

ARCHIVO

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JULY/12/92

PRESIDENT PATRICIO AYLWIN,
PALACIO DE LA MONEDA,
SANTIAGO, CHILE.

92/16169

A: 20 JUL 92

DEAR SIR,

RE: BIO-BIO DAMS

RESPONDING TO THE CALL OF 'PROBE

INTERNATIONAL', I ADDED MY VOICE TO THOSE

PROTESTING THE PROPOSAL TO BUILD DAMS ON

THE

BIO-BIO

RIVER.

AS YOU MUST KNOW THE FOREST ECOSYSTEM OF THE ALTO BIO-BIO IS THE ANCESTRAL LAND AND CENTRE OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE PEHUENCHÉ INDIANS. - THE DAMS WOULD DISPLACE OVER A 1000 PEOPLE AND DISRUPT THE LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS OF MANY MORE WHO LIVE AND FARM ALONG THE RIVER BANK, AND THOSE WHO WOULD SUFFER FROM THE ROAD BUILDING, EXCAVATION, THE SUBSEQUENT LOGGING AND THE TOURISM.

YOU WILL ALSO BE AWARE THAT THE BIO-BIO RIVER IS LOCATED IN ONE OF THE MOST SEISMICALLY ACTIVE REGIONS IN THE WORLD, AND CLOSE BY ARE TWO ACTIVE VOLCANOS. THE WEIGHT OF WATER STORED BEHIND A DAM CAN INDUCE SEISMIC ACTIVITY, AND LANDSLIDES AND AVALANCHES COULD CAUSE CATASTROPHIC FLOODING. ITS A SCENARIO OF DOOM - FOR POOR PEOPLE AND FOR THE ECOSYSTEM.

PANQUE S.A. IS SEEKING A \$125 MILLION LOAN FROM THE WORLD BANK'S 'INTERNATIONAL FINANCE CORPORATION' TO BUILD SIX DAMS ON THE BIO-BIO RIVER. IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT VICTIMIZING ONE SECTOR OF THE POPULATION WITH SPACCIOUS CLAIMS TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST DOES NOT CONSTITUTE DEVELOPMENT.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ALTO BIO-BIO MUST BE STOPPED.

WITH ALL RESPECT I WOULD URGE
1) THE IMMEDIATE RECOGNITION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE PEHUENCHÉ PEOPLES RIGHTS TO DETERMINE THE USE OF THEIR ANCESTRAL LANDS:

2) THE RIGHT OF ALL THOSE AFFECTED TO A HEARING, TO SUE TO PROTECT THEIR LAND, THEIR WATER, AND THEIR FOREST ECOSYSTEMS FROM IRRESPONSIBLE AND UNJUST EXPROPRIATION, AND TO OTHERWISE HOLD THE PROPONENTS LIABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS:

3) THE PROMPT DISCLOSURE OF ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION (INCLUDING TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDIES, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENTS FOR ALL SIX BIO-BIO DAMS), NOT JUST THE PANELOR ITSELF TO ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC THAT REQUESTS SUCH INFORMATION:

A) A HALT TO ALL WORK ON THE BIO-BIO DAMS: AND

5) COMPENSATION FOR BIO-BIO RESIDENTS WHOSE LAND, FORESTS, AND LIVESTOCK HAVE BEEN DESTROYED BY WORK TO DATE.

TRUSTING YOU WILL APPRECIATE MY CONCERN, AND WILL SHARE THAT CONCERN TO HELP ESTABLISH THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS,

I AM SIR,
SINCERELY

Paul E. Bell

C. C. JAIME TORO GONZALEZ
MINISTRO PRESIDENT
COMISION NACIONAL DE ENERGIA
TEGATINOS, 120 PISO 7,
SANTIA GO, CHILE

FRANK POTTER
CANADIAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
THE WORLD BANK AND INTERNATIONAL
FINANCE CORPORATION
1818 H STREET, WASHINGTON, D.C.
20433, USA

THE HONOURABLE DONALD MAZANKOWSKI, M.P.
CANADIAN GOVERNOR TO THE WORLD BANK
AND THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCE CORP,
C/O THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
OTTAWA, ONTARIO, K1A0A6, CANADA.

LEWIS T. PRESTON
PRESIDENT INTERNATIONAL FINANCE CORPORATION,
1818 H STREET, WASHINGTON D.C. 20433
USA

Mr. Frank Potter,
Canadian Executive Director,
The World Bank and International Finance Corp.,
1818 H Street, Washington, D.C. 20433, USA

July 9, 1992

I have followed with interest the work of the World Bank, especially as it concerns projects in poorer countries of the world. Recently I have read about the proposed dams for the Bio-Bio River in Chile, and consideration being given by the Bank to assist in funding this work. I am sure that I do not need to elaborate details for you, but I wish to represent several strong concerns I have.

I understand that the people most directly affected, the Pehuenche, have not had their interests protected, that dams on this river will destroy their way of life and livelihood. I urge the Bank to refuse finances for this work until proper consultation with this People ensures their concerns are honoured.

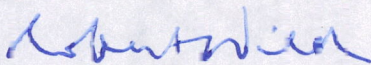
I understand that some work has already gone forward, but no adequate compensation has been paid local people who have suffered loss. I urge the Bank to refuse any funds to the Chilean electric utility doing this work unless and until back payments to these people have been made.

Finally, I understand that feasibility studies concerning economic, environmental and social effects of the proposed dams have not been made public. The Chilean public most directly concerned thus have been excluded from debate on a very contentious issue. Disclosure of these reports is essential if the Bank is to promote democratic decision-making.

Some Canadians, of whom I am one, believe the World Bank must act to support justice wherever it is asked to be involved. This project in Chile seems at present to be sadly lacking in that quality.

Sincerely,

✓
c.c. President Patricio Aylwin
Santiago, Chile
Jaime Toha Gonzalez
Ministro President, Santiago.
The Hon. D. Mezankowski, M.P., Ottawa
Lewis T. Preston, Washington, D.C.


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