

SENSELESS LOSS OF LIFE AND LIBERTY IN

THE "REPUBLIC" OF SANTA ELENA, CAYO

SANTA ELENA TOWN, Cayo District, Friday, 10th August, 2007:

Another Santa Elena family is still grieving the loss of a loved one who was shot down in the very prime of his life.

The tragedy becomes even more burdensome for the family when those close to the investigation are openly saying that the evidence gathered so far is seriously leading investigators to believe that the fatal shot that ended his life could have been fired by one of his own brothers.

It was during the evening hours on Saturday, 4th August 2007, a mere three days before his 18th birthday, that **Marvin Geovannie “Bip” Echeverria**, 17, received a single



The deceased,

Marvin Geovannie “Bip” Echeverria, 17

gunshot wound which ended his young life.

The youth was laid to rest on Wednesday, 8th August, inside Santa

Elena’s Carmen Memorial Cemetery after a 3:00 p.m., funeral service at St. Ignatius Church in Santa Elena.

The legally required post mortem examination has concluded that **Marvin “Bip” Echeverria** died as a result of external and internal bleeding secondary to a single gunshot wound to the left side of the pelvis which exited through the right side of the buttocks.



Justin “Jay” Gordon, stabbed in the exchange

Reports reaching us indicate that Saturday’s confrontation resulted from a 24th February 2007 incident in which one **Gregory Garcia**, 17, Belizean barber of a Zaiden Street address in Santa Elena was at the Galindo residence on Perez Street when a fight broke out. Garcia emerged from that



Scenes of Crime Technician,

Filiberto Pott



Brother of the deceased,

Ruben “Bengue-T” Echeverria, 25

incident with numerous stab wounds to various parts of the body. The incident led to the arrest of one **Herson Chavez**, 19, Belizean electrician of a #137 Western Highway address in Santa Elena. Also arrested in connection with the incident was **George Galindo**, 20, Belizean laborer of a Perez Street, Santa Elena address. The substantive case has been adjourned and is now scheduled to be heard on Monday, 22nd October 2007.

It was reportedly on the basis of this “*old beef*” that Gregory Garcia accompanied by the Echeverria brothers and about 20 - 25 boys from their neighborhood, believed to be members of the New Area Crew (NAC), made a move on the Galindo brothers at their Perez Street residence at around 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, 4th August.

Reports reaching us indicate that **Dennis Castillo**, **Mayro Echeverria**, **Ruben “Bengue-T” Echeverria** and **Gregory Garcia**, all members of the NAC, entered the white picket fenced yard enclosing the

Please Turn To Page 2:

Take Heart Viewers - The Pandy Show Will Soon Be Back On The Air

SANTA ELENA TOWN, Cayo, Thursday, 9th August 2007:

It has been on cable television in the San Ignacio/Santa Elena area for over 15 years and yesterday marks the second consecutive Wednesday that the weekly Pandy Show has been off the air.

Many were the calls coming into our office requesting that we write about this development. “*We want you to write about the pulling of the Pandy Show plug*” said one caller this Thursday morning.

In order to satisfy our readers request we invited the host of the show, Kent Pandy, to chat with us on the matter. He visited our office during the evening hours this Thursday and confirmed that the plug



Kent Pandy, Host of the Pandy Show. On the air since 1992

was indeed pull by the owners of the Cayo Cable Company. Pandy alleges

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SENSELESS LOSS OF LIFE AND LIBERTY IN THE "REPUBLIC" OF SANTA ELENA, CAYO

Continued From Front Page: residence of **David "Mr. Bone" Young**, stepfather of the Galindo brothers.

When Mr. Bone emerged at the front door, he reportedly came face to face with Dennis Castillo who was standing a few paces in front of the other three persons which included Gregory Garcia to the right, Ruben "Bengue-T" Echeverria in the middle, and the eldest of the three Echeverria brothers, **Mayro** to the far left, all standing in line behind Castillo and facing the blue cement bungalow structure. Garcia and the two Echeverria brothers were reportedly all standing with their hands behind their backs. Since they just stood there in a threatening manner and did not say a word; Mr. Bone, fearing for his safety, stepped back into the house and slammed the front door shut.

Just as Mr. Bone closed the door, **David Galindo**, 22, the eldest of the two Galindo brothers appeared with a bag of garbage from the backyard. He deposited the bag on a garbage heap near the front gate of the fenced yard and reportedly told the Echeverria brothers to "*rest it*" as the beef had already been settled between his younger brother George and Gregory Garcia.

While this was taking place, **George Galindo**, 20, was reportedly playing video games inside an upstairs structure attached to the main bungalow building.

Just as David Galindo was about to pass the intruders on his return to the backyard after dumping the garbage, they rushed towards him and this was when David ran toward the backyard.

What actually transpired in the backyard is rather sketchy because the Echeverria brothers are not saying much as they continue to grieve the loss of their youngest brother. All Rueben could tell us is that we must turn to the Bible and read Psalms 35 where we will find any answer we may need. Our attempts to speak to the Galindo brothers were unsuccessful as we were told that "*they are gone*". They reportedly departed the neighborhood shortly after their release from police custody.

What we were able to ascertain however is that while David Galindo ran toward the backyard, he was pursued by Castillo, Garcia and the two Echeverria brothers who by this time were joined by their third brother, Marvin, as he had rushed in from outside where he initially was with the larger group.

The group that was gathered outside on the street then began throwing sticks and stones at the Galindo house and in the process most of the glass louvers of a front double window were broken.

Shortly after David was chased behind the house, one witness said that two gunshots were heard – BAM- - - -BAM - with about a five-second interval.



-The Scene Of The Crime -

The Galindo Residence On Perez Street In Santa Elena, Cayo

In the wake of the gunshots, the situation intensified as quick word began spreading that Marvin and Bengue-T were hit. Marvin was pulled out of the yard and placed on the side of Perez Street. Just as all this was unfolding, **Justin "Jay" Gordon**, 18, was walking towards the Galindo residence when he was spotted and identified as being associated with the Galindo brothers. Police are alleging that this was when Gregory Garcia reportedly handed a knife to Bengue-T who proceeded

to stab Gordon several times in the back. As Gordon fell to the ground the attackers fled. Gordon then managed to scramble to his feet and ran into the Galindo yard for safety. He was then rushed to the San Ignacio hospital.

The injured Marvin Echeverria along with Bengue-T was placed inside one of the three vehicles that came on the scene earlier. Marvin accompanied by his two brothers was rushed to the San Ignacio Hospital with his sister

Please Turn To Page 11:

Take Heart Viewers - The Pandy Show Will Soon Be Back On The Air

Continued From Front Page:

that he was not even given an opportunity of a last show to inform his many viewers of this development.

"*The show*", he said, "*has been airing on Channel 6. This channel was operates, on rent from the cable company, by the Silva family from Cahal Pech Village Resort. However, when the Silva's family gave up the channel on Tuesday, 31st July and I went in the following day to do my weekly Wednesday evening show, I was told by the owners of the cable company that there would be no Pandy Show today. Cold like that.*"

The show which is uniquely popular among children, and some adults, has been running since 1992. It started off when the cable company was first owned by Ainslie Leslie; it continued when the company changed hands to Daniel Silva Jr. It even continued when the new owners, the Pedro Lizarraga family took over.

The show ran for over 13 years on Channel 3 but changed over to channel 6 when the operators of BelizeTV Channel 3 began demanding to run their ads during the show. The host said that he had no problems with the request provided that he receives a stipend for the use of his equipment. This arrangement did not go down well with the private operators of BelizeTV Channel 3 and so the Pandy Show was booted off the channel.

The show did not miss a beat as it moved right over when the Silva Family rented Channel 6. Since then BelizeTV has gone off the air and

might have relocated to Belmopan but the Pandy show remained on Channel 6, that is, until the end of July when the Silva family gave up the channel.

We tried to make contact with the principals from the Cayo Cable Company and were directed to "**Adrian**", a member of the Lizarraga family. Adrian told us that the current disruption of the Pandy show is nothing more than a temporary inconvenience as the cable company is in the process of renting channel 6 to another private operator. He said that the transaction should be completed in about two weeks after which the show should resume transmission.

"*The challenge*" said Adrian is that "*the cable company is currently going through major changes geared toward improving the quality of the service we provide and at the moment we have very expensive equipment in area. Since the operators of Channel 6 are gone, and with no one actually responsible at this time, we believe that it would not be a wise decision on our part to leave all these equipment unsecured. It's not that we do not trust Pandy with the keys*" said Adrian "*The problem is that he often receives visitors in the area with all these expensive equipment around. We hope to get this situation rectified. All we are asking is for Pandy to have a little bit of patience and hopefully his show should be back on the air pretty soon.*" concluded Adrian.



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Editorial



These Serious Times In Which We Are Living

There is hardly any denying that, in terms of the crime and violence situation, we are living in critical times and critical times call for critical action.

The prevailing crime situation has gotten so much out of control that we have now reached the point where even the ordinary man and woman on the street is repeatedly calling for a return of the death penalty.

There is also a sense of frustration on the part of senior political leaders as they continue to advocate for the abolition of the Privy Council. In fact just this past week, readers were treated to none other than the Minister of Tourism, in his weekly writings, referring to the Privy Council as **“The last vestige of colonialism”**.

There is hardly any denying also that our small nation is blessed with an abundance of intelligent minds. It is therefore amazing how we have thus far been unable to harness these brilliant minds with a view of finding a lasting solution to the crime situation that currently plagues our nation.

Over the past several months we have been hearing of one such brilliant mind in the person of **Dr. Arlie Petters**. A mathematical scientist by profession we are told, Dr. Petters is engaged in some undertaking involving a mathematical formula to measure the speed of light as it travels through the universe and with something having to do with a black hole. Mathematical formulas, we are also told, can be implemented to find solutions to a wide arrange of problems and challenges.

Why is it we ask, that we are not tapping into Dr. Petters' mathematical expertise to assist us in coming up with a possible mathematical solution to address the pressing challenge of lawlessness plaguing our nation. Bringing computers and computer knowledge to the children is by all means important especially in light of the long term benefit that can be derived from this undertaking but if the crime trend continues, the lives of these very same children will remain in danger.

To the good Dr. we say, use your expertise to assist us with finding a solution to the crime and violence situation in our country. Quite frankly we can hardly care if the solution is mathematical or non-mathematical in nature. After we have addressed this pressing challenge we can then safely go into computers and there might even be some of us who would be safe and comfortable to the point where we might just have time to learn how light travels through the universe and the black hole.

In the current absence of expert assistance, we are duty bound to start finding ways on our own to address this challenge. It is in this light that we

start off by asking: Why have we so far been unable to make true the familiar saying that crime does not pay? This should be the point of departure especially given the prevailing perception that crime pays even in some of those cases when the criminal is caught; it pays even more when it goes undetected.

Any police officer will tell you that they regularly see the trend of petty criminals **“graduating”** as they routinely call it, from the commission of petty offences to committing capital crimes.

The youth usually starts off by engaging in a little fist fight. He is arrested, convicted and ordered to pay a fine. He is then released on the court's order that the fine be paid within a specified period of time. He ignores the order and with the passage of time it gets lost in the system. The same youth eventually graduates into using a knife in his next violent encounter. He is taken to court and by this time everyone has forgotten about the previous court order and so he ends up with another fine, on top of the previous unpaid one. He does not honor the second order and by this time he begins to feel like he is bigger than the court itself. On his next encounter he graduates into using a gun and **BANG** someone loses their life in the exchange. It is at this juncture where we now find ourselves calling for the reinstatement of the death penalty and the abolition of the Privy Council as we grapple to deal with cultivated criminal like these.

There is hardly any denying that in any business or relationship, chaos and confusion breeds corruption. There is a general feeling that the current system for the recording and collection of court ordered fines is in disarray with chaos and confusion reigning supreme, hence the reason why we are yet to see a consorted and aggressive effort geared towards collecting all those tens, it not hundreds, of millions of dollars in outstanding court fines.

We might have not yet reached the stage of other developed countries where our law enforcement officers can walk to their patrol cars and punch a name into a computer thereby producing a reading of unpaid courts

**STAR
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Letters to the Editor

NEAC Shuffles BACONGO Out, HOW INTERESTING!!!

By: godsmen ellis, San Igancio, Wednesday, 8th August 2007:

In the last National Environmental Appraisal Committee, (NEAC) **‘reshuffle’**, BACONGO and was not included among the membership of NEAC.

This is an interesting development in view of the track record of BACONGO on the Committee.

Members of NEAC will attest that the BACONGO representatives have always brought to the Committee meetings very insightful concerns based on sound environmental knowledge and research, which had enriched the impact assessment process. However, in many instances this has been perceived as unwarranted dissent, especially by the Government majority members.

Here is the ‘backlash’. The NGO that was appointed to replace BACONGO has written back to Department of the Environment to say, “No Thank you.” They admit that the responsibility is too much for them.

The NEAC has the responsibility to do an in-depth study of all development proposals that may impact the Environmental Protection Act (EPA). The application for approval of a development project must have an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study addressing the physical, social and economic aspects of the proposed project as it affects the local environment. Also, if any damage is likely, what mitigation measures are proposed?

It is this document which is brought to the NEAC table. There is no limit to the size of the document, which may run up to more than a hundred pages. In addition, NEAC must do a site visit to the area of the proposed project as an integral part of the appraisal process. NEAC may meet

more than one time in ensuring a thorough study of a project proposal.

At the end of the exercise NEAC makes a **recommendation** to the Minister of the Environment saying why the proposal does or does not meet the EPA requirements. Sometimes a positive recommendation may include an Environmental Compliance Plan which the developer must abide by as a condition for approval.

Thirteen members comprise NEAC of which eight are Government. It is noted that in the **‘reshuffle’** one of the two appointees was not appointed representing an NGO although that individual is an NGO member. This action is in contravention of the Regulation (25 (2) (1) which specifically states otherwise. It is a great concern that Government holds a large majority, thus making it almost predictable how the representatives would vote on controversial projects. The EIA on Chalillo and that on Ara Macao were examples.

But the NGO's and the public have not been all quiet about the NEAC process. BELPO has filed a Supreme Court application charging the Department of Environment (DoE) for neglect of due diligence in carrying out its functions; the West Landivar Group are pursuing a similar path against the DoE.

It is clear that the DoE carries a heavy responsibility in the selection of the non-government members of NEAC especially that they have minority voting power. The argument that NEAC **“needs new blood”** cannot compensate for the loss of much needed environmental-based contributions to the Committee meetings. As one member says, ***“the term is two years and it takes one year for a new member to find out what is going on”***. BACONGO will be watching what goes on in NEAC.

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fines attached to that name. Why is it however that, in the absence of such technology, we are not seeing our law enforcement officers, instead of patrolling aimlessly, actually moving around with a weekly printout of all those persons with outstanding court fines.

Why are we so content in accepting the notion that like the customs and immigration branches of law enforcement, our police cannot be equally converted into an income

generating government department instead of bordering on the side of being a burdensome expense on the nation's already scarce financial resources.

Why is it for example, as an incentive for the police, we are not seeing the implementation of something like an automatic 10% commission paid to policemen for the collection of outstanding court fines. If this is not being done for fear that

Please Turn To Page 4:

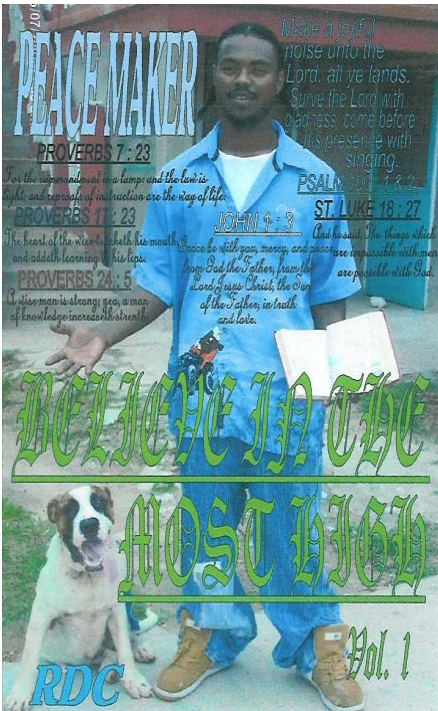
Charles McClean - A Young Musician With A Positive Message

SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo, Monday, 6th August 2007:

San Ignacio’s youth, Charles Mclean, is hitting the music scene as he promotes his first positive message CD entitled *“Believe In The Most High - Peace Maker”* which is presently available at Venus Photo & Records on Hudson Street and Back To My Roots Variety Store on Burns Avenue in San Ignacio Town.

The CD features 17 tracks busting with positive lyrics. According to this young artist, the composition is intended to instill a sense of positive reality into the minds of everyone, including the young and the not so young, who listens to the message.

“There is so much violence on the streets of our cities, towns, villages and even in our very homes” says Mclean *“Having used my talent for so many years in the past to spread the worldly*



message, I have come to the realization that the time is now for me to do my part in contributing towards the effort at improving

These Serious Times In Which We Are Living

Continues From Page 3: government might lose revenue in the process, could there not then be an instant incorporation of the 10% commission on all court fines in anticipation of a default in payment. Could not this 10% also be passed on all those persons who promptly pay their court fines?

Yes, police officers will want to collect the extra cash and so this comes with the accompanying likelihood of them being accused to *“harassing”* those individuals who owe the court. This should take us right back to the original point *“if you can’t pay the fine, then don’t do the crime”* it’s as simple as that.

An aggressive collection of court fines could result in many of those convicted criminals with unpaid court bills going into hiding for fear of being caught and incarcerated thereby reducing the number of them roaming

the streets looking for trouble. This could therefore serve as a self imposed curfew on convicted criminals.

Furthermore, why is it today that we continuously hear of the police picking up people and profiling them? Profiling them for what? The answer that is readily given is that they are being profiled in the event that they **MIGHT** commit a crime. Why on earth are we not profiling them to determine if they owe court fines? Could it be that we are unable to do so because the court fine collection system is saturated with chaos, confusion and corruption.

Why is it for example that some police officers and even court officials are having such a hard time in getting the court to write up and issue a commitment warrant for the detention of these individuals who they know are not paying their court fines? Could it probably be that some of these individuals are in fact paying their fines but these payments are not finding their way into government coffers. Could it be that those on the corrupt side fear that the detention of these individuals could result in the proverbial s - - t hitting the fan?

Oh yes, as the situation now stands, we do see policemen, especially at the increasing number of check points on our highways, primarily engaged in the checking for vehicular insurance. Who pays these policemen to perform this task? Every single one of us pays their salaries. We foot the bill whenever we pay income and property taxes. We pay them whenever we buy at the grocery store and the GST is added to all our purchases. We pay whenever we put even that \$5 worth of fuel in our tanks.

Then we ask: Who benefits directly from law enforcement officers checking for insurance stickers? Simply put, the insurance companies do, hence the reason why today we

the condition in my community, my country and maybe even the world, and hopefully in the process making it a better and safer place for all of us to live, work and play”.

The music was composed, arranged and engineered by the artist himself inside his personal studio located at his home on Flamingo Avenue in San Ignacio, Cayo. The impressive label was also created single-handedly by the artist.

The CD is currently on promotion

for \$15 each at Venus Photo & Records and at Back To My Roots. It is also available from the artist himself by calling 624-2569 or 804-0238.

If there are any other outlets that would like to carry the CD, please do not hesitate to contact the artist at anytime.

We encourage you to pick up a copy of **“Believe In The Most High”** as we show appreciation to this young artist who, in these challenging times, is utilizing his talents and youthful energies in a positive way.



Pardon the Interruption...

Belize Electricity Limited advises its customers in **San Ignacio Town** that the supply of electricity will be interrupted on **Sunday, August 12, 2007.**



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can see insurance companies constructing 3, 4 and even 5 storey office complexes especially in and around Belize City. Could this be the reason why insurance companies are blooming while the crime situation gets worse with every passing day as our police officers continue to look after the interest of insurance companies while neglecting their core responsibilities?

Let’s not get confused here; of course the possession of a valid vehicular insurance is important and necessary. However, we are living in serious times and serious times demand serious action.

How difficult will it be, for example, to let every vehicle owner fully understand that, for their personal benefit, their vehicle insurance must be current at all times. And in the event that their uninsured vehicle becomes involved in a traffic accident for which they are found, by a competent court of law, to be at fault, then the guilty party will be remanded to prison until full compensation is paid to the aggrieved party.

If the guilty party is unable to forthwith pay the compensation ordered by the court, the court’s first action should be to order the immediate sale of the vehicle regardless if it was not the actual owner driving at the time of the accident. The bottom line is that the vehicle should have never been on the road in an uninsured state. Then in the event that the sale of the vehicle, as a first resort, is not enough to compensate for damages caused, the court should then be empowered to order the sale of whatever property that individual may hold.

The best bet is that few will be those persons who would want to drive an uninsured vehicle or loan their uninsured vehicles to anyone for fear that they could instantly end up losing their vehicle and any other possession they might have if they are unable to compensate the victim due to their irresponsible actions.

These are but a few suggestions designed to stimulate critical thinking in these serious times in which we are living.

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STAR HUMOR

Recruiting Spies

Last Monday morning, a team of Special Branch Talent Spotters were at the Police Training Academy in Belmopan interviewing the top five recruits for possible posting to Police Special Branch.

As each interview session came to an end, each recruits was given a sealed envelope with instructions to take it over to the Office of the Prime Minister.

Four out of the five recruits walked briskly over to the Prime Minister's Office and delivered the package smartly.

There was only one of the recruits who, on his way over to the Prime

bathroom in the market area and opened the package.

Inside the package he found a message *"You've got the job. You are the kind of person that Special Branch needs, abort the mission to the Prime Minister's Office and report to Special Branch Headquarters immediately."*

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Rules & Regulations:

- Contestants must be nationals of Belize.
- The organizers, judges and their families are **not** eligible to enter the contest.
- Topics can focus on St. George's Caye day and/or Belize's Independence.
- Songs must be **new** and **original** pieces, created to instill patriotism and a sense of national pride.
- Songs can be in any language but each entry must be accompanied by its English translation.
- Entry packages must include a lyrics sheet and an audio recording for each song.
- Professional recording are not required; tapes, CDs and the lyrics sheets will not be returned to contestants.
- All contestants selected by the panel of judges will be required to perform a live rendition at the Finals.
- Songs must not be longer than five (5) minutes.

Entries will be judged based on:

- Audience Appeal
- Musical Arrangement
- Vocal Quality
- Lyrical Content
- Stage Presence



Winner will receive:

1st Place - \$3000 and a Trophy
2nd Place - \$2000 and a Trophy
3rd Place - \$1000 and a Trophy

Entries should be submitted by August 25th to:

**Chairman
September Celebrations Committee
P.O. Box 325
Belize City**

An Exchange With Ray

Ray Auxillou Wrote:

In chatting with some NRP knowledgeable people, I'm told all the secrecy of the intentions of the NRP are based on the strategy of waiting for the incumbent PUP government, a disaster they claim of ten years standing, to call the next elections.

They feel the taxpaying voting citizens of Belize are waiting for a change in the way we govern.

STAR Publisher Wrote:

Dear Ray;

Your writings, as usual, are interesting and thought provoking and sometimes maybe even inspirational. Being in the writing business, we thank you for committing your thoughts to written form.

We tend to agree with several of the points raised in this your latest writing. However the matter of secrecy within the NRP seems to be somewhat unusual and weird particularly when buzz words like TRANSPARENCY and ACCOUNTABILITY have, for the past many years, dominated the political campaign platform. However, when a political party is shrouded in so much secrecy as is the NRP, it breeds skepticism in the minds of voters. As very few are the voters who would want to regress into those dark days of uncertainty.

With campaign financing aside, victory at the polls is still, to a large extent, dependent on the popularity of the candidate. And therefore the argument that the NRP is keeping secret the identity of their candidates, until the 11th hour, for fear of PUP victimization and mudslinging, is not holding water.

If we are understanding correctly, some of the NRP candidates are affiliated with the PUP maybe as government employees or even as friends and cronies of the PUP. These individuals are therefore currently lined up and sucking at the PUP breast and, as the NRP admits, will only let go at the 11th hour, as they continue extracting benefits right up to the bitter end.

Bringing out these individuals will not bode well with voters and it could be a recipe for devastating defeat for any political party that brings them out as these individuals will be seen for what they actually are, nothing more than PUP parasites, and in the very unlikely event that any of them should be victorious at the polls, they will more than likely revert to their original places at the PUP feeding trough.

If these NRP candidates are to have any semblance of credibility the best bet would be for them to come out early and let the people get to know them.

Coming out a month before election is hardly enough time to campaign as there is still a large number of voters who will not vote for a candidate who did not come to

I'm puzzled by this political strategy, but am assured they are ready to contest the next national elections and provide a much better form of government than previously held under either the UDP or the PUP.

Apparently, they have all the election divisions throughout the nation covered with candidates and have a solid party equal to that offered by the UDP, if not better?

their house and personally ask for their vote because although they might know the candidate's name, they will generally feel disrespected by any candidate that did not take time out to personally visit them at their home.

And what are these NRP candidates afraid of? If they are truly fit to govern the nation, then they must be prepared and able to withstand scrutiny and criticism from any and every political party, organization and individual, not only the PUP.

By keeping secret the identity of its candidates, is the leadership of the NRP admitting that some of their candidates are harboring troublesome skeletons in their closets?

As evil, as corrupt and as vindictive as the PUP might be, in most cases they try to steer clear of the perception of utilizing the security forces to intimidate political opponents. And, as the NRP professes to have recruited these "squeaky clean" candidates any move by the security forces to irresponsibly target them will be instantly seen for what it is and this will be bad publicity for the PUP, bad publicity which the PUP can ill afford to have at this time.

They would not give me candidate names, because they claim the PUP conduct dirty politics and they are afraid that their candidates would be persecuted and intimidated by the power inherent of a patronage political party machine holding the reins of the police, the government jobs, the court dates and justice system controls and the Belize Defense Force. They don't want their candidates beaten up by police, or homes raided by the Belize Defense

Therefore this thing about fear of being intimidated by the PUP appears to be just another excuse that is not holding much water.

There are many who believe that the leadership of the NRP is starting off on the wrong foot in its apparent attempts to deceive the people as it pertains to the number of candidates that the party has in place.

There is nothing wrong with a new political party coming on the scene with less than a full slate of candidates. In fact NO new political party has ever appeared on the political scene with a full line up of candidates. There are some political parties that have been around for 10 maybe even 15 years and they still have only very few candidates contesting the general elections on their ticket.

Why then is the leadership of the NRP insisting on starting off with "all the election divisions throughout the nation covered with candidates" when this might very well prove to be the party's biggest stumbling block.

It certainly looks like the NRP leader might have painted himself into a corner several months ago when he made that first commitment of having

Force military on trumped up charges, with ransacking of their belongings Nor do they have a newspaper, radio station, or television station to get into a lying, insulting competition.

The NRP attitude seems to be they want to provide good, honest government based on logical development, through consensual views arrived at through debate. They do not want anything to do with character assassination, trumped up charges in court cases, insults and slander, which is the way the PUP operate in an election campaign using the successful political patronage model of election campaigning.

I'm not sure waiting for the last thirty days until election time is a good political strategy, particularly if they are not getting any publicity of their mission goals, vision and ideas before hand. It was pointed out to me, that the UDP suffer the same victimization, at the hands of the PUP, in that the PUP will steal their ideas if they announce them, and do their best to destroy their candidates reputation and characters should they announce to early, their candidates names.

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all candidates in place in time for the next round of general elections and now any backing off from this original stance could be viewed as a weakening of his infant political party.

It is widely suspected that whatever wind there is in the NRP's sail, will be knocked out whenever the date for general elections is announced and the party finds itself unable to field candidates in all 31 electoral divisions.

The NRP therefore stands to lose a HUGE chunk of credibility unless its leader steps forward now and set the record straight before it gets too late.

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They did put out a few good ones, but there is so much to do and the UDP are not doing it. Maybe for the same reasons the NRP say?

I guess the idea game is like playing cards, each party is holding their cards close to their chest to hide their hand. Trouble is right now the UDP seem to have a nearly empty hand. While the NRP are not ready is my thought. take anything I write with a grain of salt, I'm trying to provoke a debate and clear the air!

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Ray Responds:

The Very good rebuttal Albert! You raise some good points. The point of my own articles are mainly to make people think and debate. I think such debate clears the air and solidifies opinions and finds consensus.

I'm not pushing any agenda here, though I am subtly trying to get the PUP to lower the Debt to GDP ratio and putting pressure accordingly. The same with trying to get a Balanced Budget debate going.

The Belize City based media are notoriously slack in discussing the future and the choices we have for the country. They like to come in after

the fact, after things fall apart and criticize, but they never seem to help in creating development, or a better country and governing model. They are all money orientated and want that government newspaper advertising.

I will admit I'm feeling a bit queasy about the NRP myself. For different reasons and some of those in a different viewpoint that you mentioned. I'm hoping to put pressure to clear things up, to decide.

The thing is the PUP can do so much in a reform mode while they are still in office, but how to get them to do it? Then the UDP still are not offering any reforms with meat.

BEL's 7th Annual Scholarship Awards

BEL's CORPORATE HEAD-QUARTERS, Belize City, Tuesday, 7th August 2007:
BY: Vonetta Burrell, Public Relations Officer

For the seventh consecutive year, Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) presented tuition scholarships to students pursuing studies at the University of Belize (UB).

To date, 54 students have benefited from the program. Selections were based on academic merit, financial need and level of community involvement. Scholarships are renewable for 2 years.

This year's seven awardees were announced during a ceremony held this morning in Belize City. The seven Awardees are:

Associate Degree Level:

1. **Renita Pop** of San Miguel, Toledo District – Certificate, Practical Nursing Bachelor Degree Level:
2. **Mitylene Bailey** of Hattieville, Belize District – Biology
3. **Ulyses Augustine** of Orange Walk Town, Orange Walk District – English Education
4. **Veronica Rivas** of Independence Village, Stann Creek District – Primary Education
5. **Yamani Rodriguez** of San Ignacio Town, Cayo District – Information Technology
6. **Mildred Larios** of Orange Walk Town, Orange Walk District – Business Administration



7. **Kesha Peyrefitte** of Camalote Village, Cayo District – English

The seven awardees were presented with scholarships during a ceremony this morning at the Radisson Fort George Hotel.

BEL's President & CEO Lynn Young presented the scholarships saying *"Programs of study chosen by this year's awardees reflect the diverse fields that continue to contribute to the ongoing development of Belize. These students were selected from a highly competitive field of applicants from across the country."*

He also took the opportunity to announce that, commencing 2008, the Company will be expanding its Scholarship Program to students interested in pursuing a Bachelor Degree in Engineering from the Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada.

This full scholarship, valued at approximately BZ\$40,000 per academic year, is aimed at developing the pool of engineers and technical professionals currently in the country.

Interested applications can look out for details in the media later this

year.

The awardee must complete a four year program to obtain the degree. This scholarship will be offered biennially.

BEL's Scholarship Program is one

of several donations under the Company's Community Initiative which aims, throughout the year, to support as many individuals and organizations that are in need of financial assistance.

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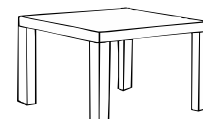
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PAGEANT NIGHT:

**Friday Night:
24th August 2007 at the
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Commencing at 7:00 p.m.**

GRAND AFTER PAGEANT BASH:

**Friday Night
24th August 2007
Immediately After
The Pageant at
Ka'ana Boutique Resort & Spa.**

SENSELESS LOSS OF LIFE AND LIBERTY IN THE "REPUBLIC" OF SANTA ELENA, CAYO

Continued From Page 2:

Yolanda following behind in a small white car. The medical team began working on the injured patient but he passed away while undergoing emergency treatment.

San Ignacio police arrived at the hospital while Marvin Echeverria was in the emergency room and were directed to **Justin "Jay" Gordon**, who had sustained several stab wounds to the back. Gordon's condition was stabilized and he was transported to Belmopan's Western Regional hospital.

Mayro and Bengue-T Echeverria were still at the hospital when the police arrived. They were instantly detained and transported to the San Ignacio police station.

The police also took charge of three vehicles reportedly connected to the Echeverria group. The vehicles included a maroon Isuzu Trooper with license plates CY-C-21798; a maroon Jeep Cherokee with license plates CY-C-25211 and a small white Geo Metro car with license plates CY-C-23183. All three vehicles were subsequently released.

Immediately after leaving the hospital, a team of police officers visited the Galindo residence where they took David and George Galindo into custody and transported them to the San Ignacio police station.

It took the police a few hours to activate its Forensic and Crime Investigation Team and by the time the team was located and readied, almost four hours had elapsed since the initial two gunshots were fired.

It was at around 10:30 p.m., that Saturday night when the three-member Forensic and Crimes Investigation Team, all in civilian clothing, were **"dumped"** on the scene by a police mobile patrol which continued on its merry way after dropping them off.

The team headed by Chief Investigator, **Sgt. #1 Enrique Aldana** included Scenes of Crime Technician, **Filiberto Pott** and **Police Constable #292 Roland Augustine**.

They had hardly begun surveying the area when they came under attack as bullets began flying from the other side of a back zinc/chain link fence.

In the hail of bullets, Scenes of Crime Technician, Filiberto Pott emerged with a bullet wound to the

left side of the chest which exited in the area of the lower back and in the process injuring his lungs.

With an injured colleague on the ground, Sgt. Aldana reportedly took cover behind a small wooden structure in the backyard. He drew his service pistol but only managed to squeeze off a single shot when the pistol experienced a stoppage.

In the hail of gunfire, Sgt. Aldana and PC Augustine sustained a single lead burn each in the region of their feet. With a seriously injured colleague on the ground and a jammed firearm, Sgt. Aldana and the team sought refuge inside the Galindo residence where they waited for about 15 minutes after the last shot was fired thereby ensuring that the coast was clear and that it was safe to emerge.

With no police vehicle on hand, the injured Scenes of Crime Technician was placed inside Mr. Bones' small pickup truck and, with Mr. Bone in the driver's seat; the technician was rushed to the San Ignacio hospital.

Upon arrival at the hospital, police encountered Bengue-T receiving treatment for a gunshot wound to a toe of the right foot. He said that he received the injury during the earlier incident in which his youngest brother was fatally shot. A police press release informs that the police are investigating the possibility that, in the heat of things, Bengue-T might have accidentally shot himself.

Bengue-T, under police guard, was removed from the emergency room to make way for the more pressing emergency. He was told to sit on a bench in the corridor while the medical team went to work on the more seriously injured Scenes of Crime Technician.

The technician's condition was stabilized and like Justin Gordon, he too was transported by ambulance to Belmopan's Western Regional hospital.

Today, six days after the incident, the technician's condition, as well as that of Justin "Jay" Gordon, is reported to be gradually improving.

Subsequent to the incident, a series of rather interesting events unfolded.

Firstly, by the time Ruben "Bengue-T" Echeverria, who is employed as a driver for former Solicitor General – now attorney in private practice – **Elston Kaseke**, was formally arrested and charged on Monday evening, San Ignacio's magistrate, Kathlene Lewis, had already left for the day. It was after 4:00 p.m., when the accused, his attorney and San Ignacio's civilian prosecutor **George Gomez** were all transported to Belmopan where the court book was lodged and the case was heard before Belmopan's magistrate Richard Swift. The single charge of attempt murder for the stabbing of Justin Gordon was read to the accused by magistrate Swift. With the charge being an indicable



The Isuzu Trooper, one of the 3 vehicles temporarily held by the police

offence, no plea was entertained. When the issue of bail came up, prosecutor Gomez rose and strongly objected to the granting of bail citing the Crime Control and Justice Act #25 of 2003 section 16 subsection 1 (a) which expressly limits any magistrate's authority to grant bail to anyone accused of committing murder, attempt murder and conspiracy to commit murder. Notwithstanding prosecutor Gomez' objection to bail, Magistrate Swift proceeded with granting bail in the sum of \$6,000 with the facility of two sureties each for \$3,000. The accused was ordered to reappear in court on Thursday, 13th September 2007.

Secondly, and probably not as privileged as Ruben Echeverria; Gregory Garcia had to wait until the following day, Tuesday, 7th August when he appeared before San Ignacio Magistrate Kathlene Lewis along with the same Elston Kaseke who represented Bengue-T the previous evening in Belmopan. The single charge of abetment to commit attempt murder was read to him. Again no plea was entertained on this indictable matter. Citing the very same section of the Crimes Control and Justice Act, prosecutor Gomez rose and objected to bail. Magistrate Lewis readily agreed with the prosecution. The accused was denied bail and remanded to the Hattieville Central Prison to reappear in court on Tuesday, 22nd August 2007.

Also appearing in court on Tuesday, 7th August was Mayro Echeverria, the eldest of the three Echeverria brothers. The 29 year old Belizean driver of a Peter August Street address in Santa Elena appeared before Magistrate Kathlene Lewis to answer to the charge of causing harm to David Galindo. The charge stems from allegations by Galindo that when he ran behind the house that Saturday evening, he was beaten by the accused. Galindo was complaining of pain in the back and other parts of the body. The attending medical officer classified the injuries he sustained as harm.

Mayro Echeverria pleaded not guilty to the charge and was released on a \$1,000.00 bail to reappear in court on Tuesday, 25th September 2007.

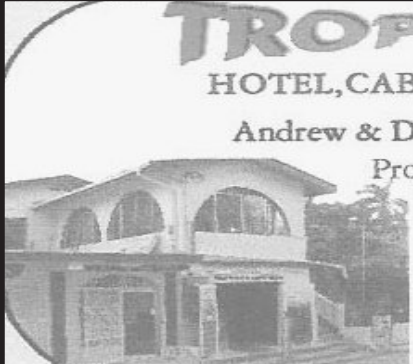
Dennis Castillo, 29, also appeared before Magistrate Kathlene Lewis on Tuesday to answer to the charge of damage to property in connection with a number of glass louvers that were broken from the Galindo's residence. Castillo pleaded not guilty to the charge and was released on a \$1,000.00 bail to reappear in court on Tuesday, 2nd October 2007.

The fifth related court hearing for the day was that of George Galindo who returned to court for a second hearing on the charge of dangerous harm in connection with the February 24th incident in which Gregory Garcia sustained several stab wounds to various parts of his body. Galindo remains on bail as the matter was adjourned until Monday, 22nd October 2007.

The police strongly suspect that they were not the intended targets of Saturday night's shooting as they are of the opinion that the dark condition at the scene, might have contributed to the gunman actually believing that he was opening fire on the Galindo brothers. Investigation nevertheless continues.

As we go to press this Thursday night, more people are being detained, interrogated and released as the search continues for the gunman responsible for shooting the policemen and more importantly, the police are determined to find out who is responsible for the injuries caused their colleague, Filiberto Pott, from their Scenes of Crime Unit.

The deceased, **Marvin Geovannie "Bip" Echeverria** who was preparing to enter 4th form at Benque's Mopan Technical High School is survived by his parents **Yolanda** and **Gerardo Echeverria**; Five sisters, **Esmeralda Castellanos**, **Olivia Vernon** as well as **Marina**, **Miriam** and **Yolanda Echeverria**. He is also survived by two brothers, **Mayro** and **Ruben Echeverria**.



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