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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 1219

RECEIVED BY

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED LEASE BY A SOUTH KOREAN
FIRM OF 94,000 HECTARES OF FARMLAND IN MINDORO

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 12, Section 2 of the Constitution provides: "All lands of the public domain, waters, minerals, coal, petroleum, and other mineral oils, all forces of potential energy, fisheries, forests or timber, wildlife, flora and fauna, and other natural resources are owned by the State. With the exception of agricultural lands, all other natural resources shall not be alienated. The exploration, development, and utilization of natural resources shall be under the full control and supervision of the State. The State may directly undertake such activities, or it may enter into co-production, joint venture, or production-sharing agreements with Filipino citizens, or corporations or associations at least sixty per centum of whose capital is owned by such citizens. Such agreements may be for a period not exceeding twenty-five years, renewable for not more than twenty-five years, and under such terms and conditions as may be provided by law xxx";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, on 16 July 2009, in an article entitled "S. Korea Leases 94,000 Ha," reported that, according to an unnamed provincial government official, Jeonnam Feedstock Ltd., a firm set up by South Jeolla, a South Korean province, has leased 94,000 hectares of farmland in Mindoro to grow 10,000 tons of corn a year for feed for 25 years;

WHEREAS, it was reported that agriculture officials were caught unaware of such lease arrangement; provincial officials of Oriental Mindoro and Occidental Mindoro also denied knowledge of the deal;

WHEREAS, Dennis Araullo, Department of Agriculture assistant secretary, and Marriz Agbon, President of the Philippine Agricultural Development and Commercial Corp. (PADCC) claimed that it was their first time to hear of Jeonnam and its plan to utilize the country's farmlands for its feeds requirements;

WHEREAS, utilization of alienable lands is open only to those qualified and in the manner provided in Article 12, Section 2 of the Constitution;

WHEREAS, the article that came out in the PDI, on its face, is a clear violation of the Constitution since there is no mention whether the South Korean province is qualified to lease such land in the manner prescribed by the Constitution;

WHEREAS, alleged lack of knowledge on the questioned lease arrangement by an official of the Department of Agriculture as well as the local government of Oriental and Occidental Mindoro strongly indicates the illegality and stealth by which the lease arrangement was consummated;

WHEREAS, in the interest of the public and for the protection of our national economy, this lease arrangement must be investigated to ascertain how this alleged irregularity was perpetrated despite the presence of our government officials responsible for upholding the laws of the land;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the alleged lease by a South Korean firm of 94,000 hectares of farmland in Mindoro.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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