

[GENERAL ORDER NO. 32, July 23, 1973]

ENCOURAGING THE PEOPLE TO DISCUSS AND DEBATE FREELY BEFORE AND DURING THE REFERENDUM ON JULY 27, 1973 THE QUESTION TO BE RESOLVED IN SAD REFERENDUM.

WHEREAS, by Presidential decrees Nos. 86 and 86-A I created Barangays (Citizens Assemblies) and designated them to constitute the base for citizen participation in governmental affairs whose views shall not be considered in the formulation of national policies and programs;

WHEREAS, by Presidential Decree No. 228, I directed that a nationwide referendum for all the Barangays be held on July 27, 1973; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable that our people shall be afforded the fullest opportunity to discuss and debate freely and publicly the question to be resolved in the referendum;

NOW THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers in me vested by the Constitution as Commander-in-Chief of all the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081, dated September 21, 1972, and General Order No. 1, dated September 22, 1972 as amended, order and enjoin the Armed Forces of the Philippines and/or other Departments and agencies of the Government, to encourage, and not to interfere in the public and free discussion and debate on the question to be resolved in the referendum.

More particularly, I order:

1. That no person shall be questioned, interrogated, or investigated before or after the referendum for any speech, remark or statement in any discussion or debate intended to explain the question to be resolved or to enlighten the people about it, for or against the question, made in public rallies or debates, in printed or other forms of communication, radio or television, and such remarks, statements or views shall not be admissible as evidence in any investigation or actions against the person or persons making them.
2. That the printing of pamphlets, leaflets, posters, handbills and other printed materials designed to explain or discuss the question or to enlighten the people about it, and the dissemination or circulation of these materials shall be allowed and in no way restricted and that no person shall be held to account for views expressed in these pointed materials, which shall likewise be inadmissible as evidence in any investigation or action against the persons, printing, publishing or circulating them.

I direct the Secretary of National Defense to adopt all measures to ensure that this General Order is observed faithfully by all the officers and men in the field and everywhere else in the country.

I likewise order the heads of the other executive departments, offices and agencies to adopt similar measures to ensure that officers and employees under them faithfully comply with this Order.