

# Sweeping condemnation of CNS closure

There has been blanket condemnation of the recent order by President Jagdeo that CNS 6 television should be closed for four months. Political parties, press groups, trade unions, the human rights association and other groups have all denounced the move. A group of Christian pastors is currently meeting to discuss the issue and are expected to issue a statement shortly.

CNS 6's licence was suspended because he aired a commentary on the station last July which was interpreted by some as having the potential of inciting religious intolerance in Guyana. The

commentary was also aired on HBTV 9. Mr Mike McCormack, Executive member of the Guyana Human Rights Association (GHRA) told the Catholic Standard that the GHRA is preparing a full statement on the issue which would also be out shortly. In an invited comment he said that he felt several issues were embodied in the Sharma suspension. The first he said was the way in which powers which should be appropriately exercised by the court are being executive President. "If Mr Sharma stepped out of line in any serious way this should be dealt with by an independent tribunal or by the courts." He noted it was not a systematic breach and

described it as "extreme" that a single broadcast should evoke the possibility of the station being suspended. Mr McCormack also feels that accruing powers of this kind to the President renders presidential politics of all kinds substantially undemocratic. "The President's party is a direct beneficiary from the exercise of power in this way and that should not be the case", he said.

The Joint Opposition Political Parties (JOPP) also issued a statement saying that along with the religious community, civil society and the trades union movement, they wish to express their deep disappointment with the suspension of the broadcasting license of CNS 6 for a period of four months. "We believe that the frivolous explanation proffered by the President is intended to cloud the real intention behind the suspension: the silencing of all voices of dissent. The very fact that the controversial Vieira commentary was also aired on another channel, but no such action was taken against that channel, evidences the reality that CNS 6 is the victim of sustained Government harassment and persecution. Also given the fact that this controversial commentary is currently engaging the

## Marians Urged to maintain 'balance'

The necessity for students to strive to maintain a balance between curriculum and co-curricular activities and also in the area of their mental and emotional lives was stressed by both the Principal of Marian Academy and the guest speaker at the school's twelfth prize giving ceremony held on Monday. Marian Academy can be justifiably very proud of its consistently high academic standards and achievements throughout its history. There has also been growing participation and successes by the students of that school in a number of in co-curricular activities related to sports, the environment, music, community service, dance and a number of others. These are also held to be very important to the wider education of the young men and women as they provide the opportunity to develop physical and mental skills, leadership, coordination, and fitness and to learn concepts related to team-work and character enhancement in a fun, structured and learning environment.

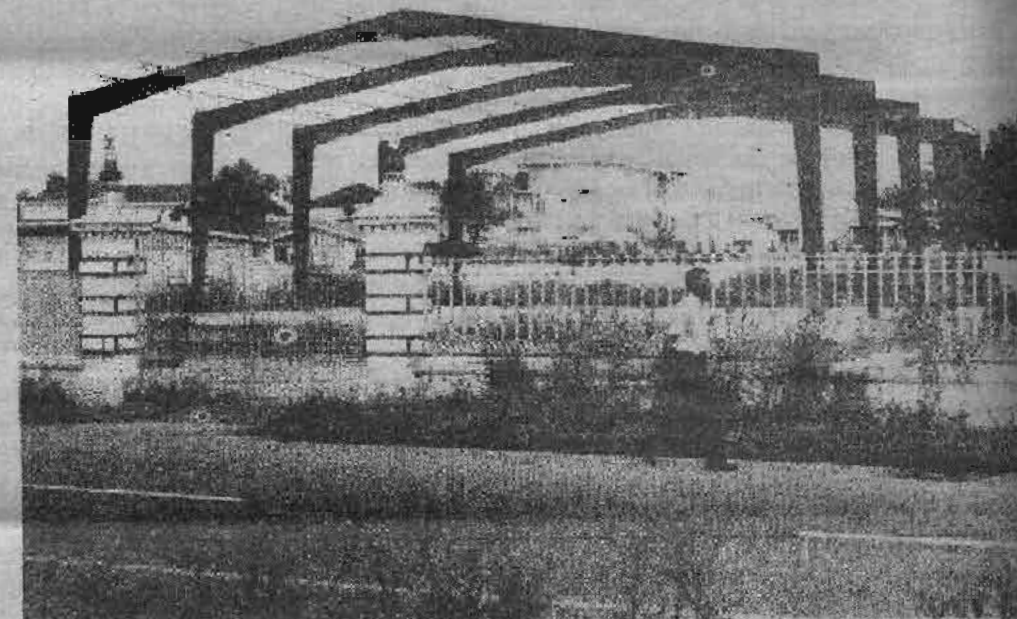
At Monday's prize giving ceremony

head mistress of Marian Academy, Ursuline Sister Marie Harper sent a strong reminder that the school emphasizes the importance of providing and maintaining balance during the school life of every student. She also pointed out that while the learning institution was blessed with wonderful facilities and surroundings, it was unfortunate that some students are not actually taking the time to neither enjoy nor participate in the many co-curricula activities. In delivering the principal's report at the proceedings which were held in the school's

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*Please turn to back page*

## Rising from the ashes



Workmen last week completed the erecting of the steel frame of the new Sacred Heart Church as work on the project continued. The next step in this phase of the reconstruction works would be affixing the roof.

Members of the building committee say they are still far from the target of \$85 million to complete this segment of the reconstruction and are still hoping more generous donors will come forward.

### 28th WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME

#### BISHOP'S ENGAGEMENTS

Sun 9th October: 07:30 hrs  
Mass at Holy Rosary

Wed 12th October: 17:00 hrs Meet  
Diocesan Financial Council

Thurs 13th October: 18:00 hrs  
Confirmation at Meadow Bank

Sat 15th October: 13:00 hrs  
Catechists' course at Fatima Parish

Sun 16th October: 08:00 hrs Mass  
at Holy Spirit. Meet Confirmation  
Candidates

+ Francis Allevne, OSB

# THE SUSPENSION OF CHANNEL 6

Pope Benedict XVI started his recent speech to the Parliament of Germany with a brief story from sacred Scripture.

"In the First Book of the Kings, it is recounted that God invited the young King Solomon, on his accession to the throne, to make a request. What will the young ruler ask for at this important moment? Success - wealth - long life - destruction of his enemies? He chooses none of these things. Instead, he asks for a listening heart so that he may govern God's people, and discern between good and evil (cf. 1 Kings 3:9). Through this story, the Bible wants to tell us what should ultimately matter for a politician. His fundamental criterion and the motivation for his work as a politician must not be success, and certainly not material gain.

"Politics must be a striving for justice, and hence it has to establish the fundamental preconditions for peace. Naturally a politician will seek success, as this is what opens up for him the possibility of effective political action. Yet success is subordinated to the criterion of justice, to the will to do what is right, and to the understanding of what is right.

"Success can also be seductive and thus can open up the path towards the falsification of what is right, towards the destruction of justice. Without justice

taught by the Popes and the Second Vatican Council to the situation. We are taken back to the late seventies when the Catholic Standard, then a lone voice for justice, was denied a free gift of newsprint from abroad on the grounds that it would offend the laws restricting imports.

We are not contesting the rightness or wrongness of the suspension. The issue is the timing of the action. Voices critical of the governing party have been muted just before an election. Do the President and his advisors believe that this will promote success for their party? Pope Benedict reminds them that seeking what is right, not success is the fundamental task of the politician.

- what else is the State but a great band of robbers?" as Saint Augustine once said. . . To serve right and to fight against the dominion of wrong is and remains the fundamental task of the politician."

In considering the suspension of CNS Channel 6, Pope Benedict's remarks are truly relevant.

Can it be right to ~~guy~~ the main TV channel which offers a voice to opposition parties on the virtual eve of an election?

**CATHOLIC STANDARD**  
Editor: **Colin Smith** Tel: **222 South Rd & Wallington St., Georgetown**

We are taken back to 1974 when the government of the day acquired an almost complete monopoly over the media. That action provoked a pastoral letter of protest from Bishop Benedict Singh, applying principles

# RESPONSIBILITY

Little interest is focused on who is responsible for any activity until something goes wrong, then the search is to identify who should be answerable.

Responsibility is linked to the role a person has to play. Given the situation that persons have different roles in life, responsibility will vary and maybe inconsistent. With responsibility there is authority and accountability. Two kinds of responsibility are normally acknowledged:

**ACTIVE RESPONSIBILITY** - is responsibility before something has happened and the person actually responsible is expected to act in such a manner that undesired consequences are avoided as much as possible. The chance for positive consequences must be big as possible.

**PASSIVE RESPONSIBILITY** - is applicable after something undesirable has happened. So, if you are passively responsible you need to be able to justify your actions.

To hold someone passively responsible, four conditions usually apply:- **WRONG DOING**

Responsible behaviour is often sought and measured against acceptable norms or codes of conduct. We all have responsibility which vary, but have the common element of complying with expressed values both moral and legal. As we lament a decline in standards and values the positive factor is often to inculcate responsible behaviour.

- "Causal contribution - The individual must have made a causal contribution to the consequences for which he is held responsible.

- Although often multiple causal contributions have to be present, events rarely have only one cause.

- Foreseeability - The individual must have been able to anticipate the consequences of his actions. Although we do expect people to do as much as reasonably possible to know the consequences of one's actions. Important here is also the precautionary principle. (The precautionary principle states that if an action or policy has suspected risk of causing harm to the public or to the environment, in the absence of a scientific consensus that harm would not ensue, the burden of proof falls on those who would advocate taking the action.)

- Freedom of action - The individual must have been given the opportunity to choose for himself."

Parents have a responsibility to their children and others. Expected duties which are attached to parents include providing

Parental responsibilities include the provision of a home environment

and certain things such as food, shelter, education, security and comfort. This is one area in which irresponsible behaviour is often very evident.

On the other hand, children have a moral duty as the years progress to ensure the comfort and well being of their parents. So often this is lacking. In the work environment there is normally a code of conduct in which the Organisations lay down guidelines for responsible behaviour. An aspirational code expresses the moral values of a Profession/Company. An advisory code outlines how profession/company exercise moral judgment at all levels.

"**DISCIPLINARY CODE**" - which ensures that the behaviour of all employees satisfies certain values and norms.

"**CODE OF ETHICS**" - have several limitations as it is hard to describe what one should do in every situation. Ethical codes try to describe universal moral rules but moral rules are generally not universal.

"**DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY**" - In the problem of many hands where something goes wrong for which the group is responsible, it is difficult to determine who did what. Hence, identifying a single person responsible can be difficult.

"Ethics discusses moral responsibilities. The law discusses legal responsibilities. To make a difference the latter is called liabilities"

It is necessary in whatever we do to recognise duties and responsibilities. It is a fine quality for persons to be seen and recognised as being responsible. It adds to their deportment and accentuates their personality. Too often persons abandon or treat causally their responsibilities to others. That is a selfish, inconsiderate and insensitive and is magnified when the consequence of acts of irresponsibility surface.

The earlier we learn of the need to accept and deal with our duties in a responsible manner the better for all parties concerned. For responsibility connotes trust, instills confidence and stimulates admiration.

With rights there are responsibilities. As we think of the many responsibilities we have to our family, employer and employees, friends, relatives, people, society and to our Country, let us not forget our responsibility to the Creator.

## Viewpoint By Vibert Parvatan

## Letters to the Editor

# Complaints about Catholic Standard

Dear Editor,

Mr. Suseran is right. You should have informed us why the Sept 16 issue was missing. We do care you know. I must also complain about the layout. Must we now expect page 7 to come before page 4? And it is becoming a regular occurrence that the direction at the end of a part of an article on one page leads to nowhere, not even to some other page.

The children's page 8 of the Sept 23 issue by the St. Finbar Girls' RC, Arouca, was nice, but a little bit of editing should have fixed the feast of St. Teresa to Saturday, not Tuesday; likewise, the feasts of the Guardian Angels and of St. Francis of Assisi to Sunday and Tuesday, not Wednesday and Friday. The children I teach like to colour, but some also like to read.

Yes, I realize it was written for a previous year, but is this the standard of the Catholic Standard? I did volunteer proofreading services to you, which have never been taken up.

**ALFRED BHULAI**

**Editor's Note:** We too are trying to work out what happened to the papers of September 16 which were destined for New Amsterdam. They certainly left Georgetown the usual way!

We try our best with limited resources to correct mistakes before going to press but alas a few do slip through occasionally and we apologize most sincerely for that.

We are discussing ways in which the paper can be improved and you will surely hear from us on the proof reading offer.

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Sun 9 October

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The programme on Chan 8: N/A is at 18.00hrs;

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# Religious groups offended by Viera commentary?

Dear Editor,

So Mr Sharma is accused of having broadcast a commentary which was intended to incite religious intolerance.

Mr Editor, this broadcast was aired since last July. If it was claimed that it was intended to incite religious intolerance how is it that the only person who has shown religious intolerance is the goodly Bishop?

I have not seen a single letter in any of the press including the Catholic Standard in which anyone objected to what was said in the commentary or found it offensive. Not from the Catholic Bishop Alleyne or any Pentecostal Pastor, the two groups the offending broadcast was said to set at odds against each other. I have not heard any commentary on the radio or TV in which anyone either challenged or condemned what was said in the offending broadcast.

Perhaps the average Guyanese is much more inclined to show much more tolerance and respect for freedom of speech, even when this might be abused, than those in power. Perhaps the average Catholic and Pentecostal take the command from their leader to love and to forgive seriously.

I would also like to make this point. On a local television station I have heard a religious leader refer to Jesus Christ as a jackass. There was no reaction from the ACB or the President Minister of Information. There is another religious broadcaster who constantly, incessantly preaches nothing but contempt for Christianity every single week. There has been no reaction from the ACB or the President Minister of Information.

Just a few hours before His Excellency was due to speak at a major pre-election rally of the ruling party he decides to suspend the operating licence of this television station which no doubt would have been the most popular among opposition groups for the airing of their election campaign commercials and advertising. Yet according to reports the President denied that the suspension was related to elections and said that the timing never crossed his mind! He then went on to show how he could have used a longer suspension to keep CNS 6 off the air for the election period but still maintained that timing never crossed his mind.

According to reports the President even went so far as to tell Mr Sharma that he could appeal to the next Head of State, thus saying in effect that Mr Sharma was not going to get a pardon or reconsideration until the elections are over.

Yet the President maintains that the timing of the suspension never crossed his mind.

Guyanese an important voice has been silenced. No one should rejoice over this closure. The suppression of any independent voice in Guyana is a threat to all of us. Even those who may condemn CNS 6 or its owner must take alarm.

**C. DAVIS**

# Groups in Forum on the Future of Policing

Leaders of the two main opposition coalitions, the AFC's Khemraj Ramjattan and APNU's David Granger outlined details of their Party's proposals for the future of policing in Guyana at a Forum held at Cara Lodge Conference Centre on Friday September 30, 2011. The Forum, hosted by the coalition of civic organizations, Facing the Future (FtF), aimed at providing members of the public with an opportunity to hear the major parties address the issue of reform of policing.

The ruling PPP/C did not accept the invitation to attend. In a letter received by FtF on the day of the Forum the presidential contender of the PPP indicated that he could not attend because his schedule was already booked. The letter went on to note the actions taken by the PPP/C Government since 2007 on security reform. However, it was left unclear why no other Party representative was available particularly since the invitation had indicated that the Forum was not seeking Presidential candidates to attend, but rather aimed to create an opportunity for discussions of party policy. In introductory remarks made by Kerry-Anne Cort, a representative of Rights of Children (ROC) - one of the civic coalition organizations involved in FtF - stated that "Facing the Future (FtF) shares the belief that Guyana has the potential for all Guyanese to live and work and build a prosperous future here. However, such an inclusive future for all Guyanese is only possible if we develop political arrangements in which race is irrelevant and which allow much greater participation of people in the way political decisions are taken." She went on to state that FtF was challenging the widespread rejection of politics, particularly by 'very turned off' young people, encouraging them to believe that they can change things for the better, if they start to make demands for a more modern, honest and transparent system of politics.

FtF announced that one of its current activities, a signature campaign to achieve reforms in the electoral system which would also enable voters to know more closely for whom they are voting, had to

date collected over 3,000 signatures from all 10 Regions. One half of this total came from Region 4 and a further 25% from Regions 1, 2 and 3. 55% of the signatories were females. This is an encouraging number since it took some time for the campaign to get into its stride. Persons wishing to sign up can also do so through the new FtF website.

Following the presentations on policing, members of the audience questioned the speakers with respect to witness protection, the capacity of the GPF to rehabilitate itself, the image of the police force as a negative influence on high court trials and restorative justice.

Former High Court Judge, Winston Moore, chaired the meeting and Cecil

## Marians urged to maintain balance

*From front page*

auditorium, Sister Marie said one of the aims of the school is to facilitate the total development of each individual by giving due attention to intellectual, spiritual, physical, social, emotional and moral dimensions.

Physical Education, she said, "As an integral part of the curriculum seeks to facilitate the acquisition of physical skills, including good posture, strength, mobility and endurance; the development of good social habits through co-operation, team work and friendly competition and the promotion of hobbies and leisure pursuits."

She advised parents to supervise carefully, have rules and limitations around internet time, and encourage plenty of off-line activities like reading books, playing games, and keeping fit.

In her presentation the principal pointed out that some advocates believe we can Google, Blog, Skype and Twitter our way to enlightenment. However she noted that opposition skeptics, such as Mark Baurelein argues in his book titled "The Dumbest Generation" that this incessant communication is really a complex manifestation of miscommunication that does not lead to intellectual growth, but rather to a stunting of genuine intellectual development.

Morris, President of the Guyana Society for the Blind gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the FtF. Mr. Morris also indicated that FtF aimed to hold similar discussions on other issues of pressing concern prior to the elections.

**Sponsoring Organizations:**  
Amerindian Peoples Association (APA), Church Women United (CWU), Commonground, Community-Based Rehabilitation -EBD, Guyana Council of Churches (GCC), Guyana Human Rights Association (GHRA) Guyana Society for the Blind, Guyana Workers Union (GWU), Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Rights of Children (ROC), Red Thread, Vilvoorden Women's Organization.

Those present included Roman Catholic Bishop, Francis Alleyne, members of the Clergy and Religious Sisters, parents, staff and students of Marian Academy, members of the of Board of Directors and of the Parent Teachers Association. The guest speaker Miss Cheryl Andrews encouraged those present to maintain a balance in the ways in which they react emotionally to situations and to develop a capacity for not 'pushing our hot button' which often results in an emotional explosion either in public or internally. This emotional balance she said affects how students study how they perform and how they survive in particular surroundings. Attitude is a choice, she counseled, adding that we should "choose to diffuse and move on". Sister Marie acknowledged the superb efforts of various groups within the parent body and friends who teamed to make the past academic year a successful one including Class Representatives, the PTA Executives, many sponsors especially with their Year Book, friends who come to their aid, the Guyana Christian Charities, based in Canada, which have given gifts to the school and sponsored children. Thanks were also expressed to Mr. Gabriel Lall who donated the Key board in memory of his dear wife Ruth.



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# Vatican newspaper criticizes BBC change to 'common era' dating

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican newspaper said it was "historically senseless hypocrisy" for the BBC to drop the dating abbreviations B.C. and A.D. on the grounds that they might offend non-Christians.

In a front-page commentary Oct. 4, L'Osservatore Romano said the change reflected a wider effort to "cancel every trace of Christianity from Western culture."

The British media corporation recently announced it would replace B.C. (Before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini, or Year of the Lord) with B.C.E. (Before Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era.) It said the new terms were a "religiously neutral" alternative.

The Vatican newspaper added its voice to a growing number of critics, who have noted that the new dating abbreviations still use the birth of Christ as a reference point, but without acknowledging the connection. "To deny the historically revolutionary importance of the coming of Christ on earth, which is also accepted by those who do not recognize him as the son of God, is an act of enormous foolishness," the newspaper said. "Why not recognize that from that moment, the world changed?" it said. For one thing, it said, the modern concept of human rights owes much to the new Christian vision of the equality of human beings as children of God.

The newspaper said it was "anti-historical" to deny the cultural

debt owed by civilization to Christianity.

## Condemnation of CNS closing

*From front page*

attention of the Court, this suspension indeed flies in the face of the procedural sanctity of the judicial process," the JOPP statement said. The political parties also noted that the suspension is purported to be done on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting which they claim is an improperly constituted body and the status of which is the subject of court proceedings.

The political parties also feel that the closure of CNS 6 at this critical period, just before the holding of the 2011 General and Regional Elections, can only be calculated to silence all voices of dissent. They referred to the timing of this action as a shameful breach of all the rules, values and conventions of the democratic societal model. Moreover they said the suspension has to be seen as a blatant attack on the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression, both in its letter and spirit.

The JOPP statement also expressed the view that this suspension of CNS 6 "effectively vitiates all the lofty ideals recently promulgated by Guyana Elections Commission in its media code of conduct. Thus, this matter must immediately engage the attention of the Commission, since it represents a major jeopardy for the holding elections that are free and fair."

The Guyana Trades Union Congress described the suspension of CNS 6 as an abuse of power and violation of rights and said "the people must raise their voices against this morally depraved regime.

"The church which is seen as society's moral compass up until 1992 played a visible role in educating and advancing the rights of citizens. Their current visible absence from the national conversation to ensure the realization of this held belief is seen as an abrogation of their moral responsibility even more so that they offer prayers for the president and this government as they transgress the rights of their flock. The religious bodies and opposition political leaders are reminded that as they speak of peace, the price for peace is justice and together we must be prepared to pay this price, The GTUC said.

"The decision of the president that will cause 30 workers to go on the breadline when translated in an average household of five (mother, father and three children as measured by the trade union) it means the livelihood and well being of 150 persons will be affected and those of many others who rely on their purchasing power," the GTUC said in their statement.

### Catholic Memory Lane

August 30th 1950 saw the arrival of Scarborough Priest Fr. Patrick Moore who brought the pilgrim statue of Our lady of Fatima to British Guiana. The statue visited nearly all the parish churches in the country, including a stop at Kaieteur Falls. Every where the Statue and Fr. Moore were greeted by hundreds of Catholics often in procession followed by Sermon and Benediction. School children too had their times of devotion.

The Catholic Standard of December 1950 reported that the effect of the visit had been truly remarkable and the outpouring of Graces too manifest to ignore and that Our lady's request at Fatima for daily and family Rosary should never be forgotten. The statue left on the 5th of November for another country. Fr. Moore returned over a decade later and again crowds attended wherever the Statue was taken. Photo shows a group of Scouts taking the Statue into the compound of St. Peter's Church at B/V.



**Dr. Jamshid Aidun**  
(Specialist in Urology)  
Will be holding Clinic  
From November 7th, at  
**St. Joseph Mercy Hospital**  
He will be working Monday through  
Friday  
From 9:00hrs to 12:00noon  
Appointments can be made by