

microKhan on Tall J, 08.07.2011

Source: <http://www.microkhan.com/2011/07/08/the-new-filibusters/#more-5973>

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The New Filibusters

July 8th, 2011 · [11 Comments](#)



When last we [checked in](#) on Bougainville's Panguna copper mine, there was considerable talk of reopening the long-shuttered operation—much to the consternation of indigenous groups who have [long fought](#) for a more equitable distribution of the proceeds. Now comes word that a few Americans might be sticking their nose in the island's business, thereby [threatening Panguna's future](#):

The president of autonomous Papua New Guinea province of Bougainville, John Momis, says a shadowy American group, with links to a militant rebel group, is de-stablising his government.

The rebel group calling itself the [Me'ekamui Tribal Nation](#), which refuses to acknowledge the government's legitimacy, reportedly has the backing of the so-called Tall J Foundation.

Mr Momis says he's met the Americans who he understands want to begin extracting alluvial gold in Bougainville.

"I don't know very much about them. All I know is that they're a menace. They are trying to sabotage all our efforts to create unity and a sense of responsibility, to get ourselves prepared for re-opening of the [Panguna] mine. They are more or less carpetbaggers, running around misleading ignorant people."

Okay, then, so what is the Tall J Foundation? Records are spotty, indeed—I couldn't find a corporate listing in the United States. [This forum post](#) from 2010 suggests that Tall J has been soliciting investors for some time now, with a fantastic promise of 500 percent returns. If the

poster is to be believed, the company's director is one Stephen M. Strauss, with addresses in both Texas and Olive Branch, Mississippi. I got another pop on that exact name through a recent SEC case, in which a Stephen M. Strauss stands accused of orchestrating a pump-and-dump stock scheme while head of the Chilmark Entertainment Group. (One of the press releases alleged to have played a role in that scheme can be read [here](#).)

Coincidence? Well, Chilmark was headquartered in Southaven, Miss., just a stone's throw from Olive Branch, so I'm thinking the answer is "no."

The only other easily accessible trace of Tall J is [this LinkedIn listing](#) for one James Blackmore. But I can find no connection between Blackmore and Strauss—at least not yet.

The bottom line is that it seems that a tiny, shady-seeming investment concern actually appears to be wreaking genuine havoc on the Bougainville peace process. That immediately made me think of such infamous 19th-century [filibusters](#) as William Walker, who fomented great chaos in Latin America in the service of making fortunes. This is why private interests really shouldn't be permitted to assume roles that might destabilize shaky governments; corporate self-interest is typically more at odds with international order than diplomatic self-interest.



Tags: [Bougainville](#) · [business](#) · [mining](#) · [Papua New Guinea](#) · [Tall J Foundation](#)

11 Comments so far ↓

- **scottstev** // [Jul 8, 2011 at 11:15 am](#)

Are they actually in location in PNG? Or is it just a vaporware white-collar object, like those Arizona developments in the desert?

- **[Brendan I. Koerner](#)** // [Jul 8, 2011 at 6:04 pm](#)

@scottstev: Well, Morris claims to have met representatives from the company, so I'm guessing they've at least visited Bougainville. But all else remains mysterious for the moment; trying to find out more, and will report back if anything pops. And, of course, hoping that a Tall J representative will leave a comment below...

- **[monkeyball](#)** // [Jul 12, 2011 at 4:20 pm](#)

I'm pretty sure Tall J killed Biggie. Maybe Tupac, too.

- **[Brendan I. Koerner](#)** // [Jul 12, 2011 at 4:47 pm](#)

@monkeyball: First person I thought of was Ray J. Would be an amazing story if he has a hand in this.

- **Stephen Strauss** // [Jul 18, 2011 at 5:48 pm](#)

I wanted to clarify a couple of mis-statements that you have made in your article. I am the Steve Strauss that you are speaking about and yes that is me in Olive Branch, MS.

Other than that your story is very inaccurate. Tall J has been involved in Bougainville for the past 18 months. I have lived with the Me'ekamui for 9 of those months in Panguna. During that time i have never met President Momis nor has any of the people that are associated with Tall J. This has been confirmed by Ruben Sierra who is an attorney and works with the ABG -Ruben ran for President against President Momis and came in third. He approached the President and confirmed that we had never been introduced (our other partner spent 4 weeks awaiting a meeting with President Momis but he was unavailable).

We had an ex partner named Stewart Sytner who still claims affiliation when speaking to the tribe with Tall J. He resigned in 2009 by his own choice and in May of 2010, he attempted to steal 60k from us. Stewart and his partner Tom Megas did meet with President Momis earlier this year. Stewart and Tom Megas are part of a company called BCIT a public company and if you read the posts about them, you will realize they are the group behind the failed meeting in Cairns, they are the ones that are creating unrest with the tribal group- we don't know who that group that you mention is – we have never had a meeting with or spoken with anyone claiming affiliation with that group-they claim President Phillip Miriori but he has always been with the Me'ekamui Government of Unity (i have documents signed by President Phillip under the MGU letterhead). We have only dealt with President Phillip Miriori of the Me'ekamui Government of Unity – the government group organized by the 13 paramount chiefs of Bougainville and who is working closely with the ABG – the only real point of conflict between the ABG and MGU is what to do with the Panguna Mine – a dispute that we have stayed completely out of and offered no opinion on), with O'orang Mining and Exploration (a PNG organized company) with whom we have a services contract to assist them in the clean up of the tailings (over 7 miles from the Panguna Mine)....our project has been submitted for approval to the ABG and we have a landowners group that is under contract with O'orang. We have over \$500,000 worth of equipment in Panguna area and we have developed a good solid relationship with the people.

Lastly as to the Chilmark fiasco, the pump and dump scheme involved a total of \$60,000. I never sold a share of stock while i was CEO of Chilmark. The interesting point that i would like you to investigate is the company that purchased Chilmark was a company called IBIE – guess who the chairman of the board of that company was when they purchased us? guess who gave me all of the information for the press releases that were issued ? if i told you Stewart Sytner would you be surprised? I am an idiot for working with him and have promised never to get near anything he ever does again. I can substantiate all of the emails for the press releases, the theft of the 60k and anything else that you may wish to verify.

- [Brendan I. Koerner](#) // [Jul 19, 2011 at 11:40 am](#)

@Stephen Strauss: Thank you for the comment and clarifications. I will push this onto the blog's main page later this week. And I will certainly look into Mr. Sytner's history.

- [Stephen Strauss](#) // [Jul 19, 2011 at 2:21 pm](#)

That is all i can ask for...also had nothing to do with Tupac or Biggie, not sure about Stewart though....thanks.

- [Tall J Speaks | Microkhan by Brendan I. Koerner](#) // [Jul 21, 2011 at 9:51 am](#)

[...] a certain amount of fairness. And so we feel compelled to publish a response to last week's post regarding the Tall J Foundation, they mysterious American mining concern that recently drew the ire [...]

- **Felix Fu** // [Sep 21, 2011 at 12:18 am](#)

May Mr. Stephen Strauss contact me at my e-mail felixfu@msn.com?

- **Avi Dick** // [Dec 4, 2011 at 7:04 am](#)

Brendan

What is your email address?

- [Brendan I. Koerner](#) // [Dec 4, 2011 at 3:21 pm](#)

@Avi Dick: Just below the image of the falcon at the top-right hand corner of this blog, there is a line that says "Email Brendan I. Koerner." Click that and you're set.