



The Other Side of the Coin

by Norman Rodriguez

THE REAL ISSUE ABOUT CHALILLO

Any person who is not in tune with this whole Chalillo issue, after having seen what is presented in the BEL documentary and more recently the news, would easily conclude that the only people who are against the damming of the Macal River are the environmentalists. The irony in the whole demonstration of opposition towards the Chalillo Dam is that most Belizeans seem to have at least one problem with the decision to proceed with this dam. If not, why have we heard so much murmuring that it is just another scam by greedy politicians? My take on this Chalillo issue is that any such proposal supported by our government to the point that the Ministers choose to ignore the "NO!" cries of our people and proceeding with what they wish is not good for us. To me, unless they prove to me that going the bagasse way, or using the windmill, or solar systems or a combination of all three to fill the gap, then I am in full support of all those who have been so brave enough to demonstrate in a "NO!" to the building of Chalillo.

The biggest slap in the face of nature and also of all of us who believe in democracy was the Mayor of Belmopan so quickly and easily saying that "it is time to look beyond parrots and..." To me, a person who would so easily brush aside an issue of the environment as me or you slapping at an annoying mosquito forces us wonder what such a person is doing in a position as Mayor. Obviously, the desires of foreigners who recently took over one of the poor people's main assets and necessity is a greater priority than the livelihood of the small man's cheapest

means of transportation, food, and overall survival. Where are the agents of tourism? Or may be they are too afraid to go public and say that this Chalillo project will greatly affect tourism. Still, maybe they are still left in a state of confusion by Hon. Jorge Espot's bravery if they should follow him, the opposition, those who still remain in the cabinet, or the recent We the People Reform Movement.

The other unacceptable behaviour for me was when our Prime Minister joined those in support of Chalillo. Of course, we all have a right to freedom of opinion and expression, but when we find ourselves

BEL Restores Service to 75% of Customers in Southern Belize

The Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) has completed the restoration of electricity services to 75% of its customers in southern Belize, who lost electricity supply as a result of Hurricane Iris.

According to Lynn Young, President and Chief Executive Officer at BEL, he is impressed with the progress of the restoration works in southern Belize.

"I am very pleased that our men have been able to reconstruct the entire primary high voltage lines and 95% of the low voltage electricity system in record time of less than four weeks," Young said. "They have surpassed our expectations, and have been progressing even faster than they did in San Pedro after Hurricane Keith."

in positions of influence and leadership, we must remember many many people follow our actions; therefore, we must refrain from biasing any situation. "The political directorate in the House of Representatives sincerely believes that this is good for Belize..." but what about other concerned groups who also are able to make sound judgements on Belize and our welfare? In fact, I have not said that I do not support the Chalillo Project because I'm aware of the importance of Belize's utility companies planning in advance for the demands of growing population. I wish to see other available methods tried first before we take a step to destroy other important areas of our natural resources. Others have been out in front of the TV to express their views. Though I was not so fortunate, I have my means, but I hope that my opinion is respected.

During the time many of us sit back and watch things happen, the strength of our voice weakens. When all that we own have been sold off, there will be nothing left in this blessed land to fight for so the time to save your country is before you lose it. Then, it will be time to jump the rails of the almost sunken ship. Is that what we wish for? Chalillo should be the lost option and until other methods are evaluated, Chalillo is not the best option for our country. I rest my case.

Until next week, may our Lord continue to protect us even as other countries face so much trials. So long.....

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