PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
News and Information Bureau

PRESS BRIEFING OF CHIEF PRESIDENTIAL LEGAL COUNSEL AND PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON SALVADOR PANELO
February 24, 2020

USEC. IGNACIO: Good afternoon, MPC. Kasama na natin si Chief Presidential Legal Counsel and Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo.

SEC. PANELO: Good afternoon, MPC. How's the newly wed? Bakit wala kayo doon?

USEC. IGNACIO: Sir, we have Triciah from CNN.

SEC. PANELO: Tatatlo lang kayong nandoon eh.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: Hi, sir. Good morning. My question is about the closure of Honda. So they were citing that they wanted to optimize their resources. For one, sir, was it really wise to raise taxes on vehicles and then cause companies to leave the country?

SEC. PANELO: Is it what? Is it really wise to?

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: To raise taxes, now causing companies or motor companies to shut down their operations here in the country.

SEC. PANELO: Hindi ko yata maano iyong tanong mo. Is it wise to what?

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: To raise taxes, sir.

SEC. PANELO: To raise taxes?

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: Yes.

SEC. PANELO: Eh dati namang nag-raise na ng taxes eh. But I don't think that's the reason for the closure. Ang sinasabi nila—ano ba sabi nila? Centered on cost competitiveness on local operations. Parang natatalo sila sa labanan ng quality, parang mas mura pag nag-import sila. Iyon ang pinaka-reason nila eh.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: But is this something, sir, that the economic managers would want to further discuss or look into, like for example restructuring taxes?

SEC. PANELO: They are meeting na nga at this time that we are talking. I understand si DOLE Secretary Bello is there in Laguna now, talking with them.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Good afternoon, sir. Sir, follow up lang po. What particular assistance can we give to those approximately more than 300 employees who will be unemployed after iyong closure ng factory ng Honda?

SEC. PANELO: I understand may statement ang Honda roon, that they are going to provide them more than they are supposed to be entitled … to tie them over, kung matuloy. Hindi pa naman natin alam kung matutuloy sila eh. Iyon ang announcement nila.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: But some labor groups, like TUCP, ang concern nila is that iyong closure ng factory ng Honda maybe a result also of the TRAIN 1 because of the … kawalan ng privilege ng tax privilege nila. So they are calling the government na baka kailangang pag-aralan pa iyong TRAIN 2 dahil baka masundan pa iyong ibang mga companies na magkaroon ng closure.

SEC. PANELO: Kung totoo iyon, eh di hindi lang sila ang magsasarado. At saka naman entire closure eh – iyong motorcycle factory nila, nandoon pa rin.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: So Malacañang is not concerned at all with the possible impact of closure?

SEC. PANELO: Pinag-aaralan na lahat ng economic managers natin kung ano ang magiging consequences. At ang kanilang conclusion diyan ay para sa kabutihan natin at sa kanila din.

CHONA YU/RADYO INQUIRER: Sir, there is an ongoing Senate investigation on the franchise of ABS-CBN ngayon. Hindi ba iyan, sir, sub judice iyong kanilang ginagawang—

SEC. PANELO: You know, I was watching them because I was guest at the ANC. They spent two hours discussing whether they have authority to do that or not. I cannot even understand … hindi pala kayo sigurado ng trabaho ninyo, eh bakit pinagdedebatehan pa ninyo. Para sa akin, let them do their job. Iyong sinasabi mong baka covered ng sub judice rule, I don't think so kasi in separate branch naman sila. Kaya lang, the very purpose for which they call that committee hearing, mukhang dalawang oras silang nagdi-debate whether do we have authority or not. Eh bakit kayo nandiyan? Dapat ni-resolve ninyo na iyan. Sabi nung isa, 'Eh 25 years ang sinabi ng Korte Suprema mayroon tayong kapangyarihan …' Twenty five years na pala eh, bakit hindi ninyo alam.

CHONA YU/RADYO INQUIRER: So they are just wasting their time?

SEC. PANELO: They wasted two hours debating on something that they should have known already. Pero after I left, mukhang dini-discuss na nila. And I'm glad, finally, ABS-CBN has submitted its shortcomings to the President; dapat noon pa nila iyon ginawa.

CHONA YU/RADYO INQUIRER: Will that be considered by the President?

SEC. PANELO: Ano?

CHONA YU/RADYO INQUIRER: When ABS-CBN admitted their shortcoming, iku-consider ba iyan ni President?

SEC. PANELO: I do not know, na kay Presidente iyon. It's personal to him.

DANTE/UNTV: Same lang ng question ni Ma'am. Kung tatanggapin ba ni Presidente iyong pag-sorry ng ABSCBN?

SEC. PANELO: That's for him, it's personal to him.

GILLIAN CORTEZ/BUSINESS WORLD: Good afternoon, sir. Sir, just now at the Senate, ABS-CBN President Carlo Katigbak apologized to President Duterte regarding the ads po. Will this somehow affect the personal opinions and thoughts about the President regarding ABS-CBN?

SEC. PANELO: I already answered it.

GILLIAN CORTEZ/BUSINESS WORLD: He said also during the Senate hearing that, regarding the campaign ads, they just felt that they were abiding by the laws and regulation that surround the airing the political ads. What's the—

SEC. PANELO: The court said, they were wrong, that's precisely a TRO was issued.

SANDRA AGUINALDO/GMA7: Sec, soundbite lang on the new PSG commander?

SEC. PANELO: Alin?

SANDRA AGUINALDO/GMA7: The PSG has a new commander daw po.

SEC. PANELO: Wala pa akong info on that. Hindi pa ako binibigyan ng info.

VANZ FERNANDEZ/POLICE FILES: Sir, good afternoon.

SEC. PANELO: Ang ganda ng suot mo kagabi ah, hindi kita nakilala.

VANZ FERNANDEZ/POLICE FILES: Sir, napansin n'yo pala ako.

SEC. PANELO: Napansin din ni Presidente, si Doris Begornia.

VANZ FERNANDEZ/POLICE FILES: Kaya pala, sir, panay ang lingon. Sir, regarding tomorrow kasi 34th EDSA Revolution People Power. Does Malacañang have any message? And also, is there any ouster plot against the President comes 34th anniversary of the People Power Revolution? Do you have any intel?

SEC. PANELO: First, iyong message, palagay ko may lalabas na message. Every year naman may message ang Presidente diyan.

Iyong sa ouster plot, hindi ba nagkaroon sila ng rally, less than 100 attended sa rally. Iyong sinasabi nilang overwhelming. Hindi nga EDSA pero protest … ano iyon, oust Duterte iyon.

FRANCIS WAKEFIELD/TRIBUNE: In relation, sir, sa EDSA anniversary tomorrow. Kung hindi po siya magiging present tomorrow sa mga activities?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi naman siya palaging present eh.

FRANCIS WAKEFIELD/TRIBUNE: Ano po ang magiging activity ni Pangulo tomorrow? Will he be in Davao? Nandito po siya sa Manila?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi ko pa alam, wala pang binibigay na schedule. Baka alam ni Henry. Kita mo naman naka-kurbata pa. Bakit wala ka kahapon? Inimbitahan ka naman ah.

DANTE/UNTV: Follow up lang po. Sa tingin n'yo po ba dapat po bang ipagpatuloy ng Senate iyong hearing sa ABSCBN?

SEC. PANELO: Trabaho nila iyon, we will not interfere with their work.

DANTE/UNTV: Kasi parang sinasabi ninyo parang waste of time.

SEC. PANELO: Hindi, they wasted time discussing on something that they should have known at the very inception. Iyon ang sinasabi ko, iyon lang. But certainly, they are not wasting time discussing the subject matter.

SAM MEDENILLA/BUSINESS MIRROR: Sir, magtatanong lang po kami kung mayroon na po bang nabigay na update iyong regarding doon sa issue ng Honda kay President Duterte?

SEC. PANELO: Wala pa, nagmi-meeting pa lang sila 'di ba. Ngayon ang meeting nila, ngayong tanghali.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Secretary, sa hearing kanina, may binanggit si Senator Lito Lapid. I think, in one of the executives of ABS-CBN—

SEC. PANELO: Hindi ko narinig iyon. Siguro pag-alis ko.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Na bakit hindi na lang humingi ng paumanhin kay Pangulong Duterte kung mayroon sa tingin nila ay maling nagawa ang network.

SEC. PANELO: 'Di ba iyon nga ang sinabi ko doon sa programa ni Karen. Iyon nga ang sinasabi ni Presidente, alam n'yo na may atraso kayo, may ginawa ba kayo? Wala. Iyon nga ang tinatawag na *hubris* – masyado kayong mayabang.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Okay. So kung hihingi ba ng patawad, paumanhin ang network, tatanggapin ba ito?

SEC. PANELO: Na kay Presidente iyon. Na kay Presidente iyon kasi matagal nang nangyari iyon, kumbaga, kung hindi nag-alboruto sa iyo, saka ka lang hihingi ng paumanhin. Na kay Presidente iyon, I don't know how to respond to that. It's a personal decision.
HENRY URI/DZRH: Pero sa tingin ninyo, tama lang humingi ng paumanhin, Secretary?

SEC. PANELO: Eh dapat noon pa nila ginawa. Sabi ni Chona baka daw too late.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Oh yeah.

SEC. PANELO: Hindi ko alam, na kay Presidente iyon how he will respond to that.

EVELYN QUIROS/PILIPINO MIRROR: Good afternoon, Secretary. Another topic po. Doon sa POGO. As a lawyer, puwede po bang makuha iyong opinion ninyo tungkol doon sa pagkakasibak ni Pangulo doon sa sa Immigration officials except Commissioner Morente. Under the principle of command responsibility, liable ho ba si Commissioner?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi natin alam iyon, pag-uusapan pa iyan sa Gabinete. Basta ang mahalaga, ni-relieve niya iyong mga supposedly involved doon sa anomalya.

EVELYN QUIROS/PILIPINO MIRROR: So sa command responsibility, hindi pa po … ang talagang magdi-decide—

SEC. PANELO: Hindi pa natin alam iyon kasi hindi pa nagsasalita si Presidente tungkol doon eh. Pag-uusapan sa Cabinet.

USEC. IGNACIO: Okay, no more questions? Thank you, MPC. Thank you, Secretary Panelo.

SEC. PANELO: Thank you.

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