

**Dear Mr. Smitherman: [Minister of Energy and Infrastructure & Deputy Premier (Ontario Liberal Party)]**

**I heard from my cottage neighbour about the Bala meeting in regards to the Bala Falls Hydro project. I am really sorry I wasn't there. For unknown reasons I did not receive a notice as he did. I would like it to be known that I would have been there to support the leaders of that meeting and was not ignoring the situation. No one I know wants to see this go through and for good reason. *(See the attachment written by Jack Hutton of Bala)***

**I am 69 years of age and have been exposed to the Bala area since I was sixteen years of age. In my case my opinion is very personal. My family and I have a lifetime of memories at Bala Falls. Disturbing the present dam is like destroying a piece of history if nothing else. All one has to do is look at the Bala signs for the Precambrian shield and anyone could appreciate the significance of this most beautiful work of nature. This project needs to be stopped.**

**I would like to go on record as a long time resident of the Bala community that I am strongly opposed to this Hydro dam project. You could call it fear of the unknown and you would probably be right. I along with a majority of other residents and cottagers did not know about the plan until a couple of weeks ago.**

**A personal note and an aside:**

**With all due respect, and I admit I digress, I would offer my perspective as a lifelong resident of Ontario. Many people still continue to talk negatively about Mr. Mike Harris and his terrible past history as the Premier of Ontario. It is my opinion that with all his faults he at least had an interest and the courage to protect our natural wilderness and he was forthright, open and up-front about what he was doing.**

**Isn't it the Liberals that are always talking about the Conservatives and the hidden agenda of Mr. Steven Harper? Even though Mr. McGuinty is Provincial Premier and not Federal Government, I can't remember anything being made public on this item by Mr. McGuinty, his ministers or the local Muskoka elected officials. If they did publicize it I am sure it was not in any publications that reach Muskoka Lake residents and cottagers on a regular basis. It is my**

understanding that the local politicians did not even have the courtesy to attend the meeting let alone inform the locals. There is no doubt in my mind that this shows a real lack of courage and transparency. This covert plan has all the earmarks of a “hidden agenda”. My observation has been that premier Dalton McGuinty seems to avoid being in the foreground on anything that is controversial with Ontarians. How often do we see our Premier in the foreground on large controversial Ontario issues. One example would be Native Canadian disputes.

If the Liberal Provincial Government is ever to get my vote they would need to show that they care more about the people of Ontario while gaining some courage into the bargain.

Sincerely

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