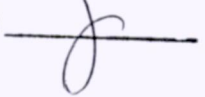




SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )

17 MAR -7 P3:20

RECEIVED BY: 

SENATE

P. S. RES. NO. 315

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION AND MASS MEDIA AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE MASSIVE PROLIFERATION OF FAKE, ERRONEOUS, DISTORTED, FABRICATED AND/OR MISLEADING NEWS AND FALSE INFORMATION BY SOME GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENSURING THAT THE PUBLIC WILL NOT BE DECEIVED AND THAT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WILL NOT ABUSE THE PLATFORM ACCORDED TO THEM BY SPREADING PROPAGANDA AND LIES**

**WHEREAS**, Article XI, Section 9 of the 1987 Constitution states that:

*"Public office is a public trust. Public officers and employees must at all times be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency, act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives."*

**WHEREAS**, Section 4 (c) of Republic Act No. 6713 otherwise known as the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards of Public Officials and Employees further states that:

*"Public officials and employees shall perform and discharge their duties with the highest degree of excellence, professionalism, intelligence and skill. They shall enter public service with utmost devotion and dedication to duty. They shall endeavor to discourage wrong perceptions of their roles as dispensers or peddlers of undue patronage."*

**WHEREAS**, on 20 February 2017, after the press conference organized by the undersigned, where SPO3 Arturo Lascañas retracted his previous statements and implicated President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in the killings perpetrated by the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS), Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Martin Andanar, made a deliberate but false and/or erroneous allegation that bribes amounting to as much as US\$1000 were given to the members of the Senate Press Corps in exchange for their coverage of the said press conference;

**WHEREAS**, in his interview with CNN Philippines' Pinky Webb, Andanar was quoted saying: "... *Mayroon din po tayong mga natanggap na mga report, Pinky, na as much as 1,000 dollars ang ipinamigay dito sa presscon na ito, hindi ko na lang po papangalanan yung aking source, pero mayroon daw pinagbibigyan ng ganito kalaking halaga ng pera para lamang i-cover ito.*"

**WHEREAS**, this has been denied both by the undersigned and the members of Senate Press Corps and the claim has apparently no basis whatsoever;

**WHEREAS**, this claim is unfounded, unverified and was clearly used to malign and discredit the undersigned and the members of the Senate Press Corps and, ultimately, to deliberately divert the issue from the President's alleged involvement in the Davao Death Squad;

**WHEREAS**, the Senate Press Corps demanded a public apology from Press Secretary Andanar and challenged him to prove his allegations as such placed doubts on the credibility of media entities;

**WHEREAS**, Press Secretary Andanar refused to apologize and resorted to claiming that his statements were misconstrued blaming his lack of fluency in Tagalog because he is a Bisaya;

**WHEREAS**, in the same press conference, Press Secretary Andanar made another false claim and assertion saying that the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) already cleared President Duterte of involvement in the so-called Davao Death Squad. According to him, "*The Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Senate committee on justice already cleared the President of extrajudicial killing and his involvement in the Davao Death Squad.*"

**WHEREAS**, The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) directly refuted this statement and in fact cited a 28 June 2012 CHR Resolution wherein the commission recommended to the Office of the Ombudsman that they "*investigate the possible administrative and criminal liability of Mayor Duterte for his inaction in the face of evidence of numerous killings committed in Davao City and his toleration of the commission of these offenses*";

**WHEREAS**, Press Secretary Andanar also alleged that the Lascañas press conference was part of the destabilization plot against the Government;

**WHEREAS**, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperón, National Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff General Eduardo Año and AFP Public Affairs Chief Col. Edgard Arevalo have unanimously said that they have not monitored any group at all that can be considered a threat to the President or the Administration;

**WHEREAS**, another official of the Administration, Justice Secretary Vitaliano N. Aguirre II has also been spreading unsubstantiated claims and unfounded assertions;

**WHEREAS**, Secretary Aguirre alleged that undersigned is supposedly involved in the 28 September 2016 National Bilibid Prison stabbing incident where three (3) high profile inmates (i.e., Jaybee Sebastian, Peter Co and Vicente Sy) were hurt and one (1) died;

**WHEREAS**, Secretary Aguirre himself already publicly admitted that his allegation was not backed by sufficient evidence;

**WHEREAS**, Secretary Aguirre also tagged the undersigned, as well as Senators Leila De Lima and Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan for our alleged involvement in the so-called plot to offer former Bureau of Immigration Commissioners Al Argosino and Michael Robles legislative immunity in exchange for them to pin Aguirre in the Bureau of Immigration Bribery Scandal;

**WHEREAS**, Secretary Aguirre later apologized to the three (3) senators as he admitted that his claim was just based on hearsay and was clearly unfounded;

**WHEREAS**, on 24 February 2017, Secretary Aguirre implicated former Senator Jamby Madrigal and Biñan, Laguna Representative Marlyn Alonte-Naguiat as those behind the attempt to offer a 100-million-peso bribe to the inmates/drug lords who testified against Senator De Lima to retract the statements they made in the House of Representatives' inquiry;

**WHEREAS**, this was both denied by former Senator Jamby Madrigal and Representative Marlyn Alonte-Naguiat;

**WHEREAS**, Secretary Aguirre has yet to present evidence to back his claims;

**WHEREAS**, Secretary Aguirre, on the same day, claimed that the car of Lalaine Madrigal Martinez, cousin of former senator Jamby Madrigal and wife of Noel Martinez, one of the inmates who implicated Senator De Lima, was ambushed that morning at the Sta. Ana race track (Circuit Makati), Makati City and that this matter was already being investigated by Makati police;

**WHEREAS**, Makati City Police Chief Sr. Supt. Dionesio Bartolome clarified that contrary to Aguirre's claims, no ambush incident was reported that day;

**WHEREAS**, due to the advent of modern technology, false, misleading, erroneous and/or fabricated news are easily proliferated and the public is susceptible to being misinformed and/or deliberately misled by unscrupulous and/or enterprising individuals;

**WHEREAS**, public officials should be more careful and should be held directly responsible for their public pronouncements in order to avoid the proliferation of false, fake, fabricated and/or unsubstantiated claims and/or misleading assertions and to prevent the proliferation of fake or false news and/or deliberate misinformation;

**WHEREAS**, it is the responsibility of the Congress, as one of the independent branches of the Government, to exercise its role in the system of checks and balances between the three (3) great branches of the Government, and ensure that no government officials would be using or taking advantage of their positions, whether deliberately or not, to disseminate fake, distorted, baseless or fabricated and/or erroneous news and false information and/or to mislead the public;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED**, *as it is hereby resolved by the Philippines Senate*, to direct the Senate Committee on Public Information and Mass Media and other appropriate committee/s to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the massive proliferation of fake, erroneous, distorted, fabricated and/or misleading news and/or false information by some government officials, with the end in view of ensuring that the public will not be deceived and that government officials will not abuse the platform accorded to them in order to spread propaganda and/or lies.

*Adopted,*

  
ANTONIO "SONNY" F. TRILLANES IV  
*Senator*