

**FIRST DAY**

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**DRAFT HANSARD**

**Tuesday 12 November 2013**

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**Subject:**

**Page No:**

**SUPREME COURT REVIEW EP59 OF 2013 SOUTH FLY**

**OPEN ELECTORATE – DECISION –**

**STATEMENT BE THE SPEAKER ..... 1**

**BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS –**

**STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER..... 2**

**CERTIFICATION OF ACTS..... 2**

**QUESTIONS ..... 3**

**ADJOURNMENT ..... 19**

## **FIRST DAY**

**Tuesday 12 November 2013**

The Parliament met at 2.p.m. according to the Terms of Resolution of 30 September, 2013.

The Speaker, (**Mr Theo Zurenouc**), took the Chair and read from the scriptures:

*Ephesian (4: 1-6)*

<sup>1</sup>I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called,<sup>2</sup> with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, for bearing one another in love,<sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup>There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, <sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup>one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. Amen.'

### **SUPREME COURT REVIEW EP59 OF 2013 SOUTH FLY OPEN ELECTORATE – DECISION – STATEMENT BE THE SPEAKER**

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable, Members, I present the decision of the Supreme Court Review application by Mr Aide Ganasi on Election Petition Decision in EP59 OF 2012 disputing the result of the South Fly Open Electorate Seat of the Western Province has been handed down by the Supreme Court on 26 September 2013 and ordered that –

- (a) The decision of the National Court, the subject of this review, dated 27 February 2013 be brought up and quashed in its entirety;
- (b) The Election of EP No. 59 of 2012 is dismissed.

**BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS –  
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members I have to inform Parliament that the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings met today and resolved that –

(a) The National Television Service, *Kundu 2*, will be allowed to televise Questions Without Notice as part of its community obligations and;

(b) The National Broadcasting Corporation will be allowed to broadcast live Questions Without Notice;

© *EMTV* will be allowed to film Questions Without Notice for news purpose only;

(d) Australian Broadcasting Corporation will be allowed to film Questions Without Notice for News purposes only;

**CERTIFICATION OF ACTS**

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, I have to inform Parliament that I have in accordance with Section 110 of the Constitution certify the following Acts as having being made by the National Parliament:

- (1) Attorney-General (Amendment) Act 2013;
- (2) Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2013;
- (3) Employment of Non-Citizens (Amendment) Act 2013;
- (4) Mining (Ok Tedi Mine Continuation) Ninth Supplementary Agreement) (Amendment) Act 2013;
- (5) Mining (Ok Tedi Tenth Supplementary Agreement) Act 2013;
- (6) National Payments System Act 2013;
- (7) Sorcery (Repeal) Act 2013; and
- (8) Superannuation (General Provisions) (Amendment) Act 2013.

## QUESTIONS

**Mr JOE SUNGI** – Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock.

Mr Speaker, the majority of the coastal and inland people within the New Guinea Islands, Southern and Momase regions, depend heavily on cocoa as their means of income.

Does the Minister have any plans for cocoa industry to go into downstream processing?

This country has been producing and selling cocoa for quite some time and it continues to sell cocoa beans. Cocoa beans, Mr Speaker, is the primary form of cocoa.

Does the Minister have any plans at all for cocoa beans to be processed to cocoa powder and sold overseas?

**Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL** – Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for his question. Let me begin by saying that the Government has a plan but it's a long term plan. But in the immediate, we cannot go into processing of cocoa because there is a drastic decline in the production and volume of cocoa in Papua New Guinea.

Mr Speaker, over the last five years, we have seen huge declines in the production of cocoa and the volume of cocoa that is coming to the market as a result of many issues and challenges, which include the volatility in the market place.

When the prices are high, the culture of our people is to go to the cocoa farm and harvest but when the price is low they are not interested in attending to the farms. So if we want to go into processing we must ensure that the volume of production must remain constant to supply to the factories. That's the first attitude problem we have to change.

Secondly, the decline has been attributed to major deteriorating infrastructure in roads, transportation and bridges. Of course, I commend the Government for putting emphasis and stressing how important these infrastructure are because they connect the farmers to the market and the market to the farmers. If we do not have investments in these infrastructure, the agriculture productions will continue to go down.

Mr Speaker, the Government, in the immediate, is planning to establish province by province nurseries to introduce into each province the 10 cocoa clones. These 10 cocoa clones are tolerant to the cocoa pod borer and the major decline attributed to the volume of cocoa production in Papua New Guinea today is caused by the cocoa pod borer, which is the main cause.

**02/01**

And as a result, the Government is now embarking on introducing the 10 cocoa clones into the provinces and then into the districts.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Minister, I will have to interrupt. The question was quite simple and asks if the Government has plans to establish a downstream plan.

**Mr TOMMY TOMSCOLL** – Mr Speaker, thank you, but I am addressing the question. The answer is simple and that is, in the long term, yes, and in the short term, no. This is because we do not have the volume. Therefore, we have got to address those issues that affect the reduction in the volume. And until we address that issue we can then move into downstream processing.

Mr Speaker, processing cocoa powder is only one product that we can do but there is trend that the price and the market circles between powder and cocoa butter.

Mr Speaker, I believe that the way to go is for Papua New Guinea to go into processing cocoa butter rather than cocoa powder. This is because cocoa butter prices are higher than that of cocoa powder. Nevertheless, that is the long term plan.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr GARRY JUFFA** – I direct my question to the Minister for Lands.

We have seen a lot of examples of land theft and land grabbing occurring. Therefore, is your Ministry going to put into place a mechanism to protect the peoples' assets, which is their land?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr BENNY ALLAN** – I would like to thank the Governor of Oro for his question and I respond in this manner.

One of the programs that we have undertaken in the Department, which I believe will address a lot of problems faced by the Lands Department, is the tightening up of the process of looking at applications and the granting of titles to those who have applied.

The process that we are about to complete, Mr Speaker, is called a Lagis System. That is where we are transferring all manual records to a computerized form. Therefore, if someone applies for a portion of land, the application goes to the first entry where we record all the details. Once it goes through the process, every section will input their information that is needed to be inputted into the computer.

At the end of the process when the title is granted to a successful applicant, we then have the title issued to that successful applicant. Therefore, we start from the application up until the title is granted. The Lagis System will now address a lot of issues that we have been experiencing in the Department. This system will ensure that there will be no duplicate titles issued, and any shortcuts in the processes will be picked out by the computer and it will alert a red flag. This means that if someone is trying to put in wrong information, the computer will automatically flag it or detect it.

This system that we are working on will address a lot of our problems and it will be fully operational on 25 November, 2013. Therefore, I can assure Parliament and the Nation that we will address a lot of the problems that we have been experiencing.

I hope I have answered the Governor's question.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**03/01**

### **Supplementary Question**

**Mr PETER IPATAS** - In addition to what the Governor of Oro has just asked, is he's Department seriously looking at the ownership of land? A lot of State land has been taken up by foreigners. If we go to other countries to invest, I don't think we would have easy access to acquire land. This country seems to be very accessible when it comes to acquiring land.

My question is, when are we going to fix this problem?

**Mr BENNY ALLAN** – Thank you, Mr Speaker. My answer to his question is that we are all aware that the law allows for any foreign investors to come in and apply for land within our country as long as they apply for a business certificate through the IPA. So he is saying that since we are unable to apply for land in other countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, we should not allow this to happen in Papua New Guinea.

The problem is now being addressed in the review that we are now conducting. The *Lands Act* review will give us 100 per cent ownership to Papua New Guineans. Only Papua New Guineans or citizens of PNG will be allowed to apply for land in the country.

### **Supplementary Question**

**Sir MICHAEL SOMARE** – My question is in relation to the piece of land at five-mile in Port Moresby, commonly known as Parkop's Park. The land has been fenced and I heard that the land was acquired by an expatriate businessman. From what I know, that piece of land once belonged to PTC. Today there is no place to create a children's playground or carry out other leisure activities. You will see it if you drive by that way.

Who gave the orders to give out such a huge piece of land to this foreigner?

**Mr BENNY ALLAN**- Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I thank the Governor of East Sepik. That land belonged to Telikom. I don't know when the Lands Board awarded the title of that land to Telikom, but Telikom sold that land sometime ago for K4 million. That land was sold privately; it did not come through the Lands Board, because they had the title. When they put up the fencing, I asked the Department to carry out an investigation to stop the development in that area and they found out that the land was sold a long time ago, but development did not take place immediately because Telikom still had some equipment on that land and that's why they waited until Telikom removed all its equipment.

**Mr JOE KOIM KOMUN** – My question is directed to the Minister responsible for allocation of Government offices, Minister for Public Service, and I ask the Minister for Public Enterprise to take note. From what I see, there is some kind of scam in place where all the allocations for the offices of Government is being allocated to only one or two foreign owned companies in Papua New Guinea.

Can the Minister state clearly how much the Government is spending in renting these properties of these companies?

**Sir PUKA TEMU** – Thankyou, Mr Speaker. I thank the Member for Anglimp-South Wahgi for the question on the current status of which companies are renting their properties to which Departments.

Mr Speaker, I will ensure a report is presented to the Parliament.

**04/01**

Mr Speaker, unlike other provinces, there are 22 government agencies accommodated within the private agencies in Port Moresby. So under the leadership of the Prime Minister Peter O'Neill, we are relocating every government agency back to Waigani where the Prime Minister's Office is located. You can already see the renovations of Pineapple Building and Central Government Office taking place. This is to avoid paying rentals of over K200 million per year to private agencies.

Mr Speaker, originally there was an understanding and partnership between the Treasury Office and the old Public Service Superannuation Fund that the Government Office complexes would be named after the departmental heads as Vulupindi Haus and the Morauta Haus were named after the former departmental heads for Treasury. Therefore, that was a status call until we ran out of office complexes and private sectors came in.

But at the moment, we are relocating everybody back to Waigani so that arrangement will be concluded in the next two years. However, I will be presenting the actual status of which private companies are renting out their properties to which government agencies.



**Mr DOUGLAS TOMURIESA** - I direct my question to the Minister for Fisheries, Honourable Mao Zeming.

In the last two weeks as I was touring my Islands of Kiriwina and Goodenough, I came across machines call Fed that were installed by officers of the Department. These machines are good but I am not sure whether there was awareness done by your officers. Alot of people were puzzled in fear of what these machines are doing out there in the sea. As a result, the people have removed the solar panels, and detached some parts to use as fishing lines and floaters.

My questions are:.

(1) Are we going to continue to waste public funds by installing machines without conducting proper awareness for them?

(2) Can the National Fisheries Authority prior to sending its officers to install these machines, conduct awareness so that our people are well aware and can look after these machines? They can be able to look after the machines? I have seen that these machines are wonderful because they bring in a lot of fish closer to the coast lines. Thank you.

**Mr MAO ZEMING** – I thank the Member for his questions. I want to inform you all that, that is a device installed by the National Fisheries Authority officers. That device is to assist our fish farmers to attract fish closer to the coastline.

Mr Speaker, the Members concerns are genuine and I will raise the matter with the National Fisheries Authority as to why proper awareness was not carried out.

Mr Speaker, the National Fisheries Authority has programs for respective provinces and the Fed Program is a very good program to assist our local fishermen. So as soon as I obtain information, I will forward my response to him in writing, as soon as I am briefed by the National Fisheries Authority.

**05/01**

**Mr CAMILLUS DANGIMA** – Mr Speaker, I am still not satisfied with the response from Minister for Lands and Physical Planning in regards to the sale of State land sold inconsistently.

Mr Speaker, I direct my question to the Right Honourable Prime Minister, Mr Peter O'Neill. The National Executive Council deliberates on the sale of State land and it is interesting to note that the Lands Department has acted on its own to sell this land to an expatriate investor.

Mr Speaker, K4 million is not a lot of money because the land that was sold is a prime land.

Can the Prime Minister conduct an investigation and get to the bottom of this?

**Mr PETER O'NEILL** – Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for Kerowaghi for his very important question. The Governor of East Sepik also asked the same question in regards to a land located in Boroko.

That portion of land was part of the Jack Pidik Park for some time but there has been a lot of contention on who owns that particular area.

I think some of our expatriate investors who are in need of land have been fighting for that land and it has in fact ended up in court with the National Capital District Commission. The Governor of NCD is very familiar with some sections of that land which is before the Courts.

Mr Speaker, in regards to this particular portion it is owned by Telikom and I want to inform this honourable Parliament that I have received a complaint from IPBC, basically with a legal advice that they did not give consent to the sale of the land. In fact, a Minister of Government at that time gave directions that this land be sold to a certain company at a certain price, which is subject to an investigation at present.

Mr Speaker, the IPBC has valued that land at K30 million and it has been sold for K4 million. I have referred this matter to the Task Force Sweep, Chairman and his Office and the matter is being investigated.

I am also writing to the Chairman of the National Capital District Physical Planning Board that any development on this land be stopped until this matter is fully investigated and resolved forthwith.

**Mr POWES PARKOP** – Mr Speaker, I direct my question to the Treasurer Honourable Don Polye. I have raised these issues in the last Meeting but to no response.

Mr Speaker, my question is in regards to the Superannuation Funds which, we all know are making huge profits with construction of high rise hotels and many other investments with different partners. They are investing in the Solomon Islands and Fiji and there is nothing wrong with that.

Mr Speaker, the contributors to this Fund are suffering here in this country and they have enjoyed luxuriously from the amendments done during the Government of Sir Mekere Morauta to isolate the organization from political interference.

It is good to read about and know that they are making profits but it is also disappointing to learn that there are no immediate benefits. They wait until the contributors either in the Public Service or Private Sector die and they can be granted their benefits. I strongly feel that, that is not right.

Mr Speaker, housing is one of the biggest needs that we face throughout the urban areas of this country. Why are these Super Funds not investing in housing?

Can the Treasurer tell this Parliament if there is a way where we could amend the law or give a policy direction to the Super Funds so that they can allocate money based on some kind of criteria to cater for housing needs to public servants and private sector employers?

Mr Speaker, now that we have isolated these Super Fund organizations away from everybody including the Executive Government and the contributors, they do whatever they want. When will the Members who contribute to these Funds benefit directly while they are still alive? They don't even sponsor some of the programs such as community projects, sporting competition or teams. Do you see Nambawan Super Fund sponsor any of the sporting teams in the country or not?

**06/01**

Does the Minister have any plans to contribute to any of the sporting activities in the communities?

**Mr DON POLYE** – Thank you Mr Speaker, the question asked by the Governor of NCD in relation to Nambawan Super is a good question. The same question was raised in the Ministerial Economic Committee whether members of Funds such as the NasFund

can benefit from the housing schemes while they are still contributing. This matter is still in discussion and all these Funds come under the regulation of the Bank of PNG. As the Minister responsible, I will not directly interfere with their decision. I make any decision according to the Boards direction; they decide and implement the decisions. As for the regulations of the Funds under the current laws, it's with the Central Bank of PNG. The Minister does not have any say or control over those Funds.

Mr Speaker, one of my ideas is for us to build financial capital market in PNG; meaning that NAS Fund, Nambawan Super and the other Funds must grow so that debt market in PNG will have the capacity.

The Nambawan Super Fund was first established in 1972, and in 2002, the capital build up was K600 million. In 2012, it was at K3.5 billion. And this is good capital for them to manage.

As for the NAS Fund, it was also established in 1972, and it built up K300 million in 2002. And this year, 2013, it's at K3 billion. And so these Funds have done very well under the management of the Board and the Management itself. They have done well in investment as well as building up the capital over those years. And so whatever decision they make for the benefit of the policies in housing and other benefits for the Members; I urge all the Members of Parliament to discuss with the Government to address it in a proper way by discussing with the Board, Management and the Bank of PNG. But I agree these funds should support the members by some impact programs like housing and so forth. But it has to be addressed in a proper way within the context of law. If there is need for the Government to change the laws then we'll have to amend it on the Floor of Parliament to give the Minister and the Government liberty to address these issues and work with the Boards and Management of those Funds to invest in those appropriate areas.

There are two points; first we continue to support those Funds to continue to invest and grow, and secondly, urge them to have a Housing Program for their members.

**07/01**

In fact, this morning, I talked to the Board Members and the Management of the Teachers Savings and Loan Society and discussions will take place. This will develop into a policy that will meet the Parliament requirements.

**Mr JIM KAS** – Mr Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister for Education concerning the Grade 10 Graduation at Tusbab Secondary School. Last year, 2012, I was the guest of honour during the presentation of the certificates. I presented certificates to Grade 10 students, who were drunk. In fact, all the students were drunk and I told the School Board that if this continues next year, I won't attend the graduation next year for the Grade.10 students.

This year, Tusbab Secondary School, held their Grade10 graduation at James Marape Hall on Sunday 3, November, 2013. I was informed that all the students were drunk and I decided not to attend the graduation. If they were graduating from PHD courses then they can celebrate after the event, but to get drunk before receiving Grade.10 certificate is a bad behaviour.

What are we going to do about the behaviour of Grade10 students in the future?

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** – Mr Speaker, I thank the Governor of Madang for raising a very important question, which concerns everyone of us including the parents. I want to inform this Parliament and the people of Papua New Guinea that the function of education is mostly a devolve function. This means that certain levels of authority is bestowed at various levels of education. For instance, the School Board and the Management at those levels have certain authorities. Amongst the authorities, are the disciplinary measures as well as punitive measures that the school can take into consideration.

Mr Speaker, we all know that drinking while attending school is not allowed by our laws. No school must allow students to drink alcohol, engage in cultic activity, smoke illicit drugs, or let alone smoke and chew betelnut within school precincts.

These are prohibited by law. It is not for the Minister for Education to impose on the 10 000 plus schools nationwide on what they are supposed to do. They are aware and they already know what they must do. The policy of the school is really with the school administration nationwide.

In this instance, the Tusbab Secondary School in Madang, which is one of the oldest schools in our country, the School Board and the Administration must take the responsibility to ensure that the students comply with those regulations and laws that are in place.

Mr Speaker, let me also say that, whilst it is a right, the current structure for education allows for those students who are given privilege to be in the school and in classes. Today, as we speak, statistic shows that on average, 25 or 30 per cent of children are not in classes, simply because of lack of school spaces.

So, the parents and citizens must equally take responsibility, whilst the Government sets up the laws. The policing of this law depends on those people such as school administrator, school boards and teachers. If they are not policing these laws, there's something seriously wrong.

Mr Speaker, if something is seriously wrong, I will make sure that the school Principals are accountable for their lack of managing and not policing the school policies. In conclusion, let me say that, their parents must equally bear this responsibility. The first part of discipline and first part of management are really at home.

Today, the parents are not responsible for the school fees. The Government has taken responsibility of school fees. In fact, we can ask, what are parents responsible for?

**08/01**

Responsibilities to manage our children at home should be a priority because the first place where we manage and control children starts at home.

Parents and teachers have responsibilities and while using the opportunity for this question I have to make it clear that students who get drunk and behave disorderly in school must be expelled from school. There are 25 per cent of children who should be in school but are not due to some unknown reasons but the onus really lies with the school administrators to implement this rule.

Early this year I received several complaints and a letter from a fellow Member that their children were sent out of Lae Technical School. I found out that this was due to the students' drunkenness and disorderly behaviour. If you can't behave and follow rules then get out of the school. There are hundreds of students who are willing to be in school but can't due to various reasons.

If you are privilege to occupy space in a technical school and wish to get drunk and misbehave, get out and make space for responsible students. These are measures that we can take and it does not require the Education Minister to decide who stays in school and who doesn't. School administrations are there to implement the rules and decide on the necessary disciplinary actions relating to student behaviour and others.

### **Supplementary Question**

**Mr PAIAS WINGTI** –Thank you, Mr Speaker, I agree with the Minister and I want to suggest that it's really based on the leadership of the school and the Headmaster. Can the Minister re-look the tenure system under the *Teaching Service Act* for headmasters who have been in a school for say five to ten years?

It comes down to management and responsibilities under the Headmasters. Can the Minister review of this *Act* and ensure those who are not performing to be replaced. We can't blame the parents, it is the management in all schools from elementary through to secondary schools in the country.

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** – Thank you Mr Speaker, I have noted the supplementary question raised by the Governor of Western Highlands and I will certainly look into it.

I am aware of the tenure system which is really three years, but due to various reasons over the years; the headmasters are not being moved around but I assure that we will look into this matter and make this policy come to light.

**Mr KILA HAODA** – Mr Speaker, my question is also to the Minister for Education and is in relation to school graduations. Each year, we attend graduations and there are students dressed like university graduates wearing gowns. The wearing of

gowns must stop. There is no reason to celebrate as yet. In 1950-1960, Grade Tens graduated and walked straight into a well-paid job, today university students are still searching for employment.

Why should Grade six and Grade ten students graduate wearing gowns and are drunk? Wearing of gowns must be stopped. Can you give the direction for schools to do away with gowns and have students graduate in their school uniforms?

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** – Thank you and let me also thank the Governor for his question; we can't stop citizens from celebrating an occasion or graduating at different levels of education. They are celebrating and dressing up in a manner which depicts that that occasion.

**09/01**

I will certainly look into whether there are laws against this in terms of matters of public interest but if there is no law on that matter then we will leave it at that.

Mr Speaker, let me also point out that the O'Neill-Dion Government is seriously looking at big time investment in the TVET sector so that it can embrace many of our children who come out of various schools with no opportunity for formal jobs. TVET sector can embrace them and put them out into the society to become better men and women in our country.

So, this is something that we will discuss another time but on the matter of the gowns, I will look into it and like I said, if it does not breach any laws then I don't think it is necessary for me to stop them nationwide. But on the abuse and use of alcohol during graduation days, certainly, underage children are not supposed to be intoxicated because it is in breach of our law. We will ensure that all the school administrators nationwide know the importance of this policy.

**Mr BELDEN NAMAH** – Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable Justin Tkachenko is a talkative.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Leader of the Opposition, what is your question?



**Mr BELDEN NAMAHA** – I direct my questions to the Prime Minister in relation to the incident that occurred at the Taurama Medical Faculty where a group of rogue soldiers violently attacked and terrorised the students and staff at the Campus.

When that incident occurred, it caused a public outcry and the Prime Minister sanctioned a Commission of Inquiry and investigation into that matter. An investigating Officer was appointed within the Defence Force, Lt. Tokam Kanani, who was the former NIO Chief. The investigation was completed and the Commanding Officer of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was charged for his involvement in giving orders to the soldiers to go and violently attack and terrorise the students and staff of the Medical Faculty.

Mr Speaker, the Defence Force has its own processes of disciplining the officers and soldiers. When the investigation was completed, a proper military court was constituted and a Senior Disciplinary Officer was appointed. The Court was heard and the subject involved was discharged dishonourably from the Defence Force.

Mr Speaker, my questions are:

(1) Can the Prime Minister confirm or deny that a particular Lt. Colonel, Stanley Benny, CEO of the first Battalion, is his first cousin?

(2) Can the Prime Minister confirm or deny that he gave orders to the Defence Force Commander through the Defence Minister –

**Mr Fabian Pok** – Point of Order! The Prime Minister will answer the question but as Minister for Defence, I know that what the Opposition Leader is implying is totally incorrect.

**Mr SPEAKER** – I will totally rule your point of order out of order. Please resume your seat and allow the Opposition Leader to raise his questions.

**Mr BELDEN NAMAHA** – Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Minister for Defence seems to be misleading the Parliament.

Mr Speaker, if you are looking for a liar, he is sitting right there.

*(Members interjecting)*

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Leader of the Opposition, please ask your questions. I will ask you to withdraw that insinuation you have made.

**Mr BELDEN NAMAHA** – I withdraw that statement but, Mr Speaker, this is a very important issue and I urge Members of Parliament to seriously take note of the questions.

(2) Can the Prime Minister confirm or deny that he gave orders to the Defence Force Commander through the Minister for Defence to reinstate that particular Lieutenant Colonel when he was dismissed by a proper Defense Force Court?

**10/01**

(3) Can the Prime Minister also confirm or deny that he gave orders in the last 48 hours to that particular CEO of the First Battalion, who is his first cousin, to carry an operation codenamed Never which is right now being conducted?

Mr Speaker, does the Prime Minister realize that he is literally in breach of all military protocols and Code of Ethics, and that he is now putting his hands into an institution which we both know is very dangerous to politicize, thank you.

**Mr PETER O'NEILL** – Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the honourable Leader of the Opposition for asking these questions.

I know that everybody in Papua New Guinea knows that the Opposition Leader has got a very special interest in Defence Force matters.

When he is talking about conspiracy and all sorts of things, he should know very well because he is the master of it. When he is talking about manipulation, he is the master of it, Mr Speaker.

When he talks about social media and becoming an expert in social media outlets, he is the master of it.

So let me answer his questions. Unlike him, Mr Speaker –

**Mr Belden Namah** – Just answer the questions.

**Mr PETER O'NEILL** – Let me finish, Mr Speaker. Let me finish and you will enjoy it, so let me do you slowly.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Prime Minister, please answer the questions.

**Mr PETER O'NEILL** – Mr Speaker, unlike the honourable Leader of the Opposition who at odd hours and strange hours holds meetings with the officers of the Defence Force, I do not engage in such behaviour. These meetings with serving officers were held at his residence at odd hours. Unlike him, none of the Ministers of this Government entertain that kind of behaviour.

Mr Speaker, I know that incident that happened at the University of Papua New Guinea's Medical Faculty Campus. I understand from the investigations conducted by the Defence Force, the officer concerned was suspended but not charged. I am not aware that he was dismissed. That is a matter that the Opposition Leader is privy to but I am not privy to it.

He is not my first cousin, he is from my electorate, yes, but definitely, not my first cousin.

There were no orders given to the Commander, it is only in his dreams and, Mr Speaker, the Minister has taken good carriage of this matter.

Mr Speaker, this operation code named Never or whatever it is that he is talking about, nobody knows about this except for him.

**Mr Belden Namah** – He is telling lies!

**Mr PETER O'NEILL** – Nobody knows about this but him only. The sooner you get out of your thinking that you are no longer a soldier, the better it is for this country.

**Mr Belden Namah** – If only you will stop stealing.

**Mr James Marape** – Point of Order! –

**Mr Belden Namah** – You too, you thief, sit down.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Honourable Leader, mind your language.

**Mr James Marape** – I ask the very military-orientated Opposition Leader to withdraw the words he is using such as stealing and lying and all these nonsense.

**Mr Belden Namah** – That's a fact.

**Mr SPEAKER** – Resume your seat, honourable Leader. You just have to withdraw those labels you just used.

**Mr Belden Namah** – Mr Speaker, since they are offended, I will withdraw the words.

**Mr PETER O'NEILL** – Mr Speaker, he is certainly becoming a bit of a nuisance but we just have to put up with him.

Mr Speaker, there is no such thing as Operation Never. I don't know where he got such information but let me assure him the Defence Force will not be politicised.

We have never removed the Commander of the Defence Force, he will remain in his office until his contract expires.

Mr Speaker, we have every confidence in the Commander and all the other commanders.

Mr Speaker, let the military do its job. The sooner he realizes that he is no longer a military officer, it will be better for him and he might even become a better leader.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion (by **Mr James Marape**) agreed to -

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.05 p.m..

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