

TWENTY FOURTH WITNESS
STATEMENT BY 20771 LT-COL METUISELA MUA

Col Mua, after having been duly sworn by solemn affirmation, was interviewed as follows:

Q1: When did you enter Parliament Complex?

A: I was there on the afternoon of the 19th May, maybe 2.00 o'clock in the afternoon after the people have stormed Parliament. I went to Parliament for a different reason. That Friday I was doing community work for our church in the morning, and after paying the labourers I overheard on the radio when I returned home that some people have stormed Parliament using arms and the Government had been taken over.

The fact that they were using arms was a concern to me, so I went down to the FBC and listened to the transmission to be able to ascertain just how the takeover was done, knowing that they had recordings of whatever transpired on that day so I asked them to replay it for me which they did.

I was still there when the General Manager overheard that I was in the Complex and he asked me to come and have coffee with him. We were having coffee when two of the journalists told the Chief Executive that there was a big rampage in downtown Suva. All this time, I thought that it was the Opposition that had undertaken this coup so I asked Isireli if I could use his telephone to get to the people in the Opposition Office in Parliament. The two reporters went out and came back in less than ten minutes to say that there was a big rampage in town. I tried to get Ratu Inoke on the phone and I was told that he was at a meeting, so I asked Isireli, "Look, would you please clear a line because I would like to go down to Parliament and see if I can get Ratu Inoke to make an appeal on the air to stop people from destroying the town, and I was also concerned that there were people at Parliament with arms. I just wanted to find out who were the people in Parliament with arms. That was why I arrived at 2.00 o'clock or so in the afternoon of Friday. Isireli Kini allowed me to travel with two of their reporters. Some distance away from the main gate, I met people there, they were scared and frightened of course.

As soon as I walked up to the main gate, I recognised some of the soldiers there. From the way they handled the weapons, I knew that they were servicemen and the type of weapons they had indicated that they were from the military. I asked, "Can I go to see the people in the Opposition Office, please?". They opened the main gate, paid compliment as usual, (I did not know who their names were), and allowed me to go into the Parliament Complex to see the members of the Opposition.

As soon as I walked into Ratu Inoke's Office, the Opposition Members were there including Speight's father, Vunibobo, Manueli, Ah Koy and the two ladies; they were still under house arrest when I walked in. I asked to see Ratu Inoke but he was busy having a meeting with someone else. When he came out, I told him, "Would you please make an appeal because Isireli has kept a direct line open for you to make an appeal to the public to stop this rampage in town?". He asked whether there has been a rampage, I said, "Yes, the whole town is gone." It was then when Manueli and Ah Koy came and told me what occurred in Parliament. He asked, "What is happening here?" He started complaining about the CRW. That is how I knew that this was a CRW squad because Manueli started complaining to me, "I've told Epele Ganilau to disband the Unit. See what it has done to us" etc, etc. They were trying to work out just how they were going to get organised in order to try and diffuse the situation, whatever that that they could have done. They asked me, "What is going to happen next?" I said, "Who are these people who are doing these things?" Someone said, "He is someone by the name of 'Speight'". Speight's father came straight to me and he said, "Those fellows are very young, why don't you go and do something about it? I said, "What should I do, I wouldn't know what to do, I've got nothing to do with those people." We were talking amongst ourselves and they mentioned what they planned to do was agreed to generally and that was for two of their members to go to Government House and say, "Look, this has happened, could you please just dissolve Parliament for the time being until we find out the solution." That was generally what they were talking about.

They were still going through that when one of the representatives from Speight's people came and said, "Would all of you please come and attend the meeting which is being held at the Government Office?" We went across as directed by Speight's men.

I went and sat right at the back and listened. I saw Major Ligairi walk in; some of the people at the meeting I knew and some I did not know. That was the first time I was exposed to those people at that time in the afternoon. They were discussing the various steps that they were going to take. After awhile, Major Ligairi walked out and I also walked out with him; and we had general discussions with him and he confirmed to me that they were his boys from the Army camp.

At that point in time, I visited Parliament regularly, almost on a daily basis but sometimes, I missed out on a couple of days and then I came in again. That is how it all started until we had a team from our side which was meeting with the RFMF team and that was almost a continuous activity. We started talking, negotiating, etc.

Q2: What was your work or your main function inside the Complex? I understand that you were part of the liaison team, what was your main function?

A: I was just part of their team and because of my exposure in Government I existed in an advisory capacity. I have told them many times over and over again that I would like to ensure that people exercise rational and balanced decisions at all times.

Q3: You eventually ended up with an advisory role?

A: Yes, in an advisory capacity.

Q4: At any time, were you part of the Operation Cell that was operating within there?

A: No.

Q5: Were you aware of the different wings, sectors or groups in there in Parliament?

A: They were there.

Q6: What were they?

A: As a military man, your mind starts to work when you come across a situation like that. You see people walk in, people doing things. I see that the people were mostly doing just sentry duties and the security of the premises there, security of hostages and security of personnel. Those were mainly what they were doing.

Q7: We have one indication earlier that there were three different wings, the military wing, the political wing and the vanua wing; three different sectors. Can you confirm now the leaders of the different wings? We had earlier indications that Ligairi was heading the military wing, political wing really was George Speight and in charge of the vanua wing was really Duvuloco in conjunction with the various yasanas. Were you aware of those wings?

A: I was aware that these things existed in a very loose arrangement except for the military. That was a very tight arrangement, I can assure you that but the others were very loose. That there was a vanua, yes; that there was a political wing, yes but then there were politicians coming in and out of the Complex almost on a daily basis and they come from all sorts of political parties with their agenda and objectives.

The only people that were keeping a tight arrangement over there were the military as far as I was concerned. The vanua was very very loose. Duvuloco ran away, he was not the head of the vanua. What had happened they had a representative from each yasana and they had regular meetings, and of course, one must also understand that the place was crowded with

visits from different communities, villages, groups, political parties, tikinas, etc. I estimated that the total number (because I was going through the books merely to find out) that had visited the Complex on the duration of the stay in Parliament excluding the burial, just for visits alone, was between 130,000 to 140,000 people.

They came from the West, Bua, Macuata, Cakaudrove, they came from Suva, Naitasiri, Tailevu and then the tikina visits, the koros, the villagers, church groups, political parties, etc, and that is a very conservative estimate. About 130,000 to 140,000 people came to support those in Parliament and the police are going to have a very hard time trying to get all those people as supporters of the coup.

Q8: During the whole stint in the Parliament Complex, were you involved in any of the activities that were happening outside the Parliament Complex? We understand your indications of what was happening within the Complex, security, the different sectors within the Parliament, the vanua, the military, the politicians coming in and out; all the activities that happened outside based on the political situation from within the Complex, were you responsible or were you aware of any of the activities that happened outside the Parliament Complex, be it in the Suva area or throughout the whole of Fiji?

A: Is that specific?

Q9: You understand what had happened, the rampage at the TV Station, we had the shooting of the police officer?

A: Oh no. The only thing I heard of the shooting of the police officer was when they came to me afterwards for me to arrange with the people in Parliament that the parents want to visit to say that; one, they have forgiven; and two, that they support the cause because my sister in law who is older than my wife is from that household. She is married to that household so she came and asked me if I could do that arrangement which I did, and they all came down. The whole thing was done. There was a burua, there was a tabua which was the usual Fijian protocol - the full works were done. It was a special occasion where the parents and the family came all the way down from Navala in Ba. They even spent the night with us, we had a service before they went back.

Q10: You were not aware of the planning of those activities whatsoever?

A: No, no.

Q11: Whilst in the Complex, were you in contact with any of the persons within the Military in regards to activities of people in the Complex? This is not normal everyday conversation with the Operations and other things to ask

- questions but other things apart from that, like assisting the cause. Was there a link person that you were having discussions with in the Military?
- A: Along that nature?
- Q12: Yes, like passing on information to you on what is happening at the camp - along that nature?
- A: I was up to date with what was happening at the camp because I was part of the negotiating team right through to the signing of the accord. I was there and went up to QEB, PTC, we went to OTS in Vatuwaqa, we went to Ratu Iloilo's place so we went all over the place, so since from day 1 I have been part of the negotiating team, just listening in and negotiating with the RFMF officers but for the other officers, if you are trying to find out whether some of those guys have something to do with the events of the 19th of May, I know them, yes.
- Q13: You are aware but you are not releasing any names?
- A: No, because the guys that met with those guys in the RFMF all of them told me; this guy, this guy, this guy and his family, this guy, this guy
- Q14: These were the persons?
- A: Senior officers of the army.
- Q15: These are not those who have voiced their opinion - okay, we support the cause. The question is, those who were working directly with you?
- A: Not with me, with the people. I found this out later and it is unfortunate. Why should I be in this situation. I actually know nothing about it except that I was there on the afternoon of the 19th with a very genuine reason, when there were people who have been meeting since June, July, August of last year.
- Q16: You are aware of people who have been meeting from last year in regards to this?
- A: Yes, I am aware because the people that meet with them told me.
- Q17: You had indicated, from July last year?
- A: Yes, people have been meeting with these people, these group, have lunch here, have coffee here at so and so's house - disgusting.
- Q18: This information you are not willing to release?
- A: No, I have taken the appropriate measures to ensure that it is protected but I am just wondering what kind of officers they are.
- Q19: On the 19th May when you walked in, that was your first involvement?

CONFIDENTIAL

374

A: Yes, I have never been a member of any political party by virtue of my employment or my profession but since early last year (you can find that out from FBC), I think it was June when I had a lengthy interview with Pareti which has got my assessment because they kept bothering me for my assessment on the political situation in Fiji. I told them in no uncertain terms that after a very brief period, that there were indicators that have emerged over the horizon which spelt out just total chaos for Fiji but he wanted me to elaborate, I said, "No, and I am not obliged" but I only quoted one incident but there were so many as time went on. I said, "Look, do you know that it is less than four per cent that had voted for Labour, this is the ethnic Fijians". If the policies of the Government are not favourable to them they will ask and they will react and that is natural and when that comes about, that is trouble, and it did not take very long for them to disagree with the policy, they disagree with this, they disagree with that, there are Bills that have been put before Parliament, etc, etc and they started reacting but no one read it. Our unit has been terminated but if they had heard and taken heed of our assessment, nothing like this could have happened, for us it is a very unpopular profession because you have to tell them the truth and it hurts, but we were prepared to do that. We did it for Rabuka, he ignored it; we wanted to do it for Mahendra Chaudhry but he said "No, out you go!", because there were so many indicators that were there. In a situation like that, you look for the indicators and then you verify that from independent sources and then you do your evaluations, etc. It is not so difficult but people just totally ignored until we have come to a situation like this.

Q20: During the whole period while you were in there, you remember your Unit - the former FIS Unit, there is one indication that you were using personnel from that Unit for your information gathering within the Complex and using those, some of them operating from within and the rest operating from without, operating from outside but using that as part of your information gathering, you normally would have done in the FIS. The question is, did you actually use that medium in there?

A: I know better than to do that. I know the risks involved. In any case I never asked them for any assistance. The only thing is, the indications that were given to me on the very first day, that Friday that the army was going to come down so I rang those people and said, "Can I use one of your radios", and they placed the radio there until we went away. I used the radio only on one occasion, that is it, I then switched it off because it cannot monitor VHF and UHF that you are using.

Q21: Throughout the whole event, the reports of your staff Naita walking in and providing information to the Complex and also walking in and setting up the communication within the complex. Were you aware of that?

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

375

A: That is what I have just said because I was under the impression that the army was going to come down and he did that on the very second day, on Saturday, and when he left he never came back, and it was useless anyway because, as I said, it was an HF monitor. People were using the VHF and UHF but then as time developed the army did not turn up as earlier indicated to me.

Q22: Were there indications or some assurances that the RFMF will come to support the cause?

A: Yes.

Q23: What led you to this belief or who gave you that assurance?

A: I was sitting across from Major Ligairi when he was talking to officers in the RFMF and that was why it appeared on the Gazette that Ulaiasi Vatu was to be the Commander and Tarakinikini was to be the Chief of Staff because both of them have said "Yes" to Ligairi, and then Ligairi also had the courtesy of advising Tuatoko, so everyone knew.

Q24: You were there when Ligairi made the call?

A: Yes, I was there.

Q25: Inviting Col Vatu to become the Commander?

A: Not inviting Col Vatu, he spoke to Tarakinikini. He said that he had already spoken with Col Vatu and that was what had happened. I was there when they were making calls on that afternoon.

Q26: A lot of information we already have. We are just confirming these things. Are you aware of the date?

A: It is in the gazette. It was on Friday night, 19th May. I went home fairly late because I had been drinking yaqona with the police officers who were sitting outside the gate. I knew it was Friday because by the time when I came back on Saturday, they were trying to do two things; one, they were trying to swear-in people to their appointments; and two, they have written a gazette notice up to that effect, the appointment of Commander and Chief of Staff.

Q27: Where were you arrested?

A: I was arrested from my home, I was sick. The last time I left Kalabu was when the Qaranivalu invited all the people to go to Kalabu to finish off from there, because of the pressure that was building up in Parliament, their farewell service and their usual Fijian protocol, vakavinavinaka etc. The last time I was at Kalabu was when I attended the Sunday afternoon service, then I left Kalabu. That was the Sunday before the 27th that would be the 23rd.

Q28: When you were arrested, did they give you any reasons?

CONFIDENTIAL

A: No. I had been listening to the radio that people were being arrested willy nilly, left, right and centre so they came for me. I said, "I'm sick, you want me to come?" They said that from Operations that they have some matters to discuss with me. That was all that they said, so I was in my pyjamas and everything when I went into QEB as if I was going to run away. There were four vehicles altogether with armed soldiers, it was unbelievable. If they had told me to come, I would have come.

Q29: This whole process of negotiation and mediation that transpired in the whole event of May 19, could the RFMF could have done something to better the whole situation?

A: Definitely yes, many things.

Q30: Would you like to elaborate on that; what are some of the ways in which you could have better those things?

A: Yes, I thought that they were trying to apply certain principles, which were imported into Fiji in order to diffuse a situation. I believe that here we have the best reconciliation system in the world, use the Fijian protocol system, that is it. It would have been done in less than two days. Even that which is being done now, to try and ask them for forgiveness is difficult because they totally ignore, it is just unbelievable. The easiest reconciliation system and the best we have but they ignored that and they wanted to use those that were imported. The Army was consistently trying to apply a military solution to a political solution. It could have been avoided.

Q31: You indicated that the function of the military is very clean, not your exact word but very organised?

A: Yes.

Q32: You were part of the negotiation team. It was in the papers that when it initially happened, it was quite specific, the angle at which the negotiation team was coming from. In the initial discussions when the negotiating team sat and discuss, this were the papers, there were allegations on both sides by the Parliament Group and the Camp. The Camp were given the indication that the Parliament Complex group came with ever changing demands on discussions with members in the Complex, they said it was the other way round. Was that so, and if so, was it coming from the political wing (with George and the group) or it was the influence of the vanua. I am just confirming something that have already been told to us, and we just to confirm that now?

A: The ten resolutions of the GCC, it says, yes, give them amnesty; two, we support Ratu Mara; three, George Speight's team some of them to take part in the new line up, etc, and the 10th one, leave the door open for further negotiations if it is deemed necessary, and that was what kept the

negotiating team not only talking to the army but also talking to the subcommittee from the GCC and on that Sunday, 28th, we had agreed on all those things, we had finished. We wanted Ratu Mara to have an honourable exit, takes about two years, and we asked for that specifically because we did not want to violate the GCC resolutions. Three, we wanted to put up a list of names for the line up of the new administration, etc. That was on Sunday, and the subcommittee of the GCC went and waited on the Monday morning before coming back to us to confirm all these things to be taken up to the President. That was Sunday, 28th. On the 29th, the army came back to say that they have abrogated the Constitution, they have removed the President, and they have done what they wanted to do and they invoked martial law so who abrogated the Constitution? The army. Who removed the President? The army, etc.

It is going to be a very funny situation when this comes out clearly. When you say that we are being influenced, no that is wrong. We had agreed with the GCC's resolutions totally. We were following that relying on the subcommittee of the GCC when instead the army went ahead and did all these things. We were surprised, we were shocked. We told them, "Who told you to do that?" They said, "We've done this for you!". We said, "No, that is contrary to the GCC's resolutions and immediately following that, they turned around and said, "No, they disobeyed the GCC, they violated that". I do not understand what you are talking about Mr. President, I am sorry. Are you sure with your facts?

Q33:

Yes!

A:

You better recheck.

Q34:

That was a question, whether they were influenced by the vanua?

A:

Well, I have answered your question.

Q35:

I wanted your perspective of that?

A:

You know they have been blaming me for being disloyal to Ratu Mara. I said, "Never have I been disloyal to Ratu Mara, never in my whole life".

Q36:

The question that was posed was; the two things that came out in the media was: one, the complex personnel was ever changing; and two, the army was ever changing; can you clarify that point?

A:

Are you relying on the media?

Q37:

No, this is a point of discussion. All our discussions we will verify with Special Branch and we will come out with the facts.

A:

Well if it is the fact that you get from the Special Branch, Mr President, I am sorry because they were the ones who fabricated the threat on the

CONFIDENTIAL

378

President (Ratu Mara). I know that because I wanted to know where the threat came from when we were there in good faith relying on the subcommittee of the GCC on Sunday, when instead there was a threat that went through on the Monday morning, so I went for Joe Brown and Joe Brown said that it came from the Special Branch.

Q38: This threat that you are talking about, is this the threat where?

A: The threat that said that the people from the Complex were going to shoot Ratu Mara and his family, something like that so they have to find ways of removing Ratu Mara.

Q39: What we are doing now is we are trying to piece together information that we gather. We will visit the Special Branch and all other avenues. Being under the trade, the Board and you will understand the reliability of some information but we will sit and value that and we will check the reliability and where the source is coming from. We all know that allegations were going from left, right and centre. Threats were going from all sectors of the world. In our investigations we hope we can find the truth.

From your point of view where you stood in the Complex, we have a number of people who came before you confirming what you have just said, you do understand where we are coming from?

A: Yes, I appreciate and respect that

Q40: Looking back at this event of May 19th, what future can you think of this Unit; should it be revived to foresee and provide the information needed and basically forecast such events in the future. We know what your answer is going to be but we want it to come from you.

A: Let me put it this way, if I may say so; that skill you cannot do without in the Government, in the Military, in the Services because it gives you just that little edge to be able to look into the future. Anyone who is good and is worth his salt should be able to do a lot more than that, to help policy makers. He is not supposed to be influenced by emotions. He does not allow his emotions to overrule his judgement so he must exercise good judgment and make a very balanced assessment of a given situation and give it to the policy makers. Policy makers can discard it, throw it away or whatever, that is their prerogative but at least the man has done his job, and he has done it honestly, and he has given him an opportunity to be able to have consideration of whatever the incident, whether it be political, economical or social. The answer is, yes there is a need but building up of skills is not easy. In this profession we are always continuously very suspicious of everyone all the time. To establish rapport, it takes about two or three years or even five years. It depends on the situations. It can never be achieved overnight.

CONFIDENTIAL

The Director Generals of Intelligence Organisations can ring you and talk to you from New Delhi, Washington, Canada, Wellington, Kuala Lumpur or even from Israel, they can talk to you only if you have their trust but that is difficult and is built-up over a long period of time. There is no where else in the world where you can do that. Yes, it is essential.

Q41:

This is probably propagation that has been going on in the media. The personnel who were in the Complex - my question is more directed to the Military, their medium of putting press releases; how do you think it has affected the whole reconciliation process?

A:

I would have thought that the military are the champions in Psy-war, they should know and they should understand because it all depends on the audience, the time, the theme and all those things. If it is wrong, if a man who does it does not take those things into consideration then you are going all over the place but I would assume that maybe in future, the military should develop a good PR Unit or a PR man who is qualified, not only from a straight-out journalistic perspective but who understands the military way of operations, like psy-war, they should be able to do an effective job.

Q42:

One of the other major concerns is the weapons that have not been accounted for, they have been missing. Would you be able to shed light on that, if you know of any weapons that are out there or you could assist us in retrieving these weapons?

A:

At the moment, I do not know where the weapons are but with assistance, yes. Assistance is no problem because there is a bond between the people that have been in Parliament and the supporters who are all around Fiji. I do not know whether you believe that or not but there is a bond up to this point in time. That little seed has grown and expanded and it is there and it is up to everyone who is reasonable to be able to say, "Okay, use that channel and get the weapons from the rebels (whatever you want to call them)." It is just a matter of telling the people, "Please return the weapons".

Up to this point in time, unfortunately, there is some mistrust, we shouldn't have that but if the people that have been in Parliament go back to those people, I am sure that they will oblige, because say for instance, I do not know for other families, my family has been threatened many times over by service personnel, not so much from civilians but from service personnel. I feel very sad and upset about it.

My family has been supplied food which is almost unbelievable, about four or five times a week and that is almost every day. They have given them money, my relatives - yes, supporters who just come by taxis, come,

drop the food, groceries, they do not even know them, which tells you that there is a bond. All I am trying to say is that, they have established a bond and if you want to use that, and I think that is a much neater and a quicker way of getting things done. Just get the people, "Please, appeal to the people, 'please, can you return all the weapons', 'please, can you come down', 'no more damage, please'". Those people in the rural areas, they are still trying to go into Indian houses, etc, they can be told, "Don't do that", and that is what I have done for a number of times in Parliament, just calm them down, ask them politely, and they follow.

Q43:

You said that the whole objective of being there was to ensure that rational decisions were made. In order to do this, you must be a member of several groups within the Parliament Complex. You have already mentioned that you were part of the negotiation group. Were you also part of any other groups apart from that?

A:

No, I have been part of the negotiation group or the negotiating team, and I always feel very embarrassed when you go up or you get a ring from the Operation Centre saying, "Hey, these people are doing these things." You know you really really feel upset about that. Some times, at an average, nothing less than 600 people; that is the minimum. Sometimes it goes right up to 2,000 that are there in the Complex at any one time and very quickly, it is not so difficult because they are all isolated into their different yasanas to look for someone, "Oh this man is so and so from such and such" and you go and ask them "Where is this guy?"

For example, this throwing of stones, objects, houses and the rampage in Veiuto area, that was when one of the guys was shot. It was Friday night. There was a foot patrol I think by the engineers because our chaps that were on the hill could see them walking down and they were calling out, "Hey, Staff Ramasima, sa maca na noqu dakai", but they were just looking down at them. The Engineer patrol had already fired the shot that wounded one of the civilian guys. That Friday night, the guy was rushed to hospital and we were very concerned. I said, "Look, don't do this any more. Do not allow people to go out at night because we are getting a very bad name for it. If anyone else is found doing that then we will invite the guy never to come back here" so they were called, martialled by their elders, they were identified, there were 12 of them and they were given corporal punishment by their elders; so things like that happen. It is a very difficult situation when the vanua was involved and there were so many people around.

Q44:

My next question is on the bond that you mentioned that you feel now exist and you said that the seed was sown in Parliament. Do you feel at any time when you were in the Complex, with your training of course that

the seeds that were actually sown were the seeds of a revolutionary idea, trying to be planted into these young men before they dispersed?

A: I have to correct that there was nothing revolutionary about it. I was talking about the seed of bondage, people were very close to each other. Normally, in a revolution you all know that you need leaders, planners and whatever else in a situation like that, but no, these are just people that come from the districts and villages. There is a bond between them that has been established. We have a common purpose. They said that they wanted to protect indigenous aspirations and rights. All these things they have in common. They wanted Fiji to become a Christian State, etc; all those things and to answer your question, there is nothing revolutionary about it. It is not a revolutionary organisation. That would have been better organised than what we had in Parliament.

Someone told me that that is how it is being assessed. I said, "No way in the world, I know how to do assessments like that." There is a seed of comradeship and also there were some people who for the first time have been able to associate with the Fijian way of life. The people from Wainibuka are related to the people of Matuku, etc and that bond had been strengthened.

Q45: On the current operations, you have already mentioned that some very senior officers were actually involved in assisting with what happened on May 19th. Do you feel that the current operations by the army has been done deliberately to either prolong the situation (which means that you will stay here for a much longer time) and also to ensure that the people that you know who were involved with what is happening to make sure that they also are not revealed?

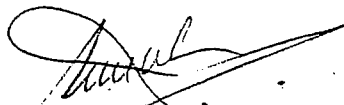
A: The answer to that Major, unfortunately, would be yes, it is unfortunate. I have to repeat that I cannot disclose names because the names would involve, not so much about the people in the army but the people that they have met from outside of the army. Any intelligence officer who is worth his salt would want to find out who those senior people are, particularly with the developments of events when people were expected to come down, etc then people came and offered information, "I met so and so", "We had lunch with so and so" or "We went out to an isolated area because we did not want people to see or overhear what we are talking about", "We had coffee till the early hours of the morning in so and so's house because of this" etc, etc, it went on and on and on. I just wish people would be more honest. I detest people who are dishonest.

Q46: Col Mua, before we release you, we are done with you but the Board will come back some time next week and if we need to ask you more questions, we will recall you. But if you are not one of those who are to

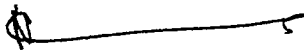
be recalled, if you do have a point when we come, please make it known to us. As soon as we will come back here some time next week, we will have to indicate whom we want to see. Do you wish to say anything else?

A:

I have said most of the things that I would like to say but perhaps if you want me to answer more questions later on. Some of the matters that were being discussed in Parliament, topical issues that we talk about, I think they should be of interest to the army and the government of the day, but that can be done later, they are not strictly related to these things although it relates to some future undertakings.



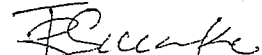
[M. MUA]
Lieutenant-Colonel



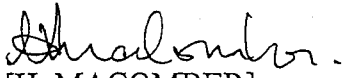
[J. N. B. EVANS]
Lieutenant Colonel
President



[A. MOHAMMED]
Major
Member



[T. GUCAKE]
Major
Member



[H. MACOMBER]
Warrant Officer Class One
Member

TWENTY-FIFTH WITNESS
STATEMENT BY 21663 MAJOR JOSEVA SAVUA

Maj Savua, after having been duly sworn by solemn affirmation was interviewed as follows:

- Q1: Major Savua, can you confirm the date when you went down?
A: 26th May.
- Q2: E rawa ni o ni confirm-taka na veitalanoa a caka e na Plant Troop ni bera ni dou vodo e na lori ?
A: Au qai march-in tiko on the 20th. Au march-in ga vei Maj. Waqanisau, 2IC Engineers Regiment, au sa mani mai tu ga e na Plant. Sa ka 26 ni siga ni vula ko Me sa lako mai kina ena brief mai cake ni sa vakarau storm-taki na Parliament. Au sa mani tukuna vei iratou na gone o ya, au sa vakarau lako sobu, meu lako ga meu lai tu loma o ya meu lai tu vata kei iratou na gone o ya, lai veivuke ga vei iratou. Sa oti sa mani so talega vei iratou na gone o ya sa bau vinakata me keitou lako vata, sa mani dua na lori ga e kea keitou kerea, sa mani kauti keitou sobu. Keitou lai sobu ga e na Marou Road, keitou takoso yani, keitou sa lako cake sara yani, o ya e na siga Vakaraubuka, na i ka 26 ni siga ni vula ko Me.
- Q3: Ena gauna dou veitalanoa kina o ya, dua na bose dou vakayacora se veitalanoa ga?
A: Sega, qo na veitalanoa ga, se tekivu tu mai e na siga Vakarauwai, na veitalanoa ga ni ka e yaco tu.
- Q4: E na loma ni Complex, na i tavi cava o ni qarava tu i loma o ya?
A: Au qarava tu ga i loma o ya na ka ga ni logistics; na kakana, na veivosakitaki ni transportation, na kedra kakana na hostages kei na lako yani ni Red Cross.
- Q5: Ni sa oti na nomuni lai curu e na Complex ena i ka 26 ni siga, a vica vata na ka e yaco. Oti o ya, bau dua na gauna tale o ni curu mai kina i tuba vata kei na so na civilian; o ni bau lewena e dua na i lawalawa e curu mai tuba?
A: Sega vakadua.
- Q6: Nomuni qarava tiko na logistics; bau dua na gauna o ni curuma kina na Operation Room?
A: Neitou gauna ga ni O-Group e na 8.00 na kaloko e na veimataka.
- Q7: O cei e liutaka tiko na Operation?
A: O Ligairi.

Q8: Mai na loma ni Complex, bau so na gauna o ni dau veitaratara kei ira mai na keba?

A: E na keba, au veitaratara vakadua ga vei iratou na NATOPS, dau veivosaki ga vata kei iratou na dau duty. Vei iratou mai na ovisa, dau vakalevu ga niu veivosaki tu ga kei iratou na duty officers ena Joint Ops Centre.

Q9: Gauna cava o ni qai biuta kina na Complex?

A: E na Vukelulu, 19th July.

Q10: O ya o sa biuta vakadua?

A: Io.

Q11: Ni o biuta na Complex, o qai gole i vei?

A: Ki na HQ Engineers. Oti ya, au sa lako mai ya i vale, au sa qai qiri cake i cake baleta na veidinadinati sa tu ena Muanikau Accord me keitou lesu tale i na keba. Au qiri au yani au via vosa vei Maj. Waqanisau, e tauvimate o koya, keirau mani veivosaki kei WO1 Waqanimaravu. Au kerea vei Waqanimaravu me kerea vei CO meu kauti iratou cake yani na cauravou e na siga Lotulevu.

Q12: O kila na tiki ni siga?

A: 19th July.

Q13: 19th o biuta na Complex?

A: Io, siga talega o ya au gole ki vale, oti toka vakalailai na 12 au qiri cake kina. Au arrange-taka gona na neitou lako cake yani, ia sa mani tukuna mai vei au o Waqanimaravu ni sega ni vakadonuya o CO Engineer, Lt. Col. Raravula, me keitou lako yani, sa qai mani qiri tale yani oko ya ni oti toka e vica na aua. Vakamacalataka ga yani oko ya vei au ni se qai oti nodratou O-Group qai sa mani tukuna oko ya me clear-taki mada mai na NATOPS na neitou lako yani, oti o ya au sa qai mani lai check i Kalabu e na gauna o ya. Au lesu mai vovoleka toka ni oti na 11 na kaloko ena bogi, ratou sa tukuna mai vale ni ratou sa qiri yani na Engr Ops, o Waqanimaravu. Au sa mani confirm-taka tale, au vosa vei S/Sgt. Ravuwai, mani tukuna o koya ni tukuna o CO ni sega ni via raici au, e via raici iratou ga na kena vo. Oti ga na kena mataka, au sa mani lesu tale ki Kalabu, au lai check tu ga i kea ena veisiga, yacova sara neitou vesu mai e na kena macawa ka tarava.

Q14: O kila na tiki ni siga o a vesu kina?

A: Thursday, the following week, 27th July 2000.

Q15: O ni a vesu ga i vale?

A: Sega, au a vesu mai Kalabu.

- Q16: Na gauna sa yaco kece kina na veika qo, nomuni sa tiko mai kea, o ni bau rogoca se o kemuni bau veitalanoa se veitaratara mai kei na dua mai na Mataivalu se e tiko i na keba?
- A: Sega.
- Q17: Na veitalanoa ko ya a caka mai Nabuni vata kei ira na cauravou, o ni a sureti ira na cauravou me ra lako sobu se a caka vakacava?
- A: Sega, au tukuna ga o au, "Au sa vakarau lako sobu. Au sa lako sobu meu lai join-taka Na Qase i ra meu lai veivuke vei iratou i ra, kevaka e dua na ka e yaco, I can be an extra hand, ia sa mani oti, ratou sa via lako talega o ratou o ya, au sa mani tukuna vei iratou, "Vakatau sara ga vei kemudou nomudou lako, I'm not forcing anyone to go down, it is your own personal will, if you want to go down, you go."
- Q18: Nomudou gole sobu o ya, e sega ni dua a qiri yani vei iko?
- A: Sega.
- Q19: O iko ga o sa via lako sobu?
- A: Io.
- Q20: Remember when you were in the Complex, after you had marched-in, there was an ultimatum put out by Commander that all the troops have to return back to camp, did you receive that information?
- A: We did not receive anything until late afternoon. E sega ni lako yani officially but announced over the radio, nothing official came.
- Q21: What was the reaction of the troops in the Parliament Complex?
- A: Even I myself collected the soldiers together, I told them, "Qo nomudou chance, sa tukuna mai o Commander mo dou lesu o koya sa via lesu" so I said to everyone, "The door is open to everyone. Those who want to go back can go back, oko ya ga e via tiko mai, tiko - so that was it.
- Q22: The food that was coming in, when you were in charge of logistics, distribution of food to the vanua, who was responsible for gathering those food?
- A: O ira sara ga na dui veisiko mai. People from the vanua all over Fiji, nodra veisiko yani e ra sa kauta sara ga yani na kakana dina kei na kena i coi.