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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 667



Introduced by
BAYAN MUNA Representatives CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
FERDINAND R. GAITE and EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCE L. CASTRO,
GABRIELA Women's Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS
and KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THROUGH THE
COMMITTEE ON GOOD GOVERNMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY, TO
CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ISSUE
OF GRAFT AND CORRUPTION IN THE MANIPULATION OF THE PHOTO
RELEASED BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES TO MEDIA
OUTLETS AND THE ALLEGED FAKE REBEL SURRENDEREES

WHEREAS, on December 26, 2019, following the announcement of a 16-day ceasefire and the possible resumption of the GRP-NDFP peace talks, the 9th Infantry Division of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) released a photo with a press release about the supposed surrender of some 306 alleged New People's Army (NPA) members and supporters in Masbate City;

WHEREAS, after the posting of the news, GMA News TV immediately took down their social media post after public criticism, both of the photo and the failure to verify the photo or report before posting. Some of the observations pointed-out are the following:¹

1. The alleged surrenderers seems to be floating;
2. The alleged surrenderers lack of shadows;
3. The resolution of the table with firearms and the image of people are different; and
4. The allegedly cropped foot of the man on the lower right side of the photo;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that at least eight (8) of the alleged surrenderers on the photo are identical to the alleged rebel returnees already presented by Sr. Supt. Froilan Elope, director of Masbate Provincial Police Office and Lt. Col. Red Cabanizas, 2nd Infantry Battalion commander to the media on June 14, 2017;

WHEREAS, the photo showing the alleged 49 surrendered firearms, one of the rifles has a tag "18 JUN 2019" drawing suspicions that the gun was recycled.² Other reports say that the firearms were donations from China, which the AFP rejected;

¹ <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/inside-track/248052-philippine-army-photoshopped-communist-surrenderers>

² <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/12/28/19/ph-army-says-sorry-for-photoshopped-image-of-former-rebels>

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2 **WHEREAS**, on December 28, 9th ID Public Affairs Chief Maj. Ricky Aguilar said that his unit
3 failed to verify the pictures provided by the 2nd IB and apologized for the “honest mistake.” The
4 military also claimed that their intention is to “ensure the safety” of the alleged surrenderees and
5 not to mislead the public;³

6
7 **WHEREAS**, on December 29, 2019, Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo, upon
8 confirmation with Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, claimed that the photo was authentic and
9 not manipulated, describing it as a mere collage of two photos;

10
11 **WHEREAS**, the manipulation of the photo released to media, which strengthens the public
12 suspicion on the legitimacy of recent and past mass surrender of alleged communist rebels, also
13 raised the suspicions of existing or possible corruption involving funds of the Enhancement of
14 Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP);

15
16 **WHEREAS**, on July 2019, Kalumbay Regional Lumad Organization earlier reported that the
17 army’s 89th IB in the Malungon, San Fernando Bukidnon allegedly forced around 50 Lumad
18 residents to surrender as rebels;⁴

19
20 **WHEREAS**, on September 8, 2019, the Philippine News Agency reported that an alleged NPA
21 member named Joselito Naag, with a bounty of P100,000 issued by the Department of Interior
22 and Local Government (DILG), was arrested in Pasig City by the Eastern Police District (EPD).
23 Naag was arrested by virtue of a warrant of arrest for cases of robbery, murder, and frustrated
24 murder issued by the Regional Trial Court of Legaspi City, Albay. EPD claimed that Naag is listed
25 as member of Kilusang Larangang Guerilla 78 in Albay and listed as No. 30 ‘most wanted person’
26 in the Bicol Region. Brig. Gen. Johnson Almazan, head of the EPD, said the successful arrest of
27 Naag was “in line with the intensified campaign against criminality and illegal drugs;”⁵ However,
28 it turns out that Joselito Naag is not a NPA member but a member of the Armed Forces of the
29 Philippines, as revealed by his Facebook account;⁶

30
31 **WHEREAS**, under Section 1 of the Administrative Order No. 10, s. 2018 or the E-CLIP, the
32 former rebels will be provided “complete package of assistance” who wished to abandon armed
33 struggle and reintegrate to the society. Meanwhile, according to Section 5 of the Order, the funding
34 for the program will be charged against existing allocation for Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan
35 (PAMANA) and the contingent fund;

36
37 **WHEREAS**, DILG spokesperson Undersecretary Jonathan E. Malaya said that a total of P260-
38 million fund for E-CLIP was earmarked in the General Appropriations Bill of 2020;⁷

39
40 **WHEREAS**, under the E-CLIP grant, former rebels or their qualified beneficiaries are entitled to
41 benefits ranging from guaranteed safety and security; monetary assistance such as a P50,000 as
42 livelihood assistance, P21,000 for meals cost while in the custody of Receiving Unit and other
43 expenses, and P15,000 per former rebel for mobilization expenses; and firearms remuneration
44 amounting to the value of turned-in firearms, among others;

³ https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1207205/panelo-mpa-surrender-photo-authentic?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR2L1VZ-29dn797cXB7r3xn9iV3Pbz5a4nT-88BXZjF8DiEptFxxiHBrpf4#Echobox=1577670111

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/SandugoNatMin/posts/898566147164085>

⁵ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1079869>

⁶ <https://www.pinoyweekly.org/2019/09/kuwento-ng-dalawang-nahuling-rebelde/>


⁷ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1088345>


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2 **WHEREAS**, DILG Sec. Año said that a total of P171.6 million in financial aid were released to
3 2,882 rebel returnees from July 2018 to November 2019, citing the data from E-CLIP Task Force.
4 Also, based on the data of the DILG-National Barangay Operations Office, of the 2,882
5 surrenderees, 2,635 were granted immediate assistance – 1,788 for livelihood assistance and 655
6 firearms remuneration amounting to PHP171.6-million through E-CLIP from July 2018 to
7 November 2019.

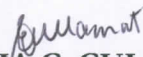
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9 **WHEREAS**, in 2018, the Commission on Audit flagged the unliquidated fund transfer for
10 administrative expenses of Task Force Balik-Loob for the implementation for E-CLIP by the
11 Department of National Defense and the AFP amounting to P9,108,926.20 and P45,684,000,
12 respectively;

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14 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the House of Representatives, through the
15 Committee on Good Government and Accountability, to conduct an investigation, in aid of
16 legislation, on the issues of graft and corruption over the issues of the manipulation of the photo
17 released by the Armed Forces of the Philippines to media and the alleged fake rebel surrenderees.
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20 *Adopted,*
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26 **REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**
27 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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31 **REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE**
32 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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35 **REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT**
36 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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39 **REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO**
40 *ACT Teachers Partylist*

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42 **REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS**
43 *GABRIELA Women's Party*

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45 
REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist