

Sunday, SEPTEMBER 30, 2001

AMANDALABELIZE

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# Canada's dark side in Belize

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Harrison Ford only put his name to it to give it prominence. He alleged that the conservationists are trying to scare off investors on the world market who may want to buy stocks in Fortis Inc., so Fortis would in turn back off from building Chalillo.

A September 21, 2001 CIBC World Market Equity Research report written for Fortis Inc. said that "we are not deterred with respect to our buy

recommendation for Fortis by actor Harrison Ford's views on the company's proposed \$45 million hydroelectric dam in Belize.

"He postulates that Fortis is wrong in proceeding with the dam, because he feels that the dam is environmentally unfriendly and economically unattractive for the citizens of Belize."

"We believe that the [Belize] government and Fortis have enviable

environmental track records."

The report concluded that even if it [Chalillo] were not built, it would not have a material impact on the [financial] outlook for the company.

Young said that this shows that Fortis is not planning to build Chalillo for profit. He insists that Belize needs new sources of power supply, and that both Chalillo and the bagasse plant have to be built. He said that if the environmentalists succeed in stopping Chalillo, it would mean no further hydropower development in Belize.

The Environmental Impact Assessment for the Chalillo dam project released to the public on Tuesday, August 28, 2001, asserts that "information deficiencies and the unproven and limited effectiveness of the identified mitigative measures" would cause significant adverse impacts on the environment.

"The impact analysis shows that the project will provide positive impacts

related to labor force, economy, flood control, reliability of power supply, increase in power self-sufficiency, and a decreased cost of electricity," the developer countered in the report.

A Probe International press release dated September 20, 2001, (<http://www.probeinternational.org>) said that "Fortis president, Stanley Usher, is reneging on his vow to abandon the project ...the CIDA report [the Environmental Impact Assessment] showed that the dam would cause untoward damage to the environment."

The EIA is available for public viewing at the Department of Environment in Belmopan, BEL's office in Belize City, BECOL's office at Mollejon in Cayo, and some public libraries until October 1, 2001. The National Environmental Appraisal Committee will thereafter review the EIA and make a ruling.

Fortis is planning to have Chalillo operational by the end of 2003. Its construction is scheduled to begin early 2002.

## BEL/Fortis Inc. responds to Harrison Ford's article

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Sept. 24

Speaking with *Amandala* today, Lynn Young, CEO of Fortis Inc. company's Belize Electricity Limited (BEL), said that he believes the Ford editorial was written by the Natural Resource Defense Council (NRDC), an international conservation organization based in New York, USA, and that

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