

**Speech of H. E. President Fidel V. Ramos  
94th Anniversary of the Department of Justice  
September 25, 1992**

**INTRODUCTION**

MARAMING SALAMAT KALIHIM FRANKLIN DRILON NG KAGAWARAN NG KATARUNGAN, UNDERSECRETARY RAMON LIWAG, UNDERSECRETARY RAMON ESGUERRA, UNDERSECRETARY DEMETRIO DEMETRIA, ATING MGA KASAMA SA PAMAHALAAN DITO SA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, OUR OTHER CO-WORKERS IN GOVERNMENT, HONORED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

SA PALAGAY KO'Y ISANG PANGANGAILANGAN NA MALAGYAN ANG DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE NG ISANG AIRCONDITIONED AUDITORIUM UPANG MAAARI NATING PAKINGGAN NG HINDI MASYADONG NAIINITAN ANG MGA MAHAHABANG TALUMPATI KUNG SAKALING MAYROONG ANNIVERSARY KAGAYA NITO.

NGUNIT MGA KASAMA, SA PALAGAY KO NAMAN AY KAYA NATING TIISIN ANG MAINIT NA ARAW KUNG TAYO AY LAGING NAKIKINIG SA MGA MATATAMIS AT MASASARAP NA AWIT NG ATING MGA MEMBERS OF THE LADIES CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION, AT GANOON DIN IYONG INYONG MABUHAY CHOIR DITO SA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

SIGURO IYONG DALAWANG GRUPO NA IYAN AY MAAARING PAGHALUIN AT MAGAKARON TAYO NG ISANG KONSERTO SA PICC AT KASAMA AKO.

BUT MY DEAR CO-WORKERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE I COULD NOT IMAGINE HOW PLEASED I AM TO BE HERE ON THE INVITATION OF YOUR VERY HARDWORKING SECRETARY O JUSTICE FRANK DRILON ON YOUR 94TH ANNIVERSARY. ON THIS DAY WE HAVE SCHEDULED A TRIP TO THE PROVINCE OF CAGAYAN BUT I WAS HAPPY TO POSTPONE THAT BECAUSE OF THIS IMPORTANT EVENT.

AND I AM HAPPY TOO THAT THE LADIES HAVE SEEN IT FIT UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF OUR GOOD FRIEND AND FAMILY LAWYER VIOLY DRILON WHO ALSO CELEBRATE THIS OCCASION BY INVITING MRS. RAMOS TO THE MT. PINATUBO DISASTER AREA AND THAT'S WHERE THEY ARE RIGHT NOW.

I ALSO APPRECIATE THIS EVENT IN A SPECIAL WAY BECAUSE I COME BACK TO THE UP CAMPUS WHERE I USED TO ROAM AROUND AND CHASE GIRLS MANY, MANY YEARS AGO. BUT THAT WAS WHEN I WAS A SOPHOMORE STUDENT OF THE U.P. HIGH SCHOOL BEFORE THE WAR. IT WAS THE AGE OF INNOCENCE. SO IF I WAS CHASING GIRLS IT WAS BECAUSE WE WERE IN A TRACK AND FIELD EVENT. BUT I NOW REMEMBER THAT THIS OLD COLLEGE OF LAW BUILDING WAS WHERE MANY OF THE SENIOR LAW STUDENT WOULD BRING US THE WILLING BRIGHT HONOR STUDENTS IN THE U.P. HIGH SCHOOL TO PARTICIPATE IN MOCK COURT TRIALS AND WE WOULD PLAY MANY ROLES HERE AS WITNESSES, AS VICTIMS AND EVEN AS THE VIOLATORS. AND THAT IMPRESSED ME DURING THESE DAYS THAT LAWYERS REALLY MEANT BUSINESS. AND I HOPE THAT IS STILL HOW IT IS 50 YEARS LATER HERE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

IN JUST A FEW YEARS, COINCIDING WITH THE END OF MY TERM, YOU IN THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WILL BE CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL, THE 100TH YEAR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

AND SO IN A SHORTER SENSE WE ARE CLASSMATES THAT WILL BE GRADUATING IN THE CLASS OF 1998. THE EFFECTIVE, SPEEDY AND INEXPENSIVE IMPARTIAL ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IS A PRIORITY CONCERN OF THIS ADMINISTRATION.

AND I WOULD LIKE TO RECALL THAT THIS DEPARTMENT IS A HISTORIC ONE. IT'S FOUNDING IS RECKONED AS TAKING PLACE ONLY TWO MONTHS AFTER THE PROCLAMATION OF FILIPINO FREEDOM IN 1998. ON SEPTEMBER 26 OF THAT YEAR, PRESIDENT EMILIO AGUINALDO ISSUED THE REVOLUTIONARY DECREE REORGANIZING THE EXISTING DEPARTMENT AND APPOINTING THE SECRETARY OF JUSTICE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE PERSON OF HONORABLE GREGORIO ARANETA.

THAT DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE IS ONE OF THE FIRST CABINET OFFICES ORGANIZED AND IT DOES PROVED TO US HOW HIGHLY OUR FOUNDING FATHERS REGARDED THE INSTITUTION OF JUSTICE. THEY REALIZED -- RIGHTLY -- THAT INJUSTICE WAS THE PRINCIPAL MOTIVATION OF THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION. AND THAT WHILE FILIPINOS COULD BEAR POVERTY AND DEPRIVATION, THEY COULD NOT EVER LIVE WITH INJUSTICE.

AND WHAT IS JUSTICE? I NEED NOT TELL THIS TO YOU. YOU SHOULD KNOW IT BETTER THAN MYSELF.

BUT THE GREEK PHILOSOPHER PLATO DEFINES IT SIMPLY AND BRIEFLY US: "JUSTICE IS TO GIVE EVERY MAN WHAT IS HIS DUE." AND THAT IS WHAT WAS SAID IN THE INVOCATION OF UNDERSECRETARY ESGUERRA THIS MORNING TO US.

THIS DEPARTMENT THEREFORE IS THE VEHICLE BY WHICH GOVERNMENT RENDERS TO EVERY CITIZEN WHAT IS HIS OR HER DUE -- THE PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF HIS OR HER RIGHTS, UNDER THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS OF THE LAND.

WE KNOW THAT THERE CAN BE NO PEACE IN THIS LAND FOR AS LONG AS OUR PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE FAITH THAT THE RULE OF LAW APPLIES EQUALLY TO ALL.

WHEN NO REDRESS CAN BE HAD IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM, THE AGGRIEVED SEEK SOLUTIONS ELSEWHERE; OFTENTIMES RESULTING IN INSURGENCY.

OUR APPEAL TO THE LEFT AND TO THE RIGHT OF THE IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM TO RETURN TO THE FOLDS OF THE LAW AND OUR DESIRE FOR OUR COMMON MASSES TO TRUST US IN RESOLVING THEIR GRIEVANCES SHALL BE IN VAIN IF THE STATE OF OUR ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE REMAINS WANTING.

AND I AM HAPPY THAT IN THE RECENT PAST ESPECIALLY SINCE THE 30TH OF JUNE 1992, THE DEPARTMENT HAS FOCUSED ATTENTION ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF ITS PERFORMANCE.

I COMMEND YOUR LEADERSHIP UNDER SECRETARY FRANK DRILON AND EVERYBODY ELSE INVOLVED IN THE INSTITUTION OF THE REFORMS THAT HAVE BEEN PROGRAMMED FOR THE FIRST 100 DAYS AND FOR THE ENTIRE SIX YEARS OF OUR ADMINISTRATION.

MAY I REPEAT SOME OF THESE WHICH YOUR SECRETARY HAS ALREADY MENTIONED IN THIS SPEECH:

1. THE RULE THAT THE INVESTIGATING PROSECUTOR MUST TERMINATE AND RESOLVE A CASE FOR PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION WITHIN 90 DAYS, UNDER PAIN OF ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS.
2. THE LIMITATION OF THE GROUNDS TO APPEAL RESOLUTIONS OF THE PROVINCIAL AND CITY

PROSECUTORS TO THE SECRETARY OF JUSTICE TO PREVENT FURTHER DELAYS IN THE EXPEDITIOUS DISPENSATION OF JUSTICE;

3. THE EXECUTION OF THE JUSTICE INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM TO PROVIDE DECENT OFFICES TO JUDGES, PROSECUTORS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM:

4. THE REGIONALIZATION OF THE PRISON SYSTEM TO HASTEN THE REFORMATION OF CONVICTED FELONS SO THAT THEY MAY REJOIN THEIR FAMILIES;

5. THE LAUNCHING OF TASK FORCE KATARUNGAN TO EFFECT THE SPEEDY INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF CRIMINAL CASES. I WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREE WITH THE PRIORITIZATION TASK FORCE KATARUNGAN HAS GIVEN TO CASES INVOLVING SMUGGLING, TAX EVASION, ILLEGAL LOGGING, ORGANIZED CRIMES, HEINOUS OFFENSES, CRIMES COMMITTED BY LAW ENFORCERS AND PUBLIC OFFICERS, AND VIOLATIONS OF THE DANGEROUS DRUG LAW. AS I ADDRESS YOU TODAY, I AM ALSO DIRECTING ALL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO ASSIST TASK FORCE KATARUNGAN AND TO EXTEND THEIR FULL COOPERATION FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS MANDATE.

FINALLY AS THE SAYING GOES "THOSE WHO HAVE LESS IN LIFE MUST HAVE MORE IN LAW." AND IN THIS SPIRIT, I WISH TO COMMEND THE NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE PUBLIC ATTORNEY'S OFFICE IN DEFENDING THE LEGAL RIGHTS OF THE INDIGENT MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY. AND I AM GLAD THAT THEY HAVE ADOPTED THE GREEN UNIFORM WHICH IS THE SAME UNIFORM AS THOSE IN THE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION, AS THEIR PASS AND HONOR IN RENDERING MORE IN LAW TO THOSE THAT HAVE LESS IN LIFE.

AS I HAVE ALWAYS EMPHASIZED MY ADMINISTRATION WILL DEVOTE MORE RESOURCES AND GIVE MORE ATTENTION TO THE NEEDS OF OUR LESS FORTUNATE COUNTRYMEN.

I HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE NOT ONLY IN YOUR CRUSADE AGAINST CRIME BUT EVEN IN OUR QUEST FOR PEACE.

UNDER THE ABLE AND EFFICIENT LEADERSHIP OF YOUR SECRETARY, I KNOW MY EXPECTATIONS AND THOSE OF OUR PEOPLE SHALL BE MET.

ANG SABI NGA SA GABINETE AND THIS WAS QUOTED BY SOMEBODY WHO LOOKS LIKE SECRETARY FLAVIER OF HEALTH WHO IS THE SMALLEST MEMBER OF THE CABINET, IYONG DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ANG PINAKAMABIGAT SA LAHAT.

SO, LET US THEN ENDEAVOR VIGOROUSLY TO HARNESS AND ENHANCE THE EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY OF YOUR OFFICERS IN ORDER THAT THE LOWLIEST AND HUMBLIEST OF OUR PEOPLE MAY STAND ON EQUAL FOOTING WITH THE RICH AND THE MIGHTY IN THE ENJOYMENT OF THEIR RIGHTS.

LET US REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS TO PURSUE OUR CAMPAIGN AGAINST CRIME AND OUR PROGRAM TO END INSURGENCY AND REBELLION, FOR A JUST, COMPREHENSIVE AND ENDURING PEACE TO FINALLY REIGN IN OUR LAND.

AS JUSTICE PREVAILS, PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL SHOULD NOT BE FAR BEHIND.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY AGAIN TO ALL OF YOU. MARAMING SALAMAT PO SA INYONG LAHAT.

