



The Other Side of the Coin

by Norman Rodriguez

Echoing the Cry of Ance

As I read through last week's issue of this same Alliance Newspaper, I came across a short article entitled: what you the citizen needs to know. Why I found this so interesting is because the pleas being made to Belizeans are the same and in the same way, that I have been pleading to the people of this country to get up and start demanding truly ethical behaviour from the politicians. I found it very necessary to echo the cries of my brother who wrote that article in hope that someone else would take hold of the torch and carry it forward to society. Political reform seems to be the biggest need to bring about this continuously promised good government, yet all these good things seems to be just another puff of wind in the natural environment: you hear it but you cannot see it nor touch it.

None of our leaders seem to want to let go of this great power enough to allow the people an opportunity to help govern themselves. The biggest promise of political reform was made by the last government in waiting before the general election in 1998. Not only the normal grassroots voter bought propaganda, but roots from within civil society, the media and so many other organizations important to the development of this society believed that we would all see a better Belize through good political reform. Today only one or two of those have groups or organizations have followed up to demand that government keep on its promise to give tree reform. We saw this in the birth of we the people reform movement and it's senate proposal and civil society's support of these proposals.

An important failure in the government's promise to give political reform was highlighted by Sharon Matola when she criticized NEAC's approving of the damming of the Macal River by saying that there was no public consultation. If political reform should give power to the people, then ignoring the results of the people is taking away their power. This is not political reform being exercised. In fact, as I said last week only the environmentalists and BEL's arguments were presented in any media form that caters to a large area of the population. This is all that is needed for a supporter of any of these parties to oppose the other side. Why couldn't the views of many other groups be aired so that the true public could be a part of this? Ms Matola was right to criticize the government for having biased NEAC's decision when it publicly supporting the Chalillo Project

US Ambassador Visits El Pilar

U.S. Ambassador Russell Freeman and Mrs. Susan Freeman visited the Mayan site El Pilar. Thursday, November 1st. Hosting the visit was Amigos of

knowing that NEAC's members is a majority government's representations. Again, we all sit back and enjoy the ride while someone else stands up in defence of our resources and us.

That is just one example of ignoring the people. Of course, we all prefer to sit back and just let destiny have its way. But how much longer can we continue to live like this? Obviously we don't see that our resources are going out of reach. It seems as if we will all get up and want to fight when there's nothing left to fight for, unknowing to many that the time to save our country is when it's still grows. Take BTL for instance; instead of paying \$8.00 every month for line access and maintenance and \$2.00 for phone rental we will now pay \$20.00 and \$5.00 respectively. This is an immediate and mandatory increase of \$15.00 to our phone bills every month. Then a doubling of whatever we use just to call within Belize City. This will be the biggest increase and it will hurt the greater part of our population the most: the daily users - you! The government can do nothing - This happens when they

ment to those who are buying we do when BWS, BEL, and sc lies decide to dig deeper into.

I am not the only one w these statements. I am not th shot who feels this way beca one who is a poor Belizean w ment, but I am one of the few the sun in my face and drag things are not right. Can you not say the same then it's making a stand to defend dem the power to us, so that our ch a Belize that belongs to Beli: want for Belize why I speak o country while it is still ours.

In closing, I would like to happy, safe and blessed Gari Celebrate safely. May God ble Until next week, so long.

VACANCY

An International Organization has a vacancy for a Programme Assistant. The s would be required to work in Belmopan where the UNICEF Office is located. He/S Programme staff in maintaining control of the Country Programme operations and pr planning, implementation and monitoring activities.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1 Collects information mainly from records and reports and prepares periodic on programme and project activities.
- 2 Organizes data and information, prepares and maintains records, documents for the monitoring of project/programme implementation.
- 3 Contributes to the preparation of reports, project documents and submissions by providing information, preparing tables and drafting relatively r Prepares background information for use in discussions with Government: tions. Participates in the briefing and debriefing of project personnel.
- 4 Scrutinizes plans of operations, exchanges of letters and takes appropriate Assists in the administrative process of government requests for assistan
- 5 Carry out specific administrative/operational control tasks for project/prog
- 6 Verifies the authenticity and correctness of documentation submitted by g NGO's on programme expenditures according to the established procedur terly Cash Assistance Governments Reports for submission to HQ. Mainta such documentation and assists Programme Officers in the follow-up of o ing documentation, by direct contact with Government and NGO counterp
- 7 Provides logistical support to Programme staff in relation to meetings/train being organized for partners.
- 8 As IT Focal Point Provides technical, operational and procedural support tion of information management of the office.
- 9 Performs other duties as required.

Qualifications, Skills and Attributes:

Minimum Associate Degree in Business Administration;
Good working knowledge in computer, skills in Microsoft Suite; Windows NT, Netw