

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KIRIBATI) HIGH COURT CRIMINAL CASE No. 23 OF 2004
CRIMINAL JURISDICTION)
HELD AT BETIO)
REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI)

THE REPUBLIC
VS
BARANIKO TEITIKAI

FOR THE REPUBLIC: MS RURIA ITERAERA
FOR THE ACCUSED: MS JENNIFER TROUP

DATE OF HEARING: 10 MAY 2004

SENTENCE

Baraniko Teitikai: you have pleaded guilty to three counts of forgery, two counts of money to be paid on a forged document and one count of uttering. Each of these crimes has a maximum penalty of 14 years' imprisonment.

In 2003 you were a seaman by occupation but home in Kiribati. You were familiar with the signatures of two other seamen.

On 10 January 2003 you got your cousin to withdraw \$400 for you from the Bank. Your cousin did not know it but you had forged the signature of one of the other seamen. On 20 January you did the same thing, for \$1,500.

On 12 March you forged the signature of another seaman on a withdrawal for \$250 and gave it to your brother to cash.

In all you collected \$2,150 from the Bank, drawn on accounts not your own.

You are 25 years old, married and your wife is expecting your first child in a few months. You help to support your parents and younger members of the family. Ms Troup told me you used the money to buy a motor scooter.

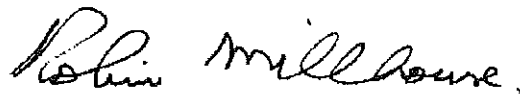
This was a serious course of conduct over several months. You were dishonest and involved your cousin and brother innocently in the dishonesty. You drew money on the accounts of two other seamen whom you knew.

You have no previous convictions and have pleaded guilty. It was a late plea, not known to the prosecution until the morning of your trial. You get credit for having no previous convictions and some credit - but not as much as if you had let it be known earlier - for pleading guilty.

You have offered to pay the money back but I do not give you much credit for the offer. It is now over 12 months since you committed these crimes. You used the money for a luxury not for necessities. As a seaman, you were in a well paid occupation. You have had time already to repay the money to the Bank.

You will be imprisoned on each count for 18 months. The terms will be served concurrently as I regard this to have been one course of conduct although the three occasions were separated by several weeks. The terms will run from 29 April when you went into custody.

Dated the 13th day of May 2004

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robin Millhouse".

THE HON ROBIN MILLHOUSE QC
Chief Justice