



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 25, 2010
CONTACT Colin Robinson: 758-7676 • caisott@gmail.com

**“WAR” ON SAME-SEX LOVE SPURS YOUNG PEOPLE TO ORGANISE
ACROSS SEXUAL IDENTITY TO PROTECT EACH OTHER**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 25, 2010
CONTACT Colin Robinson: 758-7676 • caisott@gmail.com

“WAR” ON SAME-SEX LOVE SPURS YOUNG PEOPLE TO ORGANISE ACROSS SEXUAL IDENTITY TO PROTECT EACH OTHER

A visit to Trinidad & Tobago by a “reformed” American homosexual pastor affiliated with Focus on the Family and the Exodus International ex-gay movement has instead galvanized local organizing for respect for sexual differences – in history-making ways. The weeklong visit by Phillip Lee of California-based His Way Out Ministries, at the invitation of Hospital Christian Fellowship, Lawyers for Jesus and the Emmanuel Community, was intended as a mission “to combat what seems to be a growing acceptance of homosexuality in Trinidad”.

But, in what the leading local gay group, the Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (CAISO) has dubbed “the largest (and perhaps the first) GLBT protest in T&T’s history”, a group of young people, a number of them heterosexual, spent their own funds to demonstrate that young people have a different vision from Lee and visit organizers about sexual inclusion, mental health and safety for young people in the nation.

The young group, who attended the anti-gay Christians’ signature youth event, a “sexual health” seminar, almost outnumbered other participants. The programme was moved at the last minute from its intended location at Naparima Girls High School to the pentecostal Prayer and Praise Open Bible Chapel in Cocoyea. CAISO contacted officials at both the Ministry of Education and the school before the event, urging them to ensure they did not facilitate harm to young people. The visit is promoting the scientifically discredited message that homosexual attraction is a disorder and that young people can be cured.

“Young people are taking care of each other in ways where these adults, who are doctors and lawyers, have failed us,” said 20-year-old Brendon O’Brien, one of the lead organizers of the October 23 activity. “Their message of shame, stigma and spiritual violence, not love, is out of timing, unscientific, and it harms young people’s healthy development. All children should feel safe in their schools and in their country. Young people are saying no to this negative preaching, and trying to protect other young people from it.” Lee’s hosts and promoters of his message include gastroenterologist Judith Henry, Children’s Authority board member Maria Dillon-Remy and Garthlyn Pilgrim, who composed a pamphlet for the event. The group declared war on same-sex attraction at an October 23 morning breakfast attended by the Mayor of Port of Spain and Judge Alice Yorke Soo-Hon. At the afternoon event in Cocoyea, the young people asked Henry to support anti-discrimination legislation to protect young gay people from the violence and victimization they fear will result from this war. Hospital Christian Fellowship opposes such laws.

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