

**Tok tok stori bilong mi- Kuma Weather coast of Guadalcanal September 19 to 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005.**

## **Overview of the Weather Coast Operation- The cause of much pain**

### **1. Brief; background**

**The People;** Historically our people a warriors, where I come from, our people ara called the “Barainaho” meaning people who are always at the front line to defend and fight intrudes. So fighting or going into war is not a new issue. However, our people can not just go to war/fight for nothing there must always be a cause for it. The good side of it. Is our people were the first also to be converted to Christianity. You will find them most hospitable and open people speaking their mind openly. They are hardworking and loving people.

**Custom-**Traditionally Guadalcanal is made up of two main tribes, Garavu and Manukiki, out of this two main tribes we have the small ones. So traditionally Guadalcanal is very, very easy to manager. Our Great, great granny kukua comes from the Garavu line, but married to a small line- Manukiki. So we now see ourselves us from the small lines. In reality we are from both lines, therefore one blood one people. This is very different from other cultures or Provinces in the Solomon Islands.

**Land-** Is the mother and the source of life and must be cherish and respected. It is sacred and any development must be seen as caring for the land and the benefits derive must be visible to everyone. It is a native land tenure system.

### **2. Events of the civil unrest (1998-2000)**

Main causes; land –it occupation it uses, rent and resources harvested from it. Disrespect of the cultures and practices of guale. The murdering of innocent men, women and children of Guadalcanal. Employment opportunity, Education and Health priority for Guadalcanal people = the bona fide demands of Guadalcanal people.

Out come; The Government of Solomon Islands did not response to address the genuine demands of our people, even our MP some of them are now in the NPC did nothing about it. *The Government continued to practice a heavy hand approach of Suppression, denying or even recognizing that there exist any people called Guadalcanal.* This is a very weak and lowest form of governance when people’s genuine desire to discuss issue of great concern was turn away or were called all kinds of names(school drop outs, militants, criminals)

End Results-People were finally resettled in their rightful villages and provinces. The Honiara based War lords, police constables, some MP and Honiara opportunist seized the opportunity to make claims for properties damage or abundant, threat to life and the list goes on. The \$40 million from ROC evaporates within months. I wander how many of the \$40 million was paid to the Guadalcanal people or for that matter w/c people for harassment, dead or properties stolen or destroyed. My people the story that’s not end here. The Govnt Money store house was run sack daily by Honiara based war lords,

making most govt workers work with out pay at one time for 6 pay days. Any of the W/C so called war lord was involved in the daily threat at the govt treasurer. At one state the world branded Solomon Island as a “fail state” because there was no law and order in Honiara, people demand things left and right and they got them. Do you think this was the making of the W/C people? Today right now Guadalcanal is once again as always will be is opening up again our land for benefit of the rest of the Solomon Islands. This is really what we are, Gods Blessed Province and People.

### **3 . Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) October 2000**

- Was not perfect, but it was a breathing period for the parties to begin a serious of genuine dialogue addressing the root causes of the social unrest
- Unfortunately this is not so, 3 of our innocent young men were murdered cool bloodedly by the very people who sign the TPA, and continuous demanding of money at the treasurer. Did any of the W/C people committed murder after the TPA or were at the government treasurer?
- I think this is one of the very reason why HK did not sign, that peace of agreement, because he can not trust the so called leaders and the war declared on Guadalcanal and its people was not lift yet, and those want him dead or alive haven’t taken serious step to open up dialogue with him. There was no trust and respect.

### **4. Weather coast Joint Police Civilian Operation (March 2001 till July 2003)**

The Architect here again were the TPA signatories, GP under the leadership of Ezekiel Alebua that time, the present SIG Prime Minister and former Commissioners (Assistance) of Police and Former Militants

Why w/c, none of our people was involve in ran sacking the govt treasurer, stealing demanding or murdering, why now w/c?

#### **3 reasons-**

- Jealously and Hatred for HK –he was becoming popular in Guadalcanal, through out the Solomon’s and the rest of the world as the only man who stood up and fight for the bona fide demand of the Guadalcanal, this does not go down well with a few members of his family (people of Guadalcanal). So the justifying words that were used, “*Harold Keke is a serious law and order case that could become a threat to national peace and security*”. How would someone who was living peacefully in his home village become a serious treat to nation security when he did not empty the Police armory? Or demanding money with menaces and why could he become when he was in a process of signing his own peace agreement with the parties concern?
- Another means of ran sacking the govt finances at the expense of the Solomon Island tax payers money. Millions of money was poured into the w/c joint operation, according to one of the correspondence between the GP and SIG “the operation must proceed at all cost”. This include the use and funding of the patrol boat, weapons/ammunition, logistics, food rations, salaries/allowances, hiring of

- private boats/engines and vehicles. Another indirect way of stealing money
- The use of the mighty dollar (money) to bring division and instability in our families in the weather coast of Guadalcanal. Civilian were paid allowance, some were event in the government payroll system.

## **5. Effects of the W/C Operation**

Early morning of 13th March 2001 the people of Sughu and their neighboring villages awoke to the sound of the .53 machine gun pounding their beautiful homes, in their term clearance, clearance for what and who? The bombardment went on for hours resulting in the total destruction of houses and properties in Sughu villages, some in Charavtu, Malaisu, Raurebo, Veratohu and Kidivoroa. The Australian donated patrol boat to protect innocent people and patrol our seas was abused again the third time after the bombardment at Tenaru beach east of Honiara and Aruligo west of Guadalcanal in 2000. Again the might of the Solomon Islands govet against the innocent people of weather coast ,Guadalcanal. Whatever was left behind after the massive bombardment was destroyed by heavily arm tugs. More than 120 homes were burnt, 5 elderly and sick died as a direct result of shock fear and continuous moving to safer grounds.

During this time innocent boys and men were arrest beaten and left to recover themselves and some were taken on boat Lata to Honiara to be charged and imprison. It was a sad story as some of them were severely beaten on arrival in town and without food/water for 3 days and without access to a lawyer for weeks. After months of no charges laid against them they were discharged and sent back home. This is a clear breach of individual's constitutional right as enshrine in our supreme constitution.

Our people were divided because not of security and law situation but because of MIGHTY DOLLAR – MONEY was being used, in one of the documents \$2.248, 421-00 for bounty and danger allowances be paid to the civilian resistance movement. In another document about 163 people in one ward receive \$60/day or \$3600-00 for two months. These are serious issues and many more I can mention, but again our people have used and made to turn against their own blood brothers/sisters by none other than our leaders of Guadalcanal and the Government. I strongly believe the SIG thru NPC should listen as there are sincere and genuine claims by our people. This is very important if NPC is to achieve peace and true reconciliation for one of the most ignored and humble and patient people of Guadalcanal the w/c people. The w/c operation continued on for 2½ years ending on July 2003. after RAMSI arrived and open dialogue with HK. It must be made clear here that the weather coast is not an ethnic tension issue. The amnesty bill does not cover any one. But it is a clear violation and breaches of the fundamental rights of our people by the state and its agents(see attached)

## **6.End results**

The operation should have been called of after the first fail operation in March 13<sup>th</sup> 2001. However this is not the case in one of the correspondence between the former GP primer to SIG requesting the w/c operation must go ahead at all cost. As a results not of the w/c people doing but the SIG and the GP there were;

- 10 Kwaio men paid by State went missing on a full military mission to capture HK, these men were promise monetary benefits if HK is capture
- Our MP for south Guadalcanal was killed
- 3 members of the RISPF were killed
- 7 Melanesian brothers lost their lives, These brothers were also promised money 25 HP and OBM
- Several on the civilian resistance and the GLF sides were lost. Who should take the full responsibility here? The w/c people, the NPC, the GLF or the evil masters who funded the whole operation at the expense of the Solomon Island tax payers money and the lost of innocent lives.

## **7. Serious questions**

- Will reconciliation help the innocent victims to forget what the SIG and GP did to them
- Who is responsible for this mess? Will reconciliation holds another tens from now or if RAMSI pull out tomorrow because the next government does not favor the RAMSI presences
- What is the role of the NPC and the GP peace coordinator during the w/c operation 3 years and after the operation?
- Will the NPC and GP peace coordinator listen and be able to facilitate genuine compensation to speed up the unnecessary delay of true peace and reconciliation.
- Will SIG and GP pay compensation to the innocent victims of the w/c people and the Guadalcanal people as a whole for disrespecting and ignoring their cry for a very, very long time now.

## **8. Lesson learnt and the way forward**

- The SIG can not be trusted anymore by our people, as there was lack of respect and confidence in their leadership. These also include the MP an GP members
- SIG-GP to compensation innocent victims of the w/c joint operation
- The SIG thru the PM must apologies to the W/C of Guadalcanal people
- After the SIG-GP met all the demands of our people then all reconciliation and peace initiatives will have a lasting effect and truly meaningful.
- If not legal avenue
  - Court of Solomon Islands
    - International court of Justice
    - Others

Toktok stori as told by Dickson M Sangu of Sughu Village, Secretary of the Barainaho Communities.