

A MOMENT WITH THE GM

Bracing for Landing

Professor Richard Telsoni, a poultry pathologist at New York State University, has been my dear friend for a number of years. He was a very active member of the St. Vincent/New York Partners of the Americas during the early 1980s and visited St. Vincent and the Grenadines a number of times during the decade of the 80s. He conducted many poultry management workshops throughout the Eastern Caribbean and will therefore be well known by many of our farmer-friends reading this magazine.

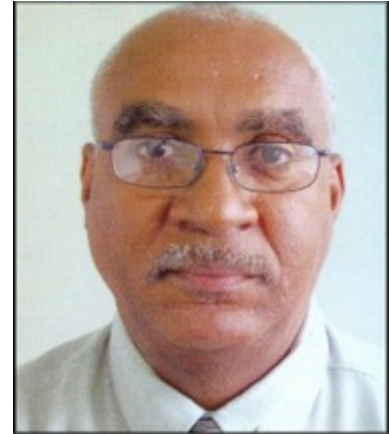
While a university student, young Telsoni signed up for active service as a member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corp (ROTC). This group of young, educated United States citizens spent many hours undergoing military training to be ready to fight for their country should the need ever arise. As part of Telsoni's training he was required to jump from a moving aircraft several thousand feet above ground. He indicated that he once appreciated the value of his parachute after observing one of his colleagues plummet earthward after his parachute failed to open. As he described it, "The youngster was pulp by the time we got around to discovering where he had landed".

I use this vivid description of a tragic situation to bring the point clearly home that if we do not have functioning "parachutes" as we traverse this world we can also have equally tragic experiences. Individuals who do not adequately prepare for difficult times can be devastated by the events that unravel ahead of them. The same is also true

of companies that fail to make ample arrangements for turbulent market times.

The ECGC Caribbean link's editorial committee must be commended for selecting "Bracing for Landing" as the theme for this publication. It is quite timely and extremely relevant to the period in which our company now exists. There is tremendous amount of turbulence on the regional markets where we operate. However, we are not daunted. We know that if we take the necessary timely steps and brace for the landing we can continue to be a flag-ship for the regional manufacturing sector.

How do we brace for the tumultuous times ahead? Our Board of Directors and Management Team must continue to explore and embrace opportunities that will simultaneously examining and pursuing opportunities to diversify. Preferably, these diversification efforts should embrace business opportunities that will have a positive spin off on the local agriculture sector, for example. In addition, each member of the ECGC family (our employees) must be prepared to work more efficiently – working harder, longer and with more focus than ever before. We must ensure that our reputation for quality products and services are never sacrificed as we seek to do more with less. We are aware that there are several negative "doomsters" predicting the imminent demise of this company that has provided numerous opportunities for employees, their children, and various communities throughout the region. They



*Dr. Julian Ferdinand
General Manager*

anticipate that our landing will be so difficult that our wheels and fuselage will be utterly destroyed (using an aircraft analogy). We will prove them wrong. I am We will prove them wrong.

I am convinced that, even as the markets become more competitive, we can continue to be force to be reckoned with and that our ECGC brands would strengthen rather than diminish and disappear. We know full well that the passage will be bumpy. We will be naïve to think otherwise. However, if we work together, looking out for each other and playing he needed supportive role that we must, we can be guaranteed a safe landing, we have checked our gear-all situations are "go". Our motto, "Excellence Through Teamwork" will keep us focused and energized as we continue to shape a positive future for our beloved company and its many stakeholders.