

DOCUMENTS

A Pentecostal Point of View

We, as representatives of the cooperating Pentecostal churches of Papua New Guinea, write to appeal against a decision of the Land Board to award the portion of land, Allotment 1 and 2 (consolidated), Section 138 Hohola, to the Islamic Society of PNG.

It is our understanding that we have 28 days to appeal against a decision of the Land Board. As the Board made its decision to award the above portion of land to the Islamic Society on Thursday, March 12, 1992, we now state our reason as to why we object to this decision.

At the Land Board meeting, 1,876 applications for the above portion were heard. At this meeting, proposals were presented by 12 parties. These were as follows:

1. Papua New Guinea Planning Association
2. Papanal Investment Pty Ltd
3. Monica Ding
4. Esa'ala Group
5. Talio Family
6. Tiare No 6 Pty Ltd
7. Kiriwina Community Ekalesia Congregation
8. Evangelical church of Papua
9. The church of Foursquare Gospel in Papua New Guinea
10. Christian Life Centre
11. Iglesia Ni Cristo (Church of Christ) Inc
12. The Islamic church of Papua New Guinea Inc

Had the application for the land resulted in one application only, namely the Islamic Society, then it is conceded that we may not have had grounds to appeal against a decision to grant the land to the Society. However, we find it unacceptable that, in considering the application by the Islamic Society, in conjunction with application by Christian churches, that the Board would give preference to a non-Christian group.

1. The Decision is Unconstitutional

As Christian leaders, we consider the decision of the Land Board to be in direct contravention to the Constitution of Papua New Guinea. In our estimation, this decision shows a lack of understanding, by the Land Board members, of the clearly-stated principles of the Islamic faith, and the affect that a strong Islamic community would have on “our noble traditions, and Christian principles that are now ours”.

2. The Islamic Faith is Opposed to Christianity

The Islamic faith is strongly opposed to Christianity, and, as church leaders, it concerns us that our government should find grounds to prefer to a non-Christian organisation over Christian churches.

3. In the Constitution, We Have Pledged to Guard Christian Principles

The Constitution of Papua New Guinea clearly recognises our heritage, to the extent that we “*pledge ourselves to guard, and pass on to those that come after us, our noble traditions, and the Christian principles.*”

The preamble to the Constitution makes the bold assertion that, “*We, the people, do now establish this sovereign nation, and declare ourselves, under the guiding hand of [the Christian] God, to be the independent state of Papua New Guinea.*”

4. Damaging to Christian Principles, on Which PNG is Based

Allowing the Islamic Society to establish a centre of worship in Moresby would be very damaging to the Christian principles, on which PNG is based. The establishment of a base for the Islamic faith would bring about a strong Islamic influence in PNG, and undermine the principles we have pledged ourselves to uphold, and pass on to those that come after us.

5. As Pastors, We are Concerned For Our Flock

It is as church ministers, responsible for the flock over which God has given us the oversight, that we appeal to you, a Minister, elected by the people of Papua New Guinea, to uphold the Constitution of this great nation. Sir, you have pledged to do this.

The action of the Land Board, to grant the above land to the Islamic Society, in preference to a Christian church, can, in no way, be construed as in the interests of the people of Papua New Guinea.

Minister, we feel most strongly about this matter, and we appeal to you to review the decision of the Land Board, and use your discretionary powers to ensure that the land is awarded to a Christian church.

Yours sincerely,

Pastor Joseph Walters, District Superintendent Assemblies of God

Pastor Peter Igarobae, National Chairman Christian Revival Crusade

Pastor Bob Lotu, National Chairman Christian Life Centre

Pastor Charles Lapa, Founder and Senior Pastor Jesus Centres PNG

Pastor Robin Lolo, Senior Pastor Foursquare Gospel church, Port Moresby

Pastor Momoti Kemopa, Senior Pastor Faith Fellowship, Port Moresby

Pastor Peter Hollands, Senior Pastor, Potters House Christian Fellowship church

Pastor Donald Onne, Senior Pastor Apostolic church of PNG

NOTE: The above letter (followed by an appendix about the nature of the Islamic faith) is dated March 19, 1992, and was presented by the Pentecostal pastors of the Port Moresby area, to the Honourable Rabbie Namaliu, at the time, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea. The Land Board decision was not rescinded, and, at the present time, plans are being carried out for two mosques in Port Moresby.