



CRITICAL

A VOODOO TIME PIECE

By Norris Hall
(17 August, 2000)-

An article appearing in The Reporter of last week reports that the World Conservation Congress has passed a resolution which urges the Government of Belize and Belize Electricity Ltd. to give up plans to build the Chalillo dam. The Editor of that newspaper said that he got this information from the internet. Well let us be reasonable and rational. How could this resolution have be passed by the WCC when it will not be to meeting until in early October in Amman, Jordan? The Editor, Mr. Lawrence, said that he may have made a mistake but that he will re-check his web source. And so did I .Unfortunately my computer does not have a crystal ball and search as hard as I did I could not find the information Mr. Lawrence referred to. Not that I expected to anyway.

One of The Reporter's columnists, Meb Cutlack, in another article in the same paper of last week, profiled himself as having even better connections in the Headquarters in the World Conservation Union which is in Switzerland. This is a country ,by the way, which is highly developed and depends of more than 160 dams, many of them large, to meet this country's demand for energy. And why should be doubt this famous "investigative journalist"?

Cutlack "reports" that the WCC,

which is yet to meet in October, passed a resolution, which according to him "is not pretty reading", saying that it is a condemnation which is more than a rap on the knuckles. This is what he wrote: "The World Conservation Congress condemnation (of the Chalillo dam) is not just a rap on the knuckles for Belize. It is a devastating blow, and there is a good possibility that Belize may never truly recover from it". We must assume that he means the Resolution which he and Editor Lawrence claim has been passed at by the WCC although the 2nd. Congress will not be held in October 2000. The 1st. World Conservation Congress was held in Montreal, Canada in October 1996. At that time the Chalillo project was not an issue. Maybe they are connected into some kind of 'Psychic Web Hotline.

Cutlack also relates the building of the Chalillo Dam to the Hurricane Hattie disaster of 1961. Well fortunately for Cutlack, it is said that the Almighty takes care of fools. By the way a little research reveals that thousand of acres of forest in the area where the proposed Chalillo dam will be built, was destroyed by a massive fire in the early 1950s. Like any natural disaster, nature rejuvenates itself. Remember the 1980 eruption of the Mount St. Helens volcano in 1980? It was a natural disaster but the landscape in recovering, like any other landscape affected by

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nature's way of doing things. There are many like Cutlack who have an Armageddon mentality and even work on their own self-destruction. Paul Ehrlicks in his book, *The Population Bomb*, which was published in 1986, predicted that general crop failures would certainly result in mass starvation in the United States by 1980. There was an oversupply of food. Norman Myers in his 1979 *Sinking Ark*, predicted that thousands of species was going to become extinct in the 1980s. And now Cutlack has entered and contributed to the Prophets of Doom.

I so often read Gregg Easterbrook's work on eco-realism and often as I read and re-read favorite novel, *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. It is always a new book.

Easterbrook writes: "For all the fashionably correct guilt many environmentalists attach to the human presence on Earth, I have no doubt nature look on men and women with lasting affection, because we do what nature asks: We live. We honour the Earth's most basis

injunction: Take of the inanimate, the vapid drone of vibrating atoms, take ye and show me life, this transcendent peculiarity that gives the whole of creation is meaning."

Unfortunately, unlike The Reporter's editor, I do not seem to have the web connection that he has, nor do I have Cutlack's connection with Switzerland. Neither do I have any connections with the WWF (that is the World Wildlife Fund), nor with AES or the Summit Foundation, all of which, readers will recall, were involved in a conspiracy with BACONGO (the Belize Association of Conservation Non-Government Organizations) in opposing the construction of the Chalillo dam to bolster Belize's energy needs. This web of conspiracy continues against us as Belizeans. It is a subversive conspiracy.

I humbly submit that there must be something that I may be missing. Therefore I humbly seek clarification on how the WCC, which will be meeting in October, could have passed such a resolution. Perhaps it is a procedural matter which is not obvious in the rules and regulations of the IUCN. Maybe it's a 'Twilight Zone' time warp thing?

The agenda for this congress will focus on environmental protection at various geographical scales as a consideration for social, economic (energy?) and even the political security of people.

According to the rules of the World Conservation Congress, any DRAFT resolution for debate or discussion at the October Congress, should have been submitted well in advance of the October 2000 meeting.

Resolutions should have been submitted through regional headquarters of the IUCN. In our area, this is in Costa Rica. The Belize Audubon Society is the only financial member of IUCN in this country. Other members included Programme for Belize and Salt Creek Preserve, neither of which have paid their dues to IUCN.

The Belize Audubon Society nor the IUCN regional headquarters in Costa Rica, through which any resolution should have been submitted through this Meso-America Group, say they have no knowledge of any such resolution.

Keep counting.

Oh! What a tangled web we weave when at first we try to deceive.