

[ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 53, February 24, 1999]

CREATING AN AD-HOC AND INDEPENDENT CITIZENS' COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ALL THE FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING PHILIPPINE CENTENNIAL PROJECTS, INCLUDING ITS COMPONENT ACTIVITIES

WHEREAS, to enhance the confidence of the people in its pursuit of good government, the present administration is committed to resolve with firmness and finality any complaint or impropriety that affects public interest;

WHEREAS, serious questions have been raised regarding the prosecution of the Philippine Centennial Projects and its component projects and activities, including the Expo Pilipino Project in Angeles City, particularly in the use of public resources and the award and prosecution of public works contracts, which now compel an exhaustive investigation;

WHEREAS, to insure impartiality and fairness, there is an urgent need to create an independent fact-finding body to conduct a thorough investigation of all the facts and circumstances surrounding the Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. There is hereby constituted an Ad-Hoc and Independent Citizens' Committee to look into and investigate all the facts and circumstances surrounding the Philippine Centennial Project.

The Committee shall be composed of five members, only one of whom shall be a government representative.

SEC. 2. The Committee is hereby granted the powers of an investigating body under Section 37, Chapter 9, Book I of the Administrative Code of 1987, including the power to summon witnesses, administer oaths, take testimony or evidence relevant to the investigation, and to issue compulsory processes to produce documents, books, records and such other matters, in the performance of its functions.

Any person who, without lawful excuse, fails to appear upon summons issued under the authority of the preceding paragraph or who, appearing before the Committee, refuses to take oath, give testimony or produce documents for inspection, when lawfully required, shall be subject to discipline as in the case of contempt of court upon application of the Committee before the proper court, in the manner provided for under existing law.

SEC. 3. The Committee shall, upon termination of the fact-finding investigation, forward to the President, through the Executive Secretary, its findings and recommendations, together with the following: