

[PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 491, June 25, 1974]

CREATING A NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

WHEREAS malnutrition is seriously affecting millions of our people;

WHEREAS, malnutrition retards mental and physical development of our children, weakens their resistance to infections resulting in unnecessary loss of human lives through high infant and child mortality rates;

WHEREAS, studies indicate that infants and young children, pregnant women and nursing mothers are most vulnerable to malnutrition;

WHEREAS, there is a multiplicity of government agencies engaged in various aspects of nutrition activities;

WHEREAS, there are various food programs in the country such as the Green Revolution, Masagana 99, Palayan ng Bayan, Masaganang Maisan and others which are aimed at providing for food sufficiency;

WHEREAS, there is a close interlinking relationship between food, education and nutrition;

WHEREAS, Executive Order 285, series of 1971, vested in the National Food and Agriculture Council the responsibility to coordinate all nutrition programs in the country;

WHEREAS, coordination has proven to be of great value in integrating the food and nutrition efforts of the various agencies;

WHEREAS, one of the objectives of the New Society is to bring about social, economic, and political reforms to eventually improve the quality of life of every Filipino;

WHEREAS, the nutrition program, being concerned with human resource development, is a vital and integral part of social reform and economic development;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution do hereby adopt, approve and make as part of the law of the land, the following:

SECTION 1. *Title.*—This decree shall be known as the Nutrition Act of the Philippines.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*—The Government of the Philippines hereby declares that nutrition is now a priority of the government to be implemented by all branches of the government in an integrated fashion.

SEC. 3. *Philippine Food and Nutrition Program.*—An Integrated Four-Year Program involving the government and private sector shall be drafted by the National Council is hereby created. The program shall be approved by the President to be implemented by all concerned.

SEC. 4. *Creation of a National Nutrition Council.*—There is hereby created an agency under the Office of the President, the National Nutrition Council, hereinafter referred to as the council, to be composed of the following officials;

The Secretary, Department of Education and Culture
The Chairman-Coordinator, National Food and Agriculture Council
The Secretary, Department of Health
The Chairman, National Science Development Board
The Secretary, Department of Social Welfare
The Secretary, Department of Local Government and Community Development
The Chairman of the Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines
President, Philippine Medical Association
One other representative of the private sector to be appointed by the President of the Philippines.

In the event that any cabinet member cannot attend Council meetings, he shall be represented by an Undersecretary or Assistant Secretary.

SEC. 5. *Functions and Powers.*—The Council shall have the following functions and powers:

- a. To formulate an integrated national program on nutrition.
- b. To supervise, coordinate and evaluate the implementation of the integrated Philippine Food and Nutrition Program to be implemented by all agencies and instrumentalities of both the government and the private sector concerned with improving the nutrition of our people.
- c. To coordinate and integrate policies and programs of all agencies and instrumentalities of the government charged with the prosecution of existing law, policies, rules and regulations concerning nutrition.
- d. To coordinate the release of public funds for nutrition purposes in accordance with the approved projects and programs.
- e. To coordinate all requests for loans and grants by the government agencies involved in the nutrition program.
- f. To call on any department, bureau, office, agency and other instrumentalities of the government for assistance in the form of personnel, facilities and resources as the need arises.

SEC. 6. *Officers of the Council.*—The Chairman-Coordinator of the National Food and Agriculture Council shall be the Chairman of the Council. He shall maintain a close link of the nutrition program with the food programs of the government. In his absence, the Secretary of Health shall be the Acting Chairman.

An Executive Director shall be appointed by the Council. He shall implement the policies, programs, projects and decisions of the Council.

One or more Deputy Executive Directors may be appointed by the Council and shall assist the Executive Director in the performance of his duties or take charge of special project assigned by the Executive Director.

A Management Committee shall be formed, the members of which shall be a representative appointed by each of the members of the Council, which representatives should be the head of the nutrition unit or project of his office. The Executive Director, or in his absence, a Deputy Executive Director, shall be Chairman