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Anti-Chalillo Protest Fizzles



The UDP 3, Aragon, Sylvestre & Mig, along with a gaggle of foreigners protesting Chalillo dam

Belmopan, Tuesday, November 6, 2001

Tuesday morning in the nation's capital, Belmopan, two Chalillo demonstrations took place at the same time. One was "pro" Chalillo and the other was "anti" Chalillo which was

spearheaded by the foreign financed environmental organization, BACONGO.

Besides the BACONGO rent-a-crowd, the BELIZE TIMES noted that a number of high ranking UDP politicians like Aragon, his

bosom buddy Urbina, along with de la Fuente and Sylvestre were part of the "anti" bunch. Their presence in the "anti" camp gave the whole protest a suspicious political patina. The Aragon-Urbina-Sylvestre contingent came off

looking like a gaggle of provocateurs. If memory serves us right the same UDP that are against the Chalillo dam now were emphatically for the dam when they were in

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power. Appears that the UDP are merely jumping on the BACONGO negativity bandwagon and riding it for all its worth.

The BELIZE TIMES also noticed that a significant number of the "anti" Chalillo lethargic protesters were Caucasian foreigners, probably part of the minions of foreign financed saboteurs whose sole agenda is to stop the building of the dam. The foreign special interest groups don't care about helping the people of Belize. They care more about the welfare of parrots and crocodiles than the welfare of Belizeans. The foreign led eco-bunch also has been raising a stink over the alleged flooding of ancient Mayan sites that were coincidentally and suspiciously just discovered. Once again the eco-saboteurs have an oddly anti-Belizean

Chalillo dam.

In a media interview the Mayor of Belmopan, Anthony Chanona, had the following observation on the Chalillo issue. *"I would agree that for too long, on both sides of the fence, the Chalillo debate has gone on as an emotional debate. And it really should be a technical debate and the fact that Mollejon needs to have a retention dam. I hope that this demonstration today is going to again augment towards that point."*

Another outspoken "pro" Chalillo demonstrator, Sandra Wragg, summed up the entire issue in two succinct sentences. She said, *"Yes it's going to cause problems, we're going to disrupt lives, wildlife, but for prosperity, we have to go ahead. We have to do this for the simple reason that it's about time*



Sandra Wragg, an enthusiastic supporter of Chalillo dam

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attitude: they rant on and on about the dead Maya but nary a word about helping the living Maya. What's the deal, one has to die before the eco-bunch gets sympathetic? Aren't living Belizeans worth anything?

From an unofficial head count by the BELIZE TIMES the total number of demonstrators ran approximately at 600. Of those the "anti" Chalillo bunch numbered around 200 and the "pro" Chalillo group was in the neighborhood of 400 strong. If the turn out for the demonstrations is any indication of how the people of Belize feel about that controversial dam project, they are for it two to one. We imagine if the foreign agitators and UDP rabble rousers didn't show up for the demonstration the ratio would be closer to four to one for the

that Belize is able to sustain itself. So let's go for this Chalillo dam."

Devon Lamb, also a "pro" Chalillo demonstrator had this to say, *"The Gringos are trying to brainwash us again, but we are no fools. Belize is for us and we will decide what is best for us. Chalillo is what we need."*

The "anti" Chalillo crew included the 'usual suspects' like the ubiquitous Sharon Matola. Matola gave a well rehearsed rap on what she sees as media misinformation. She accused the press, *"They lie. It is in the papers, it's just a bunch of Americans down there who think the whole country of Belize is a national park. That's not true. We're not against development, we're not against sustainable development."*



Belizean supporters of Chalillo from the West

When an unidentified demonstrator in the background heard Matola's comments, he rejoined, *"That gal protests too, much. She must be in some kind of denial."*

In the near future the National Environ-

mental Assessment Committee will complete its comprehensive evaluation and give its assessment, either pro or con on the effects the dam could possibly have on the terrain, wildlife and ecology.