

Motigate report: Charge Somare

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"IN doing so, the Prime Minister, the chief of staff, Mr Assaigo, Colonel Alois Tom Ur breached sections 203, 204 and 205 of the Constitution. As sections 203, 204 and 205 provide no specific sanctions, the board recommends that they be charged for violating the Constitution under section 23," the report states.

The specific charges relating to Sir Michael were:

- HE allegedly issued the direction for Moti to be flown out through his then chief of staff Leonard Louma, who conveyed the direction to former National Security Advisory Council director-general Joseph Assaigo;
- HE be charged under the Organic Law on Duties and Responsibilities of Leadership;
- HE be further investigated for his role in directing the evacuation of Moti as the Australian lawyers' district court case was still pending; and
- HE be charged with conspiracy to defeat the course of justice by allegedly directing the flying of out Moti despite ongoing court proceedings in the district court.

The board recommended that Mr Louma be also charged for various offences including conspiracy and perverting the course of justice.

Other notable figures in the Moti saga who attracted various charges and recommendations for further investigations include former chief secretary to government Mr Kalinoe, former Office of Security Co-ordination Assessments (OSCA) director-general Mr Assaigo, former acting PNGDF commander Mr Ur, Colonel Vagi Oala, Lt Colonel Chester Bero-bero, Lt Colonel Ron Hosea, former diplomat Barney Rongap and Mr Kalinoe's former executive officer Job Kasa.

While copies of the report are already in the public domain, only Sir Michael can release the report.

The Prime Minister's attempts to gag the report's release triggered condemnation by Australia, who are still pushing for it to be released to the public.



Refugee camp? No, that's the tent village to house 30,000 SDA followers who are gathered in Mt Hagen to celebrate the church's 50 years in the Western Highlands Mission. Picture: JOHNNY POIYA.

Tent city in Mt Hagen

By JOHNNY POIYA

TWENTY-TWO cows were slaughtered yesterday in Mt Hagen in one of the biggest religious celebrations in the region. More than 30,000 members of the Seventh Day Adventist church from around the country and the Pacific region gathered at the Highlands Agriculture Training Institute near Mt Hagen to mark the Golden Jubilee of the church's existence in the Western Highlands Mission. The Western Highlands Mission consists of Enga, Southern Highlands and Western Highlands provinces with a membership of over 60,000. The head of the church in the South Pacific Mission Paster Laurie Evans, is the guest speaker in the week-long celebration which ends on Saturday.

Report gag bid to protect egos: Judge

By ALEX RHEENEY

A NATIONAL Court judge yesterday described the Julian Moti saga as Papua New Guinea's version of the United States' Watergate scandal.

Speaking before quashing Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare and three others' application to nullify the entire proceedings of the PNG Defence Force (PNGDF) Moti Inquiry, Justice Bernard Sakora said their attempts to suppress the inquiry's proceedings and final report conjured up images of the Watergate scandal.

He said the application was only aimed at protecting egos and not in the public interest.

"The reason (to suppress the report) has nothing to do with supporting or giving support to what I call in my judgment ... I am trying to describe it with a word ... I

don't think you can describe it in any other word except protecting huge egos ... and I have it in my judgment ... huge egos of olympic proportions," Justice Sakora said.

Infuriated at the applicants' failure to table a copy of the report since the start of the proceedings, the judge said the court went out of its way to get a copy to no avail.

The current Government's practice in changing its views overnight on major policy decisions also came under fire, Justice Sakora describing it as a "dysfunctional system" that resulted in Sir Michael sacking Kavieng MP Martin Aini as Defence minister in the last government.

"With respect, the entire circumstances of the 10th of October 2006 flight to freedom or flight of fugitive from justice; the subsequent public uproar and the ineffective or absence of internal investiga-

tions by the PNGDF and the RPNGC (Royal PNG Constabulary); the NEC decision to have the public inquiry conducted under the Defence Act and the appointment of the board of inquiry and the proceedings of the inquiry all which found one easy victim - and that was the minister for defence who lost his job. The taking of the defence portfolio by the Prime Minister and the suppression of the report, all conjure up images reminiscent of the Watergate Affair in the United States - those of us who were alive in the 1970's (are familiar with this). The Watergate Affair that led to the resignation of a president of the United States few steps ahead of impeachment. One can't help but be reminded (that) the whole (Moti) saga is so reminiscent, for those of us who were around in the 1970's," he

said. Justice Sakora added that the Moti saga has evolved into a "blame game", a topic which his favourite authors, Englishmen Frederick Forsyth and Jeffrey Archer, like to write about.

Picking out Sir Michael's application, the judge was critical of the Prime Minister "piggy backing" on the application for judicial review filed by senior PNGDF officers Captain Tom Ur, Colonel Vagi and former chief secretary to government Joshua Kalinoe.

Sir Michael should have made a separate application to join the court proceedings initiated by Mr Kalinoe and the three soldiers; a process which Justice Sakora said was not followed.

The judge subsequently ruled that the application was an abuse of the court process and dismissed it with cost to the applicants.

 the bottom line ► The three great elements of modern civilisation, Gunpowder, Printing, and the Protestant Religion.-Thomas Carlyle, 1838.

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