



Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID
OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED MASS TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEES OF
THE RADIO PHILIPPINES NETWORK IN ORDER TO CRAFT BETTER MEASURES TO
PROTECT RETRENCHED WORKERS

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 18 of the same provides: "The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare";

WHEREAS, various media reported that Radio Philippines Network (RPN) has laid-off some 200 employees as it continues to suffer financial losses;

WHEREAS, reports alleged that RPN has been shelling out P5 million a month for the past four years for operating expenses despite not having any incoming revenue; RPN-9's acting president Robert Rivera reportedly said that RPN's losses is because the network is no longer producing anymore shows, except *Newswatch Evening Edition* and *Newswatch Final Edition*;

WHEREAS, reports claimed that RPN-9 had P3 billion in obligations, of which P2 billion was owed to its employees; to settle these obligations, the company borrowed from several groups, including Solar Entertainment; RPN management reportedly said that the retrenchment of employees was a way to cut costs;

WHEREAS, in 2011, the station announced the new composition of the RPN Board reflected the equity structure as follows: 34 percent, Solar Entertainment Group; 32 percent, FEMII or Roberto Benedicto Group; 20.8 percent, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; and 14 percent, individual private stockholders; thus, according to the Governance Commission for Government Corporations, RPN is no longer a government corporation since government equity is only 20.8 percent and 66 percent or two-thirds of the equity is already owned by private corporations;

WHEREAS, the Presidential Communication Operations Office reportedly said that they will continue to supervise the operations and management of RPN and that the government will protect the rights of the employees of RPN;

WHEREAS, the unions of RPN representing the directors and supervisors on the one hand, and the regular employees, on the other hand, reportedly claimed that the mass termination was done in bad faith and without the benefit of any discussion and consultation with the workers and the two labor unions;

WHEREAS, the notice of mass termination allegedly came barely a week after the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB) of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) facilitated an agreement for RPN and the two labor unions for the payment of long overdue benefits of RPN's workers amounting to P50 million; the union claims that both

parties were also instructed to immediately begin the negotiation for a new collective bargaining agreement;

WHEREAS, the unions claimed that RPN reneged on the agreement and announced the retrenchment of more than 200 workers or 90 percent of RPN's total workforce, offering the workers retrenchment pay lower than what they should allegedly receive;

WHEREAS, both unions claim that the workers' salary, 13th month pay, and other benefits are being withheld in order to force them to receive the retrenchment package;

WHEREAS, although RPN is no longer considered a government corporation, and issues concerning its workers and management could be threshed out under the proper government agency, it is imperative for the State to review its labor laws if such truly provide sufficient protection to workers in case of retrenchment due to bankruptcy;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported mass termination of employees of the Radio Philippines Network in order to craft better measures to protect retrenched workers.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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