers possessed; not even if these people were fishermen. Likewise, it is unknown whether the site had previously been occupied, or why San Pedranos chose to settle so far down the coast (twenty miles from Boca Bacalar Chico which separates Ambergris Cay from the Mexican mainland).

1893 to 1963: A Period of Stagnation

The passing of Ambergris Cay from one jurisdiction to another in 1893 was undoubtedly noted by San Pedranos to some extent. But the machinations of Mexican and British governments became matters of personal concern to the villagers when Queen

Victoria made land grants to "outside" families, longtime mainland residents of British Honduras. The new owners of San Pedro were not slow in setting out coconut palms in a series of plantations up and down the island from the village and in recruiting San Pedranos as coccol workers. For their work, San Pedranos were paid a cash wage. But such wages must not have been much since villagers and mainlanders alike characterize San Pedranos of that period as the "poorest of the poor". Nonetheless, from this wage San Pedranos were required to pay a yearly rental on the land they occupied in the village (to prevent obtaining common law right to property occupied for a specific period of time), or allowed to purchase the property if they should so desire. Earnings were so low that purchase was actually out of the question for most men, they were too involved in existing at the bare subsistence level. Adding to the hopelessness of land tenure (as villagers saw it) was the fact that no written agreements existed for those who did try to purchase land on time payments, and some lots were sold more than once as a consequence. A few villagers were relatively well off; either owning and operating freight boats or running small-scale shops in the village. Their number was few, however.

San Pedro was out of the mainstream of activities taking place in Belize and on the mainland during this period, but fishermen going to markets or merchants buying produce forged some links between the village and greater British Honduras. Government had established a police constabulary in San Pedro

to keep peace locally, and the Roman Catholic Church established a primary school in the village.

With the exception of a short period in the 1930's when it had a resident pastor, San Pedro had a priest who visited once a month or so to minister to the Roman Catholic congregation. Occasionally a tourist or adventurer would sail into village waters and stay briefly in San Pedro. Communication or influence via these links had little or no effect on moving San Pedro from its stagnating position, but by 1963 the village I have cursorily described was about to disappear dramatically and suddenly through the impetus of planned change.

1963 to the Present

During the last years of the preceding period, speculators from the United States and British Honduras were attracted to Ambergris Cay as a potential vacation spot for fishing enthusiasts, sun bathers, and people who simply wished to escape commercialized resort areas. At approximately the same time, British Honduras received self-government and began development of its resources preparatory to eventual independence. The former circumstance may, perhaps, be considered as an important factor in emphasizing to villagers themselves the extremely low standard of living in San Pedro. Land speculators purchased property almost adjacent to the southern boundary of the village and it seemed likely to at least some villagers, so I was told, that speculators might possibly be interested in buying village land as well. Since most of San Pedro was owned by the same

two families (the land-grant families mentioned above) which had already sold land to American "outsiders", it was not impossible that the land lords of San Pedro would not hesitate to alienate village land as well. If San Pedranos bought up the village then it would be possible to regulate who indeed would be permitted to hold land within the community. Villagers were no more able at this time to buy land than they had been since the inception of San Pedro. A possible solution to the predicament of wanting to buy land but being too poor to do so was presented to the San Pedranos. According to the present Village Council chairman, he and several other villagers proposed that the Government be petitioned to buy San Pedro and then resell land to its residents on long term contracts. The proposal was first resisted by some San Pedranos on the grounds that it was "anti-American" but opponents of this measure subsequently acquiesced. (The importance of this particular segment of village history will not be elaborated here, but in succeeding chapters it will be referred to as an important period of "pre-conditioning" before introduction of planned socio-cultural change). While villagers were seeking a favor from the Government on one hand, the Government, apparently, was seeking a favor from villagers, also. Developmental planning agencies wished to establish a cooperative fishery in San Pedro, and it may well be that through a mutual give and take with villagers it was possible for both parties to achieve their goals. Whether the Government consented to buy village land if San Pedranos

would form a cooperative cannot be substantiated, but certainly by 1963 land had been bought as requested by San Pedranos and a fishing cooperative had been established. Three years later San Pedranos were some of the wealthier inhabitants of British Honduras. The life and condition of San Pedro during these years (1963-1966) is essentially the same as was found at the time of this study. In the following pages I will give an account of these conditions and expand on the apparent solution of the problems besetting this community.

Summary

From a description of the natural environment and from figures on demography and landownership for San Pedro, it can be seen that there are few alternatives for exploiting the environment aside from fishing. Neither small-scale nor plantation agriculture are possible for San Pedranos since they do not own land outside their diminutive village and local ownership of village land is itself a recent phenomenon. In addition, soil is poor and the range of crops which could be grown on Ambergris would necessarily be limited. Developing the village and its environs by the villagers, themselves, for tourism is again precluded by the lack of land available.

Since amplifying maritime activity seemed to be the only avenue of development open for San Pedro, the British Honduran Government set about initiating cooperative fishing for lobsters. Cooperation and lobstering are changes in traditional modes of

maritime exploitation, but they differ from fishing activities of the San Pedranos in degree rather than in kind.

Finally, a number of factors were a work which facilitated introduction of cooperative fishing in San Pedro. First, residents of San Pedro existed in a state of relative poverty which was underscored by land tenancy problems. Secondly, the Governmental proposal to form a fishing cooperative was viewed as a possible solution to the financial problems of the villagers (and at the same time assist Governmental development plans for British Honduras). Apparently these factors were coincident so that a reciprocity of sorts could arise between the village and Government with the resultant formation of a fishing cooperative. The plan to solve the local problems of San Pedro and in some measure solve the national problems as well, seems to be working successfully.

CHAPTER II

MARITIME ECONOMY

Introduction

Dealing with the maritime economy in San Pedro, this section is first of all concerned with the methods and techniques involved in exploiting marine resources. Important to this discussion is the function of the cooperative and cooperation itself. Likewise noteworthy is the significance of fishing in terms of the people and time involved in its pursuit. Entering at the close of the chapter is a description of the work cycle fashioned around the taking of lobsters and in this description lies the first implications of long-term lobstering for San Pedranos; that is, what may be expected to happen to the supply of lobsters over a period of several years.

There are several ways in which the importance of fishing to San Pedro can be expressed. For example, there are approximately 135 families in San Pedro--comprising roughly the same number of households ("family" and "household" will be fully defined later)--126 of which are headed by males, and fully two-thirds of these male family heads are directly involved in fishing. Put differently, of the total village population, roughly 60% of the adult population catch or process marine products. With this prefatory note, the following pages outline the nature of the extremely significant maritime economy of San Pedro.

Maritime economic activity in San Pedro is bifurcated into a concentration on cooperative lobstering, and a much less important--generally interim--activity (between lobster seasons) which

involves the taking of scale fishes, turtles, and conchs. Lobstering itself is likewise divided between inshore fishermen (32% of the active fishing force), who stay within the barrier reef, and offshore fishermen who travel the deep waters of the Caribbean (68% of the active fishing force). Ranked in descending order of importance--in terms of the number of people involved--the various forms of fishing in San Pedro would be: offshore lobstering; inshore lobstering; and "other" fishing activity. This ranking is also generally correct in terms of the amount of money derived from the several types of fishing (even though lobstering differences are not reflected in the accounting of annual Cooperative income). Description of actual fishing techniques will thus be in three separate sections; a fourth section is devoted to the fishing cooperative itself (the hub of contemporary maritime economy in San Pedro), and finally, the work cycle of villagers is described.

Offshore Lobstering

Offshore lobstering, not so much complicated as it is rigorous, is practiced by 79 San Pedranos using 20 of the 33 boats counted in village waters. Generally it is undertaken by crews of two to seven men, one of whom is owner and captain of the boat from which they work. Crew members are often relatives by blood or marriage, but neither affinal nor consanguineal kinship appears to be the major consideration involved in selection of boat crews. (Due to the intermarriage which has taken place between San Pedrano families it is, of course,

inevitable that some kin ties obtain among crew members).

Friendship, ability to work and get along well with one another appears to be the major consideration regardless of a kin relationship. There is no formal arrangement of men in the crew, such as; first mate, second mate. Nor does the "captain" (owner of the boat) seem to be particularly authoritarian in operation of his boat. Consensus determines where the men will go to fish. Crewmen alternately take turns at the tiller and all men assist when sails must be set, the boat tied up, and other necessary operations. Fishermen, then, cooperate in all aspects of the fishing trip from sharing equally in the work, and expenses, to division of money from their catch. The captain, of course, gets the share set aside "for the boat".

Fishing boats are 24 to 27 feet long sloops ("Marconi rigged", according to American terminology) costing from \$800 to \$1,500 B.H. Mainsail and jib transform wind into the (primary) motive force for the boats, and many boats are also equipped with outboard motors (\$150 to \$300 B.H.). Most common is an eighteen-horsepower model used on occasions when "wind power" fails, and also to speed up transport generally. These boats are constructed in Cay Caulker (an island eleven miles southwest of Ambergris) or on the British Honduran mainland; built with as shallow a draft as possible without endangering seaworthiness of the crafts. Generally, design of the boats provides for a small forward hold in the bow of the boat, a larger hold amidship which carries the watertight icebox used for refrigeration, and an after hold which

can accomodate several passengers plus cargo. I did not note either regular anchors or sea anchors on any of the fishing boats. At the village, most of the men tie up either at a dock, or more regularly to long palancas (poles) which are gouged into the sea floor. The men themselves are equipped with swimming trunks, a rubber and glass facemask, rubber swim fins (total cost \$20 B.H.), and a short gaff approximately two and one half feet long. The final item in the technological inventory of offshore fishermen is the cayuco (dory). This canoe-like boat--once made from a dugout log but now plank constructed--is eight or more feet long, and propelled by poling, paddling, or outboard motor. Primarily a craft used for short trips between a moored boat and the shore, for example, the dory may be towed behind the fishing boat or carried right on deck.

Fishing boats laden with ice, food, and drinking water, proceed from San Pedro across the Barrier Reef some sixty miles to places like Half Moon Cay--near Lighthouse Reef on the extreme eastern limits of British Honduran territory--where "Rock" and "Spiny" lobsters are found. Once located at a likely spot, fishermen skin dive for lobsters continuously throughout the daylight hours for the five to ten days which constitute a fishing trip. Armed with the gaff, men propel themselves underwater with the swim fins while searching through their facemasks for lobsters. Once sighted, the prey is hooked and quickly brought to the surface where it is dropped on the boatdeck..

Fishermen rest briefly and then dive again while someone else of the boat's crew detaches the tail from the lobster, deguts the tail, and packs it in the icebox.

The methodology and technology of this type of fishing is thus rather simple, but the hardships of the work are apparent in returning fishermen. The sun and salt water combine to bake and harden the skin till it is like dark brown, almost black, leather. There is no possibility of washing off the brine of a day's activity, there is only enough water in the supply barrels for drinking. There is no warm supper--since few boats are equipped with a stove or heater of any sort--to compensate for their hard work. Canned food, eaten cold, must rejuvenate fishermen for the next day. Sleep is not refreshing for the men since boats are crowded, a wood deck is not very comfortable, and sunburn (at least at the start of the season when skin is very tender) preclude very restful slumber. The elements may be perverse which means men cannot work and must try to seek shelter either in the tiny forward hold, or the larger, but equally stuffy, after hold (both of which are probably somewhat crowded with provisions for the trip). Untoward weather may prevent progress from one fishing spot to another or back to the village, and a starless or moonless night may likewise stall the fishermen who sail entirely without charts or compass (and who likewise do not carry radio transmitters or running lights as safety measures). If fishermen are near the village when visibility is poor or there is no natural light at all, they

often send out one or two of their number in the dory to find a breach in the Reef, and, with a small flashlight, guide the fishing boat into the shallows near Ambergris where the fishing crew ties up until morning and then debarks.

Inshore Lobstering

Inshore lobster fishermen have a somewhat easier time than their offshore counterparts and most of the 37 men involved in this activity will admit that this is the reason which keeps them from pursuing more lucrative offshore work. Crews range from one to three, possibly four, men and it is probable that men in these crews are either brothers or father and sons (although other combinations exist also). The difference in crew composition may possibly be explained in terms of profits accrued from the two types of lobstering, and technological-operational expense. Inshore lobstering is less lucrative but the capital outlay for a skiff, motor, and lobster pots is far less than the cost of a sail boat, motor, and the other equipment used in offshore work. Likewise, inshore lobstermen do not have to bear the expense of maintaining themselves for several days at a time while out working. Whereas low investment-low return inshore lobstering could be carried on by one household (that is, a man and his son for example) the cost of offshore lobstering could not, I believe, be borne by one household alone. Hence, offshore lobster fishermen will look to several households for crew members but inshore lobster men can stay within the household when seeking individuals with

whom to work. Rectangular lobster pots are used--made from pimento wood, approximately three and one half feet long by one and one half feet wide by one foot deep in dimensions. A one way door in the slab-type box admits lobsters, but then holds them live captives until boxes are retrieved. One man, or a number of men together, may own sixty to almost two hundred of these pots which cost \$3 to \$4 B.H. apiece for construction materials and which they themselves make. Pots are weighted with stones and jettisoned from a motor driven skiff, or sailboat. A skiff (speedboat) is especially popular for this work since it is fast, small, and can be maneuvered by one man; frequently they are powered by outboard motors of up to 35 horsepower.

The inshore lobsterman, clothed in swim trunks and a cap, searches for a likely looking spot to sink his traps--often near a patch of seaweed or rocks. Retrieval involves locating the pots by use of an underwater viewer--a box-like affair, one side of which is glass, which permits search from the surface of the water. This is referred to as a catalejo in other places. If traps are particularly elusive it may be necessary to conduct an underwater search with facemask and fins. Once found, the pots are hooked with a long gaff and brought to the surface where they are balanced on the side of the boat while the catch is removed. Lobsters are thrown to the floor (or bottom) of the boat, and covered with wet burlap to keep them alive. After resetting the pot, progress is made to the next spot and the

same procedure is repeated. The day's rounds having been finished, lobster tails are detached and degutted, and the fisherman returns to San Pedro. The volume of lobster tails obtained by inshore lobster fishermen amounts to only a small fraction of that brought in by offshore fishers, and it is this quantitative difference (rather than a difference in the quality of the tails brought in) that accounts for the greater profits which are earned by men working offshore.

Other Fishing Activity

Scale fishermen forsake any form of lobster fishing in order to follow a work schedule of their own choosing and expend less effort still than inshore lobster fishermen. Their excursions are not frequent or prolonged, usually limited to one day trips. Scale fishermen generally use the same type of boats as are employed by offshore lobster fishermen, and boat crews are usually of the same size and type as are found amongst inshore lobster fishermen. Different from anything found in either type of lobstering activity, however, is the use of fishing nets. Drag nets, manufactured by the fishermen themselves or perhaps boughten, are set out with cork buoys and then either trawled slowly while being gathered in or simply cast out and recovered with anything which might have come into their path. Cork, incidentally, is a gift of the sea since logs of this material are blown onto the beaches of San Pedro by Easterlies and are scavenged by the fishermen.

Another method of scale fishing is the use of the fish trap which consists of net enclosures built in the water and into which fish may err. Poles are fixed deeply into the sea bed in a circular or oval disposition and net is attached. Location is usually near a probable feeding ground; near a channel leading through the barrier reef into shallow water near the village; or in a place where currents may drive fish. Traps are so designed as to admit entrance but not exit, although I did not learn what construction or mechanism made this possible. As noted above, crews are of the same type as those involved in inshore lobstering; that is, they are usually composed of men from one household.

In addition to lobster and various types of fish, conchs and turtles are also obtained from the sea. Getting them is usually a one or two man operation carried on from a skiff or dory. Conch need only be dived for, pulled from the sea floor with the bare hands, and loaded on the boat. On shore, conchs are cracked at the point where muscle connects the animal to its shell, fibres are severed, and the meat drawn out. Turtles are not so easy to catch and involve an element of danger due to their powerful snapping jaws. Using speed and maneuverability of the skiff, a fisherman tries to overtake his prey and jump overboard so that he will come up behind the turtle. He then grabs the shell at the top and base and pushes downward on the latter to force the animal to the surface. Having broken water, a companion on the skiff comes along side man and turtle, and

passes a line around the head and flippers of the latter. Once hauled on board, the turtle is trussed up and covered with wet burlap whence it is carried to the village for butchering.

Regardless of the type of creature fished for, the bulk of the catches made by San Pedranos makes its way to the local fishing cooperative plant. Only two or three fishermen sell fish fresh from the boat to local women, one man salts and dries fish to sell in the village or in Belize. Turtle, shark, and barracuda are usually consumed in the home of the man who took them.

The Cooperative

Caribena Producers Cooperative Society Limited, the fishing cooperative in San Pedro, was registered in Belize City on 1 March, 1963. For two years (1963-1965) members merchandized their produce in Belize through fishing companies there until San Pedro got its own plant facilities at the beginning of the 1965-66 lobster season. Approximately 160 people are listed in the registry of cooperative members, not all of whom are actual fishermen since membership is not limited solely to people of this profession; or solely to San Pedranos for that matter. Fishermen, housewives, merchants, and businessmen who have bought shares in the society are all equal members of Caribena Producers, though by far the fishermen have greater numbers (148). It is my understanding that there is a distinction in the constitution of the cooperative between members in good standing and members who have simply bought shares. I was unable to learn what this distinction is, and I could not observe any sort of differential

treatment of cooperative members which might have indicated that there were classes of membership in the cooperative. By this I mean that, as far as I could ascertain, all members of the co-op had a voting privilege, all members were allowed to speak on matters regarding the cooperative, and all members received the same price for like produce sold through the cooperative. An annual meeting of the membership is held prior to the opening of the new season, and, in the presence of Government officials, report of finances is made and new Cooperative Board officers are elected. Regarding the latter, seven men, three with two-year terms and the others with terms of one year, are elected from a slate of nominees by simple plurality of votes cast. Members of the Board then select a chairman from among their number. Board members are usually from among the better fishermen in the cooperative and can generally be characterized as some of the more articulate of San Pedrano males. Popularity is important in getting elected. But the voting membership also takes into account what nominees have previously done in the village and how electing a particular person to the Board will be of benefit to the entire cooperative. For example, a man who can "speak well" will be a better Board member when it comes to dealing with Department of Cooperatives officials than a man who does not speak well simply because the former will make known the wants and desires of cooperative members and the latter, perhaps, cannot. The Board is responsible for such things as personnel, policy making, and is intermediary

between "the membership" and both the Department of Cooperatives and the American wholesaler through whom sea products are marketed in the United States. Presently there are two employees in charge of the office at the cooperative where disbursements are made and records kept. Working personnel in the plant consist of a head engineer and three assistant engineers who maintain all mechanical equipment; two men who do heavy work such as lifting baskets of lobster tails etc.; a quality controller (actually employed by the American wholesalers); and seventeen teenage girls who clean, weigh and package fish and lobsters. All personnel except the head engineer and quality controller are local people who have been hired to their positions on the basis of their ability determined during a trial period of one to two weeks.

The physical plant of Caribena Producers is a complex of four buildings, foremost of which is a two story frame building where most operations take place. Divided into a number of areas, this latter structure houses an air-conditioned office (unique in San Pedro) presided over by the two office workers mentioned above; the work room which takes up most of the first floor and extends the full two stories in height; two refrigerator rooms; and an area to house the apparatus which chills the refrigerator rooms. The work area is floored with cement and equipped with running water and industrial size fluorescent lights. The room is bare of fixtures except for four long work tables, formed in a U-shape under the lights, a desk used by

the engineers, and a rectangular wooden tank of perhaps 250 to 300 cubic feet capacity where lobsters are immersed in water until they can be processed.

Regarding the other three buildings of the complex, one of these is a structure made with louvered walls where diesel generators are kept. Three generators, producing upwards of 150 kilowatts of electricity, provide the power to keep lights and refrigerators going in the complex. Another building houses the ice making machine where block ice is made from rainwater, and a third refrigerator used to store the ice. Last of all is a small building sitting somewhat apart from the others described which is referred to as the "head engineer's house". Actually the single room structure is primarily used as a radio shack where the cooperative's transceiver is located and from whence a refrigerator ship can be summoned whenever the cooperative has accumulated enough cargo to warrant a stop.

The following normally takes place whenever lobsters are brought in to the cooperative. Fishermen tie up at the main dock on the Caribbean facing side of the village and unload their catch into wire baskets which hold between 125 and 150 pounds of lobster tails each. Baskets are transported, two or three at a time, to the cooperative plant in the two co-op owned jeeps. There, each basket is sorted to ascertain how much of each catch is first class (perfect, unblemished lobster tails) or second class (dark, blotchy, or otherwise imperfect lobster tails). First and second class lobsters are then weighed and the respective

weights recorded. While the fishermen are collecting payment in the office, the catch is dumped into the storage vat. As soon as possible, one of the male employees dips into the vat with a long handled net and brings out several hundred weight of tails and puts them in buckets which are distributed to the girls on the processing line. Here, each tail is checked to make certain it is fully cleaned, the little flipper-like appendages on the underside of the tail are clipped off, and each tail is wrapped in plastic and tossed onto a tray. One member of the line has already rechecked each tail and weight graded it (tails weighing four ounces, for example, are thrown into one tray, those weighing six, eight, ten ounces or whatever being separated into their own trays). Finally cardboard boxes are filled to their ten pound capacity with a particular weight of tail, and the filled boxes are then placed in cold storage. The quality controller and the two male employees are in charge of this last (packaging) step, and likewise, they assist girls in placing these boxes into larger cartons (holding perhaps five of the smaller boxes) for pick-up by the refrigerator ship. Once delivered to the ship, lobster tails are taken to the United States where they are distributed to consumers by the Alberti Sea Food Company of Chicago.

Unfortunately I was unable to watch preparation of fish fillet, corned fish, or conch, but I am told that techniques differ only insofar as the peculiar type of marine produce may require it.

Processing and marketing fish are not the only activities undertaken by the Cooperative, however. Caribena Producers loans money directly to its members for various purposes, usually "emergencies" which require quick and ready cash. Applications for a loan are accepted by the Board and after due consideration money is either loaned or denied the applicant. As far as I could ascertain, these loans are non-interest bearing and are usually repaid by withholding a portion of each payment for lobsters until the loan is cancelled. Likewise, the Cooperative purchases various articles used by the fishermen and makes these available to members at lower than retail prices paid in Belize. Large articles, such as outboard motors, are usually bought through the Co-op by the same payoff arrangement as is involved with loans. Recently (in fact, initiated during my stay) the Cooperative has undertaken the financing of qualified students who could not afford to go to high school ordinarily. According to the Cooperative budget, it appears that an educational fund for just such cases will be included in Cooperative accounts as a regular practice. Finally, plans are currently being made whereby the Cooperative will provide the entire village with electricity produced by its generators. Details for this electrification have not been worked out as yet.

Financing of the Cooperative, and its actual monetary transactions, are sufficiently complicated to require abilities and capabilities which none of the villagers presently possess. Consequently, outside supervision and direction is necessary from

the Government and also the American financier who originally provided funds for building of the Cooperative. Supervision by Government will be dealt with below. The gentleman who helped San Pedro with capital to build the local plant complex, reportedly having extensive fishing interests all along the Central American coast, advanced \$100,000 B.H. to cover the cost of machinery and other equipment, did this "as a favor to San Pedro and British Honduras" according to the man himself. He is also the link which San Pedro has with the U.S. market, and it is he who pays the San Pedranos whatever price lobsters currently bring. A portion of this pay is received as cash, and another goes to operation of the plant and repayment of his initial loan. From monies received, the Cooperative likewise manages to pay dividends on shares, add to the reserve and education funds, and rebate a certain amount of money (so many cents per pound of catch from the previous season) to fishermen at the start of a new lobster season.

The Work Cycle

The yearly fishing cycle in San Pedro is a function of the lobstering season which is established by the Government. By this I mean simply that San Pedranos participate in maritime exploitative activity according to a schedule established by the Fisheries and Wildlife Department in Belize. This schedule consists of two phases: the legal lobstering season which lasts from 15 July until 15 March; and the "offseason" which lasts from 15 March until 15 July. Starting with activities on the opening day of a new lobster season, fishing crews have already

been chosen and the boats put into a good state of repair. During the early dawn hours fishermen are already at work trying to get off as quickly as possible. Provisions are stored aboard the boats, and iceboxes are filled to capacity as quickly as the jeeps can haul ice to the front dock. Soon the men are all on their way to the various fishing grounds which past experiences have shown to be worth the many hours of travel often required before they are reached.

For the next eight months most of the San Pedrano fishermen will be travelling between the village and the fishing grounds. The regularity and frequency with which these trips are made varies considerably from one boat crew to another; likewise, the duration of the fishing trips also varies. Of twenty-two offshore fishing crews working during 1965, for example, approximately half of the crews operated throughout the entire season, making as many as sixteen different trips. Several of the remaining crews went out only eight or nine times, and one crew went out only three times. One reason for the difference in the number of trips made may well be accounted for in the size of the boat crew. There appears to be a direct correlation between the number of men on a boat and the number of times the boat goes out. This would reflect, I believe, the purported arduousness of the work; a two man crew would not be as productive on successive trips since with only two men working, a greater amount of labor would fall to each man than would befall a member of a five or six man crew. Smaller

crews would derive less profit, perhaps, than larger crews (relatively speaking, that is) and a profit motive for continued effort might not be as great as amongst larger crews. The duration of each fishing trip seems to correlate with the lateness of the season and the number of times a boat has been out. Most fishing crews start the season by staying out from seven to ten days. As the season progresses men will remain for increasingly longer periods of time in the village when they come in to deposit their lobsters. Likewise as energy and enthusiasm flag, the time spent at the fishing grounds decreases to four or five days or less. Each take with the advance of the lobster season decreases and the recompence for each trip is lowered concomitantly. By 15th March both man and lobster are fairly well done in, and although it is reported that elsewhere there are violations of the law, San Pedranos claim that eight months is sufficient season for them and they therefore abide by the fixed dates. Inshore lobster fishers are likewise obliged to cease their operations and here again the decreased profit realized by San Pedranos from each visit to their pots must make the legal end of the season seem somewhat anticlimactic. In response to the cessation of lobstering operations the cooperative plant gears down to a slower pace of activity. Sporadically a few of the girls may perhaps be called in to clean and prepare corned fish, conch meat, or fish fillet but the number of man hours of work required in the offseason are considerably fewer than during the lobster season. Now begins the offseason activities of the village.

From mid-March until mid-July, villagers live a "normal" existence, that is, one which was characteristic of pre-lobstering days. When household expenses must be met the men go out and fish or look for conchs. Corned fish and fish fillet, made from red snapper, white snapper, parrot and other scale fish species are sold through the Cooperative and are the mainstay of village economy during the offseason. Fishing for these creatures does not occupy a great deal of the San Pedranos' time, however, and there are many opportunities to drink in the bars or just relax.

By and large, the off-season is a time of relaxation, and doing odd jobs around their homes. A new addition may be made to the house, an entire house may be built, nets may be woven, or weeds chopped.

In the latter part of May the fever of the approaching season strikes San Pedranos and all up and down the beach men draw up their boats for overhauling. Old paint is scraped off, rotten boards replaced, and new coats of paint are applied. Sails and rigging are looked to, perhaps the outboard motor is given a tuneup, and iceboxes are repaired to insure watertightness. With these major preparations made, the fishermen may take time to paint and repair dories, skiffs, and perhaps their front porch as long as paint is handy. Any new (or better) equipment, plus food and other provisions, are bought with the money from a loan or perhaps from the rebate on the previous year's earnings. With everything set in order the men are ready for the start of a new season and the beginning of another cycle.

Summary

According to all reports the methods, techniques and tools actually involved in fishing have not changed greatly since the advent of cooperative lobstering in San Pedro except in terms of a greater quantity of sailboats, skiffs, and outboard motors. Several changes have been wrought by cooperation and these changes are felt by virtually all villagers because of fishing's importance in San Pedro. First, San Pedranos focus far more intensively on taking lobsters than they did prior to cooperation when lobstering took up a relatively small proportion of their time and energy. Secondly, fishing trips now last for a longer period of time and occur with greater frequency than in pre-cooperative days when men may have gone out sporadically for only a day at a time. Thirdly, there is a difference in the functioning of fishing partners. By this I mean that prior to the advent of the cooperative a number of men, perhaps five, for example, worked as fishing partners. But, it was not necessarily the case that all five men would go out together on any given fishing excursion, and it seems that on successive excursions various of the partners would replace one another on the active fishing crew. Now, however, it appears that all partners are present whenever the boat goes out. Put simply, there is an increased frequency with which fishing partners form into fishing units wherein all partners will be present for work activities. Finally, the fishermen of San Pedro now merchandise their produce as one body; that is, rather than trying to market each catch of each individual fishing

crew separately from all other catches, San Pedro's fishermen combine their total production for a single release to the consumer market.

The local cooperative plant in some ways shortens the periods of absence from San Pedro since fishermen can spend some time at home between trips, and it appears that all fishermen do, in fact, relish being in the village with their friends and families. Local processing of fish is much more profitable than taking fish to companies in Belize City and handling the whole lobstering process locally has undoubtedly enhanced the value of the fishing cooperative in villagers' eyes.

Money for the cooperative plant came from outside San Pedro and British Honduras alike. Whether the money was provided as a favor or not, it remains that building the cooperative plant required no investment or sacrifice on the part of the community or country. Greater profits obtained without any risk makes cooperative activity a "what have we got to lose" proposition which cannot be overlooked or passed up by San Pedranos.

CHAPTER III

NON-MARITIME ECONOMY

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the "non-maritime" economy of San Pedro, but in actuality all gainful employment in the village has its base in marine exploitation. The individuals dealt with in the preceding chapter, fishermen and cooperative plant workers, are the only San Pedranos who engage in activities which directly tap wealth from the sea, but the individuals who provide goods and services for fishermen and co-op workers are paid with money earned from maritime activity. Thus, the dealers in goods and services also receive benefits from the sea but in an indirect way. Dividing the economics of San Pedro into two separate sections is intended to emphasize the predominant importance of fishing to San Pedranos, and the following pages illustrate how fishing activity comes to effect virtually every inhabitant of the village, even though some people may be merchants, carpenters, mechanics, domestics, or whatever.

Local Enterprises

San Pedro's trade and commercial activity center around enterprises owned by eight men, all but one of whom is a resident of the village. The concerns involved include six general stores, three bars, a cinema, a booth (called the "Saloon"), somewhat like the refreshment stands found at parks and recreation areas in this country, and a freight service.

Except for one bar, enterprises are almost exclusively family operated, employing the services--at least part-time--of a total of 23 people, including the various owners. All but two of the concerns are located in buildings also used as residences.

General stores carry stocks of canned foods and liquids (milk and orange juice), clothing and yard goods, tools, utensils, toiletries, a limited variety of fresh vegetables, staples such as flour, sugar, lard, tea, kerosene, and cigarettes. Very little fresh meat is stocked by merchants except for frozen chicken stored until sale in the Cooperative refrigerators and very quickly bought up as villagers hasten to obtain this delicacy for Sunday dinners. Four stores also carry a selection of costume jewelry and other merchandise which does not ordinarily turn over quickly but which is sometimes called for. With few exceptions, merchants take charge of selecting and transporting their own supplies from Belize City. If it should be inconvenient, or the load surpasses the capacity of his boat, a merchant may have another San Pedrano bring stock for his store; barkeeps generally depend on one of the merchant boats or on the local freight service to bring supplies from Belize for their establishments. Obviously, from the last remark, not all freighting contracts are given to the locally owned and operated freight service. The one boat fleet is slow and the owner does not follow a regular schedule since his secondary function as a coconut retailer often keeps him in Belize City.

Having arrived in San Pedro, goods are set up on store shelves to await purchase, and the wait is sometimes long since business, usually, cannot be characterized as brisk, unless fishermen are buying for a trip. During the latter stores are literally cleaned out. Most purchases involve small quantities of food bought just before mealtime, and perhaps consist of a few cents worth of lard, flour, and rice, two or three potatoes or onions and, occasionally, a can of meat or margarine.

Alcohol--mainly "white rum" (distilled in Belize) and imported rum and beer (from the West Indies, Holland and the U.S.)--is the object which accounts for greatest spending in San Pedro. Local bars are regularly depleted of large stores of drink throughout the year.

Clientel of the shops, bars, and cinema are almost exclusively village residents. A "neighborhood" pattern of patronage obtains in the case of shops, although shops elsewhere in the village may be patronized regardless of proximity to ones house. Transactions are strictly in cash--there is no barter in San Pedro--but credit is extended by merchants and one of the bars. This bar is busiest of the three largely because it does do credit business.

Merchants usually keep fairly regular store hours from perhaps 8 a.m. until as late as 9:30 or 10 p.m. when the lights go out throughout San Pedro. Clerks carry on the business of minding the stores and may at the same time engage in some domestic activity until a customer disturbs them. Bars have

somewhat less regular hours. One bartender, for example, will simply close up if there is no business; and another will close any time he decides it would be more worthwhile to tend his lobster pots. The third bar is also frequently closed, after the midday meal when business is slow, usually for two or three hours. Law requires that no liquor be sold after midnight and that bars cannot open until midday on Sundays.

Two other minor sources of commercial activity exist in San Pedro. Infrequently a boat comes from Xcalak, Mexico with a cargo of bananas and other fruit to sell in San Pedro. Likewise, peddlers come to the village after the start of the lobster season to sell ribbon and trinkets to the girls who work at the Co-op or other San Pedranas.

Other Economic Activity

Local enterprise in San Pedro is not restricted to shops. In numerous instances it is embodied in single individuals who are skilled laborers or specialists who apply their trades either full or part-time to make a living. Two men are carpenters who work primarily at building houses or repairing them. One of these men once built boats but has given up the practice with his advancing age. Another man is a sail maker. Eight or nine men are laborers, working in the village as longshoremen or in one of the numerous cocal on the island; another is a planter who owns his own cocal and two are mechanics who are most frequently called on to repair outboard motors. I could not find out how much each of these men earned at their various

jobs, but some are paid daily wages and others are paid by the individual chore that they do. Laborers, for example, get \$4 B.H. per day; cojal workers approximately \$60 B.H. per month. Bartenders are salaried and mechanics charge by the job. In addition to these, there are the school headmaster and the police constable, both of whom are paid by Government. The headmaster is relatively well paid at \$224 B.H. per month. I do not know what salary the constable receives, but San Pedranos told me that he supplements his income by taking a portion of confiscated goods, such as venison which is shot out of season.

Technology and various job skills found in San Pedro are not generally so complex or sophisticated that a San Pedrano cannot be a "jack of all trades". Given their capacity to do various jobs, San Pedranos are usually the ones who take care of maintenance chores such as housebuilding, painting, roofing, making or repairing furniture, mending a water storage vat and the like, around the home and (when paid) around the village; such as chopping down weeds or roofing the community center.. It is not surprising, then, that men of the village, during their lifetime or simply in the course of a year's work, will engage in a number of activities aimed at making a living. "Fishermen", for example, often occupy themselves in spare time, or in the off season, with some other form of gainful work.

The same is likewise true of those involved in local enterprises and wage labor. One of the bartenders is also a part-time

fisherman. At least three of the merchants earn extra money by chartering their boats for passenger or freight service. Two of the fishermen are barbers. Both mechanics are part-time fishermen and one of them is actually employed "full-time" by an American speculator as a mechanic-trouble shooter. Six or seven of the younger men--amongst whom are fishermen, laborers, and an office worker at the Co-op--add to their regular income by playing together as a band at village dances. One fisherman-entrepreneur has taken advantage of the supply of block ice at the Cooperative by selling syrup-flavored ice shavings to children. There are also a number of San Pedranos who are regarded by other villagers as specialists since they have skills not possessed by every individual. For example, there are three men who know how to set broken bones and are referred to as "bone doctors". Another man knows how to cure Mal de Ojo by use of an herb which he learned about from "an old Indian" who once worked on Ambergris. (More description of Mal de Ojo is given in Chapter VII). Still another man knows how to massage aching or strained muscles with "hot oils" (I could not find out what these were made from) which cause the patient to perspire and ultimately rid him of any pain or soreness. Incidence of broken bones and Mal de Ojo are not common according to the specialists; nor is massage called for very frequently. Thus specialists actually spend a small proportion of their time providing their particular services, and I was unable to determine whether they are paid or in some way compensated for their trouble.

For their part, women are somewhat confined to the domicile by various household chores and thus often carry on gainful activities which will not take them away from husband and children. Two or three women make tortillas and other food to sell to fellow villagers; one woman does washing occasionally if there is anyone desiring this service; another provides meals for occasional visitors or laborers in the village; and still another rents rooms to vagrants who do not choose to stay in the American-owned hotel or one of the privately owned cottages just outside the village. A few women do engage in activity which requires attention being directed outside the home: three of the local women are school teachers; a woman works as cook-maid at the American-owned hotel; and there are, of course, the seventeen girls who work at the Co-op. Although two other San Pedranas (perhaps more) are qualified as school teachers and have, in fact, taught for a time, they no longer practice this profession due to families which keep them busy at home. (The school, incidentally, is chronically short of teachers because of the fact that women leave to take care of their own children--there are no professional baby sitters in San Pedro--and the one male school teacher left this job at the end of the 1965 school year to earn more money at the cooperative office).

In terms of domestic tasks executed by women, they are handlers of household affairs and managers of household finances--expenditures for food, clothing and other necessities are effected by them and any savings accumulated by a man are usually the doing

of his wife. While doing these general tasks, wives of several of the merchants clerk in their husbands' stores.

The full-time nurse in San Pedro, like the constable and headmaster, comes from outside the community and is paid by Government and UNESCO. Trained by the latter agency as a midwife, and given training up to the R.N. degree by Belize General Hospital, the nurse has supplanted the two aged San Pedranos who once practiced midwifery in the village. She also administers what amounts to first aid to anyone in need of medical attention. She likewise conducts "well baby clinics" (rudimentary checks on the general health of village children brought to the clinic) and assists the visiting doctor when he makes his monthly call in the village. She informed me that her duties actually take very little time due to the good health of San Pedranos and she enumerated the only maladies she knew: namely, one case of tuberculosis; one case of typhoid; one case of polio (all three of which existed before her arrival in San Pedro a year and a half ago); and several cases of measles and influenza.

Summary

Noted initially was the fact that in some way or another all San Pedranos are involved in the exploitation of the sea. The immediately preceding material illustrates the ways in which some villagers indirectly capitalize on maritime activity and these illustrations complement the account of maritime economic practices. Maritime and non-maritime economic activity taken together warrant analogy of San Pedro to a fish net. A tug at

one point of the mesh ramifies throughout the entire network of meshes; and so too a change or interruption in fishing and fishing related activities in San Pedro would be felt throughout the entire community. Instituting cooperative fishing could not help but effect all San Pedranos. Thus, the entire community had interest in getting cooperation started and then making it work once impetus for change had roused San Pedro's fishermen.

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY AND RESIDENCE PATTERNS

Introduction

Discussion of family configurations points up the fact that kinship, beyond the various family configurations encompassed in households, is not an organizing force in the village at large. Cooperation has characteristically been confined within the household units, and these traditional units are the most fundamental and important ones in structuring activities in San Pedro. In order for the Government to successfully inaugurate cooperative fishing in San Pedro, this tradition of familism did not need to be altered and thus a potential obstacle was averted (Foster, 1961: 1181; Banfield, 1958; Rubel, 1966: 232). There is also a description of land tenure and residence patterns which shows how San Pedranos now meet the relatively short supply of land (or the previous inability to buy property) and how, in general, they distribute themselves in the village. The importance of the latter in facilitating the acceptance of the cooperative is discussed further in the chapter on world view.

Family Patterns

There are three patterns of family living in San Pedro: the nuclear family, the extended family, and a modified extended family. The nuclear family is composed of an adult male and female who sexually cohabit and cooperate economically, along

with their unmarried children; it is also a localized residential unit in that its members all share the same house, room or whatever. The extended family is composed of a husband and wife who have their unmarried children and some of their married children, and their spouses, living with them. There may also be grandchildren (offspring of resident married children) in this family configuration. It too is a residential unit. The modified extended family has several permutations; it may consist of grandparents and grandchildren; a husband and wife, their offspring, and nieces or nephews of either spouse; or a husband and wife, their children, and an unmarried brother or sister of either spouse; or a husband and wife, their children, and a parent of either spouse. These three types of families are the chief groups found in the household.

There are also a number of idiosyncratic "family" units in San Pedro which I feel are best handled under the residual category of non-family households. By this term I mean simply a situation wherein two or more individuals, who may not be related to one another through kinship, occupy the same residence. According to the configurations of family previously outlined they are not family units at all, merely residential units.

Unfortunately it is not possible to give exact percentages of households encompassing these various family types. The reason for this is that family composition seems to be in a constant state of flux. Relatives from within the village move in with other villagers and thus change the various family

configurations of individual San Pedrano families. This may also happen with relatives who normally live on the mainland. Residence is usually temporary in these cases perhaps lasting only a week or as much as several months, but some cases exist where residence has been taken up permanently. Likewise, San Pedranos who work at various projects elsewhere on Ambergris Cay constantly come and go between the village and their work sites, and this changes the actual census figures and makeup of households in San Pedro from one time to another. Roughly speaking, however, there are 136 family households and approximately fifteen non-family households. Of the family households, my data show that approximately 70% encompass nuclear families and the remainder are divided between the extended family-types.

Relationships Between Family Members

In spite of these various family arrangements, interaction between individuals who stand in a certain relationship to one another appears to be fairly standardized, although there are discrepancies between ideal and real treatment.

The husband-wife relationship is generally one of congenial cooperation, both ideally and in reality, in the majority of San Pedrano unions, which pervades all aspects of family life. Husbands are acknowledged as the heads of their respective families; they expect, and are expected, to take the major part of the financial burden of supporting their families but ideally the husband and wife work together in this undertaking.

While a man is busy fishing or is otherwise occupied his wife is doing her housework, caring for children, marketing for the family, doing laundry and ironing, sewing and cooking. If her husband is engaged in commerce the wife may divide her time between house and store. Ideally the object of daily activity is for the wife's work to complement that of the husband and it appears to me that this ideal is approximated in reality. Husbands, in addition to their gainful work, may also assist their wives in such things as cooking, baking, and child care. For example, it is not unusual to see fathers minding young children as they play on the beach; and a man in the household where I took meals during my stay in San Pedro frequently did baking for the family. Women generally assist in management of money, and exert a great deal of influence over its expenditure. It is expected that women will, in fact, be better at saving money and "making it stretch" than men. Wives do, nevertheless, condone some drinking on the part of husbands, but only to the point where the welfare of the family is not endangered. If a man drinks up half his pay from a lobstering trip--as some men do--there will likely be harsh words. In addition, it appears as though San Pedranos are also permissive of husbands going to a dance or movie without them. The wives will stay home with the youngsters. On their part, women do little drinking or smoking, but do engage in gambling which is a form of recreation as well as a possible way in which to make a little extra household money. Gambling, incidentally, is invariably in the form of buying

chances on the daily Boledo, or lottery run by the British Honduran Government or the weekly lottery sponsored by the Panamanian Government. Occasionally a raffle is held for a cake or a like thing and women also buy chances on these. Although there is little public affection shown between a husband and wife (with the exception of younger couples) neither are there public displays of anger or vexation. Private displays of anger seem to be confined solely to verbal interchanges but I was told of two families wherein husbands beat their wives. It is mutually expected that there will be no extramarital flirtation or infidelity and such activity on the part of either spouse (from reports of past occurrences) would lead to shouting and fighting, and probable departure of one of the two.

It is now the general practice to seek formal marriage in the Church, but a large number of unions (nearly 20% of all marriages in San Pedro) amongst villagers 30 years old or more are common-law unions consummated simply by a man and woman living together as husband and wife. Such cohabitation usually brings a certain amount of "talk" at its inception, but no attempt is made by fellow villagers to ostracize the couple or act differently towards them--at least once the initial period of "talk" is over. Children born to common-law unions are not stigmatised, nor are "outside children" (children born out of wedlock, whose parents do not even bother to live together). Women involved in common-law marriage seem to be somewhat less active socially than those married in the Church, and when interviewed do not readily admit that they are married only under common law.

As stated, mother and father share a good deal of the responsibility of watching pre-school children--when the father is in the village--and are openly affectionate towards them. School-aged children are involved in their studies for ten months of the year and are not as much of a concern as their younger brothers and sisters. Nonetheless, mother and father keep a fairly close eye on the school age children and take an active part in teaching their offspring the general skills they will need as adults. Mothers supervise girls in domestic activities such as cooking and sewing, while fathers teach their sons how to fish, repair nets, sail boats, and so forth. I do not know to what extent parents may encourage their children in school work (or help them at various studies), but many, if not most, parents desire high school education for their sons at least.

In non-scholastic endeavors, I heard neither discouragement nor encouragement of children as they undertook various ventures. Treatment of the unmarried offspring who remain in the father's house is rather protective in the case of girls and fraught with cool civility in the case of boys. Fathers are the ultimate disciplinarians of their dependent children, but due to their sporadic absence over a long period of time, discipline, affection, teaching of skills and other factors involved in the socialization of offspring necessarily originate with mothers in many San Pedrano families. Lobstering activity has made it possible for young men to make a good living by working with individuals who do not come from their own households. As a

result there seems to be a breakdown in intrafamilial cooperation between males in San Pedrano households wherever the males are involved in offshore lobstering. This is apparently true because young men do not have to obey their elders either in a work context, or in the context of everyday family life since they are economically independent of the household. Fathers are frequently absent when disciplinary action is required, but even if they are present and reprimand their sons all that the young men have to do is move out of the father's household in order to escape chastizement. Where the young men do not move out, the father-son relationship is often strained since fathers resent "bad" behavior in the boys, and boys are defensive lest their fathers should say anything to them regarding their behavior.

There is generally a quiet affection between a mother and son but sons often seem to treat their mothers in a condescending manner, assuming that the women will always defer to their wishes and will always be ready to minister to their needs. Boys do not show disrespect or disdain for their mothers, as they often do toward fathers; they simply seem to disregard their mothers as being in no position to coerce them into doing something which they do not wish to do. Likewise mothers are not capable of forcing their sons to desist from behavior which the mothers feel is bad.

More than anything else, these boys are condemned by older males, and some females, for the heavy drinking indulged in. In point of fact, boys merely imitate fathers and other male elders.

The inconsistency of the older males in directing the younger men to "straighten up" is readily apparent from statements of the young men. Once boys have married, however, relations improve with their parents, in some cases, even to the point of being able to bring the new bride to the father's household.

The unmarried daughters are not a great problem for parents, except when some flirtation may involve an undesirable youth. Daughters are, in fact, an asset to the household due to the help they provide in caring for children and doing other domestic work. It is not uncommon for a girl to bring her new husband to live in her father's household. There she can continue to assist her mother while waiting to take direction of her own household.

Siblings at an early age are more or less responsible for one another--older children watching the younger ones. Older brothers and sisters often take it upon themselves to discipline an "offending" youngster, but generally siblings of mixed ages get along well. Frequently, play groups of seven to ten year-olds, for example, gather for some game or other and are surrounded by satellite groups of younger children who try to participate but end up playing amongst their age mates.

Throughout school years, brothers and sisters, although in different grades, may well be in the same room receiving virtually the same instruction (through eavesdropping) and having the same school mates. Around age fourteen, when dating begins, it is not uncommon for two brothers of one family to court two

sisters in another; joint interests may extend to other areas as well, such as cooperation in fishing in the case of the boys. Cooperation does not end with marriage necessarily, but in the case of sibling shopkeepers it is evident that competition may in fact arise. Women after marriage maintain close contact with sisters, and often help one another in child care, for example. Brothers, too, maintain contact through membership in the same boat crew, or perhaps in aiding one another build a house.

Extended family members--a son-in-law, daughter-in-law, niece, nephew, or grandchild--when they are included in the household, are apparently treated in exactly the same way as basic family members would be treated, although relations between male sons-in-law and the head of the household may be more relaxed than between a father and son. A man and his son-in-law (whether residing together or not) often fish together and their relationship is generally a congenial one. The woman of the house and daughters-in-law combine their energies to do household chores; cooking and washing, for example, are joint projects. I do not have any records relating to the behavior between men and their daughters-in-law or between women and their sons-in-law. Brothers- and sisters-in-law often join together in both work and play. Brothers-in-law may be members of the same boat crew, for example, and if not cooperating economically, men will likely be drinking partners or share the same circle of friends. Sisters-in-law behave toward one another as sisters would. Nieces and nephews relate to their cousins as if they

were all siblings, and to all appearances enjoy the same relationship with elders in the household as village children do with their parents.

Residence Patterns and Land Tenure

The disposition of land in San Pedro Village is at first inspection very neat and specific insofar as well marked boundaries of residential sites and distinct demarkation of village limits is concerned. The ravages of past hurricanes, obliterating or obscuring plot lines, and the purchasing of village land by Government necessitated a survey of San Pedro approximately five years ago. At this time, 34.4 acres of land were laid out into 26 blocks cut through by three north-south oriented streets and five east-west streets. Residents of the village, who had previously rented property, were allowed to petition Government for a particular site and at the same time make arrangements for extended payment. The result of such petitioning was the division of 19 blocks into 159 lots. Of the remaining property, one block was divided into five lots plus an undivided area, and six blocks were left totally undivided and are presently owned either by the British Honduran government or absentee landlords.

A second inspection of land tenure, where actual ownership, occupance, and utilization of land are investigated, shows considerable jumble and lack of clarity. A survey of ownership, occupance, and utilization produced the following findings: 120 lots have identified owners; 15 lots are listed on a local map

(left in San Pedro after the Government survey) as owned, but no one knows by whom; 21 lots are vacant with no owner listed; 3 lots are used for public purposes; one entire block is listed as owned but no name is given; 3 undivided blocks had as many as three names listed as owners of various portions of the blocks (in square feet); two and a fraction Government lots were totally vacant; and a fraction of a Government lot (shown to be unoccupied) is the site of the village school.

Making an inventory of both land and buildings, I found that many of the lots in San Pedro accomodate multiple dwellings. Only 117 of the more than 160 lots have any sort of structure on them--either public or private. One hundred fifty-three buildings occupy these lots, of which 142 are private residences or semi-residences (living quarters and a business being housed in the same building). Since five houses are still abuilding (and two or three are vacant) and only 109 lots actually contain private residence structures, there are, in effect, 1.2 residence buildings per lot. A number of reasons were given by San Pedranos to explain the existence of multiple dwellings on a lot rather than there being one residence for each parcel of land. One was that the only remaining land is undesirable. Villagers have tended to settle on the Caribbean facing side of the island, which is free of bush (the lagoon facing side is not), is free of insects since sea breezes sweep in from this direction, access to the sea is readier, and most commercial establishments are located there.

Another reason given was that allowing a son to build on his father's property would make it easier for the son to set up his own household since the son would not have to purchase a lot. Since there does not appear to be a patrilocal residence bias in San Pedro (or any particular preference regarding where a new family will live for that matter) the latter reason seemed only partially adequate to explain multiple dwellings on a single lot. Further inspection of the data showed that it is sometimes a son-in-law who builds on a man's lot, and that the relationship existing between owner and builder does not follow a pattern for the entire village i.e., it is not always the first son, first married son, first son-in-law who builds a second structure. In the final analysis it would seem that the building of plural structures on a given plot of land arises simply through agreement of two parties, in order for the second builder to establish his own household.

In the cases where doubling up of residences has occurred on a lot, no one could tell me who properly holds title to the land, who has to pay taxes on it, who is responsible for purchase payments, or what happens to the land and buildings when a household dies. Conceivably it would be possible, for example, for a father to leave his own house, the house of a son, and the property on which both sit to some heir other than the builder of the second house. At present such a possibility is purely speculative due to the newness of land tenure as it now exists in San Pedro, and villagers expressed no great concern over the lack of

precedence to resolve such cases when they arise at some future date.

Finally, there are twelve cases in San Pedro where brothers, father and son(s), or mother and son have purchased lots side by side or touching in some other way. Whether these arrangements also existed before Government bought San Pedro or if they came about only under the new land tenure system I do not know, nor do I know whether the parties involved petitioned for their lots on the basis of propinquity to specific relatives.

Residence is not the only use to which land and buildings are put, as evidenced above in the inventories given. Nine buildings, on the same number of lots, house various public functionaries or are used for public functions: the police station; fishing cooperative; community center; infirmary; credit cooperative; Roman Catholic Church; Seventh Day Adventist Church; the bishop's house (vacant residence of the Roman Catholic bishop who administers San Pedro); and the school. Aside from the uses already described, land in San Pedro is put to no other service. There is absolutely no agriculture practiced in the village, nor is there even a stray vegetable garden scattered here or there. Given the size of the village it is perhaps not surprising that agriculture is absent within village limits; likewise absent is any deep attachment to "the soil". Other than as a desirable location for building a house, land has no particular value over and above any other chattel. Land is disposed of through sale or bequest, and the only restriction

governing disposition of property is that sale must be to a villager in the case of property still owned by the British Honduran government. This is to insure against non-villagers alienating land, which was the object of San Pedranos originally petitioning the Government to buy San Pedro from land holders who might sell to outsiders.

Having already accounted for the various edifices in San Pedro, it is appropriate here to describe the actual construction and furnishing of the buildings, including the sanitary facilities and utilities employed by villagers. Residences in San Pedro are largely of a plank and frame variety built on pilings from one to eight feet off the surface of the ground. This type of construction is particularly well suited to the needs of the villagers for three reasons: being built off the ground, houses are not as likely to be ravaged by the vicissitudes of wind and water which can easily inundate the low-lying, unprotected village (which happened as recently as 1961 with hurricane Hattie); elevated buildings allow the free circulation of air round about them which helps offset the sticky, heavy humidity of the climate; and crawling pests such as scorpions, lizards, and cockroaches cannot gain entrance as readily as into houses founded on the ground. Materials for constructing these houses are obtained entirely from the mainland where zinc or asbestos roofing, eaves troughing, and electrical and plumbing fixtures and accessories can be purchased in the various hardware or construction supply stores. Lumber

is more than abundant on the mainland from the extensive stands of indigenous timber, amounting to one of the less expensive items involved in building. The method of construction is relatively simple and a house 20' by 30' (roughly a medium sized house) can be built by two men in a month--less, of course, if work is steady and unpunctuated by fishing or other activity. Pilings, the number depending on the size of the projected house, are sunk deep into the ground and floor beams are bolted to them. From this base the basic four walls of white pine rise, topped by a gabled roof so that water will readily run off. Windows, perhaps one per room, partitions to create the rooms, a porch, and eaves troughing finish the house. Extras, such as electric wiring or plumbing may be added now or later, but the basic structure stands.

Still present in the village, although the minority of the house types present, is the so-called "trash" house. (Different ownership of these is discussed in the next chapter.) The term is a bit of native humor which has been corrupted from "thatch", and indeed it is this material from which roofs of this house type are made. Walls are built of sticks approximately 2" in diameter nailed vertically to well braced frames. Both the palm fronds for thatch and the sticks (I was unable to find out the name of the sapling-like "tree") are obtained locally and are evidently free for the taking. As implied, this style house was forerunner of the plank-frame type and existed as the normal residence structure as far back as the

oldest villager can remember. Aside from the fact that thatch must periodically be replaced, and the floor may only be of tamped earth, these houses appear to be quite sturdy and element-resisting structures, capable of being rendered nearly as "modern" as those of plank by the mere addition of wood floors. Some of the "trash" houses are also built on pilings, wired for electricity, etc., and they are bereft of glass window panes as are most plank residences (glass, as well as plumbing and electrical materials, is very costly throughout the colony and villagers likewise do not want to obstruct cooling breezes). Most "trash" houses now serve as cooking huts or utility sheds although some are still used as residences.

Whether the old model "trash" house or the plank house now popular with the villagers, residences have two or three, and as many as six separate rooms. One room generally serves as a cooking and dining area, another as a living room or parlor where guests are entertained or where the family gathers to chat, and any remaining rooms are dormitory spaces. Some houses have been built on pilings of sufficient height to allow creation of a second, or enlarged living area under the main house--planks need only be added to the existing underpinnings. In many instances the under part of a house serves as a place where women can do laundering or as a general storage area; in one or two cases this open-air space has been given a cement floor. Only forty-odd buildings (of 153 in San Pedro) are wired for electricity provided by a privately owned generator. Cost for the four-hour-per-day service

(6:00 to 10:00 p.m. weekdays, till 11:00 p.m. on weekends) is paid monthly at the rate of 80¢ B.H. per 40 watt bulb. Four other places, the three bars and the American hotel, have permanent electrical service supplied by the generators at the Cooperative. Cost in the latter cases could not be ascertained. The small private generator, a 10 kw diesel, is only capable of operating lights since voltage is set at 85 rather than the 110 necessary to operate most electric appliances. All other buildings in San Pedro are lighted by kerosene lamps or, in a very few cases, by lamps burning white gasoline.

The furnishings of residences is not extensive in San Pedro. Kitchen-dining areas usually have a table and three or four straight-backed chairs, an assortment of cooking utensils, dishes and silverware, and either a stove or "fogon" for cooking. The "fogon" is an open fire of mangrove roots or coconut husks over which women cook meals in pots and pans supported on angle iron or some other type of metal frame. Stoves are run by kerosene or, in a few cases, by butane gas. Roughly three quarters of the households are now equipped with the latter type of cooking apparatus as the older "fogon" is being phased out of existence. Many houses also have a Dutch oven, which is placed either on "fogon" or stove, in which bread and other food items can be baked. Half a dozen butane, kerosene, or electric refrigerators in the village provide what cold storage there is in San Pedro, and three of these are located in the bars while two others are in stores. Hence, the vast majority of villagers are without

refrigeration unless they wish to pay the Cooperative to have perishables stored in its freezing rooms. It is also possible, when there is surplus, to purchase ice from the Co-op to chill drinks and other refreshments. Living rooms generally have two or three straight-backed chairs, a small table topped by seashells or photographs, perhaps a straight-backed settee, and almost invariably the picture of Christ or a saint on the wall. Most homes are equipped with the multi-purpose hammock which frequently serves as a divan or spare bed. Bedrooms usually have a frame bed, perhaps a wardrobe, chest of drawers, or even cardboard boxes for clothes storage, and again a hammock or two. A number of houses have phonographs, sewing machines, and clothes irons (run with white gasoline), and two of the villagers working for Americans have relatively elegant furnishings--padded settees etc.

Sanitary facilities are almost exclusively of the outdoor variety although one or two of the houses do have indoor plumbing. Water is obtained from one of three sources: hand-dug wells within the confines of an individual's property (a good well can be gotten by digging fifteen feet or so into the ground); the community water supply contained in a 25,000 gallon vat under the Community Center (filled by runoff of rain from the roof); or privately owned vats which are likewise filled by catching rain as it flows off the roof into eaves troughing and thence to the container. Runoff water is used directly from the vats for drinking, bathing, and cooking, and is not processed

in any way although the nurse has tried to get San Pedranos to boil all water before it is consumed. Used by a few people only, is a unique, and perhaps fourth source, namely, the swimming pool just outside San Pedro which is one of the few remnants of a pre-hurricane Hattie tourist resort. Pool and vats alike can store a considerable supply of the fresh, soft water so necessary to the villagers, but they are also the frequent final resting place of lizards and other crawling or flying vermin. There is little or no disease resulting from the water (or sanitation) facilities according to the local nurse.

Non-residential structures in San Pedro often manifest the same features of construction (e.g., use of pilings) as living quarters. The school, built by the government to serve an auxillary function as hurricane shelter, has pilings of reinforced concrete, walls of cement block, and is without electricity (but is one of the few buildings in San Pedro with indoor plumbing). Several classrooms accomodate the almost two hundred youngsters enrolled in school and are of sufficient combined size to allow community affairs being held there on occasion. The Community Center is made of cement blocks and is actually a two story building although half of what would be the ground floor is missing by design. The lower story has a small office (which may eventually be the center for transaction of village business but is now vacant), and also shelters the community water vat. The top story is composed of a large community hall and three smaller rooms, (one of which is a bathroom) which

lately housed a volunteer couple from the United States Peace Corps. The infirmary is built like any one of the new-style houses in the village but is larger in size and has a floor plan somewhat altered from that of residences so that examination space, dispensary, and in-patient sleeping space are provided. The Roman Catholic Church and police office are both frame buildings with little distinctiveness about them other than the high radio antenna rising at the latter and the sprawling decrepitude of the former. The Adventist Church is also frame built, a little box-like affair on pilings. One of the most imposing of the village structures is a three story frame house near the middle of San Pedro which is owned by one of the land magnates who had owned much of the village land prior to 1963. The ground floor is occupied by one of the village bars, and the other two stories are the sometime residences of vacationers in San Pedro. The owner is currently remodeling the entire building as a club-hotel prior to being leased by a mainland plane pilot who is hoping to attract Guatemalan tourists to San Pedro instead of Cozumel off the Yucatan coast which currently gets their business. This building will have quite superior plumbing and electrical service compared to the village residences generally, and is far larger than the two story American owned hotel which also boasts indoor bath facilities, electricity, etc. The Cooperative building has previously been described.

Summary

In families where the male head is involved in offshore lobstering intrafamilial cooperation is breaking down. Rather than a father and his sons fishing together, there is a tendency for fathers and sons respectively to turn to friends as fishing partners. Wives necessarily carry on household activities without help from their husbands.

Men are absent from San Pedro far more than they ever were in scalefishing days--a situation undesirable to males and females alike, but which is unavoidable. The result is that mothers in many families are increasingly the agents of socialization and emotional security. From this situation, discipline of teenaged boys has become a problem to individual families and to the whole village--one which apparently has no solution. Solely responsible for children for days at a time while husbands are out fishing, younger women are voicing desire to limit their families so that they themselves will not "go crazy taking care of kids", a desire not altogether approved of by husbands although the reason for this could not be ascertained. In addition, young boys must turn increasingly to their peer group or to slightly older boys for training in the various skills necessary to adult maledom. In general, there seems to be more focus on the mother within the family, and on age-mates of the same sex outside the family, with the latter taking over some of the functions previously performed by the former.

The practice of doubling up residences on single parcels of land is still widespread, but possibilities for perpetuating this residence pattern are limited due to size and availability of lots in the village. If sons continue to cause problems for their parents it is likely that parents would disallow sons from building on their land. Further implications from this latter fact are numerous, such as prolonging bachelorhood since males would have to save money to buy land in addition to accumulating the cost of building a house before they could marry, but presently exist as pure speculations. Land tenure has slipped from its position as focus of community attention to consideration from purely individual viewpoints.

In toto it would appear that establishing cooperative fishing in San Pedro did not necessitate any reorganization of families and "households", but continued offshore lobstering is having unexpected, disruptive effects on a large number of San Pedranos.

CHAPTER V
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Introduction

According to Service (1962: pg. 19ff) the social organization of any given society is made up of the patterns of inter-group relations plus the status system of that society.

Social groups are broken down into residential groups (family, village, sometimes a state) and sodalities (non-residential associational groupings such as clans, secret societies). Membership in the former is ascribed, usually by birth, whereas membership in the latter is voluntary.

The status system is the general pattern of inter-relationships between individuals holding particular named positions in a society (statuses) behaving according to the roles associated with those statuses. Statuses may be achieved or ascribed in a society, and an individual may hold a number of statuses of each type.

The status system and social structure articulate with one another through the actual statuses themselves. Some of the statuses an individual may hold necessarily include him in one or more residential groups or sodalities which may exist in his society.

This section of the thesis is concerned with how social structure contributes to the organization of San Pedro Village. Organization is inspected to ascertain what change, if any, cooperative fishing might require from San Pedro in order to

succeed, at least initially. Also of interest is what organizational change, if any, has taken place in the last four years through accomodating cooperative fishing.

Information was derived from key informants through directed and non-directed interviews and a community genealogy which included virtually all residents of San Pedro Village. But it should be noted that I have placed total emphasis on social structure rather than on the status system. The status system is not, therefore, described. The reason for omitting so important a thing as the status system (system of named social positions) of San Pedro is based primarily on the fact that I did not remain in San Pedro long enough to gather the necessary information. The examination of social structure, which would deal specifically with the pattern of intergroup relations and with group formation, would perhaps be more important than the examination of the status system in giving insight into "why" the fishing cooperative could succeed. The existence of such a group as the fishing cooperative is crucial to this thesis since one of the premises is that cooperation succeeded in part because little or no organizational change (i.e., new group formation or elimination of traditional groups) was necessary in San Pedro for the cooperative to function.

Social Structure

Residential Groups

There are only two residential type groupings in San Pedro, the family—households and non-family-households. Family units

normally fall into three categories, as discussed above, conjugal, extended, and modified extended. The integrative basis of these families is kinship, and they are all localized entities. As in other communities, the function of the family unit is procreation and rearing of children and internal economic cooperation to secure material necessities for the well being of all its members. Non-family households are also localized and their members cooperate economically, but the basis of integration may be mutual amicability or necessity rather than kinship. Non-family households also differ from families in that they are not self perpetuating, that is, new members are not produced. Characteristically, non-family households exist only as long as the life span of the two or more individuals constituting them.

Each household configuration operates essentially as an autonomous unit of production and consumption, except insofar as fishing activity has produced cooperation with individuals who come from outside the household. In a sense, therefore, each San Pedrano household constitutes a nucleus of human beings whose primary social and economic concern is for its own well being. The integrative mechanisms which operate within households do not extend beyond the individual units to integrate the entire population of San Pedro into one community. By virtue of the traditional lack of community-wide integration, at least where residential groups are concerned, villagers have tended to operate solely in terms of their individual units with regard to most basic functions. I was told by villagers that the only

situations wherein the parochialism of household units is and has been regularly transcended is (was) in fishing, and in so called "crisis" situations. These situations include such things as hurricanes, death, or serious illness, under which circumstances San Pedranos readily offer help and ignore household boundaries for purposes of carrying on important, mutual functions. The idea, then, of forming associational groups based on corporate effort of individuals sharing a mutual goal or interest is not new to San Pedro, but is perhaps a little uncommon and in the past has occurred primarily in only two particular contexts. Likewise, these groups being situational would not necessarily have had a very long life span. By looking at the groups which San Pedranos form, however, the carry over from these groups to the fishing cooperative should be readily apparent.

Formal Sodalties

Economic

First of the formal sodalties in San Pedro are those which are basically economic--the various fishing crews and the fishing cooperative. At least twenty-two sodalties are formed by males when fishing activity is undertaken. Members, as noted above, are frequently composed of friends, at least in part, and hence transcend the confines of familism whenever they fish collectively. Crew composition apparently remains fairly consistant over time and most of the current crews are said to have existed before cooperative fishing for lobsters

began. The purpose of the crews is fairly clear cut: a number of men join their labor, finances, and technology to obtain a livelihood from exploiting the sea. The cooperation of at least two men is a prerequisite of conducting fishing operations of almost any type from a sailing boat. Likewise, two or more men combining their efforts ought logically to derive greater income from work than one man alone.

The fishing cooperative has more than 160 voluntary members constituted of fishermen, and men and women in other occupations as well. Affilliates come from virtually every family and household in San Pedro, thus the cooperative serves to horizontally transect the entire community and bring village-wide interest to bear on its operation. Actual maintenance of the fishing cooperative obtains by virtue of the fact that all its members are focussed on the economic advantage which the Cooperative can afford in merchandising marine produce. The fishing cooperative is essentially a single purpose association, or so it was intended at its inception. Subsidiary functions have accrued to the organization since its inception but they remain essentially economic ones. It has extended its activities to include promotion of education through establishment of an educational fund. Likewise, it is very soon to be the source of community-wide continuous electrification of village streets and residences and commercial centers. Thirdly it has made loan funds available in a community where formal (that is institutionalized) lending agencies are absent. Finally, the cooperative has even moved into the realm of entertainment.

Established with the birth of the fishing cooperative is an annual party given by the same for all San Pedranos. Sometime in June or early July, before the opening of the lobster season, the cooperative holds its election of officers, and immediately afterwards the party commences. Alcoholic and soft drinks, flavored ices, and a dance band are provided, costing (in 1966) more than \$1500 B.H. altogether.

The elected officers of the fishing cooperative constitute a sodality within a sodality. The Board, as noted in Chapter II, are elected from and by the members of Caribena Producers for varying terms of office. By and large these men tend to be relatively young and/or successful; and Board membership tends to carry over rather consistently into involvement in village-wide activities. In addition to governing general functioning of the Cooperative (such as hiring and firing of personnel, deciding on loans to members), the Board has been responsible for most of the innovations in Caribena Producers. Although ideas are contributed by other members, the "activist" Board members are ultimately the individuals who convince the total membership in general assembly of the worth of certain projects such as, for example, establishment of the education fund.

Religious

The Roman Catholic parish constitutes a religious group which includes, at least nominally, all but six or seven of the villagers. Membership is voluntary except in the case of children who become affiliated by virtue of parental action over which they

have no control. Visited once a month by Fr. Raszkowski (except during the summer when he lives in San Pedro), the mission does not boast exceedingly large attendance at its services. Normally men are conspicuously absent from mass. The bulk of the congregation is made up of women and children. A number of villagers, again women, are a core of the faithful worshipers and it is they who see to it that the church is dusted and altar decorated, but there is no formal organization of women such as an altar guild. "Things just get done somehow" according to the priest. There are also two or three women who know various prayers from memory and occasionally lead other villagers in these when the priest is absent.

Although the activities which take place out of the Church have a religious guise, the function of most of these appears to be something other than religious in nature. Mass for example, is an opportunity for teenage girls to pretty themselves and attend services as a social outing, necessarily walking past young village males on the way to church. Weddings and baptisms are diversions or recreation for many villagers. Weddings are "open", the whole village is invited to the ceremony and to the reception afterwards. At the reception--paid for by the groom's parents and held anywhere there is sufficient room--beer and soft drinks are in abundance and a band provides music for dancing; drinking and dancing will last until long after dark and some attendants may make an all night spree of it. Baptisms are much smaller affairs. Parents are not present for the ceremony--

godparents are left in charge of the child during the same-- but usually are busy at home preparing for a party after the christening is finished. Godparents, the priest, a few close friends and relatives are invited to gather for beer, cake, and other appetizers. Moderate drinking and conversation last for two or three hours and the affair is finished.

Like the co-op, the Church is a sodality which contains an administrative sodality within it, namely the Church committee. This committee is composed of seven members elected from and by the parish plus the Village Council chairman who was invited by these people to assist in the group's functioning. The Council chairman is also on the Co-op Board, and one other man on the Church committee also holds a position on the village council. Ostensibly, the *raison d'etre* of the Church Committee is to organize efforts to raise money to build a new church (costing an estimated \$10,000 B.H.). Under the aegis of the Church Committee, bazaars, dances, or the two in combination are held periodically throughout the year; proceeds from these ventures go to the Building Fund. Likewise, the one religious celebration of the year, St. Peter's Day (29 June), and the religiously inspired but virtually secular celebration of Carnival (just prior to Lent) are organized by the Church Committee--again as a means for raising money. In point of fact, the Church Committee operates as one of the few organizations in San Pedro to provide periodic recreation and diversion for villagers. Bazaars and dances are community-wide and ordinarily attract the majority of village residents.

"Bazaar" is the name given by San Pedranos to the occasion when food is sold at the plaza or near the church, or somewhere near the dance which is often given simultaneously. Ingredients for various dishes--rice, beans, and canned vegetable soup (used almost directly from the can as a salad) are bought by San Pedranas, prepared, and then donated to the church for sale at the bazaars.

A dance may be held at the plaza, Community Center, the school, or virtually any place which has electricity and sufficient space for numbers of people. Admission is charged to these dances but little profit is realized from them since the band (usually local musicians) must be paid, and cost of keeping the generator running after its 10 or 11 p.m. shutoff time must be met--the greatest money maker at one of these bazaar-dances is actually from the sale of beer and rum.

Carnival is a time of dancing, partying, and drinking just before the abstentions supposedly imposed by the Lenten season. Costumes are worn by men, women, and children, parades and dances are held in the streets and, I am told, there is a festive atmosphere far more pervasive than at any other time of the year.

St. Peter's Day is also a time for dances and parties, but it is somewhat more restrained than Carnival celebrating and includes several religious services as part of the occasion. Men arise early on St. Peter's Day to attend a 4 o'clock mass--one of the few they go to during the year, in fact. At 8 o'clock there is another mass for women and children whereupon the remainder of the day is spent in preparation for the evening's celebrations.

Women prepare food for the bazaar, musicians practice for their later performance, and men are busy drinking in the bars, as they have been for two or three days previously. Late in the afternoon, at a time announced by hammering on the bell near the plaza, a procession is formed to carry the statue of St. Peter around the village. The figure of the patron, carefully decorated with flowers by the women, is borne on a catafalque by the men. A complete circuit of the village is made during which prayers are said by a prayer leader and responses given by the school children. After making the circuit, the marchers return the figure of the saint to the church where more prayers are said and the religious portion of the day's festivities come to a close. A dance then follows along with a bazaar and the sale of liquor. Proceeds from the celebrating go to the Building Fund, as mentioned above.

The other religious group in San Pedro, that of the Seventh Day Adventists, has a congregation of only six or seven people. Those adhering to this faith are relatives of the missionary family which came from the mainland to convert San Pedro, and individuals from one or two other families. Activities of the church are limited solely to religious services, and its effect on San Pedro and its villagers is almost negligible.

Political

Political activity in San Pedro is embodied in one agency-- the Village Council. Seven men, elected for one year terms, transact all business which has a direct bearing on the community

for example, handling petitions for land, making plans for electrification of village streets on a twenty-four hour basis. These men, like members of the Cooperative Board and Church Committee, tend to be more "successful" than other villagers and are concerned with total community welfare as well as that of their respective family units. In addition to internally governing San Pedro, the Village Council acts as a buffer between the central government and villagers. Action of Government which affects San Pedro, travels along bureaucratic lines until it reaches the local level, namely the Village Council. Consequently, Government does not act directly on San Pedranos and the full complexity of being part of a national government does not impress itself on villagers.

Hypothetically, then, the Council has power and authority derived from its position in the national bureaucratic structure, whose function is to carry on its administrative functioning. In point of fact, however, the Village Council operates primarily through personal influence of its members on fellow villagers. Conversely, actions of the council are viewed by villagers, so I am told, as arising by a process of personally influencing individual Council members for "special favors" despite the fact that the Council conceives of itself as representing all villagers. Differential influence of villagers on council members results in greater or lesser degrees of involvement in village government. Thus, although the Council is held in high regard by villagers, at least those interviewed, not all villagers conceive of Village

Government as working equally for all, and many villagers withhold cooperation and provide criticism. Lack of involvement carries over to the point that it is difficult to get men who are willing to serve on the Council. Elections were several months past due at the time of my departure and were not immediately forthcoming.

Informal Sodalities

There are numerous groups in San Pedro which periodically form for various purposes. Characteristically these are temporary, voluntary associations which cross-cut boundaries of the household units.

The most obvious and frequent of these informal associations are the drinking groups formed by men and teenaged boys. San Pedranos are known far and wide for their drinking habits, and indeed men and boys can drink prodigious amounts of liquor--although they do get drunk and disorderly as a result, or pass out or get maudlin over an unrequited love. Most of the drinking in San Pedro takes place during the offseason or during the various village-wide celebrations, but even during the season for lobsters--perhaps when a boat has just come in from a trip--fishermen go on sprees (also referred to as "going bleaching") which can last for two or three days. Cost of the sprees in many cases is ruinous for fishermen in the offseason when there is no income to speak of and no savings to fall back on. Since credit drinking is allowed in one bar at least, the net result of offseason sprees is that income from the first few trips a

fisherman makes may have to go to pay off bar debts. During the season while fishermen are in the village for a rest stop more debts may be accrued or women may be hard pressed to obtain part of their husbands' earnings for the household in his hurry to pay outstanding accounts (or buy drinks for his friends with ready cash). The law requiring bars to close at twelve midnight is met punctually, but the more serious drinkers lay in a supply of liquor for after hours and stay out of doors round the clock while imbibing. If sleep overcomes them in the middle of one of the streets during the night, they lay down in the sand and doze; no one will molest or rob them and there is little danger of becoming ill from exposure to the elements unless it should rain. San Pedranos are not "drunkards", however. In fact, there are only five or six persons in the whole village who are "alcoholics", and wastrels, by village definition.

From my observations it seems that most of the drinking groups, which may number from two to five or six men each, are frequently composed of the same men who work together on the fishing boats. The similarity between the composition of boat crews and drinking groups undoubtedly derives from the fact that friendship and amicability draw certain men to one another. This in turn probably has some connection with the generalized relationship of the San Pedrano to fellow villagers (dealt with at length in chapter VI) which may be viewed as one of friendly rivalry. It seems likely that men join a particular

boat crew or drinking group simply because it is possible to be more relaxed or less on the defensive (against verbal jests, for example) than in some other crew or drinking group.

Women, too, periodically form voluntary groupings. Mothers and daughters (or daughters-in-law), sisters (or sisters-in-law) do a great deal of visiting back and forth. Likewise, San Pedranas who live in the same general area visit one another frequently. Time is spent conversing about children, what the men are doing, and whatever is going on currently in the village.

Another topic of conversation is gambling (in the form of lotteries) which involves a large number of the San Pedranas and a few San Pedranos. Other than gossip or innocuous conversation, the groups formed by women have little purpose. Occasionally there is reciprocal work between mothers and daughters or sisters such as child care.

Clearly, women's groups often arise because of kinship ties or because of residential proximity, which is not necessarily true of either the drinking groups or the boat crews formed by the men. This might be interpreted to signify an attempt (unconscious, perhaps) of the women to preserve close relationships which originated under circumstances when a woman and her daughter, for example, occupied the same household. On the other hand, perpetuation of mother-daughter relationships, for example, may be for purely pragmatic reasons wherein assistance is asked from a closely related female by virtue of greater acquaintanceship, making a refusal of help less likely, perhaps, than from a mere

neighbor. However this may be, it would seem that there is a qualitative difference between the women's and men's groups; namely, women's groups do not appear to serve in breaking down familism through cutting across the boundaries of autonomous household units. Men's groups, to a certain extent, however, do achieve transcendence over the boundaries of the household.

Frequent in their formation, but smaller in terms of numbers of people involved, are groups which arise primarily for a single purpose centered on recreation or diversion. For example, more or less spontaneous parties of a few close friends are a common diversion in the village. Equipped with a bottle or two of rum, limes and soft drinks for mixers, a guitar, and perhaps some lobster tail with tomato catsup and lime juice, the group goes off to sing, drink and cavort. From groups such as this, although not always from such a base, come serenaders who visit the homes of various girls and regale them with songs. The spontaneous parties may last all night, or perhaps for a day or two straight.

Housebuilding was once a community project in San Pedro, or at least attracted cooperation of a significant part of the male population. Similar to the "bees" familiar to American frontier communities, building a new house was occasion for merrymaking and partying. No longer a community project, housebuilding is still the excuse for a party once the edifice is completed, but only a small number of people are involved. The new householder, or more often a few of his friends, will buy beer and other refreshments for the party which may last all night.

Respect and Authority

Wealth differences range from income of two or three hundred to between two and three thousand British Honduran dollars per year within the village population. Despite differences in wealth of San Pedranos, there is little indication from general behavior or most material possessions that these differences do exist. Yet, it is the merchants and more productive fishermen who tend to occupy positions on the Village Council, for example. Evidently villagers have confidence in those who prosper and "get ahead", and they therefore place these individuals in positions of authority in the expectation that the same prosperity will be reflected back on the entire village.

Respect (esteem) and authority (capacity to control men, goods or services) can also be commanded, in a sense, by wealthier San Pedranos; they are the individuals who can loan money and extend credit, thus creating a circle of villagers who are beholden to them and thereby merit at least outward respect in conjunction with their admitted economic authority. Even greater respect is held for the merchant who extends credit when times are hard or for the lender of money who does not charge interest or continually press for repayment. Although authority may derive from money, respect comes only from the manner in which one handles his money i.e., what he does with it.

Residents of San Pedro are a fairly homogeneous population in terms of education. Most villagers have completed only primary

school and the academic knowledge of one villager is, therefore, not too different from that of another, although some may have mastered aspects of that knowledge better than others. Nonetheless, nearly all villagers voice respect for secondary education, university training or whatever advanced learning one can obtain beyond the primary level. San Pedranos desire such schooling for children, for the benefits to be derived from it. This appreciation is attested to, in part, by the newly created educational fund in the Cooperative budget. Some of the respect for education, and the expertise it can confer in certain areas, is given grudgingly, however. In 1965, the Cooperative plant was in need of a chief engineer--pay, \$300 B.H. per month. Some of the members claimed they knew as much as any chief engineer, and reasoned that if they served in that capacity the salary would stay in San Pedro rather than go to an outsider. Problems arose with the refrigerator rooms which these men could not repair, fish and lobster tails spoiled in the heat and the Co-op incurred a loss of several thousand dollars; a chief engineer was hired forthwith. Another example is that of the office manager at the Cooperative, also a \$300 B.H. per month position. A San Pedrano who had gone to high school and evidently had some experience in office management held this post until a short time before my visit. His departure was made necessary in order to undertake further study outside British Honduras whereupon he would return and resume his duties. In the interim, instead of hiring a competent person, local boys

have tried to do the book keeping and so forth, but their secondary education alone is not adequate to do the job. Cooperative authorities in Belize City, as the result of the auditor's report on the 1965-1966 books, insisted at the 1966 annual meeting (in San Pedro) that a qualified manager simply had to be hired in their stead.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the respect which does accrue to education comes about because villagers conceive of learning as a way of having an easier life and make more money by means other than physical labor. It does not appear as though there is any great admiration for education as an end in itself; nor does education automatically help or hinder an individual in becoming an authority figure. The account of social structure, status system, wealth, education, respect and authority leads to the final point in description of community organization in San Pedro--the "class" structure.

Class in San Pedro

Three distinctive strata or "classes" exist in San Pedro. Foremost of these is a class composed of merchants, skilled workers (mechanics for example), and the most productive of the fishermen. These individuals tend to have a more stable income throughout the year. They are in a position to loan money or extend credit, and tend to be village "activists" i.e., are more involved than other villagers in community-wide projects. They attempt to stimulate interest in affairs which will profit all

San Pedranos. These individuals--although not necessarily educated beyond primary school--are the villagers most impressed with higher education and are pressing their own offspring to go to high school and, in one or two cases, a university. Individuals in this class tend to be given greater respect and have greater authority than do other villagers.

A second class includes average fishermen and steadily employed laborers or artisans. Less well to do than the first class, people herein are still interested in community affairs and bettering San Pedro but are not as vocal or involved.

Lowest on the scale are sporadic fishermen, day laborers, and individuals who through age or infirmity are not able to participate in lobstering. Earning perhaps only a few hundred dollars per year, the people of this class tend to have fewer material possessions and fewer conveniences. The men in this class tend to be heavier drinkers than men in the other two classes, and their women are more or less compelled to work--making tortillas, for example--in order to keep some semblance of solvency in household finances. People here tend to be the least involved in community affairs, have the least respect and authority. They appear to be the least concerned with education.

San Pedranos seem to be conscious of the classes outlined above as evidenced by statements such as "no one is better than anyone else, but there are a lot of people worse off than I am". Nonetheless, the classes are fairly amorphous due to the fact

that they seem to be based solely on wealth; the figurative demarcations between classes may readily be transcended (except in the case of the aged or infirm) by participating in lobstering or perhaps becoming a salaried employee of American developers. After engaging in either of these activities for perhaps only a year's time, an individual could move from one class into the next higher class. Apparently this movement has in fact taken place (referred to by villagers as "getting ahead") but it appeared to me that the advantage for such movement lays with young, physically fit men and men without a large number of children.

Summary

The social organization of San Pedro Village is constituted primarily of residential groupings; these groups encompass virtually all villagers. A consequence of this situation is self-perpetuating atomization of San Pedranos into autonomous household configurations. Associational groups (sodalities) do not counter balance the parochial circumscription of residential groups to allow extensive or prolonged interpersonal or inter-familial cooperation let alone pan-community cooperative efforts.

In spite of a tradition of non-cooperation in most every day activities, fishing and extraordinary situations--"crises"--give rise to cooperative endeavors in San Pedro, sometimes effected through community-wide associations. Just prior to introduction of cooperative fishing in San Pedro, villagers were in need of a favor from the Government (i.e., to have San

Pedro's land purchased from private holders and sold to villagers). Government wanted to introduce a cooperative in San Pedro and it seems likely that through a bargaining process each party achieved its goal. In the latter, or Governmental case, I do not doubt that Government appealed to San Pedranos to make use of the already existing fishing crews as a basis for the growth of a cooperative which would necessarily involve all San Pedranos. Here, then, would be the opportunity for San Pedranos both to obtain control of their land and to raise the standard of living without villagers having to undergo organizational change insofar as work units were concerned, or, in fact, in any other aspect of village organization.

CHAPTER VI

WORLD VIEW

Introduction

According to Redfield (1953: 85) the world view of a people is "the way a people look outward upon the universe". Likewise, "world view may be used to include the forms of thought and the most comprehensive attitudes toward life" (Redfield, 1953: 86). The intent of this chapter is to outline the world view peculiar to residents of San Pedro Village, specifically in reference to Nature, God and Man. By illustrating the ideological context with which development planners had to cope in initiating socio-cultural change, it will, perhaps, be easier to understand the San Pedro situation. For example, the section on the San Pedrano in relation to Man should explicate earlier comments on the tendency of villagers to operate primarily for the family unit, or how it comes to be that there is a problem in getting leadership personnel for the formal sodalities that came into existence.

The San Pedrano In Relationship to Nature

The facets of Nature which are of greatest importance to San Pedranos are winds, rain, and the sea. All of these concern villagers either as a source of survival or as a convenience: the sea supplies food and a livelihood; winds are motive force for the boats from which fishermen work and by which San Pedranos most frequently transport themselves and supplies between mainland

and village; and rain is the prime source of potable water. The sea and elements can be hostile or niggardly in providing the things which villagers depend on them for. But whether Nature operates positively or negatively San Pedranos impute no supernaturalistic force or cause to it--other than as it is part of God's Creation. Likewise, although villagers respect the dangers and benefits of the elements, they do not hold these latter in awe.

San Pedranos operate on Nature to the extent which their knowledge and technology will allow; failure to achieve some particular end because of incomplete knowledge or insufficient technology elicits a matter-of-fact admission of the inadequacy rather than laying blame to the supernatural. Equally probable in the latter situation is a grudging resignation to the fact that greater knowledge or better technology is not immediately forthcoming. In general, Nature is simply something which must be coped with in as realistic a way as possible.

The San Pedrano in Relation to God

All San Pedranos are at least nominally Christian; predominantly Catholic. Although the conception of God is partially refracted by Catholic dogma, to San Pedranos the basic belief in God is that He is a Being which is "there" somewhere, and is to be respected, but not feared. The overt practice of religion is performed regularly by only a handful of villagers, and there is--from all reports--very little or no family prayer,

recitation of the rosary or the like. Whatever religious instruction there is comes from the school and the priest. Although certain saints are held in higher regard than others, there is little or no supplicatory prayer to these, or the Deity. St. Peter himself, patron of the village and of fishermen, receives very little overt reverence except in the celebration of his feast day. There is, in fact, no religious ceremonial practice surrounding so important a thing as fishing, such as blessing of the boats and crews preparatory to opening the lobster season. In effect, religion and the God-Man relationship are very individual, private matters which apparently occupy little of the San Pedranos' thought and obviously take very little of their time.

As far as I could learn, there are virtually no elements of non-Christian belief or practice which might have survived from a "pagan" Mayan past. The only evidence of "superstition" amongst San Pedranos exists in limited belief in Mal de Ojo, and ghosts. The former is a disorder which is not clearly defined in my mind since I could find only two villagers who would talk about it and their statements were very vague. It seems, however, that parrots, and perhaps some human beings, can cause sickness in children by merely looking at them. Apparently the affliction (referred to as "having Ojo", or, literally, "eye") is not consciously directed onto individuals but is an accidental happening. The result is a withering, debilitating sickness which may result in death. Mal de Ojo

in San Pedro differs from a similarly named phenomenon found in other Latin American countries in that nowhere else does it seemingly derive from parrots. Likewise, in other Latin American countries Mal de Ojo supposedly has its basis in desire, covetousness, or strong feeling (Rubel, 1962: 800).

San Pedranos apparently believe that a relative who died quickly or who was abusive of his family in life may come back to visit the living in spirit form. In the former case a visit is inspired by virtue of the dead wishing to "say something to me" but being unable to do so because of the rapidity with which death over took them. In the latter case it would seem that the dead wish to continue to intimidate their families as they did in life; in order to avoid being visited by spirits, the living will take care to keep the grave clean and neat and otherwise try to appease the dead.

The San Pedrano in Relationship to Man

The San Pedrano view of people from outside the community is not so much hostile or unfriendly--as mainlanders would have one believe--as it is guarded and reserved. Used to coming into face to face contact with one another in daily village interaction, motives and personalities of fellow villagers are more or less known--not so with non-villagers. On several occasions San Pedranos have been duped, they feel, because they themselves did not know the people with whom they were dealing and/or the motives underlying the behavior of the non-villagers. A case in

point is that of cooperative fishing operations prior to establishing a processing plant in San Pedro. Fisherman took their lobsters to Belize where they were processed and then conveyed to various distributors. Processors in Belize, with whom San Pedranos had a contract fixing the price of lobsters paid to fishermen, supposedly made a "very large profit" which San Pedranos felt themselves entitled to, but lost, because "we did not know what they were up to". Social control which San Pedranos exert on one another--primarily through "talk" or gossip--is not effective on outsiders and villagers cannot enforce "fair dealing"; hence the reserve which mainlanders interpret as unfriendliness.

Visitors to San Pedro--tourists and businessmen--are treated with friendly reserve and while money from those visitors (for running errands) is welcome, a large influx of tourists is viewed with alarm. San Pedranos, considering themselves a highly moral people who are not given to impropriety or promiscuity, do not consider outsiders to be as highly principled as themselves. Many villagers believe that values and mores--heretofore maintained by traditional means--will be perverted through influence of outsiders. One self-styled ambassador of good will, for example, an American, presented herself in San Pedro a year or so before my arrival. With guitar and "brief" swim suit she entered the bars--off limits to women by village custom--and sang to the patrons. Her performance was repeated in the village plaza, and very soon thereafter she was asked to leave. San

Pedranas did not think it would be good for the men or children to be entertained in this improper manner, and in this specific garb.

Also involved in the apparent reserve of San Pedranos is desire not to attract attention to themselves as individuals, not only in regard to outsiders, but also within the village population. Speaking now specifically of the latter situation, one San Pedrano told me that he was badly in need of corrective lenses, but would not get any because people would make fun of him. Only three or four villagers wear glasses in fact. There were numerous cases where villagers refused to speak English in my presence because they said they would be ashamed at making mistakes. Still another example exists where women continue to go swimming fully dressed; men, of course, wear swim suits in their work, and a few teenaged girls own swim wear which they use when no one will see them, but most women prefer to wear a dress so they will not attract attention. Interestingly, the girls who do have swim suits wear a blouse with their outfit until entering the water, and don the blouse again before leaving it.

The desire to remain unobtrusive produces difficulties in getting people to fill leadership positions or take leadership responsibilities. Few people wish to take a central spot in activities because of the attention involved, and there is also the uneasiness that if elected to some position or other they will not be able to express themselves so that instructions

will be understood, or the intent of what they are saying clearly conveyed. Ability to speak well and thus present the villagers' case is a prime criterion for election to positions that involve dealing with Government--as in the case of Cooperative Board Chairman who will have to treat with officials in the Fisheries and Wildlife Department. In part, the felt inability to communicate clearly stems from the wide-spread use of Spanish in San Pedro whereas English is the country's official language and is the only language used when business is done with Government in Belize. I was told that the primary goal of the Peace Corps in San Pedro was simply to get villagers to use English language and thus facilitate making San Pedro an integral part of British Honduras through breaking down barriers to communication and understanding.

Desire to remain unobtrusive is only a partial explanation of San Pedrano behavior and of their world view in regard to fellow villagers. San Pedranos view other San Pedranos as friendly rivals who are not to be allowed to physically or otherwise dominate them or run their lives. In a sense individual fishing crews are competitors with other crews for lobsters which are not in infinite supply given the technology used to obtain them. Siblings or other relatives engaged in commerce vie for the same consumer population. Men drinking together in bars or in small gatherings out of doors frequently tease one another in an attempt to obtain verbal dominance. Growing out of this latter situation is the art of "one-upmanship"

practiced by men and women alike; jokes told at ones expense should be turned against the teller (humor involved in this jesting would be described as "earthy" in this country, especially when translated into English). Reluctance to serve in leadership positions--where performance of duties may be fraught with mistakes, and an individual is the center of attention so mistakes cannot be concealed--is explicable in terms of desire to prevent taunts i.e., verbal domination against which one may feel himself defenseless. Gossip, or "talk" is an instrument of social control illustrating the non-physical domination by which villagers enforce acceptable behavior. Rivalry and the concern with being made vulnerable to wagging tongues explains the general paucity of collective activities in San Pedro, where such activities would necessarily mean that someone would be in a position of dominance through his coordinating of individual efforts. Dislike of law as personified in the constable (to be dealt with in Chapter VII) derives in large part from villagers' dislike of being dominated. When the constable tries to achieve or perpetuate dominion over San Pedranos through the law, both (constable and the law) become distasteful.

Ideally words will resolve whatever conflicts might arise between San Pedranos, however serious they may be, but this is not to imply that villagers do not enjoy watching a fight or even participating in one. On occasion, gossip or jest are not sufficient to keep people in check or convey the feelings of one villager to another. When this happens, meaning is graphically

illustrated in a fist fight. Onlookers view the hassle merely as a diversion and it is expected that when the fight is finished there should be no grudge and feelings will be mended rapidly.

In spite of rivalry and verbal dueling San Pedranos are generous when on spees and in "crisis" situations. If one is celebrating, others present should also celebrate. If someone needs help, then help is forthcoming from friends, relatives, and even complete strangers.

Community Identity

According to villagers an individual who identifies himself (and is in turn identified by others) as a San Pedrano, derives that identity by several different means. Being born in the village makes one a San Pedrano. If ones parents are San Pedranos so too is that individual. Moving to the village and settling into its life style makes one a San Pedrano. Spouses of San Pedranos achieve the same distinction through marriage. Removal of San Pedranos to other locales does not eradicate the identity, and San Pedrano expatriates periodically visit the village--or are visited by other villagers--in token of the never-to-be-lost distinction of being a San Pedrano.

For villagers the foregoing criteria establish who belongs or does not belong to the community, but underlying these things are factors which I believe serve to underscore the sense of

community identity in each San Pedrano. These factors are: ethnic composition of San Pedro; geographic isolation; and the nature of economic activity.

First, the basic population with which San Pedranos come into contact is Creole, San Pedranos are mestizos. By virtue of numbers and political and economic power, Creole mainlanders have made residents of San Pedro a de facto ethnic minority. Ethnic differences, and concomitant difference in language and cultural traditions have tended to separate San Pedro from non-mestizo communities, a separation which is in large part maintained by San Pedranos through their bias against "colored people". Maintenance by San Pedranos of an ethnic barrier, so to speak, causes them perforce to turn inwards, thus magnifying whatever sense they already have of being a distinct community.

Secondly, reference to any map of Central America should amply illustrate the geographical separateness of San Pedro from the rest of British Honduras and the other communities which exist in the country. Because Ambergris Cay is not easy to reach, it has not hosted an exceedingly large number of visitors in the course of the history of its only village. A relative lack of transportation and communication links with the mainland--until recently--has placed San Pedro outside the mainstream of national activity, and has thereby forced a large measure of socio-psychological self sufficiency on the San

Pedranos. The feeling of actually being apart, in a physical sense, has caused a circumscribed view of the world to the extent that parameters of the world for many villagers do not go far beyond San Pedro. This turns villagers inwards and brings about intensification of their sense of community.

Finally, the economic activity of San Pedranos, I believe, contributes to social and psychological isolation, at least insofar as isolation from the mainland is concerned. Except for a few staple food items and the few items of technology necessary for fishing, San Pedranos traditionally got along by themselves (however poorly this may have been). Cooperative fishing did not appreciably change the situation described. The technological change and the concomitant changes in knowledge and skill tied to the use of that technology was limited to the processing plant, and in both cases San Pedranos were not themselves effected since "outside" expertise was placed in the village by the American backer of Caribena Producers. No new ties to the mainland were required when cooperation began, nor was it necessary from the village standpoint to accentuate old ties.

Still further, economic activity is different in San Pedro from most British Honduran communities, with the exception of other insular or coastal fishing communities. The various problems revolving around maritime exploitation and a community organization which has grown out of it (i.e., marine exploitation) are qualitatively different from those problems and

concerns of people involved in agriculture or other economic activities. For example, the work cycle of agriculturalists must necessarily function according to seasonal changes; there may be a time for clearing land and planting, another time for weeding or cultivation, and still another time for reaping. There is no comparable seasonal regulation to fishing and there is not, therefore, any "natural" breakdown of the calendrical year into periods when fishermen would be forced to work or, on the other hand, could remain idle (the fishing "season" is a Government imposed unit of time). The resource base with which fishermen and agriculturalists work is considerably different. Agriculturalists usually have a certain, probably fixed amount of land which they can work. Assuming that no natural disaster, such as drought or flood, will effect his crop, and that prolonged "careless" use of the soil has not depleted the soil of nutrients necessary to crop growth, the farmer can make a rough estimation of what his labors will produce. The fisherman, however, cannot hazard so much as a guess as to what he may bring in from one fishing trip let alone a year's work. The productive fishing grounds of one year may be barren the next; perverse changes in water currents may take fish afield from where they had previously been. If the farmer raises a good deal of surplus, too much to be profitably disposed of on the market, it is usually possible to store that surplus either for his own use or for future sale when market prices may be more favorable. The fisherman cannot,

in most cases, preserve his catch if the market is glutted or is simply offering too low a price to compensate for the effort expended in catching the fish. Likewise, he cannot preserve marine produce for his own future use.

Ability to obtain subsistence locally, idiosyncratic problems arising within a maritime economy, and a life style attuned to exploitation of the sea, provide a common denominator for villagers, and bring the focus of San Pedrano attention on themselves.

San Pedranos do not simply carry out daily activities and maintain their island existence without some purpose. Collectively they pursue what I shall refer to as the "good life". Without oversimplifying, the San Pedrano conception of this is quiet living wherein an individual may enjoy the society of family and friends, punctuated with distractions and diversity in routine so that the desired existence is not a boring one. Families should be composed of well disciplined children, and spouses who work together for the mutual benefit of all concerned. Ideally, people will be self employed rather than working for someone else. Industry should not follow an inflexible schedule--one must be able to relax when he or she feels like it, and work is merely the means whereby it will be possible to take things easy at some future date. There is no particular merit in being a fisherman. The work, as it is now pursued, is relatively hard when compared to that of pre-lobstering days. Although there is some pride in the fact

that fishermen "can take it" (that is, the hardships of their work), youngsters are encouraged to seek easier jobs usually by attaining education higher than is offered in San Pedro or acquiring a skill that would be useful and therefore lucrative.

Interference or impingement from "outside" San Pedro is undesirable for the village and its residents since villagers wish to tend to their own affairs; interaction with mainlanders should be tolerated only insofar as it will satisfy local wants and needs. This is not to say that assistance in money and advice would not be welcome from outside sources, but San Pedranos should be allowed to decide what use money will be put to, and just what portions of the advice should be followed.

The ultimate goal of each villager is to be self sufficient throughout his life but this goal is seldom realized because of the tendency of San Pedranos to live only for the present. Villagers satisfy immediate wants and needs as they arise and do not postpone relaxation or enjoyment for the time when they will be physically incapable of economic productivity. In point of fact, San Pedranos seem to operate on the assumption that it is possible to "have ones cake and eat it too", which is to say that they expend money in the present when it should be conserved for the future, and they relax in their youth rather than wait to relax in old age when they cannot work.

The concrete aspect of the "good life" that is, material goods, utilities and services, is not extensive. San Pedranos want a good house (a frame structure on pilings) with indoor

plumbing and sanitary facilities, and electricity. Variation away from a seafood diet is desireable--especially if it is in the form of meat and fruits. Women would like such things as a refrigerator and washing machine to make housekeeping easier. Men would like to own their own boat and outboard motor. A more amiable police constable would be desireable and many San Pedranos would like to be able to give their children education beyond primary school.

Summary

San Pedranos view Nature and God in a matter-of-fact way, neither flippantly nor with awe. Insofar as Man is concerned there are two categories into which people fall, "they" or "we". They, outsiders, are reacted to with caution or reserve because their motives for behavior are unknown to San Pedranos, and mechanisms which enforce socially acceptable behavior in the village are ineffective with non-villagers. In regard to other members of his community, the San Pedrano is constantly involved in friendly rivalry with his or her fellows. This rivalry is dynamically manifested in contests, usually verbal, to gain mastery over others and at the same time avoid being mastered by anyone. From this orientation self-perpetuating familism is engendered amongst San Pedrano households. Familism, or preoccupation with the welfare of ones family to the exclusion of all other families, serves to segment San Pedrano society and inhibit community-wide cooperative activity. Nonetheless,

while the operation of familism is duly emphasized, the existence of limited cooperative activity is not lost sight of. From those areas where extrafamilial cooperation does exist it is not difficult to extrapolate to formation of a fishing cooperative. To reiterate a previous point, it would seem that the desire of San Pedranos to have the Government buy village land was a propitious coincidence with the Governmental desire to establish cooperative fishing in San Pedro. Fortunate for Government planning, the organization of San Pedro encompassed basic units of cooperation which would lend themselves to creating a fishing cooperative, and the world view of San Pedranos was "flexible" enough to at least give cooperative fishing a chance to "prove itself".

CHAPTER VII
COMMUNITY AND NATION

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter on community and nation is to complement the preceding chapter of world view. Whereas Chapter VI dealt primarily with the separateness of San Pedro, especially in terms of socio-psychological separateness, this chapter is concerned with the links that do exist between San Pedro and mainland British Honduras. This section will, therefore, enumerate the channels of transportation and communication whereby information, influence, and material goods reach San Pedro and thereby illustrate the ways in which San Pedro is necessarily involved in the national life of British Honduras.

Communication and Transportation Links

Communication between villagers and anyone outside San Pedro is a relatively difficult or tedious proposition. There are no telephone or telegraph links to San Pedro from outside Ambergris Cay, nor do these facilities exist within the confines of the island itself. Several radio transceivers do operate in the village, but these are not for public use and are restricted to police communications, calls between American speculators on the mainland and their employees in the village, and messages from the fishing cooperative to the mainland or the refrigerator ship which comes to San Pedro. Emergencies are, of course, handled by operators of these radio sets, but casual conversations

cannot take place between private parties. Mail is very irregular and undependable which means that private messages, newspapers, and correspondence courses are invariably late or out of date.

Lack of roads on the island or to the mainland is no great problem to San Pedranos since there are only two or three motor vehicles on the entire island and most travel can be accomplished by speedboat, sail boat or dory.

The shallow water separating Ambergris Cay from the mainland is crisscrossed by well-known routes to Belize, Chetumal, and various other locales within a thirty-five to forty mile radius of the village which San Pedranos have cause to frequent either for commercial reasons or purely for purposes of visiting friends or relatives. Only the darkest night or stormiest weather deters San Pedranos from plying these routes. Other sea lanes stretching sixty to seventy miles or more are followed across deep waters to fishing grounds. There were no accounts given by informants of travel to the southern limits of British Honduran territorial waters, but it is possible to sail the full length of the country within the relative shelter of the Barrier Reef. In actuality, however, many villagers have travelled very little outside the village, or on the mainland, although there are several who have gone on holiday to various places in Mexico (Merida, Chetumal, and Xcalak for example) or as far as the United States in a few cases.

Foreign newspapers entering British Honduras are few in number, largely Florida papers flown in from Miami, and these seldom reach San Pedro. Two dailies published in Belize City (organs of the two political parties in the country) offer a restricted view of world happenings to mainlanders and villagers alike, but they are certainly easier to obtain on the mainland than in the village. In fact, San Pedranos derive a large part of their information on national and international affairs from the various radio stations powerful enough to reach the transistorized radios which almost every family owns. Villagers ordinarily divide their listening attention between Radio Belize--operated by Government--and Radio Chetumal beamed in from Mexico. Radio Belize, which broadcasts both in Spanish and English, offers musical, news, religious, and special programs, reruns B.B.C. and Voice of America news, and throughout its fifteen and a half hour day encourages its listeners to "...Unite and work together to build an independent country of Belize in Central America". Chetumal is turned to most frequently for music and such serial programs as "Kaliman", a culture hero of sorts similar to Superman in the United States.

In the absence of roads, and as an alternative to transport by boat, air travel is possible to within a few hundred feet of San Pedro, or to Basil Jones (site of an oil drilling operation) about twenty miles north of the village. At these two locations landing fields have been cleared in the bush which will accomodate single engine aircraft--although the land is

rather rugged and neither field has a landing tower or lights. Planes for charter in Belize frequently fly to the island to pick up or deliver business men or tourists who have dealings either in the village or at one of the development sites. Another plane, owned by the husband of a San Padrana--an American who also owns a hotel in San Pedro--can be chartered whenever his other commitments do not take him away from the village. As yet, few of the local people utilize the flying services--in part due to the cost involved (\$30 B.H. round trip to Belize)--but more and more of them, so I am told, voice a desire to employ this faster means of transport which would cut the four hour boat trip to Belize down to fifteen minutes of flying time.

Taxation and Community Projects

Whether San Pedranos like it or not, and most of those interviewed did not, San Pedro is definitely a part of British Honduras when it comes to paying taxes. Citizens of the country are obliged to pay tax on their income and on property holdings alike. Although I do not know what schedule may be used to determine the tax an individual has to pay on his lot or on his or her income, this yearly event causes a good deal of consternation, I am told. One reason for the latter is that there is no withholding of money from salaries or wages which is sent to Government to apply against the total year's tax. Thus, villagers may be faced with a bill and have no money to pay it. Likewise, there is no office or bureau located in San Pedro where villagers can pay taxes or make installments on the purchase of their land.

Benefits from money paid to Government can be seen in the persons of the local teachers, nurse, and constable, but this is apparently not enough to satisfy villagers--especially since village projects, paid for by their taxes, are so slow in reaching fruition.

The projects referred to include: complete twenty-four hour electrification of village streets, and homes of villagers who wish to purchase the facility; clearing all the bush at the back of the village so that lot owners can build and unpurchased lots will attract buyers; cutting of a fourth north-south street for the village in the area to be cleared of bush; establishing of a dieselene dump so that fuel for Cooperative generators can be stored in bulk (brought to San Pedro by oil tanker) rather than freighted in fifty gallon barrels; and dredging near the village so that the lagoon will accomodate deeper draft vessels than it presently does. All of these projects necessarily involve Government help since villagers simply do not have the money and equipment to accomplish them. Interest of villagers is differentially invested in the projects so not all San Pedranos are equally upset at their lack of completion. That the projects exist, even in limbo, so to speak, does draw attention to the fact that Government reaches to San Pedro.

School at San Pedro

The primary and secondary systems of education in British Honduras are a synthesis of Church and State cooperation. Working with Government, the various religious denominations in the

country--primarily Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and Nazarine--have established parochial schools wherein the country's youth are educated. Law requires all citizens aged five to fourteen years to attend school; currently 188 San Pedranos are enrolled in school in compliance with this law. Each denomination has a manager for its primary schools (I do not know how secondary schools are controlled) who is responsible for everything short of policy such as curriculum. The Government determines the policy and furnishes the finances by which schools are built and teachers paid. San Pedro, a predominantly Roman Catholic community, has a primary school administered by Fr. Ring in Belize City who reaches San Pedro via the headmaster in terms of actual operation of the school such as teaching classes and keeping the school in good repair. The ministry of education and the various departments in it establish the syllabi around whose contents San Pedro's teachers instruct pupils, preparing them for graduation from primary school and for entrance examinations to secondary school. The graduates from San Pedro's primary school who have high enough grades, sit for exams in Belize during the month of June each year. On the basis of their performance, the students may be eligible to go to St. John's College (for boys) or St. Catherine's Academy (for girls).

Insofar as obtaining funds for maintenance of school and teachers are concerned, San Pedro is no different from any other British Honduran community. This is also true of having a set

curriculum and having opportunities for students to take high school entrance exams.

Law and Justice

The laws of British Honduras derive from two sources: from the heritage of British Common Law brought by colonial administrators and from the British Honduran legislature which enacts laws to govern internal affairs of the colony. Common law and local legislation alike are enforced by police constables who operate under the executive branch of government within the various communities of the country. Justice is meted out by the judicial branch of government which tries cases brought before its various courts by the constabulary. In all of these matters, in legislation, law, and justice, San Pedranos have some part or interest.

In regard to legislation, San Pedro is part of Belize Rural North electoral constituency which selects a representative to sit in the upper house (House of Representatives) of the legislature. This individual and seventeen others together comprise the House. In conjunction with the eight man appointed Senate, the representatives meet to pass laws for the country. San Pedranos are free to visit or write their representative to offer advice or criticism and occasionally villagers make use of this avenue to the Legislature. In turn the representative makes infrequent visits to his island constituents and on these occasions villagers can, and sometimes do, approach him with advice or opinions on various matters.

Likewise, San Pedranos are free to visit the Premier or other ministers to make known their wants or plead special cases in the hopes that higher levels of the executive branch will, for example, make good legislative promises. A visit to the Premier, for example, is effected by simply making an appointment with the Premier's secretary for a time when the head of Government will be in his office. At the appointed time the visitor will be ushered into the Premier's office, and the business which prompted the visit will be discussed. According to informants, San Pedranos have made such visits in the past in order to speed up governmental working, specifically in cases where the legislature promised to provide light poles and wiring for village streets, cut another street through the bush at the back of the village, and do some dredging work for villagers just off shore from San Pedro. The results of these visits is often disappointing, so I am told, since even strong assurance from so high a figure as the Premier does not mean that a project will be executed forthwith.

Law is enforced in San Pedro by a resident police constable. It is presupposed by his superiors that he will impartially and conscientiously administer the laws of the land and offer protection and help for the villagers. In turn, villagers will supposedly respect this symbol of authority and cooperate in maintaining internal peace. Unfortunate for all concerned, the idyllic situation expected by villagers, constable, and the constable's superiors is not to be found. One of the very first

things I was to learn upon entering San Pedro was how poorly the constable and residents got along with one another. On the one hand San Pedranos told me the constable was unreasonable, always threatening them with a court case if exuberance during sprees was not held in check or occasional fights prevented. The constable was characterized as unfriendly, unwilling to drink with San Pedranos but accepting drinks from visitors, especially Americans. The constable was also "crooked", he would catch someone hunting deer out of season but instead of imposing the \$25 fine he would take a quarter of the deer and let the hunter go free. The constable, on the other hand, described villagers as resentful of authority, especially his, flagrant in their violations of breach of the peace, unfriendly, abusive and vindictive. He said it was necessary almost from the start of his duty in San Pedro (a year and a half before my arrival) to threaten prosecution for fighting or other misdemeanors. The occasions when he had sent San Pedranos to court had not taught them a lesson, however, and they were more surly than before. In addition he cited several cases when villagers had carried out retaliation for his "vigilance". A pet rooster of the constable had been hanged by the neck; also, sugar was poured in his outboard motor. Reports of village and mainland informants alike indicate that the previous constable had had no problems with San Pedranos and had gotten along well with them. A racial explanation for the friction between police and populous may be adequate since it is true that the Carib constable is terrifically outnumbered by mestizo San Pedranos.

But it appears that the dislike of being dominated, referred to previously, is truly at the base of police-villager problems. The situation is aggravated, moreover, by the fact that the constable is part of a generation of Carib civil servants which, I am told, characteristically attempts to expand its limited power and authority in individual community contexts so that people like San Pedro's constable would come to have more influence than their actual status and role would warrant. In the final analysis, it appears that San Pedranos are fully respectful of national laws, but these are not administered by a constabulary which is sensitive to personality idiosyncracies of the villagers.

Political Parties and Movements

Two parties dominate the politics of British Honduras--the National Independence Party and the People's United Party. At present the latter has a majority of seats in the House of Representatives and is hence the party which provides British Honduras with premier and ministers and is the Government of the country. The National Independence Party is the "loyal opposition" which has so little voice or influence that "hinderance" might be more appropriate than "opposition". The P.U.P. is descended from the party which led the struggle for home rule in British Honduras and is now trying to achieve complete independence for British Honduras in the Commonwealth. "Hampering" attempts of the premier, at the head of the P.U.P.,

to bring about this independence is the N.I.P. The focus of N.I.P. dissidence is not independence from Britain, but it is widely believed by members of this party that the premier is preparing to turn over British Honduras to Guatemala. (It is a matter of record that British Honduras and Guatemala have had a long-running dispute over the legitimacy of British Honduras to exist at all). Recent conferences in June of 1966, ostensibly to discuss economic problems with Britain, were supposedly a cover for the "sellout" of British Honduras to Guatemala. The premier makes little comment about what actually transpired, but while riots and strikes have been led by the N.I.P. to force a complete account from the premier, they have earned only epithets from the P.U.P. and no answer from Government.

San Pedranos take little notice at all while the N.I.P. and P.U.P. heap insults and aspersions on one another. The racist overtones of N.I.P. propaganda, appealing to the dominant Creole population not to give in to the Indians of Guatemala, does not rouse much interest amongst San Pedranos. The P.U.P. has been slow when community projects for San Pedro are at issue. Thus, from all observations, political parties and movements seem to have little meaning for San Pedranos at this point in time, and serve in only a very minor way to make San Pedro a part of British Honduras.

Summary

Instituting cooperative fishing has served in several ways to tie San Pedro to greater British Honduras--some of which are new, some merely intensified versions of older ties.

Communications and transportation have not been greatly improved since the beginning of lobstering. Nonetheless, there are more airplane stops made near San Pedro; more radio receivers and skiffs are owned. By the plane service San Pedranos are coming into somewhat greater contact with outsiders who are generally monied people. Associating with them has had some influence on villagers in terms of aspirations for material goods. Radios and speedboats have, respectively, served to better inform villagers of mainland activities, and shorten travel time to the mainland. Faster transport--available by chartering a speedboat perhaps--encourages attendance at meetings (a full day's work will not be lost) and travel just to visit relatives in Belize or do a number of other things. Radio is also important to inform villagers of weather conditions, vital to San Pedranos who spend as much time at sea as they do.

With Caribena Producers there has come greater interest of Government in the island village, and increased influence by Government on San Pedro. Cooperative activities bring the island and mainland into closer contact through the Department of Cooperatives, Cooperative Inspectors, government auditors, and Fisheries and Wildlife Department. Other ties also obtain

between the Social Development Office (which placed Peace Corps Volunteers in the village) and San Pedro, brought about by concern with bringing villagers into active participation in national life. Treasury officials are attracted to San Pedro by the land and income taxes which were virtually non-existent prior to lobstering, and villagers, of course, are very aware that the attraction must be mutual. Yet in spite of apparently closer bonds between the village and the nation, it seems to me that the connection is not on the order of what the Government would truly like. By this I mean that San Pedranos interact with the Government and mainland residents only when absolutely necessary, for example when villagers need a favor or need material goods and services not available locally. Likewise, from the San Pedrano point of view the bargaining between the Government and the village, which allowed creation of the fishing cooperative, for example, reflects the type of relationship which still exists between these two entities. That is, a transaction between San Pedro and the Government is conceived of (by San Pedranos) as effecting only the two entities of village and Government. There are no ramifications for all of British Honduras. Therefore, while there may be more ties between the village and the nation, the role of San Pedro in British Honduran national life is not an active one from the viewpoint or the actions of San Pedranos; villagers are part of British Honduras more or less by default.

CHAPTER VIII

ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This chapter is designed to do three things: to summarize the findings of the various descriptive chapters and tie these findings to the thesis problem; to indicate what others have had to say about socio-cultural change, specifically on the points basic to the thesis; and, finally, to enumerate some of the actual changes which have taken place in San Pedro and present some predictions as to what will occur in San Pedro if life and change proceed in the current directions.

Summation of Findings

Evaluation of San Pedro's environment would indicate that there are few alternatives in exploiting that environment aside from maritime activity. The lack of alternatives derives from poor soil, lack of land, and the lack of capital or capacity to create capital on the part of villagers. It would thus follow that horticulture, small-scale or plantation agriculture, and industry, are precluded insofar as San Pedro is concerned, either as primary sources of livelihood or as secondary sources conjoined with existing maritime activity. The development of Ambergris Cay for tourism is being organized and financed by non-villagers; San Pedranos themselves could not undertake development activity since, again, land and capital at their disposal is insufficient to the requirements of the task.

The Government, having come to the same conclusions, yet desirous of raising the living standard in San Pedro, set about amplification of already present patterns of economic activity. Cooperative merchandising of produce had been successfully initiated in various agricultural communities on the mainland; fishing cooperatives were known to operate successfully in Nova Scotia, the West Indies, and other areas. The Government, therefore, promoted cooperative fishing in San Pedro, directed not toward scalefish, however, but towards lobsters. Although greater income could be gotten for scalefish through cooperative marketing than from independent ventures, the market for lobsters was far more lucrative. Additionally, lobsters were in superabundance around Ambergris Cay and would apparently be rather simple to catch. San Pedranos had been taking lobsters on a limited scale, knew the techniques, and had the technology necessary for increased operations.

The environment and means for exploiting it were favorable for initiating cooperative fishing in San Pedro. The problem for the Government was to get San Pedranos to accept it. The Social Development Department, Department of Cooperatives, and Fisheries and Wildlife Department worked collectively to introduce cooperation to San Pedro. Initial attempts were unsuccessful in San Pedro in spite of the fact that villagers viewed themselves as poor, benighted individuals, and in spite of the fact that upwards of a dozen fishermen actually favored cooperative lobstering. The reason for this rejection stems, I believe,

from the world view of San Pedranos with respect to the social organization of the community. The village has traditionally been organized around autonomous household groups. Characteristically there have been few associational groups which cross-cut San Pedro nor has there been extensive, long term cooperation with persons outside residential units. This organizational situation is tied to the San Pedrano dislike of being dominated (necessary in any formal association where a particular goal is to be achieved) and an equal dislike of having attention drawn to oneself (obviously impossible to avoid if one is in a leadership position). There was not, therefore, a tradition of cooperation, since on one hand followers could not be obtained who would lay aside self interests and submit to some directive authority, and on the other hand individuals could not be found who would function as leaders due to an automatic rise to a position of publicity. Yet, there is an important trait of San Pedranos which acted as a foothold in the community, so to speak, and this is the fact that villagers did cooperate in many of their fishing activities.

There was also a combination of two "pre-conditioning" factors which, I believe, provided a favorable context into which cooperative fishing might be introduced. First of these was the unmitigated poverty of the San Pedranos. Villagers eked out a bare subsistence from the combined income obtained through cocal work and fishing. From all reports, living conditions were most uncomfortable for the villagers. Diet was

limited to seafood and such staples as beans and rice. Thatch and stick residences, while adequate protection against bad weather, were often fouled with smoke from cooking fires, had only dirt for flooring, and were in other ways unpleasant. Clothing was in short supply and was poor in quality. Other material goods were limited primarily to tools; there were few if any luxuries.

The second of the "pre-conditioners" was the land tenure situation. During the late 1950's and early 1960's the Canadian Land and Timber Company had become interested in Ambergris Cay as a potential resort-retirement area. The sparsely populated, subtropical Caribbean island was largely in the hands of two families which also owned the village of San Pedro. Representatives of Canadian Land and Timber (actually an American concern) were able to purchase land from these families close to San Pedro and began construction of cottages and other tourist facilities. It was readily apparent to some of the villagers, specifically men who were also interested in cooperative lobstering, that village land was in jeopardy. Villagers had long been tenants on "their" land, worked for their landlords in nearby cocals, and were in no position to purchase lots due to the subsistence level at which they existed. The men who viewed speculators as a threat to San Pedro, hereafter referred to as "activists", conveyed this same idea to other villagers although not without some difficulties. These difficulties were twofold: it was hard to convince other San Pedranos that there was a way in

which land could be rescued from outsiders; more importantly, there was a problem in convincing villagers that they could become land owners in their own right. The solution in the first case, so activists thought, was to have Government buy San Pedro from private holders and resell lots to the villagers on land contracts. The solution in the second case was to go along with governmental plans and enter into cooperative fishing. Village activists and the Government combined efforts to convince the rest of San Pedro's population that activist solutions were "correct" and cooperative fishing should be tried, using the land tenure situation and the poverty of San Pedro as levers. The resultant bargaining between the village and the Government produced an exchange whereby both parties achieved their goals, at least initially. Village land was duly purchased and arrangements were made for its sale to San Pedranos. Likewise, Caribena Producers Society, Limited, was established as San Pedro's fishing cooperative. This accounts for cooperation being given a chance in San Pedro, but skirts the important point of the thesis which deals with the continuation and success of Caribena Producers.

Several points regarding continued success of the fishing co-op must be reiterated here. San Pedranos have evidently been fishing folk since the inception of the village. Included in the repertoire of fishing techniques and in the inventory of technology were foundations for cooperative lobstering. The change to this mode of maritime exploitation was a very small

one actually. It required a slight alteration or amplification in certain past behavior (focusing on the taking of lobsters as opposed to scalefish; intensifying the aggregation of traditional fishing partners for fishing trips; increasing the frequency and duration of fishing excursions) and acceptance of only one truly innovative practice i.e., collective marketing of produce rather than individual marketing. Underlying the facility with which change to cooperative lobstering was accomplished is the fact that the resource itself is, and has been, an abundant one. Although a legal lobstering season is set up by the Government, the quota allotted to San Pedro is sufficiently large as to in no way hamper the productive efforts of the fishermen. In fact, San Pedranos did not achieve the 1965-1966 limit and the quota for 1966-1967 has even been increased (at the same time with no substantial increase in the number of fishermen).

The foregoing summary of descriptive material would seem to support the major body of the thesis which states: the success of planned socio-cultural change in San Pedro is explicable by the fact that cooperative lobster fishing is primarily the amplification of an already existing mode of economic activity. That is, exploitation of marine resources did not require any basic changes in the life style and organization of San Pedranos since marine resources are abundant and can be obtained through implementation of technology and organization already present in the village. It is also worthy of note that cooperative marketing

of produce, the one innovation in San Pedro, did not itself produce drastic changes in village life. Although the structure of the cooperative technically involved an hierarchy of statuses, antithetical to the San Pedrano world view, the actual functioning of the cooperative was so egalitarian as to camouflage the structural existence of subordinate-superordinate statuses. The initial functioning of Caribena Producers was not, therefore, inhibited by dominance- and authority-resisting San Pedranos.

There are two important corollary statements which also must be taken into account in the discussion of cooperative fishing in San Pedro. The first of these is: the likelihood of continued, successful, cooperative fishing is enhanced by a locally owned and operated processing plant which eliminates external interference in all but a very few cases. Cooperative fishing was not devoid of hardships and certain drawbacks. The work itself was more arduous and intense than what most San Pedranos had been used to. Men had to be absent from their homes and families for longer periods of time and the produce had to be taken to Belize for processing and merchandising prior to the construction of a local processing plant right in San Pedro. Physical hardships could be (and were) passed off with prideful boasts that "we can take it". Absence from homes and families could be (and were) rationalized by the fact that increased income would be of great benefit to dependents back in San Pedro. Furthermore, there was still a four month period during the offseason when men could be home. Less pleasant than

either of the foregoing drawbacks, and one which could not be rationalized, was the fact that during the season men perforce had to spend time in Belize City between fishing trips. Much of their pay was left in Belize City because it was there that they bought supplies and paid for entertainment. Furthermore, Mestizo islanders were not overly fond of "colored" Belizenos. Most importantly, San Pedranos figured that processors were making considerable profit (\$40,000 B.H. in one case) that rightfully belonged to them. Working for two years (1963 to 1965) under these conditions San Pedranos were dissatisfied with the status quo.

Opportunely Mr. Adam Smith, a man wealthy in money, experienced in fishing of various types throughout Central America, and kindly disposed towards San Pedro and British Honduras, advanced money to the islanders for their own plant facilities during this time. An interview with him brought out that advancing money to San Pedro had been a simple act of altruism and that their fishing activities per se were economically inconsequential insofar as they would benefit him. However this may be, San Pedranos did not have to make any sacrifice whatsoever in order to obtain plant facilities. With the beginning of the 1965-66 lobster season villagers had their own processing plant which could not only care for marine produce brought in by fishermen, but also make block ice necessary for iceboxes on the fishing boats and generate electricity which could be utilized within the community. With a local plant

San Pedranos necessarily return to the village at the end of a fishing trip. There they can dispose of their catches, be close to families and friends, buy supplies for the next trip from the various merchants, and get ice. Income of the fishermen now stays within the community rather than being left on the mainland where it will not benefit the villagers. The entire fishing operation is now in the hands of San Pedranos. Villagers can, in all but a few cases, go about their work without dependence on or interference from outsiders. Although not all the drawbacks of cooperative lobstering have been eradicated, much of what was distasteful to San Pedranos has been positively modified. The first corollary statement would appear to be substantiated and it seems to me that the second corollary is virtually a given. This second corollary states that: the fact that villagers did not have to finance building and equipping the plant themselves made its existence possible in the first place.

San Pedranos entered into cooperative fishing with a legacy of poverty. Even given two years (1963-1965) of increased income through cooperation, San Pedranos were in no position to finance plant facilities themselves. Lack of savings, or capacity to produce the same, is tied to world view and the conception of what is the "good life". Quite obviously the "good life" in San Pedro is geared to the here and now, and as such it acts as a built in curb to long range economic planning. By this I mean that San Pedranos tend to spend any money they

earn as soon as they receive it rather than try to accumulate savings. This being the case it is hardly likely that San Pedranos could have put up the necessary capital to build the processing plant, and it is, in fact, problematic whether there was an agency in British Honduras at the time which could loan \$100,000 B.H. to a single community.

I would like to direct myself now to the matter of where this particular study fits in with what has already been written about planned socio-cultural change. The task of assessing where this study fits is, however, a most difficult one when all the ramifications of the change phenomenon are considered. Because of the difficulties involved, I will make special reference to a volume entitled What Accounts for Sociocultural Change authored by Gilbert Kushner et al (1962). In this volume an attempt has been made to order at least a portion of what has been written on sociocultural change. According to the first eight pages of Kushner's work, the various dealings with sociocultural change are categorized primarily along the following lines. First, change has been inspected in terms of the innovation involved. Here the success of a change may depend on whether a new element fits into an old context without disorganizing or disrupting effects, or it may depend on familiarity of new customs to existing customs. It may also be that an innovation is successful if it is satisfying or rewarding to its receivers; it may yield economic advantages through greater efficiency or greater utility, or it may be rewarding in terms of prestige. Second,

socio-cultural change has been inspected from the viewpoint of the type of society in which the change occurs. According to Kushner (1962:3) great emphasis has been placed on peasant society, for example. Third, culture, or more correctly, specific aspects of culture, such as social organization have been considered as keys to change. Fourth, non-cultural variables have been focused on as crucial to change. Here geographical environment, human biology, or demographic features may be the primary considerations. Fifth, individual psychology or personality in culture may be given major importance. Sixth, change may be investigated in terms of the ramifications which it has for a given society. Finally, Kushner says (1962:7) that much of the literature on socio-cultural change comes by way of individuals concerned with inducing socio-cultural change. Here the concern is to specify the techniques and motivations which will bring about change.

Each of the categories reflects, I believe, not only the major concern in the mind of the investigator at the time of his study, but it also reflects the basic concepts with which he is working; that is, it reflects what he thinks culture, for example, is composed of, how the "parts" of culture go together, and what the dynamics of cultural systems are. What all of this means insofar as this study is concerned will be explained shortly, but first I would like to type this study in terms of Kushner's categories listed above.

Taking the various premises of the thesis, it seems to me that my study does not actually fit into any one category outlined by Kushner. It fits into several categories in fact. In the thesis I tried to discuss the success of socio-cultural change in San Pedro in terms of the innovation itself in that it fit pre-existing culture (the first category); in terms of a specific aspect of culture, namely social organization (category three); and also in terms of non-cultural variables, the geographical environment and the marine resource base (category four). I do not think I would be stretching facts too much to say that I was also concerned with the seventh category since change in San Pedro was planned, or induced, and the thesis presents one example of successful planned change. By virtue of three foci in the thesis perhaps it has been possible to discuss change in San Pedro without falling into the trap of explaining a complex phenomenon in terms of one variable only. As Kushner has stated (1962:8) "no variable stands alone; no thread alone makes the fabric." If this is true then I am indeed pleased since understanding the success of socio-cultural change in San Pedro is, after all, the subject of my study. I would be even more pleased if this thesis were a contribution to the understanding of socio-cultural change generally, and I think this is possible if I go back to comments on the significance of Kushner's categories.

As stated above, the explanation used by an investigator of socio-cultural change reflects his basic concepts regarding

the variables involved in the change phenomenon. The whole tenor of my thesis, at least the one which I consciously tried to transmit, was the wholeness of the socio-cultural context in which change took place; which is to say that I conceive of culture as something that neither appears nor acts as though it were constituted of independent parts. Although I believe that "parts" of culture can be analytically singled out for investigation, in reality there is a functional interrelationship of these "parts" to the extent that it is not possible to understand a single "part" without reference to all others. This brings me to the point of what I actually mean by the term culture, what it is composed of, and what the foci of my thesis imply for socio-cultural change generally.

To me, culture is the non-biologically derived, extra-corporeal adjunct of socially living man that exists between man and his environment. Culture is man's creation, and by means of his culture, or perhaps through it, man interacts with his environment. My view of man and environment is thus an ecological one. Using a model employed by individuals such as Leslie White (1949:364-366) it is possible to conceive of culture as existing in three layers (in layer cake style) which are founded on the natural environment. The topmost of these layers is the ideological system of a given culture, composed of ideas, beliefs and knowledge of a people holding that culture and expressed in speech and other symbolic forms. Next is the sociological system constituted of interpersonal

relations expressed in patterns of collective and individual behavior. Finally there is the technological system which is made up of the material, chemical, mechanical and physical instruments, along with the techniques involved in their use, by which man exploits his natural environment.

Steward (1955:30-42) has gone beyond this to point out that due to the closeknit functional interrelationship between these levels there arises, due to the feedback from the technological level to the other levels, certain features which are "closely related to economic arrangements and subsistence activities" (Steward, 1955:37). There would therefore be ideological and sociological elements in any given culture which would be closely tied to the technological, and these elements would be crucial to man's interaction with his environment. Here, then, I finally come to the crux of my thesis. The three hypotheses or foci around which the thesis is organized all have to do with subsistence activities. Amplification of maritime activity, congruent with the previous socio-cultural context, was the first of the foci. According to Kushner, I have in this case talked about the success of cooperative fishing in terms of the innovation itself. A "new" element was introduced into San Pedrano society by virtue of its familiarity with already existing customs. San Pedranos were fishing folk; their entire economy derived from maritime exploitation and all of their technology was geared to taking produce from the sea. Innovation consisted of directing San

Pedrano attention to the taking of lobsters rather than scalefish, but inasmuch as they already had the tools and techniques necessary for lobstering planned change did not consist of anything which was really new to the villagers. In other words, lobstering activity was congruent with already existing customs.

The second focus is the social organization of San Pedro Village which did not impede cooperative fishing. Referring back to Kushner's categories, it would seem that here I have examined successful change in terms of a particular aspect of culture. The most basic work unit in San Pedro was the household but limited cooperative work ventures included individuals from outside the household unit. Specifically, fishing activity which required the labor of several men was the context in which cooperation with non-household members did take place. Men undertook fishing excursions wherein work and profits were shared equally by all involved. The undertaking of cooperative lobstering in no wise disturbed this organizational feature which was the mainstay of San Pedrano economy. All that cooperative lobstering did serve to do was regularize the fishing season, the work schedule, and the frequency with which fishing partners came together in order to work.

The third focus was the abundance of marine resources. In this case I have related success of cooperative fishing to a non-cultural element, namely the resource base of the San Pedranos which existed as part of the natural environment. According to reports of the San Pedranos, lobsters were in

superabundance around San Pedro and Ambergris Cay. At the time that cooperative lobstering began, in fact, lobsters came right up on the shores of the island. The resource that San Pedranos were being urged to exploit was not, therefore, a scarce one, and seems that initially it was exceedingly simple to harvest the lucrative lobsters.

Likewise, and finally, the corollary statements regarding the cooperative processing plant are also related to economic arrangements of the San Pedranos. Once again, success of cooperative fishing is discussed in terms of the innovation itself. The innovation, referring to Kushner, would be considered an element which would yield economic advantages in terms of greater utility than had existed prior to its introduction. It will be recalled that at the beginning of cooperative lobstering San Pedranos had to take their produce to Belize City for processing and distribution to wholesalers. Fishermen necessarily spent their earnings in Belize City for supplies and entertainment, thus depriving their families of the fruits of lobstering activity. Outside capital was offered to San Pedranos to build their own, village-based processing plant. There was no risk of personal wealth in building the processing plant, and the plant proved to be of great economic advantage to the villagers. It was possible to have marine produce prepared for distributors without having to pay special fees. It was also possible to keep most of their earnings right in the village since it would be in San Pedro that fishermen would

buy supplies and entertainment after coming in from a fishing trip.

It is readily apparent that these foci all have to do with how San Pedranos make a living and hence are part of the "economic arrangements and subsistence activities" of the San Pedranos. Thus, my explanation of how planned socio-cultural change succeeded in San Pedro is ecological. By this I mean that introduction and continued pursuit of cooperative fishing in San Pedro has been discussed in terms of the adaptation which San Pedranos had achieved with their natural environment. The adaptation which San Pedranos had effected was one closely geared to maritime exploitative activity. This activity ramified in various ways throughout the entire socio-cultural framework of San Pedrano life. It is in the context of this particular adaptation and its consequent ramifications that planned change is discussed and explained. An ecological explanation is not, of course, the only way in which planned change in San Pedro can be evaluated. I have taken this approach, however, since it seems to me that ecology yields the greatest insight into this particular case.

Epilogue: The Present and The Future

The ethnographic portion of the thesis was used to illustrate the aspects of San Pedrano culture which differ from pre-lobstering days. At the time of their first notation these changed elements were pointed out and contrasted with what had

obtained before, but for convenience I will once again give a brief inventory. Most striking of the changes wrought is in material goods: food, clothing, shelter, household goods, and implements for fishing. In the area of diet, for example, the staples of fish, rice, beans, plantains are still widely used in meal preparation but casava has been dropped from most menus and village tables are spread with eggs, a small variety of vegetables, canned meats, cheese, and even fresh meat. Clothing has greatly increased in quantity. Made of light washable fabrics, most clothing is bought factory made from Britain or Commonwealth countries and is relatively inexpensive. Women with sewing machines may also choose to make their own clothing from an increased variety of yard goods carried in local shops. Housing has changed markedly. Thatch and stick houses built most frequently with the ground as a foundation have largely been replaced by frame houses on pilings. Old-style houses have largely been relegated to cooking houses or utility sheds. Household furnishings are somewhat different from what obtained before cooperative fishing. Kerosene stoves have become increasingly numerous, replacing the old style fogon. Each household has at least one transistor radio of some sort and several also have phonographs. A few families have padded or cushioned chairs and divans rather than plain hardwood editions of the same articles. Chests of drawers, bedsteads, and many other furnishings are both in greater abundance and of better quality than before the Cooperative. More men in the village

own their own boats and outboard motors, and it is now common for men to have a skiff in addition to a sloop and dory.

San Pedranos have apparently long been known as heavy drinkers. Although I have no idea what quantity of alcohol may have been consumed prior to increased income from lobstering, it is not uncommon at present for a man to spend as much as fifty dollars at a time (or more) for drinks or to order a case of beer at a time for his table. Apparently the phenomenon of adolescent drinking is greatly increased since the advent of lobstering but again no quantitative figures are available.

Values and norms, included under "world view" above, differ in the changing San Pedro most noticeably in the greater merit ascribed to industry. Gainful work is expected of the able bodied far more than it once was. One reason for this is the greater benefit derived from work; the more effort expended the larger are the rewards. Directly related to this change is the increase in competition between San Pedranos in commercial and maritime aspects of the economy. Competition is necessary in fishing to obtain those lobsters which can be caught with the technology at hand. Men are aware that they are likewise going to have to work hard in order to maintain themselves and their families according to the new standard of living. Merchants compete in the area of merchandise which they stock, some assortments of goods are far more extensive than what is found in other village shops. Barkeeps also

compete through differential services which they afford customers such as extending credit, providing billiard and card tables for example. In order to economically compete the ideal of not working for others, never entirely possible in times past, has been set aside in many cases. San Pedranos provide services and labor for wages. Fishermen forsake working alone to cooperate on a boat crew where greater income can be derived from lobstering. Desire to work whenever one wishes is increasingly replaced with accomodation to regulated work patterns.

There are a number of predictions which could be extrapolated from the study on San Pedro. Necessarily some of these would be highly speculative in view of the short period of time (four years) which cooperative fishing has been practiced within the community. Nonetheless, there appear to me to be several future developments which seem to me to be very likely. For example, merchandising of lobsters and the supply of capital which built the co-op plant are both centered in the United States. It is conceivable that rather than closer economic ties to British Honduras, San Pedro will turn increasingly toward the United States. This is all the more likely due to the expected increase of American tourists who will be living on Ambergris or touring the island. Americans could come to have greater personal contact with San Pedranos than do mainland British Hondurans, and likewise come to have greater influence on San Pedranos. Dependence on America, or closer

economic ties with the United States than with British Honduras, will doubtless cast British Honduras in a poorer light, from the San Pedrano viewpoint, than the one in which it presently appears. Still further, American conceptions of work, property, and achievement, amongst others, will more than likely be adopted than British Honduran conceptions of the same phenomena. The goal of the British Honduran Government to integrate San Pedro into national life will very likely be frustrated.

Of greater consequence than the above is the quickly developing crisis in San Pedro's source of wealth. Lobsters once came up on the beaches of Ambergris Cay; four years after the advent of cooperative lobstering the San Pedranos have to travel up to sixty-five miles from the village in order to find anything which they can catch. At this rate of retreat--more than fifteen miles per year--lobsters will soon be in deep waters where fishermen simply cannot go without significant change in technology and the knowledge accompanying more complex tools than what are now used. San Pedranos could perhaps opt to fish for shrimp, but technology again would have to change and organization of the village would undergo modification to accomodate longer absences of the males than what now obtains.

Finally, a potential problem for San Pedranos is further compacting of the village's population. There is no more land to be had for expansion once the present lots are sold off, and more land is absolutely essential if the population continues to increase at its present rate. What may well happen to relieve

this situation is emigration of villagers to mainland locales, and it seems to me that the most likely individuals to leave San Pedro are the young people with high school educations who wish to work other than as fishermen. Siphoning off young people would leave only oldsters to populate San Pedro and within a generation San Pedro would be a dying village. This would be true, of course, only if the present low rate of immigration were to continue and restrictions on land sales to outsiders were to be maintained.

In the final analysis, it appears that "development" is neither a total blessing, or a camouflaged curse, for San Pedro Village.

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