

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS NO. 298, July 19, 1975

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TO :

The Secretary of Agriculture
The Secretary of Defense
The Governor, Central Bank of the Philippines
The Chairman, Development Bank of the Philippines
The President, Land Bank
The Director of Animal Industry
The Commissioner of Budget
The Secretary of Local Government

WHEREAS, the current foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) affecting livestock in thirteen (13) provinces of Luzon has reached epidemic proportions;

WHEREAS, this disease, while not fatal to livestock incapacitates affected animals for at least six (6) months;

WHEREAS, to date, the number of FMD cases reported amounts to 14,000 carabaos, 426 cattle and 18,000 swine;

WHEREAS, the FMD epidemic has serious implications on rice production since it affects carabaos which are the major means for land preparation;

WHEREAS, the majority of provinces affected by FMD are major rice-producing areas, and farmers in these provinces will not be able to plant rice unless they have a substitute means for tilling their land;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need for a massive vaccination and quarantine program to control FMD and at the same time ensure the continued success of the Masagana 99 program;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, do hereby order the following:

- The Secretary of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Animal Industry, shall undertake an all-out drive to control and eradicate the foot-and-mouth disease through vaccination of livestock, strict quarantine measures and other necessary steps.
- For the duration of the present emergency, the Secretary of Agriculture is hereby granted the authority to make purchases of vaccines amounting to P100,000 and above without the prior approval of the Cabinet Coordinating Committee on Procurement as an exception to Executive Order No. 323, series of 1971. The required amount of vaccines shall be imported directly from manufacturers without middlemen, whenever possible.
- The Commissioner of the Budget shall immediately release, P18,200,000 from the calamity fund to cover the cost of vaccines.

- The Secretary of Agriculture is also hereby authorized to directly open the required Letters-of-Credit to cover vaccine importations.

- The Central Bank Department of Rural Banks, the Development Bank of the Philippines, and the Land Bank, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall immediately undertake a special emergency financing program to enable rice farmers in affected areas to purchase hard tractors and/or four-wheel tractors on liberal terms in time for the rice planting season. In this connection, the DBP shall allocate P50,000,000 and the Land Bank shall provide P24,000,000 for the purchase and/or financing of such tractors.

- The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Local Government, through the Philippine Constabulary and the Coast Guard and with the cooperation of local governments in FMD affected provinces, are hereby directed to give the necessary assistance and support in the strict enforcement of quarantine measures.

This Letter of Instructions shall take effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 19th day of July, in the year of Our Lord, Nineteen hundred and Seventy-five.

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