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Miss Sonia Soto

Chairperson, League of Filipino Students

Mr. Manny Ceneta

Chairman, Youth for Nationalism and Democracy

Mr. J.V. Bautista

President, College Editors' Guild of the Philippines
 c/o The University of the Philippines Student Council
 Vinzons Hall, U.P. Diliman
 Quezon City

Dear Miss Soto; Messrs. Ceneta and Bautista:

Pursuant to our agreement to reduce in writing the points of agreement reached and other matters discussed during our dialogue last 21 October, we wish to put on record our position vis-a-vis the demands set forth by your group during that meeting:

A. On the alleged presence of military personnel in school campuses:

We agree to pull out police detachments, if any, inside school campuses.

Police detachments near schools, but outside campuses, however, will remain to enforce law and order and to protect school premises and students against criminal elements.

Police authorities will enter campuses only to deal with crimes actually being committed or about to be committed, or upon the request of students or school authorities when such request is justified.

Only uniformed policemen will be employed when entry into school campuses becomes necessary or justified.

Military elements will not interfere with peaceful student protest actions inside the campuses.

B. On the alleged use of force against student protest actions:

The Ministry will investigate policemen and security personnel allegedly involved in manhandling or inflicting unwarranted injuries on student demonstrators and prosecute those found culpable therefor, as warranted by the witnesses and evidence to be presented by the students.

Police authorities will drop the criminal charges filed against nine (9) students involved in the 7 October 1981 demonstration at Liwasang Bonifacio and the students will desist from filing any criminal charges against any policemen in connection with the same incident.

No force or violence will be employed by both sides in the course of student protest actions.

Your group has agreed to conduct protest actions peacefully and for that purpose, you have given an assurance that you will undertake the obligation of maintaining order and discipline within your ranks.

If ever warranted, only reasonable force will be employed by lawmen to stabilize a disorderly or tumultuous situation.

To minimize, if not eliminate, suspicion, friction, misunderstanding or conflict which sometimes results in open confrontation and violence between law enforcers and student groups, we suggested and you agreed to coordinate with and give notice regarding your plan to hold a demonstration or rally to the police authorities within a reasonable time prior to the actual holding of such demonstration or rally.

Guidelines to be mutually agreed upon by students and law enforcement authorities to govern the relationships of the two (2) groups during demonstrations and rallies will be adopted. The initial meeting towards the formulation of such guidelines will be held between your group and a law enforcement panel headed by the Commanding General, Metrocom and Concurrent Director, Metropolitan Police Force. Such guidelines will eventually be formalized between us.

Only uniformed lawmen will be employed for law enforcement duties during demonstration and rallies.

No Citizen Military Training or Citizen Army Training (CMT or CAT) elements will be employed to "break up" student actions.

The proposal to prohibit the military training of non-University of the Philippines (U.P.) students in the campus will be considered.

Complaints against the Youth Action Development Organization or YADO will be investigated.

C. On the alleged arbitrary arrest and detention of students:

Normally, a warrant is needed for the arrest of any person, however, an ordinary citizen may effect an arrest if a crime has been committed, in his presence. Policemen and soldiers, who are duty-bound to enforce the law, have every reason to be able to do so.

School security guards are not as a general rule vested with police power and therefore are not allowed to detain or interrogate students. Upon effecting a citizen's arrest on any student for an offense, a security guard shall forthwith turn over the student to the police authorities.

D. On the National Security Code and the Public Order Act and other similar laws, decrees and LOI's issued which are allegedly invoked against "the freedom of expression and the democratic rights of students.

Like all citizens, students have the right to exercise their freedom of speech and their freedom to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances, provided these are done peacefully and lawfully.

All student protest actions should be conducted within the bounds of law and regulations more particularly libel and sedition laws and the regulatory requirements of local governments.

The law enforcement authorities concerned have been formally apprised in writing of the aforementioned policies, to which the Ministry of National Defense binds itself. We would like to reiterate that the doors of the Ministry are open to any members of the studentry who may wish to elevate any legitimate complaints and grievances that are within our jurisdiction to act upon.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) JUAN PONCE ENRILE
Minister