



ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT
(January 2001 - June 2002)

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT
FOR THE FIRST 18 MONTHS
OF THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION

OPENING STATEMENT:

The Department of Justice, as a key player in the criminal justice system, has upheld the rule of law and ensured fair, speedy, and transparent administration of justice, guided by its mandate to:

- a) *provide legal advice and legal service to the Government and its functionaries, government-owned or controlled corporations and their subsidiaries;*
- b) *administer and enforce immigration, citizenship, alien registration and related laws;*
- c) *detect, investigate and prosecute crimes;*
- d) *conserve and/or redeem human resources by granting parole and recommending probation, pardon and other forms of executive clemency to qualified convicts, and accord human treatment to national prisoners;*
- e) *preserve and maintain the integrity of land titles and the stability of land ownership through registration; and*
- f) *provide free legal assistance and services to indigent members of society.*

The following report covers the accomplishment of the Department for the past 18 months.

A. INTEGRITY, LEADERSHIP AND PERFORMANCE

1. The Justice Secretary argued for the Administration before the Supreme Court in a Special Civil Action for *Quo Warranto*, wherein the Court, in a landmark decision, ruled in favor of the legality of the Arroyo Administration. Two motions for reconsideration of the said ruling filed by the former President were both denied.
2. Among the significant opinions rendered by the Justice Secretary concern the following issues:
 - the President can approve the Balikatan exercises under the Visiting Forces Agreement as the chief architect of foreign policy in the country;
 - the government can retake majority control of the cash-strapped Philippine National Bank from the group of business tycoon Lucio Tan;
 - the issuance of temporary residence visas to spouses and children of Alien Social Integration Act beneficiaries by the Bureau of Immigration; and
 - the findings of the Tariff Commission on the issue of cement imports are binding on the Department of Trade and Industry
3. The Justice Secretary filed a motion for reconsideration of the Supreme Court's earlier decision rejecting the live media coverage of the

historic trial of former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

4. The Secretary of Justice has created a panel to review the contracts of independent power producers (IPP) with the government.
5. The DOJ played an important role in the drafting of the newly signed anti-money laundering law. The new law provides an exception to the operation of the bank secrecy law and is more pervasive than the American Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations law.
6. The Justice Secretary signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Anti-Laundering Counsel in connection with the investigation and prosecution of money-laundering cases and other violations of the Anti-Money Laundering Act.
7. The DOJ filed charges of estafa involving P1.8 billion against 11 Urban Bank officers after investigation of the charges filed by the Central Bank against Urban Bank officials for gross violation of central bank limits on individual loans and the grant of real estate loans.
8. The DOJ and the DSWD launched a free legal aid program to provide youth offenders with lawyers.
9. The DOJ assigned special prosecutors to go after scalawags in uniform.
10. The Justice Secretary has instructed prosecutors not to allow plea-bargaining in drug related cases.
11. The DOJ, through the testimonies of Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño and State Prosecutor Pablo Formaran, took an active role in the

prosecution of the complaint against CA Justice Demetrio Demetria which resulted in the latter's dismissal from the service for intervening in the case of a suspected drug trafficker.

12. The National Anti-Crime Commission, chaired by the Justice Secretary, apprehended the leader and members of the Esting kidnap-for-ransom gang.
13. The DOJ filed criminal charges before the Regional Trial Court of Iba, Zambales against three Chinese arrested last Nov. 15 while transporting 335.5 kilos of shabu worth P668 million.
14. DOJ filed criminal charges against Mayor Ronnie Mitra of Infanta, Quezon, for a big haul of shabu (503.6 kgs.). The case has been transferred from RTC in Quezon Province to RTC Branch 80 of Quezon City, where trial has been set for August 6, 2002.

The following national security cases are presently being expeditiously prosecuted by the DOJ pursuant to the President's directive of a legal offensive against terrorism and criminality:

15. Apprehension of former ARMM Chairman Nur Misuari, who led a failed rebellion by MNLF sympathizers in Mindanao through the joint efforts of the DOJ and DFA in coordination with the Malaysian authorities.

Abu Sayaff Cases

16. People vs. Khadaffy Janjalani, et al. wherein 120 Abu Sayaff members have been arrested and are being tried for 58 counts of kidnapping of school children and the beheading of a priest and teachers in Basilan (Regional Trial Court of Pasig

City, Branch 261, Presentation of Prosecution's evidence).

17. People vs. Nadzi Saabdullah et al. (Commander Global) for multiple murder in the Pearl Farm Resort (Davao) Abu Sayaff raid (Regional Trial Court of Pasig City, Branch 163; Crim. Case No. 122366-H for Murder; Crim. Case No. 122367-H for Piracy; and Crim. Case No. 122365-H Homicide amended to Murder; for Arraignment).
18. People vs. Ustadz Nur Muhammad Umog (Abu Muslim Al Ghazie) for multiple murder in the Gen. Santos bombings and illegal possession of explosives; the prosecution is now waiting for the result of our petition for change of venue.

Pentagon Kidnap for Ransom Group

19. People vs. Commander Tahir Alonto, et al. of the Pentagon kidnap for ransom group operating in Central and Southern Mindanao. Crim. Case No. Q-01-99596 for Kidnapping for Ransom; Crim. Case No. Q-01-99597 for Robbery and Crim. Cases Nos. Q-01-99598 to Q-01-99600 for Illegal Possession of Firearms. These cases are now pending trial/presentation of prosecution's evidence before the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, Branch 219.
20. People vs. Faisal Marohombsar, et al. This case is now pending before the Regional Trial Court of Manila Branch 18. Accused in this case has already been arraigned. On July 10, 2002, pre-trial was conducted. The next hearing schedule will be on August 28, 2002.
21. The DOJ filed charges of infidelity in the custody of prisoners against those responsible for the escape of Pentagon leader Faisal Marohombsar and his

companions. The Justice Secretary ordered the NBI and BI to assist in the massive manhunt of the escapees.

B. LAW AND ORDER AND LEGAL AID

Intensifying Operations Against Criminality

1. Cases Against Former President Joseph Estrada

- a. In a Special Civil Action for Quo Warranto questioning the legality of the Arroyo Presidency, the Justice Secretary successfully argued for the Administration which led to the landmark decision of the Supreme Court upholding the legality of the Arroyo Administration. Two motions for reconsideration were both denied by the Court.
- b. The issue of the legality of the Arroyo Administration having been resolved, the preliminary investigation of the plunder and criminal cases against former President Joseph Estrada, et, al. before the Office of the Ombudsman proceeded.
- c. Due to the gravity of the criminal cases involved, the Department of Justice opposed all requests of former President Estrada to travel abroad and even issued hold departure order against the former President. The Bureau of Immigration was directed to closely monitor the country's exit points to obviate the possibility of Estrada leaving the country.
- d. In line with Her Excellency's directive to evaluate and decide who among the

prospective witnesses in the cases against ousted President Estrada may be granted immunity from prosecution, the Secretary of Justice made the appropriate arrangements and representations with the following persons to enable them to testify:

- a. Former SSS Chairperson Carlos Arellano;
- b. Former GSIS President and General Manager Federico Pascual;
- c. Willy Ng Ocier; and
- d. William Gatchalian.

e. Based on the testimonies and evidence adduced by the first three-named persons as contained in their respective affidavits, the Department of Justice instituted the filing of a plunder case against former President Estrada before the Office of the Ombudsman. The case centers on the alleged ill-gotten wealth in the amount of ₱189.7 Million amassed by former President Estrada out of the "stock transactions" involving the Belle Corporation. The GSIS and the SSS were allegedly compelled to buy Belle shares upon the direct order of the former President. The evidence would show that the former President illegally gained ₱189.7 Million in commission out of the said stock transactions by taking advantage of his official position.

f. At present the DOJ is still evaluating the possible filing of sequestration proceedings against Estrada's properties including the mansions built for his various mistresses. The Office of the Solicitor General likewise pursued a forfeiture case against Estrada involving some P15 billion in questionable assets and properties. The DOJ and the Office of the Solicitor General asked the Quezon City and

Makati City Registers of Deeds to annotate an adverse claim on the land titles of two alleged illegally acquired real estates of the former president.

- g. Corollary to the criminal cases filed by the Office of the Ombudsman, the Justice Secretary, among others, was deputized, as well as other prosecutors of the Department of Justice, as members of the Special Prosecution Panel to actively prosecute the said criminal cases pending before the Sandiganbayan. The deputized DOJ Prosecution Panel closely coordinated with the Office of the Ombudsman on the plans, strategies, ways and means for the expeditious prosecution of cases.
- h. The former President was finally arraigned, relative to the "Belle transactions", on 10 July 2001. The prosecution, ably represented by Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, presented former SSS President Carlos Arellano and GSIS President Federico Pascual. Mr. Arellano testified that SSS bought a significant bloc of shares from the Belle Corp. worth P243 million on October 21, 1999 after he felt some pressure from the former President. On the other hand, Mr. Pascual categorically said former President Estrada instructed him to buy shares from Belle Corp. sometime in September and October of 1999. His testimony bolstered the prosecution's argument that the GSIS, particularly the investment committee, bought the P1.104 billion worth of Belle shares upon the instruction of the former President.
- i. The Department of Justice also formed a task force to probe the alleged smuggling activities of the close associates of former President

Estrada, including one of his mistresses. The task force is composed of elements from the DOJ, DOF, the NBI, and the Bureau of Customs.

- j. The DOJ also created a task force to investigate and prosecute possible anomalies involving a mistress of former President Estrada relative to the shelved computerization projects of the COMELEC. The denunciation came from former COMELEC Chairperson Harriet Demetriou who signified her willingness to testify on the matter.
- k. The NBI was tasked to continue the investigation on the Estrada mansions. The NBI summoned the architects and contractors of the mansions and the board of directors of various private corporations which are registered owners thereof. The DOJ is working for Mr. Jaime Dichavez' extradition to shed light on the issues involved on the matter.
- l. The DOJ and the Kapisanan ng mga Broadcaster sa Pilipinas, filed petitions before the Supreme Court requesting full media coverage of the Estrada trial which were denied. The DOJ filed a motion for reconsideration of the said denial.

Personalities Involved -

Charlie "Atong" Ang and Yolanda Ricarforte

The DOJ received information that Charlie "Atong" Ang and Yolanda Ricarforte were hiding in the United States seeking political asylum. Hence, DOJ sent a letter to the US government asking for the extradition of Ang and Ricarforte. The

government's request for their extradition received an added boost with the arrest of Charlie "Atong" Ang on 27 November 2001 in the United States. Ang filed a motion for release on bail before a US federal district court from which the DOJ filed an opposition. At present, the Department is seeking the intercession of the US Attorney-General's Office for the expeditious extradition of Charlie "Atong" Ang.

2. The DOJ's role in the failed "Labor Day Power Grab" as an offshoot of the "Estrada Cases"

The aborted attempt of pro-Estrada supporters to topple the Arroyo administration led the President to declare a "state of rebellion" in Metro Manila which resulted in the issuance of warrantless arrests, eliciting diverse views from the public. The Justice Secretary supported the President's move by declaring the "state of rebellion" and justifies the deployment of Armed Forces during the siege of Malacañang by Estrada loyalists and the warrantless arrests issued against opposition leaders.

As an aftermath of the aborted "power grab" and declaration of a "state of rebellion", the Justice Secretary ordered the arrest of Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Miriam Defensor Santiago and several other opposition senators while former Senator Ernesto Maceda was picked up by the police. The DOJ upgraded the charges against Sen. Enrile from sedition to rebellion.

Some opposition senatorial candidates were tagged as instigators in the failed "power grab". Aside from the opposition senatorial candidates, local opposition leaders from the cities of Caloocan, Malabon, and Pasay and the province

of Cavite were likewise investigated by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for their possible complicity in the incident.

On the other hand, PAO Chief Persida Acosta, DSWD Secretary Corazon Soliman, Justice Undersecretary Manuel Teehankee and Pampanga Governor Lito Lapid coordinated the release of some 89 Estrada supporters detained thereat, in line with the administration's desire for unity and reconciliation with pro-Estrada supporters. The detainees were eventually released.

Petitions were filed before the Supreme Court questioning the declaration of a "state of rebellion" and the issuance of warrantless arrests. Appearing before the Supreme Court, the Justice Secretary informed the Court of the President's intention to eventually lift the declaration of "state of rebellion" which was indeed lifted on May 06, 2001. This led to the dismissal of the petitions by the Supreme Court in a vote of 8-3.

In keeping with the administration's policy of unity and reconciliation the DOJ dropped the charges of rebellion filed against former Sens. Juan Ponce Enrile, Ernie Maceda and Sens. Gregorio Honasan and Panfilo Lacson

3. Investigation on Senator Panfilo Lacson;

Initial findings in the investigation conducted by the NBI pointed to Senator Lacson as the mastermind behind three major crimes attributed to the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) and Presidential Anti-Crime Commission, which he headed.

Based on a complaint filed by PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza, the DOJ filed new charges for the murder against 34 police officers led by Senator Panfilo Lacson and two civilians for the killing of 11 Kuratong Baleleng gang members in Quezon City in 1995, and recommended no bail for their temporary release.

The Court of Appeals, upon motion of Senator Lacson, nullified the DOJ's investigation. The DOJ, through the OSG, elevated the matter to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court remanded the same to the Regional Trial Court in Quezon City.

Angelo Mawanay a.k.a. "Ka Ador" an alleged agent of the defunct PAOCTF, came out to testify on Senator Lacson's nefarious activities. He was subjected to a lie detector test and was placed under the Department's Witness Protection Program.

As early as March 2002, the DOJ has been verifying reports that Senator Lacson and/or his wife Alice have some \$500 million in a secret account at a US bank. The US government has furnished the Department/National Bureau of Investigation documents on the account/s.

Another material witness, Mary "Rosebud" Ong likewise testified on Senator Lacson's alleged link with kidnapping and illegal drug trafficking charges.

4. Case of "PR Man" Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

Preliminary examination by UP forensic experts showed that the charred remains discovered in

Indang, Cavite were those of Dacer and Corbito. This was corroborated by the National Bureau of Investigation based on examination of dentures and a ring found at the crime scene.

Initial witnesses point to some members of the PAOCTF as responsible for the abduction of Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito on 24 November 2000 in Osmeña Highway corner Roxas Zobel St., Manila. The CIDG summoned one (1) former ranking official of the PAOCTF to shed light on the disappearance of Dacer. Their testimony led to the apprehension of 7 PAOCTF agents allegedly linked to the case.

The most promising development came with the arrest of SPO4 Marino Soberano, a PAOCTF agent identified by a witness as one of the abductors of Dacer. One by one, the alleged abductors were arrested and identified. In this connection, the NBI summoned the head of the PAOCTF-Visayas, Senior Supt. Teofilo Vina. The NBI likewise, conducted a manhunt for Police Sr. Supt. Glenn Dumlao of the defunct PAOCTF and 11 other suspects/witnesses. The NBI requested immigration authorities to closely monitor all exit points after receiving reports that some suspects in the Dacer-Corbito kidnap-murder cases are trying to leave the country to escape prosecution.

The DOJ filed kidnapping and double murder charges against twenty-two men. The court issued the corresponding warrants of arrest to some of the accused.

Based on newly discovered evidence, the DOJ filed a motion with the Manila RTC to temporarily suspend the arraignment of the accused in the Dacer-Corbito murder case pending the inclusion in the charge sheet of Sr. Supt. Michael Ray

Aquino, Sr. Supt. Cesar Mancao, Teofilo Viña and Allan Villanueva of the defunct PAOCTF. The Manila RTC denied a motion to quash filed by the additional suspects and at the same time allowed the Justice Department to reinvestigate the Dacer-Corbito double murder case for the possible inclusion of Aquino, Mancao, Viña and Villanueva in the list of accused.

In anticipation of their impending indictment, Aquino and Mancao surreptitiously fled to the US to seek political asylum. Investigation conducted by DOJ prosecutors showed that Aquino and Mancao left for HongKong via the Subic International Airport on June 24 and July 2 without the knowledge of the Bureau of Immigration.

The DOJ still filed double-murder charges before the Manila Regional Trial Court against former PAOCTF officials Sr. Supts. Michael Ray Aquino, Cesar Mancao, Teofilo Viña, and Allan Villanueva for the abduction and death of PR man Bubby Dacer and his driver. The move was however, denied by Manila RTC Judge Rodolfo Ponferrada on the ground that the state prosecutors allegedly violated a provision of the rules in discharging of the accused to become state witness. Likewise, said Court denied the admission of the amended information filed after the reinvestigation was terminated. This prompted the DOJ to file a motion to inhibit Judge Rodolfo Ponferrada which the latter granted resulting in the re-raffle of the case to the RTC Branch 18, Manila and the subsequent filing of the petition for certiorari before the Court of Appeals for the inclusion of Cesar Mancao, Michael Ray Aquino, Teofilo Viña and Allan Villanueva. The petition was granted but the motion for reconsideration thereof is still pending for resolution.

The NBI already has in its custody additional witnesses who will testify against the mastermind. Subject to further investigation/verification, a ranking police officer of the defunct PAOCTF surfaced and tagged former PNP Chief Panfilo Lacson, as one of the brains in the kidnap-murder.

A petition for the inclusion of three (3) former police generals was granted by the Court of Appeals.

ATTACHED AGENCIES OF THE DEPARTMENT

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Implementation of Law and Order

1. Continuous campaign against violators of intellectual property rights resulted in the seizure of the following items in sizeable quantity and amount:

- P1.3 million worth of fake VHS tapes replicating machines in Makati City;
- P.8 million fake shampoos during a raid in Carriedo Center, Manila;
- counterfeit personal computers and central processing units worth P6 million at Muntinlupa City;
- P2.25 million worth of pirated Microsoft software;

- P2.2 million worth of fake Gucci ladies handbags and Cartier products during a raid at a shopping center in Binondo, Manila; fake cellular phone accessories worth more than P4.5 million during a raid at stores in Virra Mall in Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan;
- fake automotive parts worth of P2 million following a raid in Quezon City; some P1.2 million worth of fake Microsoft products during a raid on five different computer establishments in Davao City;
- P1 million worth of fake jeans and shorts during a raid on a factory warehouse in Pampanga;
- some P1.2 million worth of fake Microsoft products during a raid on five different computer establishments in Davao City;
- P2 million worth of counterfeit play station compact discs in Cabanatuan City;
- 68,888 pairs of counterfeit underwear bearing the trademarks Tommy Hilfiger, Lee and Playboy in four simultaneous raids in Pasay City;
- P10 million worth of unlicensed software products of Microsoft, Adobe and Macromedia during a raid on a big publishing firm in Quezon City;
- thousands of pirated video and audio compact discs (VCDs) in Cebu City;
- 17 Million worth of counterfeit Sketchers shoes seized from Interpacific Industrial Trading, Sansheng Strong Classic Shoes, Xin Hua Marketing and Grand Shoppers Trading Co.;

- 132 computers and 27 installers containing illegal copies of Microsoft softwares in two separate raids in Muntinlupa City and in Metro Manila;
- 117 personal laptop computers and Microsoft softwares worth P9 million following a raid in Pasig City; seized close to P1 million worth of fake Hewlett Packard products in Binondo, Manila.

2. Arrest of the following offenders/fugitives:

a) French fugitive Alfred Sirven arrested by combined agents of the BI and the NBI, on 02 April 2001. Sirven, who is long wanted in his own country for corruption charges was deported to his country the same day to face criminal charges. The NBI has begun a probe on the billions of dollars allegedly laundered by Sirven in local banks and a manhunt has been ordered for Vilma Medina, the Filipina lover of Sirven.

b) Syndicates involved in producing fake "US Federal Reserve Bonds" arrested through the joint efforts of the PNP and the NBI. The arrest gained international prominence considering that the fake bonds are worth millions of dollars.

c) Suspects responsible for the rape-slay of Claudine Mabel Feliciano, a 21-year old La Salle graduate whose naked body was found in a creek in Parañaque City.

d) Seven (7) persons, including the triggerman, allegedly responsible for the murder of Masbate City Mayor Moises Espinosa, Jr.

e) Former Quezon Governor Eduardo Rodriguez and his wife, who are the subject of an extradition case filed by the DOJ.

f) Principal suspect arrested in Tangub City, Misamis Occidental for the killing of former OGCC Chief Counsel Jun Valerio.

g.) A businessman who allegedly fled with P2.3 million from job applicants abroad;

h) An alleged illegal recruiter who defrauded overseas worker applicants of some P500,000.00 for fictitious jobs abroad in Mandaluyong City;

i) The Chief of the Land Transportation and Franchising Regulatory Board in Ilocos on extortion charges;

j) A Mindanao-based Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom leader and nine (9) members in Quiapo, Manila;

k) A Senior Customs lawyer after receiving a marked money from several truck owners;

l) A member of a notorious kidnapping gang in Southern Tagalog arrested in San Pablo City; and

m.) A former manager of a big insurance firm involved in the controversial P25 million pyramid scheme;

o.) 40 persons for selling/processed methamphetamine hydrochloride or "shabu" worth more or less 7 million;

p) Hassan S. Maliga, leader of Martilyo gang and 3 others in a joint operation of the NBI, ISAFP and PNP-CPD Intelligence Unit;

q) Caesar R. Mañalac, a former ranking head of a Manila-based international business school for alleged hacking and on-line piracy;

r) Brendo R. Villasanta, president of a gun club in Rizal for illegal possession of 16 pieces of firearms, 50 kilos of bullets for different calibers, and other instruments used in the manufacture of firearms and ammunitions;

s) Eugenio T. Carlos, Sr., mastermind of a fixing syndicate of US veterans claim; and

t) 3 members of a gun-for-hire syndicate, Jose Bascon, Mario Caparas and Eduardo Cayaban.

3. Successfully raided a Pasig City condominium that led to the confiscation of sophisticated bugging devices allegedly used by former operatives of the defunct PAOCTF. The NBI conducted a "computer autopsy" on these wire-tapping equipment, reportedly worth P30 million, leading to the filing of wiretapping, malversation of public funds, graft and corruption and perjury charges against Sen. Lacson.
4. The NBI filed cases of double murder and attempted murder against P/Supt. Edgar Iglesia and nine (9) other ranking officers and members of the PNP-Intelligence Group relative to an alleged "mishandled operation" at Quezon City which resulted in the death of Fernando Lozada and Marian Uson and the wounding of Clarissa Frances Lozada.
5. In answer to the President's directive, the NBI conducted an independent investigation into the death of Quezon lawmaker Marcial Punzalan and the latter's bodyguard following alleged involvement of several members of the PNP in the said murder. Todate, it has already filed double murder charges against the suspected killer.

6. The NBI played a major role in the apprehension of the abductors cum killers of Mark Harris Bacalla, son of former Quezon City judge Marciano Bacalla leading to their eventual court indictment. Primary suspect, Onofre Surat, Jr., was able to escape. NBI Director ordered a manhunt.
7. The NBI intensified its manhunt operations against former Santiago City Mayor Jose Miranda who went into hiding after a court ordered his arrest for allegedly masterminding the cold-blooded killing of two students in Santiago City in 1996.
8. Ably assisted the Australian police in investigating the massacre of the Gonzales family, Filipino-Australians who were murdered in their home in Sydney, Australia. Prime suspect Sef Gonzales is now in the custody of the Australian police.
9. Filed criminal complaints against eight (8) persons allegedly responsible for the December 30 (Rizal Day) 2000 bombing.
10. Played a major role with the PNP in the seizure of 489 kilos of shabu valued at P996 million, the largest haul in the history of the PNP, leading to the arrest of Panukulan, Quezon Mayor Ronie Mitra, and three cohorts. The DOJ filed drug trafficking charges against the accused before the Infanta, Quezon RTC. Meanwhile, the DOJ filed a petition for change of venue with the Supreme Court praying that the hearing of the case be transferred from the province of Quezon to any Metro Manila court.
11. Investigated the killing of Comelec Education Information Department Chief Velma Cinco which led to the arrest of a suspect in San Pascual, Batangas and his eventual indictment.

12. Conducted an in-depth investigation into the brutal murder of the late actress Nida Blanca, following the recantation of erstwhile self-confessed killer Philip Medel, Jr.

13. Filed charges against the following:

- 12 officials of the beleaguered Police Savings and Loan Association, Inc. before the City Prosecutor's Office of Manila;
- couple caught in possession of bricks of marijuana and sachets of shabu during a raid in their house in Angeles City illegal possession of prohibited drugs;
- Pacifico Marcelo for 12 counts of perjury charges before the Mandaluyong City Prosecutor's Office;
- Melchor Caliuag and 56 others against suspected jueteng financier, 6 of whom are minors, following series of raids on the suspected jueteng dens in San Fernando and Angeles City;
- four officials of the National Power Corporation in Cagayan Valley for allegedly falsifying documents in five (5) contracts of the power firm from May 1999 to November 2000.

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION

The Bureau of Immigration is not a revenue agency by law. It is a quasi-judicial body with enforcement power. But the Department of Budget and Management imposes on it

revenue targets. Its total income for CY 2002 as dictated by the Department of Budget and Management is P1,053,235.00 as reported in its Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing for 2002. The Bureau is, however, actually targeting to collect P 700,000.00. (This is the realistic target for 2002). The Bureau is reducing its estimate to P700,000.00 due to inadequate funds approved which will not allow the Bureau to maximize collection efforts as well as enforce stricter and more frequent check/monitoring of Bureau's sub-port offices.

The signing into law of the Naturalization Law will earn for the government **P10 billion in revenues** and benefit more than 100,000 foreigners in the country. To date, a total of 671 foreigners were recognized by the BI as Filipino citizens during the first semester of the year after they qualified for recognition under the 1987 Constitution.

Synchronizing Government Efforts to Implement the Law-

1. For the first eighteen months, BI agents were able to arrest a total of 520 undocumented aliens 206 of whom are fugitives from justice in their respective countries. Among the high profile personalities investigated are Surigao del Norte Governor Robert Lyndon Barbers, for allegedly being an American citizen and businessman Pacifico Marcelo for allegedly falsifying his citizenship records.
2. The BI launched on 20 March 20, 2001 the use of a computerized passport reader machine to further augment the campaign against the entry of illegal aliens and human trafficking,
3. The Bureau of Immigration is fast-tracking the review and processing of the papers of more than 500 foreign applicants for special investor's residence visa, which have been pending for several months since the bureau

suspended action on the applications due to alleged anomalies in the visa program;

4. Arrested the following illegal and undesirable aliens:

- a. A Korean national who is wanted for string of estafa cases in South Korea;
- b. A Taiwanese national and five others who were allegedly involved in human smuggling on board their fishing vessels off Davao Gulf;
- c. An overstaying Italian for allegedly harassing his estranged wife using prohibited drugs;
- d. 7 Taiwanese nationals allegedly involved in the manufacture of cement, in Camalig, Albay without valid work permits;
- e. A Malaysian lady executive working in the country without a valid permit;
- f. A Malaysian travel agent suspected of being an international terrorist;
- g. A Dutch businessman who was tagged as the mastermind of an illegal recruitment syndicate which deploys Filipino nurses in Netherlands;
- h. 2 South Korean nationals suspected to be illegal recruiters who are now facing deportation for victimizing more than 700 Filipinos overseas applicants;
- i. 2 Belgian tourists who were illegally operating a dive resort in Cebu City;

- j. 8 Indian nationals for alleged overstaying and without valid permits during a round-up operations in Palawan;
 - k. An American pedophile who is wanted in the US for sexually abusing and impregnating his own daughter;
 - l. An American fugitive wanted by the US government for money laundering and insurance fraud cases.
5. BI launched a campaign that will monitor thousands of foreigners who were issued student visas after reports that some of them are engaged in illegal activities instead of attending classes. The Bureau is monitoring the activities of over 3,000 foreign students at the moment.
6. The BI issued a 30-day ultimatum for the Taiwanese to legalize their stay in the country and secure work permits, or face arrest and deportation.
7. Likewise, the BI is determined to hold the 116 Chinese poachers caught in Balalac, Palawan answerable for violation of the local law, when it ordered the increase of administrative fine to P50,000.00 each.
8. However, it has relaxed its policy on renewal of tourist visas in a bid to boost tourism and prospective foreign investors for the year 2002.

Combating Terrorism-

The BI actively participated in the global anti-terrorist campaign by tightening its watch over the entry of terrorist elements; alerting immigration authorities in different ports

of entry in the country on the possible entry of 17 suspected foreign terrorists attempting to attack US civilians and military; and Filipinos who have reportedly undergone military training under the renegade leader Osama Bin Laden. It also blacklisted 28 more foreigners tagged as leaders of the Al-Queda network.

THE LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY (LRA)

Efforts to Safeguard the Torrens System-

LRA is continuously implementing the Land Titling Computerization Project (LTCP). Its most significant activity of involving data conversion in three (3) pilot sites namely: Registries of Deeds of Quezon City, Parañaque City and Cebu City. To improve efficiency and further safeguard transfer certificates of title, LRA embarked on the Improvement of physical facilities of the Offices of the Registers of Deeds (ORDs) nationwide. Hence, two ORDs were inaugurated; five ORDs are under construction; three ORDs are for award to the winning contractors; and six ORDs are on the planning and design stage

Synchronizing Government Efforts to Implement the Law-

The LRA Task Force Titulong Malinis was able to endorse to the National Prosecution Service a total of twelve (12) cases for criminal prosecution of persons engaged in the illegal reproduction or use fake and fraudulently issued titles, the most significant of which involves "Titulo de Propiedad, de Terrenos of 1891, Royal Decree OLT-01-4 Protocol" allegedly covered by a certificate of title in the names of Hermogenes Rodriguez and Antonio Rodriguez covering vast parcels of land in Rizal, Bulacan and Laguna.

The same task force likewise endorsed to the Office of the Solicitor General a total of eight (8) cases for the filing of cancellation proceedings or declaration of nullity of questionable or spurious titles.

THE PUBLIC ATTORNEY'S OFFICE (PAO)

Providing Free Legal Assistance to the Public-

1. The PAO Special Appealed Cases (SAC) Division successfully defended the accused in G.R. No. 134973 (People vs. Arapok) and G.R. No. 134294 (People vs. Villabos) for rape and robbery, respectively, that resulted in the acquittal of the accused in the said cases.
2. The PAO assisted the arrested persons who laid siege at Malacañang in an assault on May 1, 2001 resulting in the release on recognizance of one hundred forty-two (142) accused.

Strengthening Political Democracy-

PAO intensified its acceptability and enhanced positive public perception on the government through linkages with the tri-media (radio, television, and print media). A PAO lawyer provided on-the-air live interaction, in DZRB, DWWW, DZMM (Batas), Radio Veritas, Channel 9 (Legal forum), Channel 7 (Debate), and Channel 2 (Hoy Gising!) in Metro Manila and other provinces nationwide.

BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS

Improving Jail Management & Penology Services--

1. Played a major role in the discovery and arrest of inmates who, during the past administration, were able to secure their release based on fake documents.
2. Spearheaded a proposal to increase the food allowance allotted to each prisoner under its custody.
3. Entered into a Memorandum of Agreement between the DPWH and the Correctional Institution for Women (CIW) for the construction of a Four-Storey Dormitory building with basement for the CIW at the latter's compound. The Memorandum was approved on 17 January 2001. Construction has started.
4. Completed the rehabilitation of NBP's antiquated water system.

BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLE

Improving Jail Management & Penology Services-

1. The Board recommended to the President the grant of conditional pardon with parole conditions to 132 inmates; commutation of sentence to 5,452; absolute pardon to 3 petitioners; granted final release and discharge to 2,630 parolees/pardonees.
2. The Board interviewed a total of 3,434 prisoners confined at the Davao Prison and Penal Farm, Zamboanga City, Leyte Regional Prison, Abuyog, Leyte, and Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

PAROLE AND PROBATION ADMINISTRATION

Improving Jail Management & Penology Services –

1. The Parole and Probation Administration (PPA) accomplished 99% of its workload of probation investigation, pre-parole/executive clemency investigation, supervision of probationers and parolees.
2. In addition, PPA assisted a total of 7,846 unemployed probationers, parolees and pardonees in job placements or livelihood activities on various self-employed projects with the help of the government and non-government organizations. It was able to give probationers, parolees and pardonees adult high school and college education; and 3,513 vocational training.

C. SECURITY AND POLITICAL STABILITY

Role in the Government's Campaign Against Terrorism-

- In August, BI agents at the NAIA barred from entry five Bangladesh nationals suspected to be members of terrorist groups; while in early September, BI arrested two Iranian nationals, likewise suspected members of international terrorist group, for carrying tampered documents.
- In September 2001, foreign nationals believed to be members of the right-wing extremist group out to

liberate Vietnam from communist rule were arrested in a joint operation of the BI and the PNP.

- BI Commissioner Domingo urged the PNP to file criminal charges against a Filipina who aided and gave sanctuary to three alleged international terrorists in their plot to bomb the Vietnamese Embassy in Manila. Criminal charges for illegal manufacture and possession of explosives against the three accused were filed before the Pasig City RTC. The DOJ has in its custody witnesses to testify against the suspected international terrorists.
- Immigration authorities at the NAIA required pilots and crewmembers of foreign airlines to present their travel documents for inspection. A terrorist watch was formed with members from the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, the Bureau of Customs, the Aviation Security Group, Coast Guard and the BI.
- The BI implemented a stricter identity verification of foreign nationals in all its ports of entry. BI Investigation revealed that four terrorists who took part in the September 11 attack on New York City and the Pentagon visited Manila for 21 days late last year and early this year. BI likewise discovered that some 100 persons linked with Saudi multimillionaire Osama Bin Laden are in its watch list.
- In November 2001, two (2) Iranians were held and immediately deported by immigration agents suspected as terrorists and in possession of fake Italian passports while in transit to Manila on their way to Australia. The BI also placed in its custody a suspected Palestinian terrorist arrested in Mindanao by combined military and BI intelligence operatives.
- The NBI confirmed that the "suicide pilots" in the September 11 US terrorist attacks never studied in

any Philippine flying school; most Middle Eastern students who studied in the country's aeronautic schools focused on single-seater aircraft, a close comparison to commercial planes used during the terrorists attack on the US; and that most Middle Eastern students who took flying lessons in the country came from Libya.

- The Justice Secretary with the DILG Secretary, the Chief PNP and the NBI Director signed an agreement pledging Muslim cooperation in the government's all out war against terrorism and criminality in the metropolis.

D. NATIONAL UNITY AND PEACE

Reconstituting the Peace Process

I. Political Detainees

The quest for peace and national unity got a well-needed boost when Her Excellency finally approved the release of 73 political detainees out of the 77 recommended by the Department of Justice.

The gesture elicited positive remarks from exiled NDF political consultant Jose Ma. Sison who is said to be impressed with the recommendation of the Justice Secretary to President Arroyo for the release of up to 77 communist prisoners still in jail.

The most celebrated release is that of Leonardo Pitao, a New People's Army commander, upon approval by the President based on the recommendation of the DOJ, DILG and the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Peace Process.

The Department of Justice is conscientiously monitoring the status of those recommended for

release. Directives were issued to the prosecutors concerned not to oppose, when applicable, the recommendees' motion to be released on bail or recognizance.

The Department of Justice opted to make the release of political offenders, whether permanent or provisional, a yearlong endeavor. In fact, the committee, which includes the DOJ, has just finalized the list of the next batch of recommendees for approval by the Office of the President.

Any future action on the release of political detainees however, should take into consideration the President's declaration to momentarily suspend peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippine-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA), in the light of the assassination of Ex-Congressman Rodolfo Aguinaldo.

2. GRP-MILF PANEL

The Department of Justice, as a member of the Technical Working Group, participated in the formulation and negotiation of the implementing guidelines on the security aspect of the GRP-MILF Tripoli Agreement on Peace which was signed on August 7, 2001 in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

DOJ also participated in the drafting of an agreement on the implementation of the rehabilitation and ancestral domain aspect of the Agreement on Peace between the RP government and MILF which was signed in Libya on June 22, 2001.

3. Alex Boncayao Brigade

The DOJ reviewed the Peace Agreement between the Alex Boncayao Brigade and the Philippine government.

4. RP-US Agreement

The Department of Justice, as member of the Technical Committee, participated in the drafting and negotiation of the Mutual Logistics Support between the Philippines and US government.

E. ADVANCING THE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Foreign Relations and Filipinos Abroad-

1. The DOJ through its Legal Staff reviewed the Treaties on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons (TSP) between the Philippine government and the government of the Special Administrative Region of the Republic of China and Thailand which were recently ratified. To date, it is still negotiating other treaties with the United Kingdom, Bahrain, Cyprus, Spain and India.

2. Also the DOJ is working on a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with Spain and Germany.

BUREAUCRATIC REFORM

Better Government-Public Interaction Through ICT-

The National Crime Investigation System (NCIS) is a joint project of DOJ and its attached agencies (BUCOR, BPP & PPA) with the Supreme Court, PNP and BJMP, to monitor status of criminal cases. The Department is still in the process of updating data.

From January 2001 to March 2002, the NCIS encoded a total of 175,894 cases from the NCR alone. Today, it is consolidating reports from the different regional prosecution offices.

Reforming Resource Management Practices-

1. Exemption from Salary Standardization Law of Prosecutors and Lawyers of the Legal Staff

Justice Secretary is vigorously pushing for the approval of a bill exempting the prosecutors of the National Prosecution Service (NPS) and the lawyers of the Legal Staff of this Department from coverage of the Salary Standardization Law which will allow them to avail of higher pay while in the service.

2. Establishment of Immigration Academy

An Immigration Academy was established in Clarkfield, Pampanga in April 2002 in coordination with the Clark Development Corporation. The Academy will serve as training venue for immigration authorities.

3. Establishment of DOJ Academy

The Justice Secretary signed a Memorandum of Agreement between the DOJ and Clark Development Corporation for the establishment of the DOJ Academy at the Clark Polytechnic inside the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga. The Academy shall be used as a training center for prosecutors and will serve as a provider of the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Program.

4. Construction of Hall of Justice Buildings

The DOJ's JUSIP and Victims' Compensation Program received P50 million (for construction of the Manila city Hall of Justice) and P9.8 million respectively from the PAGCOR. Following Malacañang's approval of its P900 million budget, the construction of the Manila Hall of Justice Building at Taft Avenue, Manila is on-going and scheduled to be completed during the first quarter of 2004. The Department approved Valenzuela City's proposed P20-million Hall of Justice Building.

I. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION

Keeping the Public Informed

1. Launching of the KAIBIGAN Action Center

The DOJ launched the KAIBIGAN ACTION CENTER (KAC) in line with its continuing commitment to serve the people's needs, and to ensure the speedy administration of justice. *It is a help just a phone-call away.* A call center that will receive and entertain calls toll free from any part of the country, seeking legal assistance, reporting crimes and possible filing of complaints against any violators of the law. The public can access through telephone numbers (02) 521-6264 or 1-800-5216264 for toll free long distance calls. This will erase misconception that the DOJ or even the Secretary of Justice cannot be easily reached.

2. Launching of the DOJ Web Site

The Department of Justice launched its website designed and developed by ePLDT. The website will enable the public to transact directly with the DOJ and its attached agencies at <http://www.doj.gov.ph> via the Internet. It offers a wide range of information on the Office of the Secretary of Justice and the following agencies attached to it: a) National Prosecution Service b) National Bureau of Investigation c) Bureau of Immigration d) Bureau of Corrections e) Board of Pardons and Parole f) Parole and Probation Administration g) Office of the Government Corporate Counsel h) Land Registration Authority i) Commission on the Settlement of Land Problems; and j) Public Attorney's Office. Among the information posted on the site are: agency's history, mandate, vision, functions, activities and the directory of officials. It includes syllabi of the opinions of the Secretary of Justice from 1940-2001. The site also features matters of interest to criminal law practitioners, and students, among others, the Bail Bond Guide, the Rules on Appeal, Inquest and Preliminary Investigation.

Strengthening Citizen Participation

1. Reactivation of the Katarungan Pambarangay

The Department, in coordination with the DILG, is conducting a nationwide seminar-workshop on the Katarungan Pambarangay Law. The activity provides an avenue for the expeditious settlement of controversies and at the same time promote a more harmonious atmosphere in the grass roots level of the community. It also aims to unclog the court dockets.

J. Basic Needs and Greater Opportunity

1. The DOJ Katarungan II & III Housing Projects

The DOJ recently opened its Katarungan II Housing Project. Qualified applicants were allocated the fifty one (51) units of rowhouses ready for occupancy. There will be a total of 312 units to be constructed.

The survey for the next housing project to be known as Katarungan III Housing Project consisting of 50 hectares was conducted. The necessary proclamation which will segregate the area from the NBP reservation will be submitted to the President.

Respectfully submitted:

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Secretary