

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

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SENATE
P.S.R. No. **177**

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, EMPLOYMENT, AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, REVISIONS OF CODES AND LAWS, COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY, AND COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE VIOLENT CLASH BETWEEN LAW ENFORCERS AND STRIKERS IN HACIENDA LUISITA

WHEREAS, Hacienda Luisita Inc., a corporate firm established in the late 1980s under the stock scheme of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), has more than five thousand (5,000) farm workers, who are regarded by the Cojuangcos as co-owners;

WHEREAS, the worker unions in Hacienda Luisita were demanding a P 100.00 salary increase and a P30,000.00 bonus for their members; however, the management maintained that it can only provide a P12.00 wage hike and a P12,000.00 bonus;

WHEREAS, the unions also demanded the reinstatement of three hundred twenty-seven (327) farm workers who were laid off by the Hacienda Luisita management last October 2004;

WHEREAS, the workers in the 600 hectare estate launched a strike after separate negotiations between the management and the sugar mill failed;

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article III, Section 4 states that: "No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, expression, or the press, or the rights of the people to peaceably assemble and petition the government for redress and grievances";

WHEREAS, during the strike, a clash between the law enforcers and the strikers occurred; as a result, 111 rallyists were rounded up and brought to the provincial office in Camp Gen. Francisco Makabulos in Tarlac City;

WHEREAS, 10 policemen were also reported to have been injured;

WHEREAS, the death toll of strikers during the violence at the Gate 1 of Hacienda Luisita has already reached 14;

WHEREAS, there are still no clear reports on who fired shots at approximately 4,500 strikers during the dispersal launched by policemen and soldiers;

WHEREAS, United Luisita Workers Union President Rene Galang said gunfire lasted for 10 minutes, even as strikers were already retreating;

WHEREAS, the 4,5000 strikers reportedly refused to obey a "return to work order," which was issued by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);

WHEREAS, Northern Luzon Command Spokesperson Lt. Col. Monta confirmed there were reports that some snipers had been sighted, but he claimed they were not from the government;

WHEREAS, almost 100 injured strikers were admitted for treatment in different hospitals in Tarlac;

WHEREAS, Department of Justice (DOJ) Secretary Raul Gonzales said a careful investigation has to be made on the incident, which he described as a "tumultuous affray"; he said that everybody in the groups suspected to have caused the deaths and injuries should be charged;

WHEREAS, Secretary Gonzales also said that the police can be charged criminally for resorting to excessive use of force, even if the military was called to assist in peacekeeping;

WHEREAS, Philippine National Police (PNP) Director Edgardo Aglipay has also ordered relief from their posts Chief Supt. Quirino de la Torre and Sr. Supt. Angelo Sunglao, chiefs of police of Central Luzon and Tarlac, respectively;

WHEREAS, de la Torre was in charge of about 1,000 policemen in the anti-riot contingent, which included policemen from Olongapo City, Pampanga, and Bataan;

WHEREAS, police and soldiers involved in the clash would also be rotated out and replaced with a fresh contingent that would exercise "maximum tolerance" on the striking workers;

WHEREAS, in reaction to this violent clash in Hacienda Luisita, President Arroyo has appealed for an amicable settlement of labor dispute between the Cojuangco-owned estate and its laborers.

WHEREFORE, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the Senate Committee on Labor, Employment, and Human Resource Development, Committee on Constitutional Amendments, Committee on National Defense and Security, and Committee on Agrarian Reform to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the violent clash between the law enforcers and strikers in Hacienda Luisita.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
JCS

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