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[More "Hands of God"](#)



Couple Drops KMBH-FM Radio Show Because Of Censorship Incident at Public Broadcast Station

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HARLINGEN - "North of the Border" has gone south in the wake of the "Hand of God" controversy at KMBH.

Joe and Rosa Perez pulled the plug on their weekly KMBH-FM radio show Friday to protest KMBH-TV's refusal last week to air the Frontline episode "Hand of God."

"I felt so damned embarrassed to be associated with the station," Joe Perez said. "I consider myself a cultural activist and making a statement about this is as important as anything else."

"North of the Border," a program about music that has traveled to this side of the Rio Grande from Mexico and Latin America, had aired on KMBH-FM for five years. "Hand of God" concerns the child abuse scandal that rocked the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston in recent years. KMBH, the local Public Broadcasting System affiliate, is owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brownsville.

On Friday, Monsignor Pedro Briseño, KMBH's general manager, denied any connection between the station's ownership, the show's subject matter and the decision not to air "Hand of God."

Briseño did not return several calls seeking comment Monday about the Perezes' resignation.

Perez said he and his wife had provided "North of the Border" at no cost to KMBH. They are retired teachers living in Olmito who also perform folk music as Runbo al Anacua.

The resignation e-mail was addressed to Chris Maley, program director of KMBH-FM, Perez said. But Maley was away from the office on Friday. It was Briseño who replied to Perez. The two exchanged several e-mails, Perez said.

"His whole tone was like a priest talking to a 13-year-old ... in the confessional," said the retired teacher. "I didn't like that."

"To be honest, we were starting to lose our enthusiasm after five years of doing this," he said.

Perez said the controversy over "Hand of God" was the final straw. Perez said to himself, "We don't need to be there anymore."

Perez said he and his wife will attempt to air "North of the Border" on other stations.

"We're not trying to make a living at this," Perez said about the show. "We're not going to charge for it. It's just a cultural statement we want to make."

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