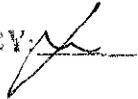




FIFTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
1ST Regular Session)

11 MAY 30 P4:29

SENATE
P.S. RESOLUTION NO. 497

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Teofisto "TG" Guingona III
and
Senator Panfilo M. Lacson

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC OFFICERS AND INVESTIGATIONS (BLUE RIBBON) TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE ALLEGED MISFEASANCE, MALFEASANCE, AND NON-FEASANCE IN THE PHILIPPINE PRISON SYSTEM WHERE PRISON OFFICIALS OF THE BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS, BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY, AND NATIONAL BILIBID PRISONS GRANT SEVERAL INMATES AND CRIMINALS SPECIAL LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND PRIVILEGES AND EVEN FACILITATE THEIR ESCAPE ALLEGEDLY IN EXCHANGE FOR BRIBE MONEY

WHEREAS, the allegations of misfeasance, non-feasance and malfeasance in the Philippine prison system has never been made more apparent until former Batangas Governor Jose Antonio Leviste, who was convicted of homicide, was found to be enjoying with impunity special treatment in going in and out of the National Bilibid Prisons (NBP) without authorization, without a Court Order and enjoying living out privileges;

WHEREAS, because of the Leviste scandal, several Bureau of Corrections officials have been relieved and Bureau of Corrections Director Ernesto Diokno went on leave pending investigation of the incident;

WHEREAS, the Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation uncovered supposed special privileges given to a select group of prisoners, among them Leviste;

WHEREAS, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima assigned Parole and Probation Administration (PPA) chief Manuel Co as concurrent officer in charge of the

Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) and to take over the prison operations "temporarily" while BuCor director Ernesto Diokno is on leave;

WHEREAS, no less than Maguindanao Governor Esmael Mangudadatu, whose wife and relatives were among the victims of the Maguindanao massacre has exposed through videos and photographs that the alleged masterminds in the Maguindanao massacre namely the Ampatuans who are now being detained at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig have been receiving special treatment and privileges as well;

WHEREAS, it was alleged that the Ampatuans have the privilege of using mobile phones, Internet and air conditioning units in their detention cells and are going in and out of prison;

WHEREAS, the Mangudadatu expose alarmed the executive department which started the investigations led by Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Jesse Robredo;

WHEREAS, Secretary Robredo ordered the relief of Chief Inspector Glennford Valdepeñas, Quezon City jail annex warden in Taguig City. Valdepeñas was relieved following allegations of giving special treatment to former Maguindanao governor Andal Ampatuan Sr., one of the principal accused in the Maguindanao massacre;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that a convicted Taiwanese drug trafficker, Frank Chua, had escaped the national penitentiary in 2004 and remains at large;

WHEREAS, the family of road rage victim Eldon Maguan also claimed that convicted murderer Rolito Go was allowed by prison officials to maintain a separate hut for himself complete with amenities even while in detention;

WHEREAS, most recently, inmate Brian Peña, who has been missing for two days, was found dead on 26 May 2011 and his body was discovered at Bilibid's maximum-security compound;

WHEREAS, DOJ Secretary De Lima cited allegations of corruption in the food budgets, bidding and escapes of inmates, which are reasons for the investigation and overhaul of the NBP;

WHEREAS, Secretary De Lima ordered the inventory of inmates in the NBP and other penal colonies, in order to check whether there are also similar cases of escapes or living out prisoners, as well as reported VIP treatments;

WHEREAS, the recent issues and scandals of graft and corruption haunting the Philippine prison system is an *insult* to the rule of law and should cause alarm not only to the Executive Department but other constituent units of the State as well;

WHEREAS, the Legislative Department particularly the Senate should conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation regarding these reports to be able to come up with remedial legislation to immediately address and arrest the problem in one of the Six Pillars of Justice of the State.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines to direct the Senate Committee on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations (Blue Ribbon) to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, into the alleged misfeasance, malfeasance, and non-feasance in the Philippine prison system where officials of the Bureau of Corrections, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology and National Bilibid Prisons grant several inmates and criminals special living arrangements and privileges and even facilitate their escape in exchange for bribe money.

ADOPTED,


Senator Teofisto "TG" Guingona III


Senator Panfilo M. Lacson