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## SPANISH LOOK OUT SHUTS DOWN OIL COMPANY EXPANSION

A Belize Natural Energy (BNE) source charges that Spanish Lookout is causing the oil company tens of thousands of dollars in damages every day by refusing to grant them more drilling permits to expand the development of the Spanish Lookout field.

BNE claims they will be holding Spanish Lookout accountable for the losses because their refusal is unreasonable and in violation of their agreements.

BNE currently has 5 wells producing about 3,500 barrels of oil a day at Spanish Lookout.

At current prices of BZ\$145/barrel, that's half a million dollars a day, which means that the oil company is losing some BZ\$100,000 per day for each new well they can't drill.

## Belize's Economy Is Being Destroyed

The famous British statesman Winston Churchill said, *"For a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle."* What would he have thought of Belize right now?

Belize's economy cannot survive the burdens that are being placed upon it. Not just from taxes, but also the bloated contracts entered into by Government. There are records of construction contracts awarded by the Government which exceed **four times** the amount of the bid of the lowest qualified bidder.

By spending excess taxpayer money, Government officials have acted as if they have a right to award contracts to higher bidders, generally well connected individuals, even when there are low qualified - and occasionally better qualified - lower bidders.

Has either political party done anything to stop this practice? If they have, it is not apparent and most importantly, it is not working. If they haven't, why not? Is the crony system destined to bleed

On the other hand, Spanish Lookout hasn't done anything with the oil. It is still in the ground ready to be pumped, so it sounds like a lot of legal baloney and huffing and puffing threats when

the country dries while thousands of citizens go without, and the poor and middle class are victimized?

It seems so, for the awarding of bloated contracts continues and the government continues to borrow to absorb the losses from these over payments. The national debt has sky-rocketed to \$2.5 billion, a sum that the grandchildren of today's youngest citizens will be strapped to pay for many years to come.

It has to be a matter of political will, for the practice could easily have been stopped by the appropriate legislation. Legislation that would require all contracts above \$10 million to have all bids published in generally circulated newspapers at the time the award is made, along with the terms of the contract that was eventually accepted by Government.

Further more, any citizen should have the right to proceed in court to have the bloated contract declared void and recover damages by way of enforcement.

This type of legislation would ensure

BNE claims that they have been damaged because they have to wait until next week or next month to make the same amount of money that they want to make today? But that is why God created courts and

transparency and accountability for the use of taxpayer funds, yet neither political party has proposed it. Such reform does not seem to be contained in either of the two main party's political reform proposals or manifestos. Do the major political parties simply want the crony system to continue so politicians can pay off their election season debt?

Another great burden on the Belizean economy is the excessive cost of utilities. There is not any country in the Western Hemisphere whose citizens have to pay as high of a rate for electrical, water and phone service as is charged in Belize!

A major cause of the high cost of electricity is the Government's guarantee to Fortis of a return of 15% on its investment. With this guarantee, Fortis can profit excessively by building dams, and rejoice in the size of the costs of overruns. Fortis could probably obtain financing in the vicinity of 5%. The 15% guarantee gives a perpetual excessive return. The return is close to being equal to twice the proper return on the investments and

judges. Except, BNE claims that disputes are supposed to be settled by arbitration and Spanish Lookout is saying *"no"* to arbitration.

The Mennonites have a well established reputation for being fair and wanting to get along with everybody, so just what on earth is going on here?

At the recent Landowners Association meeting held at Spanish Lookout, Allen Reimer, Chairman of the Spanish Lookout Oil Committee, commented that the problem is NOT that Spanish Lookout won't grant permits for the two new wells, because they will always abide by their agreements. He says the problem is that BNE is in default on a number of issues, and the Oil Committee has required that the oil company cure all of the defaults involving the existing production before any new drilling site is approved.

Frank Redmond, a consultant for Spanish Lookout, at the Landowners meeting said the issues are very serious and involve moral as well as financial and legal issues, but he would not elaborate.

It seems that the oil problems are points of discussion for everyone in the Spanish Lookout Community, but no one seems to have many details.

At least two big problems exist: 1) BNE owes a lot of money to SLO for flaring penalties and refuses to pay it; and, 2) BNE refuses to install meters to measure the oil production so no one knows how much oil is produced.

I asked Jim Cavanaugh, Spanish Lookout Oil Consultant, about the refusal to arbitrate and two big problems.

*"The law requires that the parties go to arbitration,"* Cavanaugh responded, *"when they cannot come to an agreement on compensation. The problem at hand is not failure to come to an agreement, but rather default on agreements that already exist. Actually arbitration suits the spirit of the Mennonites very*

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# Letters to the Editor

## The PUP is headed for OBLIVION!

Dear Editor,

With the birth of many new political parties, I think the PUP will disappear into oblivion and history? In the beginning, they were the party of the poor masses. Today they are the party of the rich who want to get richer and run by the wealthy. Consider that 55% of the working population work for the PUP government, at salaries ranging on average around \$1200 to \$1400 a month. You notice in this statistic that the 55% of adult workers are government workers, yet their associated family members most often are not. This gives another interesting statistic of 85% of the majority population in Belize with cash incomes of only between \$100 to \$400 a month. The division of adult voters is very close! It is that low monthly cash income flow that is the more meaningful.

Most of what the Peoples United Party have been doing in recent years in taxation, has been geared to feed off the higher salaries of government workers and Belize City merchant and clerical type staff. Yet the majority of the population in the nation do not earn that kind of big money. They get by on only \$100 to \$400 a month.

The PUP are so out of touch with reality it indicates they can no longer

manage the country, if they ever could, and all indications are they have been lousy managers, or at best mediocre. The only thing the PUP have going for it, is a superb political machine, with block captains, active vote recruiting, or vote buying systems, using tried and true political patronage to ensure allegiance. In this, they have no equal and in the past this has won many elections to make the PUP members more rich.

I think the majority people, the poor people, are slowly waking up and hopefully this next national election, they will vote for the most HONEST candidate and ignore the political party affiliation. It is definitely time for a change!

Much of what the Peoples United Party are implementing today, such as laws that can be used to intimidate, or punish opposition, or new taxes, permits and licenses and other monopolies to raise money for government, are the result of their inability to govern and manage the nation on government revenues. All these new costly things are punishing the ordinary citizen who finds it hard to pay \$75 for electricity, or \$45 for running water, license fees and 10% pyramiding taxes, taken out of their \$100 to \$400 monthly cash flow. We just are not that kind of country and you can't build a nation like Belize based on non-existing manufacturing capability, solely taxing based on government workers salaries.

With the birth of the NRP, the National Reform Party, we have the Mennonite

element, of the Heartland of Belize. The Mennonites original agreement was that our national government would let them govern themselves. They have built their own schools, churches, streets and highways and paved roads, factories and stores, electric hydro dams, etc. For fifty years they have shown the rest of us Belizeans how to govern. There are now 50,000 of them.

I doubt the NRP as a Mennonite run party could find enough candidates for all district seats of their persuasion, but even so, if the Mennonite business philosophy could control the purse strings as Finance Minister, and Prime Minister, and lend common sense and long range planning to the Cabinet and control things. I think it is certainly worth a try to change horses in the next election.

Certainly after forty years of UDP and PUP we have learned the system of self interest and greed do not do much good for our nation building. Think about it! There are other parties to choose from, each has some good people to vote for.

The PUP created national debt has this rich political party painted into a corner. They can only see one way out. That is to tax people more and more, and estranged as this party are in their rich life styles, I think it is going to backfire when the poor majority finally realize the PUP are going to make them pay for everything.

The Mennonites well understand volunteerism, and communal sharing and work. The stretching of limited money and resources after 50 years of self-government themselves, within our heartland, traits we in the rest of Belize badly need. It should be possible to improve and govern this country without the foreign money the PUP would borrow more of, if they were elected.

Only one of the new parties running in this next national election offer much hope for the nation in my current fluid opinion and that is the Mennonite run NRP. If this NRP could attract people like Wil Mehia in Toledo and Clinton Luna up in Corozal and hijack the honest UDP politician in San Pedro and maybe Mario Castellanos in Central Cayo, they may have a chance?

There is no question about it, especially financially speaking, things are going to get worse for the nation, if the PUP are re-elected; using their formidable party patronage machine and rich treasure chest. The only media newspapers free, seem to be THE REPORTER, THE INDEPENDENT and the AMANDALA this election time? I would ask them to promote these new political hopeful parties and give us some choices. None of these new parties have newspapers, or television stations, or money to campaign. It would be patriotic for these free media outlets to level the playing field for this national election.

The Guardian and the Star newspaper are UDP organs. The Capital is a VIP organ. The Belize Times and Channel 5 are the PUP organs. Even the honest members of the PUP want to see the nation do better.

The reason I think the PUP will fade eventually into history, is that good members have been forced to vote for their wrong party policies over the interests of the nation and their constituents. Coye is a prime example.

A nicer honest man you wouldn't want to meet as a PUP elected representative, yet when shove comes to push, he caves in and toes the rich interests in his political party over the interests of his nation and constituents. When a nice guy like him puts his party interests over that of his nation and constituents, then it is TIME FOR A CHANGE!

The system has gone awry and the PUP will not reform the Constitution and fix it, so they have proved. All successful political patronage parties eventually bite the dust. Will this national election be the death knell of the PUP?

Signed,  
Ray Auxillou

General Manager:  
Trevor Vernon

Editor:  
Karla Heusner Vernon

Design/Layout  
Environmental  
Editor:  
William Ysaguirre

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## GoB/MoE/QADS

**Not one of us does not support the Textbook Programme. What we do not support is your choice of books in the Infant Division. The teachers, parents, managements, BNTU and BRC have a LEGITIMATE CONCERN.**

You have taken BRC's very successful and popular learning to read series out of the schools and replaced it with Fast Phonics which you wrote and evaluated.

The Reporter Newspaper quotes Mr. Longworth:

"...in March a revision of the list of text books by primary schools was done, experts were invited to review the list and, based on a formula devised by the University of the West Indies, the Ministry made an evaluation and arrived at a list".

You consulted with experts rather than the education partners because you knew that the education partners would choose BRC. The formula devised by the University of the West Indies is no better than the persons using it. QADS used the formula to evaluate Fast Phonics that they wrote and wanted in the schools. Then, they evaluated BRC that they wanted out of the schools.

GoB, how can you accept the obviously biased and extremely optimistic opinion of QADS officials and dismiss the testimony of parents, teachers, principals and managements?

On the 10th of May, 2007, the Association of Catholic Primary School Principals met. Not one of the Principals stated that they had been consulted and almost 100% of the Principals stated that they wanted BRC books to be included in the Textbook Programme. A large majority signed a petition requesting the above.

On the 13th of June, 2007, the Catholic Local Managers met. They were not pleased that they had not been consulted and that BRC's books were not on the Textbook Programme. The local managers asked the General Manager to write the Minister of Education expressing their displeasure at not having been consulted and requesting that BRC's books be an option on the Textbook Programme. GoB, QADS believes that their Fast Phonics is going to be extremely successful. They believe that children will be able to read anything put in front of them after one year of Fast Phonics.

GoB, talk to teachers. The English speaking world is struggling in its effort to teach privileged children how to read in two or three years and QADS believes that they can teach non-privileged children how to read in one year. GoB, our children and all of us will pay the price if you are wrong.

The decision is yours, not QADS.

GoB, even after your presentation, parents, teachers, principals and managements are not happy. If your "experts" are wrong and Fast Phonics is not as good as BRC's Reading, you are going to have some very angry people.

GoB, why are you going to risk the anger of the parents and teachers on the opinions of QADS? If Fast Phonics and the New Caribbean Readers do not help children learn to read as well as BRC's Reading, you have much to lose.

Your statement that "parents should not purchase books for core subject areas," meaning BRC's books, is an effort to get BRC's successful books out of schools. Why? Why are you willing to go against the wishes of a majority of parents, teachers, principals and managements?

Parents care about their education. If the children of parents who can afford to purchase books are not learning as well as in the past, they will be really angry when the school tells them that GoB would not even allow them to ask parents to purchase BRC books

Most schools which serve the needy have been using BRC's books. Many parents made great sacrifices and bought the books because they believe in education for their children. Free books that do not help their children learn are not going to make them happy.

Even at this late date, you could listen to the cries of the people and everyone but a few MoE/QADS personnel would be happy. You would accomplish everything you set out to do with your Textbook Programme unless getting BRC's books out of schools is part of your plan.

**To whom can teachers and parents turn if your technocrats are wrong?**

BRC Printing Ltd./Deacon Cal



# Do You Curfew?



**By: Karla Heusner Vernon**

*“It’s like a ghost town, where is everyone?”* We were driving through Belize City one night last week. It wasn’t late, around 10 pm. But it felt more like 3 am.

It was eerie. Yes, there were some people moving around, but the majority of shops were closed, shutters and burglar bar doors drawn. The few people we saw on foot were moving quickly, looking over their shoulders, not milling about, intent on getting to their homes, in one piece.

Maybe there were more people congregating in areas off the main streets, in alleys or on their front steps and verandahs. But from our route through town, we did not see them.

I don’t know if this is the case every night. I don’t live downtown anymore. But when I did, it seemed much more lively, and people seemed less afraid.

So it was with some surprise that I read online that the police department was re-instating its curfew for children. My first thought was: **there are hardly any grownups out at night anymore, let alone children. The whole town already seems like it is living a self-imposed curfew.** Do we need a legal one?

But no doubt the police know their business better than the rest of us do. No doubt they find unsupervised children all over the place, getting into trouble, or become victims of bad intentions. A runaway child was already returned home safe last weekend; five or six others picked up and taken to their parents the week before. Clearly this is a necessary service to protect the kids, from bad strangers, and perhaps their own family’s lack of interest or

neglect. A good reminder to the people they live with that they are meant to be home in bed after dark, not roaming around the streets and alleys.

A lot of people have commented on the curfew, criticizing and praising it. In

**There are hardly any grownups out at night anymore, let alone children. The whole town already seems like it is living a self-imposed curfew.**

our own Independent Weekly, Canon Leroy Flowers, writes about it elsewhere in this issue. My daughter Julia did a cartoon on it for Teen Page last week. The drawing came out a bit smaller than she anticipated it, so the sign showing who was under curfew was difficult to read. But her take on the issue is different than many people’s: she believes the child molesters, rapists and drug pushers should be the ones banned from public places, during the hours of 7 am and 7 pm. so the children and teens of Belize can feel safe, play and congregate at parks or with friends.

I believe she has a major point that might escape some of us older heads. Not all crimes against children happen at night. In fact, from news reports it seems an awful lot of them occur when the kids are traveling to and from school (which is why we had a warden program) or in their own homes and yards pretty much any time of the day or night.

The two Chinese children who watched their mother shot to death recently and were then themselves shot by a crazed drug addict had all this happen in their own home, while they were snug in their beds, exactly where they were supposed to be. Many of the children injured by stray bullets during gang cock-fights are in standing right near their parents, or even in their mother’s arms. Often the real, intended victims are their older brothers and fathers, or boyfriends of their sisters and mothers.

The girls who were murdered a few years ago by the man described as “*Jack*” disappeared in the daytime. I

doubt their killer(s) waiting until nightfall to butcher them.

How many of our precious Belizean children have been slaughtered or injured in broad daylight? Is it as many as the shopkeepers murdered during normal business hours, in front of their regular customers? How many bank and payroll deposits have been held up at night,

versus in the day? How many citizens of Belize have lost their lives during the normal course of duty in places they should have been able to feel somewhat secure?

How many home invasions now occur in the middle of the day or at dawn, often under the cover of rain and thunder? How many students have had their property taken away at knife or gunpoint under a sweltering sun?

I suppose my point is that while a curfew for children is a good idea—if the police can handle the additional responsibility—is it based on a false premise that somehow Belize is more violent, more dangerous after 9 pm than it is after 9 am.

But let’s say the child curfew is a good start. Perhaps we can extend it in the near future to include all those unemployed youths who dropped out of school and roam the town all day and all night, scoping the neighborhoods

and looking for easy prey among the walking, biking, driving, working, washing, and sleeping citizens. Perhaps instead of taking them home to their parents, they can be sent to military camp or chain gangs or on patrol to protect the border from Xate cutters and bandidos, made to do something productive instead of destructive. Their penchant for violence and love of guns channeled into some useful work.

For right now, it is these youths, from 12 to 19 or so who appear to be holding the rest of the country hostage. It is these youth who seem, at least from the headlines, to be doing the most killing and the least jail time. It is these youths who are the most active of all criminals, hard at “*work*” 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Who knows, if we catch enough of these boys wanting to be men before their time, a legal curfew for the rest of the citizens might never have to be considered.

And the one our people have imposed on themselves might be lifted, bringing our cities and towns back to life after dark, once more.

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# NALEB: Fighting Minority Rule In Guatemala

By Trevor Vernon



There is a powerful organization in Guatemala called NALEB (pronounced NALEF). They are fighting for the voice of the mostly disenfranchised indigenous populations to be heard and reckoned with. They don't field electoral candidates but they sure as hell can make and break them; so in this sense we will call them a political organization. We ran their entire "manifesto" last week on pg 6 of this paper. You can read it at: <http://tinyurl.com/245dpp> or <http://belizenews.com/independent/vol2.no.28>

Now you have to understand the history of political organization in Guatemala, especially when juxtaposed with their history in Belize. We take a lot for granted here. That's not the case in Guatemala.

In Guatemala the indigenous people are for the most part Maya, but they are not a coherent group. History has been harsh to them, keeping the various groups suspicious of each other. But any outsider sees them as one.

The history of governance in Guatemala, post-Columbus, has seen them placed completely outside the nation state. As a group, they may well have been living on a "USA-Styled" reservation as they receive very little if any social services: health, potable, education, power, etc.

Recently there has been some degree of reservation jumping and co-mingling with the mainstream in Guatemala. Migration from the rural to the urban areas, from the traditional dress to the more western garb...from speaking their provincial tongue to speaking the language of Cervantes.

The result of the commingling has given rise to a new class called the Ladinos, kind of like what we call Mestizos here in Belize.

Traditionally in Guatemala the indigenas were ranked below zero on the social totem pole. This is not unlike the case in Belize today where in order to arrive socially you must not acknowledge your "tar brush" roots. So there are some similarities.

On the political front, in Belize, everybody who is here legitimately (or not) votes. That's not the case in Guatemala. Of the 65% of the Guatemalan population, only a mere 5% of them get to vote for the president. Wow! Now that's a huge paradigm shift for Belizeans to digest.

Generally speaking, if you wear traditional garb you are isolated politically.

In Belize, on the other hand, there are quite a few people who don the unfavorable garb and hairstyles and still remain at the trough.

Anyway, I am fascinated by NALEB's objectives. It will bring about a huge paradigm shift in the old Spanish Capital. And they have seen the precedence that some south American countries have set. Out with the old blue eyes and in with the "cholos".

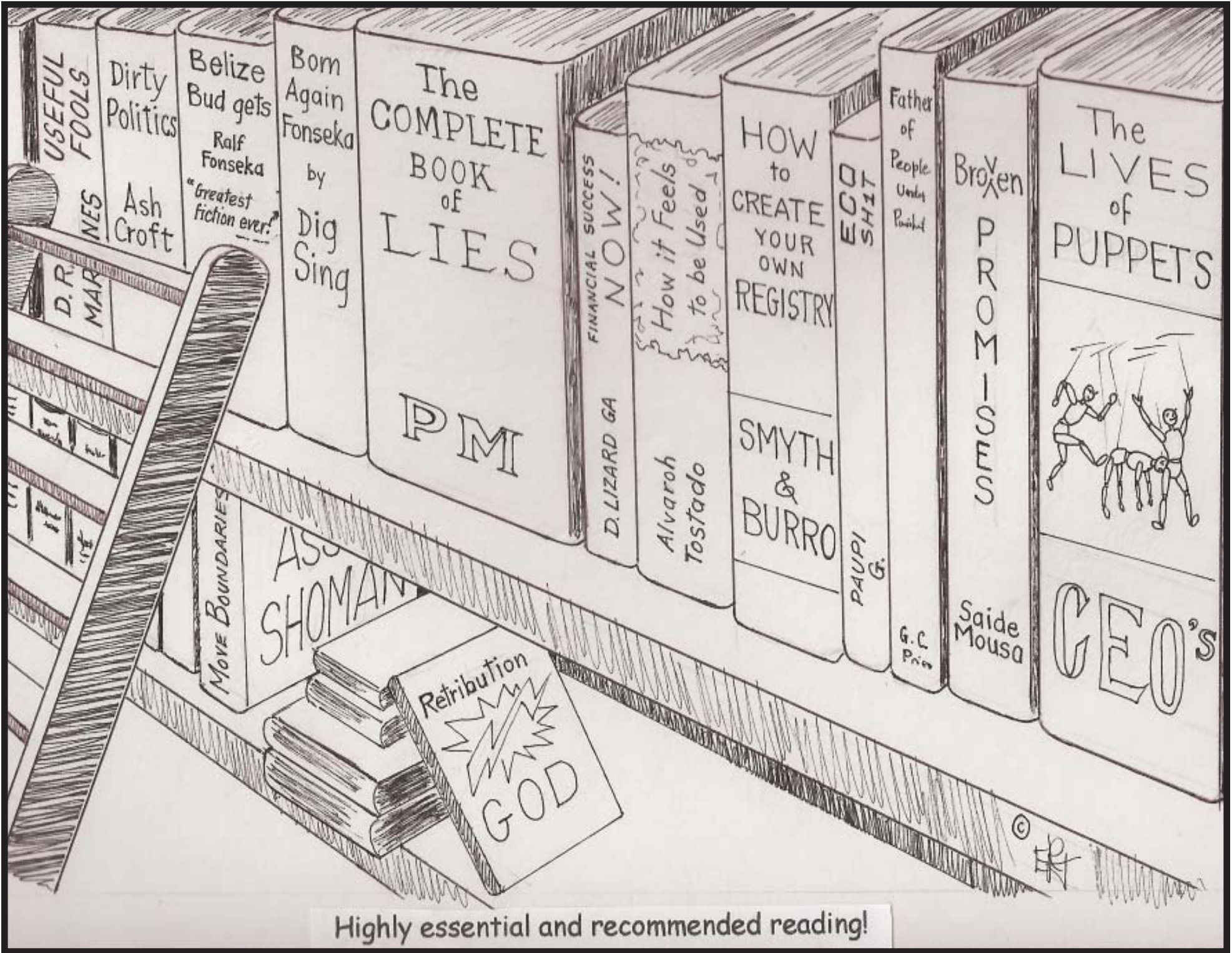
I think this will have a big effect on us here in Belize in the next 5 years, if not before. Why? Well, right now we are

getting a huge inward migration of Guatemalans from the Peten. Mostly indigenas, but also Ladinos. The lower classes who came and are still coming are from the lower "castes" and have been motivated by somebody here to come.

If and when these pressures are removed in the Guatemalan totem pole where the indigenas have an equal chance as the ladinos and the "rabbiblanco", they will surely want to return to their motherland even if Said had given them Belize passports and voter registration cards and a piece of land. And then what?

Even knowing of the existence of NALEB, if I were a Belizean with Guatemalan indigenous ancestry, I'd feel the need to want to help out and eventually return to my motherland. So I am sure a lot of Guatemalans will be leaving once the NALEB gains her successes in the Presidential elections slated to be held in Guatemala on September 9th, 2007.

Therefore as a public service, all media houses in Belize should be circulating the NALEB objectives and principles as a humanitarian gesture to our brothers of Guatemalan Indigenous ancestry. And this is what I find most interesting. Let us support the work of NALEB whatever way we can.





# TOP SECRET: How To Win And Never Lose

From: [www.nrpbelize.org](http://www.nrpbelize.org). The Office of the National Reform Party (NRP) -

What do you mean? We are so frustrated, so tired, so broke, so confused! Boy life “haad out yah”. This is the cry of the people. The focus of our country is lining up, on the General Election to have a new government; even though it is claimed that we are eight (8) months away.

There seemed to be a lot of energy going into what we need to improve and what we want to see changed in the new leadership. General election is one area where all different ethnic groups and cultures and the poor and the rich all share a deep concern.

The newspapers are packed with discussions about the direction our country will choose to take within 8 months. There is a good reason for this, because we will choose the leadership called Government Administration for the next 5 years and they will bring our society either up or down; more starvation or more prosperity; more crime or more tranquility; more war and blood or peace and happiness; more bondage and taxes or more freedom and better living. The bottom line is that good leaders will go to higher levels and bring the people to a higher level.

We are hitting a hot spot here. What is a higher level you may ask? Some people move into a better house, but for the first time in their lives they find they cannot meet the obligation because of high payments; others may credit groceries to make the payment and not lose the house. The question is. Is that a higher level? Or just a different situation? The question is where have we changed and for what reason. Many things happened in 15 years for people to look at and examine it very closely and carefully.

The people of Belize have learned all about their political leaders, and they are still learning. The media is busy bringing out all the facts and truth to the public. They hold a very sensitive and important position. There seems to be a big breach of trust between the political leaders and the people of the country that have led us for the last 15 years. Why is that? you may ask. We need 100 pages to begin to describe what has happened, but let’s give an example.

Say you are a woman and your husband is the leader of the house. One day you come home and your beloved husband has sold your vehicle without your consent. But he says, “*Do not*

*worry Honey, I will buy you a better one later*”. The following week you realize that he also sold your stove and he tells you, “*Do not worry Honey, we will just go to the restaurant and eat*”. The next week he sold your dress shoes and he says “*One pair is enough. Just trust me*”. So you are waiting for the better time to come. Then one day he announces: “*We are short of money*”. This means that those things that were promised are not coming. Now he is saying “*Honey, why don’t you take one more job while I make a loan at the bank. This will help me to get approval and later to pay the loan*”.

Every time you feel bad about where things are going, you ask for an update or an audited account. He avoids the issue. Now make your own estimate. How long will this partnership operate? For him to spend your money is not the worse part, doing things without your consent as a partner is the most sensitive part. It will not take long until she would tell her husband “*You are too old for me, or you are not capable of taking care of the house,*” especially when she learns that the bank is taking the house against the loan.

You may say these things will never happen to us as a country! But our problem is that these things are happening to us already and yet we act as if it’s not real, or cannot be so.

Normally, a warning comes before the accident. There is also a saying, “*Who don’t want to hear, must feel it.*” That is hard language, but so true. We should avoid that as far as is in our power. In kriol there is a saying “*dat dah notin nice*”. We come back to word truth. People will perish for the lack of knowledge, meaning before we know where we are, we cannot come out of the situation if we are sunk into. Here is a word to the leaders. People do what people see. There are those that will say, “*Do what I say, but not do what I do,*” but that is not the way it works.

There is a great truth about people: they will not forget how you made them feel. They may forget what you said and even what you did, but not how you made them feel.

People will reflect the attitude of the leader. What has taken most leaders out of office in our history is that they may understand politics and their job, but not the people. To their surprise, when they thought that they led well and wanted praise from the people, they got

jut the opposite and were called gangsters, gamblers, people with no self respect. Some of them have also learned to stay quiet for several years and the people voted them back in and the same scenario happened all over again under a different form

There are 4 descriptions below about knowledge and mentality of people. We tend to think we are right and judging our selves by our good intentions before we run a check on ourselves. Here is a check list to think through.

1. He that does not know that he doesn’t know, is a fool. Don’t follow him. They say they sometimes show up in the mirror.

2. He that knows that he doesn’t know is a child, teach him.

3. He that knows but doesn’t know that he knows, is asleep. Wake him up. He has potential.

4. He that knows and knows that he knows, is wise. Follow him.

In the case of political leaders, what do we need to know, you may ask? This brings us point square to principles, character and attitude. This is what we need to know about our political leaders. This is a part of the top secrets. We have seen how some have tried to become political leaders and gain the trust of the people. They spend all their time and money which is a tremendous sacrifice. In some cases they have lost their house, wife and children in their ambition and race for power and position. When they do not achieve the position they are very hurt, especially if one of their own caused them to lose. They tried to get the trust of the people through money, material things and speeches which work for a while to get their identity. Then it all vanishes.

Again here is another top secret. If you see a leader gain some trust of the people and have the ability but if he does not carefully study leadership principles, good character and right attitude he will lose everything he works so hard for. On the other side, if he embraces leadership principles, character and attitude he will get all the trust he wants from the people for free and he can never lose.

How can a man get to where he can never lose? Tell me about that top secret. Yes, because even if he loses a convention or even an election, he remains with his qualities. The world is short of this kind of leader! It will not be long before the public will come and look for this person to help them and to lead them. There is nothing so great in

this life as to lead by example. It satisfies the leader and pleases the followers and the other side of the coin there is nothing so conniving and hurtful as leadership by force and manipulation.

Here is a broad picture to lead you into more top secrets. Here are 7 ways people come to power: which we need to know

1. **BY FORCE:** That is when people have no choice but to accept what comes their way.

2. **BY INTIMIDAATION:** That is when people are pushed to the point where they can do nothing to change to a better situation.

3. **BY MANIPULATION:** When people are coerced. When people are led to believe but then get disappointed.

4. **BY EXCHANGE:** When people trade for something they think is better or just to get rid of what they have now to try something different.

5. **BY PERSUASION:** When people are convinced by information and education.

6. **BY MOTIVATION:** When people act willingly to improve themselves by the help and encouragement of their leaders.

7. **BY HONOR:** When people are honored by their leader and they respond accordingly.

Which one of this leadership character or attitude will you choose in the next election to lead us for the next 5 years? May we never come to where we have to learn only by circumstances and consequences! Belizeans are above that and we shall keep searching for the top secrets until we live above bondage and not beneath it.

Keep this in mind when you think about your short life on earth and choosing a leader for your earthly affairs. Think which one will help you reach your goals.

Here are some pointers:

1. Remind yourself of what you know to do and do it well.

2. Ask yourself, “*What do I feel I should do in life?*”

3. Ask yourself, “*What I actually want to do?*”

4. Try to make up your mind what you are going to do in life.

5. Really think of this one: What is it that you are doing right now that you will feel good about in time to come?

Other top secrets to be continued later....



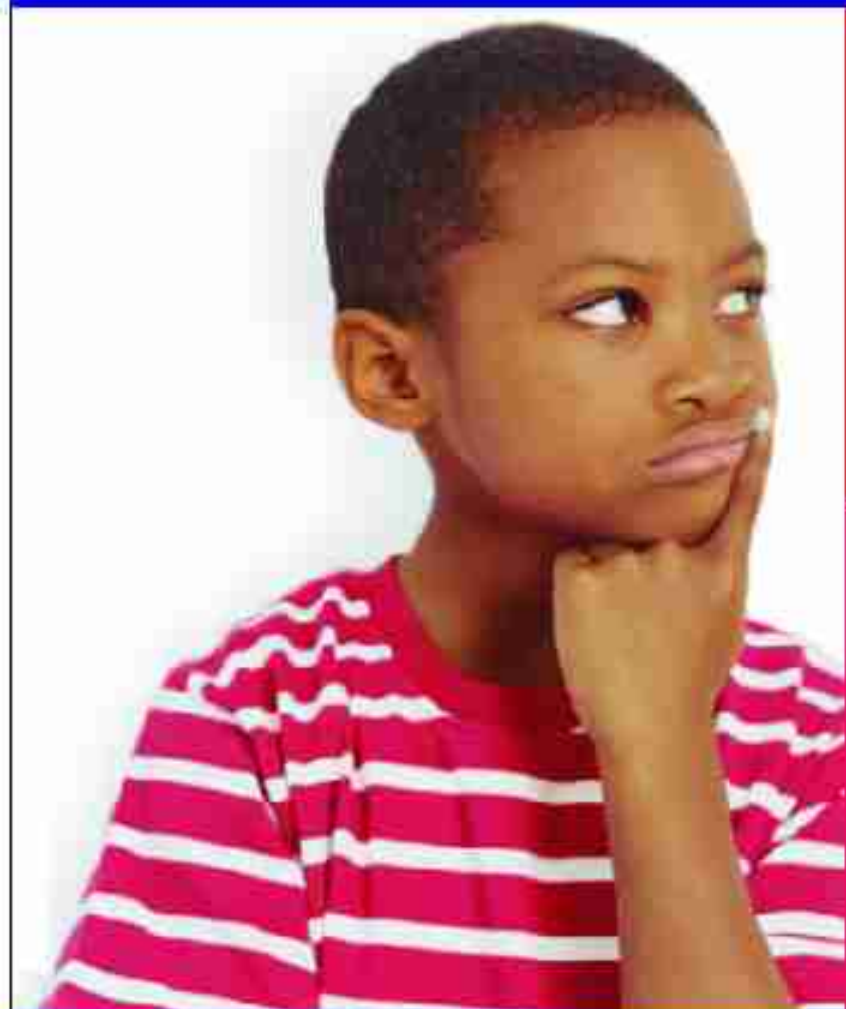
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# "WAR ON THE UDP?"

*PUP has declared WAR on Belize.*



***CORRUPTION!  
POVERTY!  
CRIME!  
INJUSTICE!  
LIES!***

*...total economic PLUNDER!*

**VOTE them in AGAIN?**  
**NEVA!**



# Inspired Insights Curfew



By: Rev'd Canon LeRoy Flowers



A couple weeks ago it was announced that a curfew for children will be introduced effective Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2007. Sadly, the media and others have been rather negative and I am yet to hear an objective discussion on the problem and how to address the situation. So far, mainly the police and politicians have been attacked.

While it is easy to play the blame game or become self-righteous, it will not help the situation. As is now the norm in the wider society, we seek to kill the messengers and forget the message.

Let us take a brief look at our present condition that has placed our children in such a vulnerable situation that has led to the re-introduction of the curfew:

(1) Approximately 40% of us live in poverty.

(2) Many in the middle class are one pay-cheque away from poverty.

(3) Approximately 45% of our population is under 16yrs.-17yrs.

(4) The housing conditions for many are overcrowded and deplorable.

(5) Many children are cared for by one parent (working single mothers and grandmothers).

(6) Too many dysfunctional families.

(7) For many, extended family members no longer give the support to children's upbringing.

(8) Many fathers are irresponsible and have more children than they can care for adequately, financially, physically, mentally, spiritually.

(9) Many voluntary groups (guides, scouts, youth group) lack adult leadership.

(10) Many children are used by adults for criminal activities.

(11) Too many young children can be seen nightly wondering aimlessly.

(12) Too many children are abused sexually when in these vulnerable situations.

(13) Too many children live in fear and have no sense of worth and security to simply be children. Parenting is a great challenge and requires patience, sacrifice, dedication, commitment, and love. Most parents are overwhelmed by their daily demands and in the performance of their duties as parents. This points to the importance of the extended family, as well as the support of the wider society on a whole.

It serves no useful purpose to talk about what used to be. We need to take steps to right a horrible path before us. This we must do collectively and individually.

To this end:

- We must make our homes child friendly.
- Fathers must make every effort to bond with all their children.
- Parents must be held legally responsible for their children.
- Parents must put an end to animosity

towards each other and have respectful relationships for each other, even when not living together.

- Adults who abuse our children must be severely punished.
- We need to create child friendly neighborhoods, especially in challenging areas of the city.
- Our leaders must have greater vision in town planning and creating more open spaces for recreational purposes.
- Adult Volunteers are needed to mentor our youths.
- Churches and all NGO's must work towards harnessing the wealth of our young for the greater good.
- We must have a meaningful sexual educational program in all our schools.
- Our Educational Systems must become more relevant to the needs of the wider society - helping to create discipline, creative thinkers.
- Our homes must become safe and secure for our children
- We must encourage wholeness, family values and attitudes.
- The extended Family and neighborhoods must take interest in our

children and provide support and care.

- We need volunteers to make better use of our church and school buildings that are locked up most of the time.

The task may seem daunting but it is critical that we seek to reach all our children. Let not the so-called experts, who have never reared a child, nor had to face such challenging experiences, tell us what to do, as we battle to rescue our children.

Help them to grow up in a secure, loving, caring environment. Where they will have the opportunity to be children: to live out their dreams and hope. Rescuing one child at a time is the answer. No child must be discarded or disrespected. He/she must be made to feel wanted, loved, valued and secured.

The curfew speaks to a larger social issue that we cannot run away from: parental responsibility and social moral decay of the wider society. It allows personal responsibility and making choices for the greater good of families and society. It is never too late to begin, today!

## A Look At The Political Scene In Cayo Central

By: Ray Auxillou, Hillview, Santa Elena Town, Cayo



The two major party candidates for the Cayo Central West elective representative seat seem to be contested by two very nice guys. Mario Castellanos is running for the PUP. He is the incumbent and then there is Rene Montero who is running for the UDP. The NRP, headed by Cornelius Dueck, a Mennonite running on religious Christian party fundamentalism has been putting signs up around the area and has everybody curious: who is their party candidate? There is no sign of any other third party candidates advertising and visiting voters in this District, at least that I know of.

We haven't seen Mario out here in our Hillview area for nearly a year. He did get a water line completed to some house lots on the north side of the hill, which were highly appreciated by residents.

The waterline project had been promised for over six years by the PUP and area residents had to do without water access until last Fall.

This promises to be a close race. As Mario has been unable to do much during his term, because of the financial problems caused by his party leadership.

Rene, the new guy in this competition for the UDP, is moving ahead of Mario

in the vote getting it seems. Though Rene is a new UDP representative for the area, he is moving ahead aggressively. He has assisted over 300 campesinos and Permanent Resident citizens who qualify for citizenship after their over five years of residency to get their citizenship applications in process.

Currently he is running these people who cannot afford the fees for citizenship, HIV and medical tests, plus the fees for police reports, photographs and JP signatures around in his vehicle and helping them do the paper work.

A very smart move on his part and I forecast that the election between the PUP and UDP is going to be tight in this area. Especially when only 20 votes sometimes can be the difference between winning and losing.

Traditionally Cayo West are SWING VOTERS and tend to vote for the best judged candidate, irrespective of party connections, or national influence.

I hear Rene Montero is a successful businessman and since I met him yesterday, find him impressive. But then Mario of the PUP is also a very nice guy.

Unfortunately, Mario doesn't seem to work his constituency much and the financial scandals and waste of over a billion and a half dollars in shenanigans by his party leadership cabal, have left him with no ability, or resources to have done infra-structure things for his constituency.

Most people feel it is time for a change! We need culverts and street work out here in Hillview and there is a big argument between the UDP

Town Council who claim Hillview is a central government DFC project and their responsibility and the PUP who are silent, but flat broke, having apparently thrown away the next thirty years of government revenues already and lack the party financial management skills to look after their area representative's constituency. Can nice guy Mario overcome his PUP party deficiencies through personality alone?

Like most people out here in Cayo Central West, I look to hear more from the NRP who have put up signs all over and to meet their representative, whoever it is and we also hope to have more vote choices from another fourth party, if the Independents can put their power plays and greed aside and form one national party.

I know one thing, if the NRP run on a platform of mixing religion and government they won't get my vote! Got no time for religious nuts and liars of any persuasion.

Everybody out here knows ITZAM NA created our Universe and without the Sun God, KINICH AHAU, life on our planet Earth and in Central Cayo West, out here would not be possible. Anybody who has to go around SELLING their European, or Middle Eastern religious beliefs door to door, is a phoney, a liar and a cheat! You can't elect a political representative based on religion and get fair service from your government.

Civil wars have been going on for two thousand Years over separating government from religion. We don't need that issue here, the issue is good government and good fiscal management of government revenues.



# NEWS FLASH — Truth IS stranger than fiction

IN GERMANY:

A German bus driver threatened to throw a 20-year-old sales clerk off his bus in the southern town of Lindau because he said she was too sexy, a newspaper reported Monday.

**“Suddenly he stopped the bus,”** the woman named Debora C. told Bild newspaper. **“He opened the door and shouted at me ‘Your cleavage is distracting me every time I look into my mirror and I can’t concentrate on the traffic. If you don’t sit somewhere else, I’m going to have to throw you off the bus.’”**

The woman, pictured in Bild wearing her snug-fitting summer clothes with the plunging neckline, said she moved to another seat but was humiliated by the bus driver.

A spokesman for the bus company defended the driver.

**“The bus driver is allowed to do that and he did the right thing,”** the spokesman said. **“A bus driver cannot be distracted because it’s a danger to the safety of all the passengers.”**

ALSO IN GERMANY:

A German man who startled his neighbours when he hurled his computer out of the window in the middle of the night, was let off for disturbing the peace by police who sympathised with his technical frustrations.

Police in the northern city of Hanover said they would not press charges after responding to calls made by residents in an apartment block who were woken by a loud crash in the early hours of Saturday.

Officers found the street and pavement covered in electronic parts and discovered who the culprit was.

Asked what had driven him to the night-time outburst, the 51-year-old man said he had simply got annoyed with his computer.

**“Who hasn’t felt like doing that?”** said a police spokesman.

While escaping any official sanction the man was made to clear up the debris.

IN THE SOUTHREN UNITED STATES:

A volunteer firefighter in south-central Kentucky was arrested after allegedly making false 911 calls because he was bored, police said.

Joshua Matthew Garmon, 18, a member of the East Barren Volunteer Fire Department, was charged Sunday with nine counts of falsely reporting an incident, according to the Barren County Sheriff’s Department.

The false calls came from cell phones that don’t work anymore except for emergency 911 calls, Detective Rusty Anderson said.

Anderson said Garmon allegedly made false reports of fires and wrecks with injuries because he wanted to go on fire runs.

IN ITALY:

Most people would agree that miners have a tough job. Now an Italian trade union wants people such as barmen, hotel porters and even ballet dancers to be ranked alongside them.

As part of negotiations with the government over reforms to the pensions system, unions are pushing to widen the category of jobs officially considered **“arduous”** so such workers can retire earlier than people in less stressful occupations.

Currently the list is restricted to traditionally tough-sounding jobs like mining and deep-sea diving, but to soften the blow from plans to increase the minimum retirement age from the current 57, unions want the list expanded.

Luigi Angeletti, head of one of the three main unions in talks with the government, told Corriere della Sera daily that any job which has nightshifts should qualify, including nurses, police and hotel porters.

Primary school teachers should also be on the list. **“I’d like to see you keep control of 25 wild children — what a bunch of stress,”** he said.

The life of an Italian barman was not all flirting with the customers, he added. **“A barman can’t choose. If he has 10 people in front of him who want a coffee, he can’t go and smoke a cigarette, he has to speed up his work.”**

The plight of Italy’s ballet dancers was also a **“serious problem”**, Angeletti said, saying that the 300 of them employed in Italy should be allowed to retire at 45.

The pensions negotiations are proving one of the toughest challenges Italy’s Prime Minister Romano Prodi has faced since being elected a year ago as he tries to square demands from the left to soften reform plans with the need to reduce the cost of pensions to the state.

ALSO IN ITALY:

Want to help fight global warming? Take off your tie, says the Italian health ministry.

It has urged employers to let their staff dress casually at work in the summer so the air conditioning can be turned down.

**“Taking your tie off immediately lowers the body temperature by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius,”** the ministry said in a statement. **“Allowing a more sensible use of air conditioning that yields electricity savings and protects the environment.”**

It called on all public and private offices to let employees wear no tie during heatwaves like the one that has brought Africa-like temperatures to many parts of Italy this week.

The move echoes a similar initiative from Italy’s biggest oil group, ENI, which told its staff earlier this month they need not wear a tie at work.

Tie makers, however, were left hot under the collar.

**“Italy confirms that it is a strange country,”** Flavio Cima said in a letter to financial daily Il Sole 24 Ore under the headline: **“I, tie maker, am responsible for global warming.”**

**“We can now happily continue with our lifestyle, using cars, consuming fuel, heating and cooling our homes at leisure. On one condition: we should not wear a tie while we do so,”** he wrote. **“I should have listened to my friends and become an oil producer instead.”**

Italy is one of the European Union’s worst performers on the pollution front and is among the EU countries expected to exceed their greenhouse gas emission targets.

IN CHINA:

Beijing television channels should ban sexist and sexually suggestive adverts during the summer vacation to protect children, state broadcaster CCTV said Monday, citing experts and parents.

Explicit commercials that promote breast enlargements, women’s corsets and cosmetics and unproven medical treatments are common on local stations.

**“Advertisements that contain sexual hints or flirtatious language are easily seen on some local television channels,”** CCTV said on its Web site (www.cctv.com.cn).

In one breast enlargement commercial, a woman with small breasts walks by while a man is heard saying **“too small to be good.”** Another woman with bigger breasts shows up and the man shouts “bigger is better!”

**“These kinds of adverts reflect discrimination and disrespect for women ... which could mislead teenagers,”** youth expert Zong Chunshan was quoted as saying.

Many parents would rather send their children to summer camp or sports training during the summer holiday than

let them stay at home and watch television, CCTV said.

**“My daughter told me that she would not eat cakes anymore, because if so she would not have a good body and boys would not like her,”** a parent was quoted as saying.

China has been trying to clean up commercials on its plethora of local — albeit state-run — television stations, especially those advertising miracle cures or ways to attract the opposite sex.

IN BOLIVIA:

The winner of a Bolivian beauty contest for indigenous women was stripped of her title moments after her coronation when judges noticed she was wearing false plaits, organizers said Saturday.

The Miss Cholita Pacena pageant, held in the Andean city of La Paz late Friday, seeks to instill pride in indigenous women who choose to wear the traditional dress of wide skirt, bowler hat and long plaited hair.

But doubts over whether the winner was a genuine Cholita Pacena — the name for Indian women from La Paz — led judges to strip her of her victor’s sash and call for a rerun, said pageant organizer Walter Gomez from La Paz’s city government.

The judges **“disqualified the winner because they realized she didn’t have plaits, that the plaits she had were false,”** he told Reuters. **“Having short hair means they don’t live like Cholitas.”**

Friday’s contest was a far cry from the mainstream beauty contests that are popular in Bolivia, in which the South American nation’s indigenous majority are under-represented.

Not a bikini in sight, the toughest test for the 14 contestants was making a speech in the native Aymara language to prove their Cholita credentials.

It is not the first time scandal has hit the pageant. In 2004, the winner caused a stir after her coronation by saying she did not normally wear traditional dress.

## OWN A PIECE OF TROPICAL PARADISE ON THE MACAL RIVER

Two houses on a double lot, over 20,000 sq.ft., with established banana, lime and mango trees. Beautiful leafy setting on the Macal River in Santa Elena with river views from your hammock and steps set in riverbank leading to a private dock.

Main house has four bedrooms plus a separate two-room building for guests or an office, studio or business. Easy walk to San Ignacio’s market, banks, post office, police, French and German bakeries, tour guides, restaurants, internet cafes, doctors, dentists, schools and hospitals.

In the preferred, popular Cayo District, the highlands of Belize, the temperatures are cooler up here with nice afternoon breezes.

Possibly the only tropical country with no mosquitoes! Belize has hundreds of species of birds, major Maya temples, the world's only jaguar reserve, forests, and jungle. You can paddle kayaks through mysterious caves, try rafting adventures, and ride horses.

The Caribbean Sea, island cayes, and magnificent barrier reef are only two hours away for diving, snorkeling, sailing, fishing and heavenly relaxation.

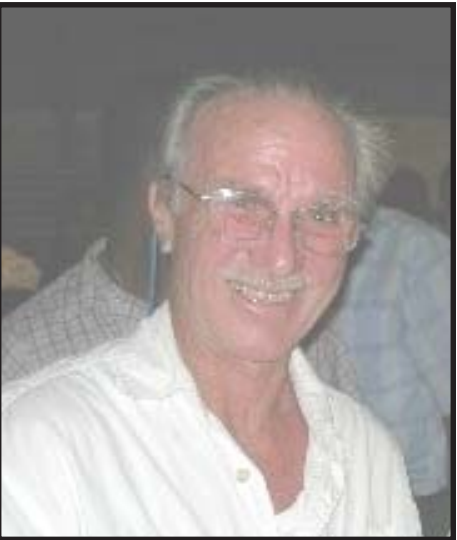
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# TOLEDO NEWS

## Rt. Hon. Said Musa and Hon. Michael Espat Support Eco Park Plan

By: William “Chet” Schmidt



The Prime Minister; Right Honorable Said Musa, accompanied by Honorable Michel Espat, Honorable Marcel Mes, Honorable Florencio Marin, The Mayor of Punta Gorda Town Carlos Galvez and Mr. Henry Usher Secretary General of the PUP, held a massive meeting in the Sports Center in Punta Gorda Town on Friday July 12th.

The Prime Minister, in answer to a question from the floor, asking what is being done about the lack of employment, replied, ***“Toledo has great potential for ecotourism development”*** and looking directly at me said ***“I see people in this crowd who have very good ideas on how to develop this potential. I have asked Minister Marin to support them.”***

The next morning I spoke to Minister Michael Espat, Area Representative for Toledo East who told me the Prime Minister had brought the Toledo Peoples’ Eco Park up at the last cabinet meeting and had in fact asked Minister Marin to help. Minister Espat said he would also ask Minister Marin to support the plan.

This week we sent Minister Marin an update on the proposed Six Day Eco Cultural Nature Conservation Tour, with maps and suggestions on how we believe he can help us to proceed.

At the June monthly meeting of the Toledo Branch of the Belize Tourism Industry Association a letter from the Punta Gorda Conservation was read asking for a letter of support. Later members and supporters were sent by email a copy of the INdependent Reformer article, ***“Toledo Cacao Fest a Smash Success”*** Friday, June 29th 2007 page 8, and two follow up letters outlining the Six Day Eco Cultural Conservation Tour Package and listing the following potential benefits.

(#1) The Six Day Eco Cultural/ Nature Conservation Tour will bring more visitors to Toledo.

(#2) The program will help the non business owners as well as the business owners.

(#3) The program will also help to protect the surrounding endangered flora and fauna.

(#4) The watershed for Punta Gorda Town and Forest Home is also protected with the program.

(#5) The Toledo House of Culture/ Museum will help to strengthen the arts, music, dance, drama and culture and be another popular attraction.

(#6) The Rice Mill Plaza can be designed to include a traditional Maya market where the arts and crafts producers can sell their products rather than in the doorways of our hotels and restaurants.

(#7) The success of this pilot project can encourage our people and the funders to try the rural part of the plan.

The letters explained the importance of the Belize Tourism Industry Association’s support for the project, and asked for a letter of recommendation for the concept. If the members would support our poor people’s plans and efforts, the president of the Toledo branch would be welcome to be a member of the management committee of the PGCC and to be part of a video documentary being made to show what the district has and how the people support our

plans for the responsible development of the tourism potential.

Unfortunately repeated requests went unanswered while numerous other issues that we brought up at the meeting were addressed in the preceding months emails, no mention was made of the Punta Gorda Conservation Committee’s plans or request for a letter of support.

Tomorrow night will be the first monthly meeting since the letter was presented at last month’s meeting and the two follow-up letters were sent over the e-mail. While it is a shame the BTIA’s support was not included in the video documentary, we still have hopes that the members will bring it up and provide the requested letter of support for our people’s plans to share with the BTIA membership the benefits of responsible ecotourism in their monthly meeting tomorrow night.

As the article on the Cacao Fest pointed out, if the wealthy and powerful will support and help the less powerful, working together we can eliminate poverty in Toledo, especially with the Right Honourable Prime Minister, the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources and our two Area Representative’s support.

### VIDEOS TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF TOLEDO:

Last month, a highly professional team of videographers spent three and a half weeks and eighty hours of videotape interviewing citizens of Toledo in the rural villages and Punta Gorda Town. They plan to spend the next three months editing it into three separate videos.

(#1) A general documentary on the Toledo District flora and fauna, geography, and people 25 years after gaining independents from England and

making the transition from British Honduras to the new nation of Belize.

(#2) A promotional video on the Toledo Ecotourism Association’s award winning Village Guesthouse Eco Trail Program.

(#3) A documentary of the development of the proposed Toledo Peoples Eco Park Plan, as told by different Belizeans, who have been involved with it for the last twenty years. It’s hoped that this third video documentary will motivate those interested in funding holistic eco development to end poverty. To help the rich and poor people who care, to create replicable examples that will help other peoples in need to use systems thinking and people power in eco development to rapidly move from their poverty to prosperity.

The budget for the three documentaries is \$100,000 U.S. dollars. The producer/director has made over 320 documentaries; many have been translated into seventeen languages. It is expected that the videos on Toledo will be broadcast worldwide.

Once the rich natural and human resources of Toledo are seen and people learn how they can be sustainably used by and for the people of Toledo, one question the video on the proposed eco park is expected to generate, is why didn’t the private sector, the NGOs and the government support the people’s plan? Some with greater understanding, education and experience may not have to ask.

One motto of the rich is, ***“Knowledge is power; knowledge shared is power lost.”*** One motto of the Toledo Peoples Eco Park is, ***“Relevant knowledge is power; Appropriate knowledge shared is power gained.”*** Power to the People.

# Nature’s Way Guesthouse

In Punta Gorda

## Welcome To Nature’s Way Guesthouse

Clean, Safe, Affordable,  
Central Location Sea Front View & Breeze  
Single \$23BZD, Double \$33BZD,  
Triple \$48BZD  
Get off bus at Catholic Church on  
Main & Church Streets, walk down  
hill 75 yards to Guesthouse.



# TEEN PAGE

## The Trip

By Julia Heusner

Before school closed in June, everyone was given a letter asking us if we would like to join the Hugh Parkey Foundation for Marine Awareness and Education to meet some students from Virginia. My principal said that since there were only 5 spaces and about 40 kids got the letter,

the first 5 people who handed the letters back get to go. Well I was eager to go so I handed in my letter the very next morning. The trip was going to be in the 20<sup>th</sup> of July.

So this past week, the big day arrived. As I got to the Radisson dock where the boat was waiting for me, I looked for my friends. I noticed, Dave, one of my former classmates. I ran up to him and we started to talk, then



"We don't have coke light! We love it!" says one of the participants from Virginia



Julia (L) and the teacher from Virginia (R)

some more of my friends started to arrive.

On the way to Spanish Caye, we stopped to look at some dolphins.

They were beautiful! When we arrived they took us to meet the students from the US.

They all seemed nice, we talked about our different types of food we have, and they told us they love our "coke light" they say they don't have that in the U.S. they have other types of coke but not "coke light".

We played some introduction games and said something about ourselves. After that we were taken to the manatee museum where we learned about the different types of manatees. It

was all fascinating. During lunch we discussed the differences about our schools. We played a few games of volleyball. We also swam for a little while and some of us got a tan.

At the end we all signed a clear sheet, just writing some silly things and drawings and our names so that the teacher from Virginia would not forget any of us. In the boat trip back we all laughed about the great trip we had and the memories we would not forget.

So if you ever get invited to anything sponsored by the Hugh Parkey Foundation, or get the chance to meet some teens from another country, go! You won't be sorry.

## PARENTS

Parents, if your school used BRC's books last year, it is because the teachers believe that children learned well using BRC's books. How did your children do using BRC's Reading?

The Government has threatened schools and teachers if they ask parents to buy BRC's books. If your school asked you to purchase BRC's books in June (past), they cannot be punished when GoB gives an order in July (present). Teachers want to use BRC's books because they know that the books help your children learn.

If you want your children to use BRC's books, and it will not be a burden, you can buy BRC's books. The school will use the books to teach your children. You will be assured that your children will get a good foundation.

If you want your children to use BRC's books, and you cannot afford to buy them, BRC will give the books free. BRC is struggling for those children who need more than one year to learn to read using all 72 phonics symbols.

BRC Printing Ltd.



TOPICAL

TIDBITS

**Undersea exploitation**

Belizeans were surprised to hear of a death in southern waters of a worker from an oil rig. And just as surprised to hear about the offshore operation.

While all eyes are on Spanish Lookout and Temash Sarstoon reserve,

Tourism Operations *reportedly* on the market

Among the hotels and lodges and other tourism operations reportedly for sale, or recently sold, in Belize are the following, with reported asking prices. Additions, deletions and corrections invited. Lan Sluder [www.belizefirst.com](http://www.belizefirst.com)

**CAYO**

**San Ignacio Resort Hotel**, San Ignacio, US\$2,500,000.

**Mopan River Resort**, Benque Viejo, US\$2,850,000

**Roaring River Lodge**, US\$250,000

**Inn at Xunantunich**, Succotz, US\$375,000 (with terms)

**Casa Maya**, San Ignacio, US\$1,400,000

**Black Rock Lodge**, US\$1,100,000 (*SOLD*)

**Parrot’s Nest**, Bullet Tree, US\$550,000

**Royal Mayan Resort**, Benque Viejo, US\$1,750,000

**Warrie Head Ranch & Lodge**, near Georgeville, US\$1,500,000

**Windy Hills Lodge**, US\$2,500,000

**Touch of Class**, Santa Elena, US\$250,000

**PLACENCIA**

**Miller’s Landing**, US\$1,500,000

**Manatee Inn**, Placencia Village, US\$375,000

**Mango’s of Maya Beach**

**Serenity Resort**, Placencia, US\$2,000,000 (*SOLD*)

**Singing Sands**, Maya Beach, US\$890,000

**Luba Hati**, Seine Bight, US\$3,095,000 (*SOLD*)

"God Is Good" says Canon Flowers

**By: Rev’d Canon LeRoy Flowers**

The Trinidad Suite Chorale is on a two week tour of the Anglican Diocese of Belize.

Last Sunday evening they hosted a concert for the Parish in our renovated upper parish hall in Belize City in aid of our outreach ministry.

On Sunday July 22, they performed at the Bliss Centre for the Performing Arts.

Last week the Anglican diocese also hosted a father-daughter team from the USA who were in the country to assist the parish in its outreach ministry. \$20,000 has also been raised toward a project of \$25.000 and the parish contributed the difference and

it seems overseas partners are now exploring for oil over our seas. Get those block permits while they are hot and going at “*sprang head*” prices.

A new UDP government will no doubt charge more to exploit local resources. Condolences to the family of the man

**Green Parrot**, Maya Beach

**Nautical Inn**, Seine Bight, US\$1,700,000

**Sugar Reef** (*SOLD*)

**Macovy Blues Hotel & Restaurant**, reduced to US\$399,000 (with terms)

**Mariposa Beach Suites**, Placencia (*SOLD*)

**Maya Breeze Inn**, US\$1,100,000 (*SOLD*)

**Rum Point Inn** (*SOLD*)

**Soulshine** US\$550,000 (*SOLD*)

**HOPKINS AREA**

**Kanantik** US\$10,000,000

**Toucan Sittee** (*SOLD*)

**Jaguar Reef Lodge**, US\$4,705,000

**BELIZE CITY AREA**

**El Chiclero Inn**, Burrell Boom, US\$995,000

**JB’s Restaurant and Cabanas**, Western Highway, US\$300,000

**Howler Monkey Lodge**, Bermudian Landing, US\$250,000

**AMBERGRIS CAYE**

**Pedro’s Backpacker Inn**, US\$660,000

**Salamander Hideaway**, US\$1,700,000

**Rubie’s II** (not original Rubie’s), San Pedro, US\$399,000

**Corona del Mar**, San Pedro, US\$2,700,000

**Lili’s**, San Pedro, US\$1,500,000

**Royal Palm**, US\$6,000,000

**Seven Seas Resort/Timeshare**, US\$1,950,000

**Copacabana**, US\$375,000

some labor to conduct works in Lemonal.

This included a fully furnished kitchen, a well and installation of a pump which now provides running water for the school. The church building was also painted.

God is good and we are looking for another school-mission to assist in the coming year..

THE MAN WHO DOES NOT READ HAS NO ADVANTAGE OVER THE MAN WHO CANNOT READ

who thought he was getting a good job to provide for them.

Who is looking out for the workers in Belize’s newest industry? Is it time for them to join the Belize Energy Workers Union? Bet those shrimp trawlers will get chased out real quick if oil is discovered in those waters.

**Grand Tour**

It seems the leaders of both the PUP and the UDP were on pilgrimage to the

**COROZAL**

**Hokíol Kíin Guesthouse**, Corozal Town, US\$598,000

**Las Palmas**, Corozal Town, US\$2,900,000

**TJ’s/International Cozy Corners**, US\$399,000

**CAYE CAULKER**

**Seaside Cabanas**, US\$2,400,000

**Belize Odyssey Resort**, Caye Caulker, US\$3,500,000

**Tropics Hotel**, Caye Caulker, US\$995,000

**Barefoot Caribe** (formerly Sobre Las Olas), Caye Caulker, US\$1,800,000

**Lorraine’s Guest House**, US\$450,000

**Bel-Isle Condos** (unfinished), US\$600,000

**TOLEDO**

**Sea Front Inn**, Punta Gorda, US\$1,200,000

**Tranquility Lodge**, Jacinto, US\$240,000

**OFFSHORE CAYES**

**Blackbird Caye Resort**, Turneffe Atoll, US\$8,000,000

**Slickrock Adventures camp**, Long Caye, Gloverís Atoll, US\$1,400,000 (doesnít include island real estate)

**Caye Chapel Island Resort**, Caye Chapel, somewhere north of US\$50 million

Lan Sluder

[www.belizefirst.com](http://www.belizefirst.com)



southern and western regions over the past couple of weeks.

Elections must be imminent for them to deign to visit remote villages and far flung towns. Perhaps Belizeans were satisfied with rudimentary water systems and rural electrification projects, ferries and one-room community centers before... but nowadays? It’s going to take a lot more than rudimentary anything to get the support from this increasingly sophisticated electorate. Biggest mistake either party could make is to take the rural populace for granted. Just look at the village and municipal elections for proof that the countryside is not satisfied with old time politricks.

Political Intimidation, PUP-Style

The new improved PUP are non-stop at their political intimidation games against the smaller parties. Mind games galore. True story: in the middle of a strategy meeting the phone of one of the third party leaders rings.

Who is on the line? A convicted murderer who had hacked the party leader’s brother to death asking if the leader would give his support during a hearing for his early release—after serving only a quarter of his sentence. It destroyed the meeting and the party leader’s focus as they had hoped. How cold can Kolbe be?

**Positively Vile**

Ah for the days when government hacks got nice offices and fancy rides whenever they needed to be transferred due to incompetence, and not their own radio shows... Citco has actually had to designate an entire crew to clean up the filth emanating from the negative vibrations set off every morning in studio off Coney Drive. Didn’t take these folks long to veer off their initial promise to highlight the “*positive achievements*” of the PUP. Fortunately the morning listenership knows all the action is still on KREM and the juice is on WAVE, and every once in a while there is actually someone interesting on LOVE. Although, to be fair, someone must be listening in Belize City; because, the circulation of the INdependent has skyrocketed and we keep getting calls “*Dey mi di taak bout unnu again! Wey I kud get dis week paper? I waan si wey gat den soh upset!*” No such thing as bad publicity.

**Small Ax, Big Tree**

What’s up ole youth Said? You couldn’t wait another week or two for Ms. Merlene to finish the job? You really think the foreign development banks don’t read the internet news, after all these scandals, and would be fooled by a one man hand job? Or have you just lost patience with G- man and want to get those files to the DPP? GG isn’t about to take the rap for all a unnu.



# Ethics In Government - Plank No. 8

It was our sincere intention last week to publish the remaining two components in the set of 8 Planks for better governance. However, a miscommunication occurred in the rush to meet printing deadlines resulting in the reproduction of the first 6 Planks along with Plank No. 7 and a part of Plank No. 8.

In an effort to make amends, we now proceed with publishing the final component, being Plank #8, in its entirety.

Just to recap, we remind you of the various headings of the first seven Planks as follows:

**No. 1:** Granting of powers to Local Governments.

**No. 2:** New requirements of elected officials.

**No. 3:** Implementing Recommendations of the Political Reform Commission.

**No. 4:** Planning and Environmental protection.

**No. 5:** Economic Development of Belize.

**No. 6:** Support Constitutional Amendments.

**No. 7:** Foreign Policy and now this week we move into Plank No. 8 dealing with Ethics in government but before doing so let us also remind you that this document was prepared through consensus by a group of Belizeans from all political parties in Belize with some suggestions offered by friends of Belize through the Belize culture and polisci lists.

This document was prepared in the hope that all political parties in Belize would adopt most or all of these ideas in their own manifesto (or political platform) in upcoming elections. The concepts are not meant to be in support of or against any political party.

Some of the planks may have already been addressed to some degree by certain existing laws in Belize, however, the purpose in listing these concepts is that they show where improvements in these laws can be made or better enforced. They therefore show what should be important to the political party in the process of making reforms to the

constitution and laws of Belize in the future.

It is also hoped that the platform will serve as a mechanism to initiate public discussions that will lead to improvements in these planks.

This document is for public information and there is no copyright claimed. It is hoped that any additions or deletions to this document will be so marked to show the clear difference between any new version and the original document.

## Plank No. 8 Ethics in Government

Whereas this party will insist upon the highest of ethical standards in the operations of government, and Whereas this party will deal honestly with the citizens of Belize, and Whereas every elected official and every government employee has a duty to report violations of ethical standards, and Whereas knowingly failing to report a violation is a violation of the Code in itself, and Whereas this party shall insure that a code of ethics will immediately be put in place with the following elements as a minimum, and Whereas failure to abide by the newly established code of ethics by any elected, appointed, or other government employee will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from elected office, appointed office, or employment with the Government of Belize at municipal, District, or national level; the following shall be the minimum standards of the **“Government of Belize Code of Ethics”**:

1) It is the intention of this party that the Code of Ethics will be applied even-handedly and that all employees and elected and appointed officials shall be treated fairly. Elected officials, appointed officials, and government employees shall be guided in all their relations by the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

2) Belize officials and employees must avoid any action, investment, interest or association that might interfere, or be thought to interfere, with their independent exercise of judgment such as:

a) Have a material ownership interest in any business enterprise that does business with the government.

(b) Pursue outside of his or her employment or elected office any business opportunity that could be considered an opportunity that came to the person in the course of his or her position with the Belize government.

(c) Elected officials, appointed officials, and government employees and their immediate family members should not do through third parties things that this section of the code would otherwise prohibit. Questions on potential conflicts shall be resolved by the **“Ethics Committee.”**

(d) A standing committee known as the **“Ethics Committee”** shall be created and shall be comprised of 5 members of the National Assembly ( 2 appointed by the Prime Minister; 2 appointed by the opposition leader; and 1 appointed by the majority vote of the Senate). This **“Ethics Committee”** shall have the responsibility of oversight of ethics in Belize Government.

3) **Gifts** - The government must avoid the appearance of an improper relationship with current or prospective vendors. Therefore, neither government officials nor employees of the government nor any member of the person’s immediate family may accept, directly or indirectly any gift, favor or entertainment that can reasonably be perceived as an attempt to influence government business.

4) **Copyrighted Material and Software** – The Government of Belize will not allow employees to make copies of legally protected works including software, database information, and other copyrighted materials.

5) **E-mail** – Employees are prohibited from using E-mail or other means of communications in a way that conceals the user’s identity, violates the law, or distributes or saves pornographic or offensive material. The unauthorized use of another employee’s password or making use of other unauthorized means to access information such as database information is strictly prohibited.

6) **Harassment** – This Party is committed to maintaining a bias-free environment where harassment is prohibited. This Party will not tolerate harassment of any kind by government officials or staff including sexual harassment.

7) **Discrimination** - This party will train, promote and compensate individuals based on job-related qualifications and abilities, without regard to race, color, religion, natural origin, gender, political affiliation, age or disability.

8) **Drug-Free Workplace** – The use, sale, possession, negotiations for, or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol on the job or on government property will be prohibited.

The abuse or improper use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs or other controlled substances will also be also prohibited.

9) **Unlawful Payments** – It shall be illegal for government officials and employees to receive payments from companies or individuals in order to provide special treatment or consideration with respect to any government service or transaction.

10) **Whistleblowing** – It shall be the responsibility of government staff and elected and appointed officials to report their concerns about serious misconduct occurring within the government of Belize including violations of the **“Government of Belize Code of Ethics.”**

The Government of Belize will not tolerate the punishment or unfair treatment of any government employee or official who reports concerns in good faith or who participates in an investigation of any such reports. Retaliation against an individual for reporting in good faith any violation of the Code of Ethics or other serious offense is a serious violation of the Code of Ethics that will subject the violator to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including the termination of employment or loss of public office. A fraud investigation unit and fraud hotline shall be established. The fraud investigation unit will report regularly to the **“Ethics Committee”**.

11) **Nepotism** – Nepotism is generally defined as giving special favors to relatives. This party will not tolerate nepotism within government operations and will enact special legislation to address the organizational structure of the GOB and detailed rules relative to this issue.

12) **Government Hiring Practice** – This party shall insure that every position in the government of Belize is properly advertised with a detailed job description, salary range, education and experience requirements, and other appropriate information about the government position. This party will insure that government managers are properly trained in proper hiring practices. This party shall also insure that promotions are based on qualifications and experience with proper documentation and in accordance with a new and improved set of Human Resource Standards.

13) All elected, appointed, and government staff shall be required to read and understand the new **“Government of Belize Code of Ethics”** that will be written in detail to include the standards above and other related standards. After reading the document, all elected, appointed, and government staff shall be required to sign that they have read this document and will be given a copy of the document for their personal use.

# FOR SALE

Industrial lot measuring 0.86 acres for sale in Belmopan, not far from the Constitution Drive, near Builders asking **\$87,500.00US** obo, residential lot measuring 92ft x 125ft in the Orchid Garden extension, Belmopan, near the US Embassy Residence selling for **\$30,000.00US**; other commercial land also in Belmopan Starting from **\$30,000.00US** for info please call 600-2499





## SPANISH LOOKOUT .... (Con't from page 1)

*well, because they prefer to resolve problems through discussion, as compared to the confrontational character of a court room. But, there is nothing to arbitrate here. It is a simple matter of defaults that must be cured. BNE has failed to meet the terms of their agreements, and Spanish Lookout is simply saying, before you go any further, please clean up the mess you have already made. That is hardly unreasonable."*

When asked about the two big problems, money owed by BNE and the production not being measured, Cavanaugh said, "Look, I am an oil man and the financial affairs of Spanish Lookout are their business. If Allen Reimer wants to disclose those details he will, but don't ask me. Measuring production is another story though. Royalties, overriding royalty interest, production sharing, taxes, and participation interests are all determined as a part of or percentage of the total measured production."

"Our contracts require that the production be measured at the well site by accurate industry standard verifiable systems. However so far, there are NO verifiable meters to be read. BNE simply tells everyone what they have produced. And BNE refuses to install meters. Spanish Lookout has not been paid any money for royalties or participation

## JUNIOR THE JAGUAR THRILLS ZOO VISITORS!!

"Junior" is a star at The Belize Zoo. His mother arrived as part of the zoo's "Problem Jaguar Rehab Program", she was a confirmed and repeated cattle killer.

Weak physical condition most likely contributed to her becoming a "problem jaguar", however, what zoo staff did not know, is that she arrived pregnant!!

Three months after her "check in" at "rehab", her cub was born. What a surprise for everyone!

To the dismay of zoo staff, the mother rejected her youngster (this often happens in captivity), so "Junior" was adopted by all, and lovingly raised.

because such payments are related to the actual production and there is no way to know what that production was. GOB could be losing millions here and they don't seem to be aware or are not concerned about it. This is absolutely ridiculous!"

We found out that Prime Minister Musa came to Spanish Lookout last week to meet with Community representatives and discuss the oil issues and problems. Two days later, a large group of Landowners met to develop a proclamation apparently to present Musa. We expect there will be more interesting developments about Belizean oil very soon.

## TOO WILD FOR WORDS!



When "Junior" reached 4 months, he was put into the main part of the zoo, and due to his fondness for people, readily appears to delight his visitors.

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# Editorial - STAR Newspaper

Edition No. 119, dated Sunday, 15th July 2007 -  
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**The Crumbs Are Beginning To Fall**

Providing free textbooks for all primary school students is an undertaking that is long overdue.

The question is; why did government wait until its back is against the wall and with only a few months before the next round of general election, to push this 6.5 million dollar bit of crumbs off their table?

It was the PUP minister and area representative for the Lake Independence division, **Cordel Hyde**, who, in the House of Representatives during the 2005 budget debate, told his prime minister and indeed the nation of Belize, that prior to 1998 (under the UDP administration) **Barry Bowen** was paying 25 million dollars annually in excise duty on beer and soft drinks, when the PUP came to office Bowen’s taxes was reduced to a measly 4 million dollars.

In this one instance alone, government gave up 21 million dollars in annual collectable taxes. *“I say return the tax to what it was prior to 1998”* said Cordel Hyde, but like several other things before, his call simply fell on deaf ears.

At a cost of 6.5 million dollars per year to fund the textbook program, for every year that government would have charged Bowen its fair share of taxes, government could have comfortably funded the program for three years with 1.5 million dollars to spare.

The program gets even more affordable when we are told that the initial investment is 6.5 million dollars but that it will take less than 2 million dollars each year to maintain the program. Therefore, when we do the math, the 21 million dollars collectable taxes from Bowen alone could have financed the initial 6.5 million dollar investment with 14.5 million dollars to spare which, at less than 2 million dollars per year, could have maintained the program for an additional 7 years still with over ½ a million dollars to spare.

The bottom line is that if Bowen alone was paying its rightful taxes, the government could have not only provided free textbooks but rather free education for every single primary school aged child across this nation. On

that basis alone such an administration would have stood a fair chance of being victorious at the polls.

It’s unfortunate that the economic situation in Belize has reached the point where the majority of parents could care less if the textbooks are up to standard. The bottom line is that they are getting these books for **FREE** and as such they will not be required to expend scarce financial resources to purchase new next books for their primary school aged children. It will therefore be left up to the teachers to make the textbooks work or face the consequences of being labeled incompetent or outstanding depending particularly on the results of next year’s Primary School Examination.

For some unknown reason it never ceases to amaze ordinary folks how politicians almost always take us for granted as with only a few months before a general election, they begin to brush the crumbs off the table so that the masses may feast.

Why is it that after taxing and squeezing a people for so long, politicians can spring up at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, scatter a few crumbs and expect the people to forget the suffering they have endured over previous years?

Why are they issuing textbooks at the 11 hour?

Why are they only now filling house lots for residents on the south side of Belize City?

Why is it that with only a few months before the expiration of government’s term in office, we are seeing them scrambling to fix a feeder road in San Antonio, Cayo?

How is it that after selling the houses of so many Belizeans, this government is only now, at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, subsidizing mortgage payments for poor Belizeans?

How is it that all of a sudden it dawned on the prime minister that he must visit and consult with the people of Belize on a nationwide tour?

Why is it that we don’t see the prime minister taking, for example, 2 weeks out of every year to undertake an *“Annual Prime Ministerial National Tour”*? In its stead, we have a prime minister embarking on a national

tour once every five years as the one currently in progress with just a few months left before general elections?

The results of the March 2006 municipal elections, coupled with those of the recent village councils, should serve as a wake up call for all politicians. It should serve to show them that the people will no longer be satisfied with these quick fixes.

The forgiving of DFC loans for thousands of Belizeans a few weeks before the municipal elections did not deter the people from voting against the party in government.

In the San Ignacio/Santa Elena scenario for example, with just three weeks remaining for the municipal elections, one major street in Santa Elena and another one in San Ignacio were quickly paved.

The people saw through the gimmick and voted against the party in government.

The people are seeing through these political gimmicks. Despite the handouts during this season the people have not forgotten that prior to the last

general election, the environmental tax was at 1% and that today it is now being charged at 2%, being a full 100% increase.

The people have not forgotten that prior to the last general election the Sales Tax was charged at 9% and that today it is not only at 10% but more like 19% because the initial 9% was never removed from consumer goods and services as was promised.

The people have not forgotten that prior to the last general election the price for a 100 lbs cylinder of butane was \$52 today it has doubled in price to over \$100 for the same product.

The people have not forgotten that prior to the last general election they were paying electricity at the rate of 21 cents per kilowatt hour and that today the very same product stands at 35 and 44 cents per kilowatt hour.

The people are seeing through these political gimmicks and hence the reason why the amount of money any political party spends during the campaign season will play no significant role in the outcome of an election as voters will take the goods, the services and the money that these unscrupulous politicians disperse during these critical months and vote for the candidate or individual who is truly committed to addressing their needs on a continuous basis instead of only at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour.

## INdependent Classifieds

### Needed

Mountain Bike Tour Operator wanted in Cayo with equipment. **Tel: 663-5580** Cayo Adventure Tours.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Need help

with cleaning, ironing, painting or other household chores at your Ladyville home? Then call me at **624-3652**. Reasonable rates, mature female.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Free Ads!

The INdependent Reformer gives you your first classified ad with us free of charge! After that only \$10 per advert per issue.

Ads must be

- 1) 20 words or less
- 2) photos must be jpeg or tiff formats only. Must be emailed, no disk pickup or drop off
- 3) business card - first run is free 2007, \$20 a run thereafter
- 4) All classified ads must be emailed to

[independent.newspaper.bz@gmail.com](mailto:independent.newspaper.bz@gmail.com) with cc to

[kheusner@yahoo.com](mailto:kheusner@yahoo.com)  
and checks to  
P.O. Box 2666,  
Belize City.

Please note: We must receive your ad by Friday at mid-day for inclusion in the following Tuesday issue.

### For Rent

A (2) bedroom flat located in King’s Park, Belize City \$800/month. One commercial building (4 offices, confernece room, reception area) in King’s Park \$1800.00/month.

\*\*\*\*\*

### For Sale

Computers \$800/each  
**Call: 223-1668 and 602-9182.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### Free international real estate and investment blog and podcast.

Go to <http://investtheworld.blogspot.com> as we travel the world for fun, investment and profit.

\*\*\*\*\*

**For Sale:** Home overlooking Sittee River w/1/3/acre. Info/photos at: <http://web.mac.com/nadjabblz> **609-5632** 3-5p.m. daily.

\*\*\*\*\*

### For Sale

Two Yamaha propellers:  
1) for a 115 Enduro (aluminum)  
2) for 200 - Stainless Steel - 19 pitch  
**ASKING BZ\$600 O.B.O**  
Call us at: **225-3520 600-1627 664-1627 671-1964.**

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# Belize Covenant Movement Says “Thank You”

## BELIZE COVENANT MOVEMENT

The Belize Covenant Movement wishes to thank all those who attended and participated in its Induction Ceremony on Sunday, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

While we understand the sentiments of those who have expressed disappointment in the attendance, the Movement remains clear and steadfast to its Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives; to *“Keep watch with the angels, the stars and moon”*, to protect Belize and Belizeans at all times!

Our ceremony was not to select or endorse candidates for an election. We are not a political party but a Patriotic, Nationalistic, Benevolent, Altruistic Faith Based Movement.

The 24<sup>th</sup> of June was our initial publicized date for the Induction (date of the Placencia Lobster Fest), but due

to the roof damage at St. Mary’s Hall, we were forced to change venue.

It was therefore not deliberate to hold our Induction on the P.U.P convention date, nor were we aware of yet another Lobster Fest clash (the Caye Caulker Lobster Fest on July 1<sup>st</sup>).

While it would have been great for Belizeans to turn out in large numbers Sunday to stand to create a new Belize, the people who sacrificed all else to come out and stand for Belize are exceptional, brave, and courageous! We congratulate you!

We have begun the journey and we will not stop. We believe others will join us as the journey progresses. Time is against us!

Our Guest Speaker Mr. Mose Hyde said that Belizeans have been asleep for too long but are awaking from their slumber. They need to keep watch! The Belize Covenant Movement believes that the more than ten thousand Belizeans who turned out to vote in the referendum on the UHS Loan Guarantee in less than 48 hours is testimony that Belizeans are awaking from there slumber.

**The Belize Covenant Movement believes that with God all things are possible.**

Let us remember when Jesus went to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane, He asked His disciples to keep watch at the gate to protect Him. When He returned after a few hours He found them sleeping, and not keeping watch as He had requested. The Belize Covenant Movement understands that we may never have three hundred thousand Belizeans keeping watch at the same time.

The Belize Covenant Movement thanks the 127 who came out to join the watch over Belize, while others engaged in other matters. We believe that those who are called to guard understand that we must guard for all even while others sleep. The Covenant Movement will always watch and stand guard over Belize no matter who sleeps. We will always welcome every citizen who chooses to join us if and when they are ready to take this Covenant stand with Belize.

As Ms. Les Wakefield from Toledo said in her stirring remarks at the Ceremony, *“The chairs that are empty are filled with angles keeping watch with those of us who are here”*.

The Belize Covenant Movement believes that her statement symbolizes the very essence of our faith and conviction as a people and Nation.

Please be assured of our very best wishes, and again, Thank You! We are excited about the victory we will win in unity for Belize.

Yours in Covenant with Belize.

Derek Aikman  
Belize Covenant Movement  
Coordinator

# Belize’s Economy Is Being Destroyed

(Continued From Front Page)

drastically increases the cost of electricity for Belizeans. Disclosures show that Fortis’ **highest rate of return on their international power investments** is from Belize.

While Fortis rakes it in, enjoys a gift from the Belizean government, Belize’s poor cannot get a break and continually have their electricity turned off when failing to pay small amounts due. Whatever happened to poverty alleviation? Just lip service for foreign donors, while foreign companies increase their profits at our expense.

In 1998 the PUP came to power on a landslide vote based on their campaign charges that the UDP instituted a terrible Value Added Tax. The PUP promised to get rid of the VAT. They did, and substituted the GST in its place. But the adverse effect of the GST is many times worse than the affect of the Value Added Tax. The VAT has been successfully used in other Caribbean countries. And the VAT came with hundreds of exemptions, especially health care, medicines, and school books.

The GST is a real killer of some businesses because it is not the usual form of a sales tax, but a business tax that takes 10% off the top of businesses based on revenues. It covers most everything; it is even added to your hospital bill. Are Belizeans going to have to pay to die? It is apparent that unless things change, Belizeans are being taxed to death.

The irony is that taxes such as the GST only work up to a certain point. Beyond this, the higher the taxes are raised the less money a government can actually collect as tax revenue. This is because higher taxes discourage investments. Consequently fewer jobs are available due to the loss in production.

The Belizean economy is suffering terribly already. Many of our businesses are barely able to make 10% profit on their operations. Some make less. Businesses whose products must compete with products from other nations are subject to operational costs that make them non-competitive,

non-profitable and can put them out of business.

For example, an attempt was made to manufacture “flashlight” batteries in Belize. But this was terminated because costs were too high. These batteries could be manufactured more cheaply in other countries and imported into Belize.

Now we see Belize’s largest garment manufacturer laying off employees and there is talk they will move their operation to another country where they can be more competitive. A business cannot be competitive if they have to include in their costs of operation excessive charges for utilities and pass on the cost of an excessive tax to the prospective buyer. Don’t our politicians understand that? Don’t they care about the costs to the economy down the road when they make tax policies and give exorbitant profit guarantees in shady deals to foreign companies?

What is going to happen to the people of Belize? Where are they going to obtain employment in the future if there is not sufficient industry? Without changes to improve the economy how are they going to survive?

Now the government has come up with the novel idea of free school textbooks for primary school education. They will also promise free medical treatment. But nothing is free, we, the taxpayers will pay for it all. Twice.

For the \$10 million plus interest that went to one crony would have paid for all the textbooks and all the medical

care. The famous \$30 million plus interest paid out to favored brothers would have paid for the books and medical many times over, from the cradle to the grave.

There are many, many other outstanding loans that the government does not even attempt to collect. They just leave the cronies with the money and “flim-flam” the people into believing that the PUP is doing something for them. Why doesn’t the government try to collect the overdue loans from the Political Malpagos? Is it because the borrowers did not get all the money? Did some of the money go elsewhere? Into other pockets? Are the cronies just the front men?

If they are not, if the government officials did not themselves profit from these bloated contracts, and if the government really wants to help the people of Belize they would make the cronies pay back these millions of dollars and use it give the people free education and medical treatment. But instead, the government squandered the money that should have gone for the school books and medical treatment.

To make up for the losses caused by their friends the government is demanding taxes from the people. It is the GST that will pay for the *“free”* textbooks and the GST that will pay for the *“free”* medical care. And it is the people of Belize who will once more pay for the free money loaned out to freeloaders. Jorge Espat was apparently right, after all. Whatever happened to him?

**Visit  
The Belize Zoo  
The Best Little Zoo  
In The World  
27 Miles on the Western Highway**