

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 376

Introduced by Anakpawis Partylist Representative RAFAEL "Ka Paeng" V. MARIANO, Bayan Muna Representatives TEODORO A. CASIÑO and NERI J. COLMENARES, Gabriela Women's Party Representatives LUZVIMINDA C. ILAGAN and EMERENCIANA A. DE JESUS, Kabataan Partylist Representative RAYMOND V. PALATINO, and ACT Teacher's Partylist Representative ANTONIO L. TINIO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

On January 15, 1987, the *Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP)*, a national peasant organization, held a camp-out in front of the office of the then Ministry of Agrarian Reform to assert their demand for genuine agrarian reform.

On January 20, 1987, a dialogue took place between the peasant leaders and then Minister of Agrarian Reform Heherson Alvarez. But the government has no clear and substantial response to the demand of the farmers.

On the morning of January 22, 1987, farmers led by *KMP* decided to march to Malacañang to air their demand for genuine agrarian reform. They were later joined by members of other sectoral organizations such as the *Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU)*, *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN)*, League of Filipino Students (LFS) and *Kongreso ng Pagkakaisa ng Maralitang Lungsod (KPML)*. They arrived at Liwasang Bonifacio at about 1:00 p.m. where they held a brief program.

The demonstrators numbering from 15,000 to 20,000 then reached C.M. Recto at around 4:30 p.m. It was during this mobilization that the OPLAN YELLOW was put into effect by the Capital Regional Command (CAPCOM). Task Force Nazareno was deployed within the vicinity of Malacañang. The civil disturbance control units of the Western Police District (WPD) were also activated.

While the leaders of *KMP* were negotiating with the police to allow the body to proceed and continue up to the gates of Malacañang, policemen then suddenly fired their guns indiscriminately, shooting directly at the throng. It was at this moment that a tumult occurred.

As a result of the pandemonium, thirteen (13) marchers died namely: Danilo Arjona; Leopoldo Alonzo; Adelfa Aribé; Dionisio Bautista; Roberto Caylao; Vicente Campomanes; Ronilo Dumunico; Dante Evangelio; Angelito Gutierrez; Rodrigo Grampan; Bernabe Laquindanum; Sonny Boy Perez; and Roberto Yumul. Thirty-nine (39) were wounded by gunshots and twelve (12) sustained minor injuries, all belonging to the group of the marchers.

In the aftermath of the said fateful day, now known as "Mendiola Massacre", then President Corazon C. Aquino issued Administrative Order (AO) No. 11 dated January 22, 1987, which created the Citizens' Mendiola Commission (Commission for short) to investigate the incident.

Among the findings of the Commission were:

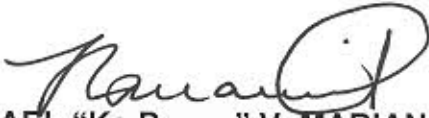
- (a) the crowd dispersal units of the police and the military were armed with .38 and .45 caliber handguns, and M-16 armalites, which is a prohibited act under paragraph 4(g), Section 13, and punishable under paragraph (b), Section 14 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 880.
- (b) the security men assigned to protect the WPD, INP Field Force, the Marines and supporting military units, as well as the security officers of the police and military commanders were in civilian attire in violation of paragraph (a), Section 10, Batas Pambansa Blg. 880.
- (c) there was unnecessary firing by the police and military crowd dispersal control units in dispersing the marchers, a prohibited act under paragraph (e) Section 13, and punishable under paragraph (b), Section 14, Batas Pambansa Blg. 880.
- (d) Tear gas was not used at the start of the disturbance to disperse the rioters. After the crowd had dispersed and the wounded and dead were being carried away, the MDTs of the police and the military with their tear gas equipment and components conducted dispersal operations in the Mendiola area and proceeded to Liwasang Bonifacio to disperse the remnants of the marchers.

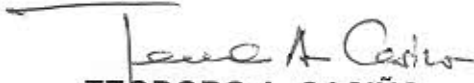
This event, subsequently, served as a wake up call to the Aquino administration to push for a legislated land reform program in the country.

After twenty (20) years, people may have forgotten what transpired on that fateful day. Some journalists called it "Black Thursday" but to many, as stated above, was tagged as "Mendiola Massacre".

This bill was formulated not only to remind the nation of the incident which undeniably became a chapter in our country's history and to honor the heroism of the peasants whose lives were deliberately taken for the mere reason that they are struggling for a "**genuine agrarian reform**" but, more importantly, to recognize the vital role of farmers in achieving a just, prosperous and democratic society.

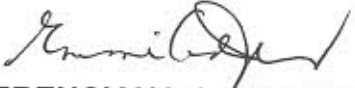
Support for this bill is earnestly requested.


RAFAEL "Ka Paeng" V. MARIANO
 ANAKPAWIS Partylist

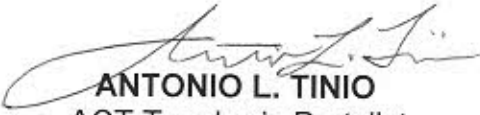

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AN ACT
DECLARING JANUARY TWENTY-TWO OF EVERY YEAR
AS A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS
NATIONAL FARMER'S DAY

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. The twenty-second day of January of every year is hereby declared as a special working holiday to be known as "*National Farmer's Day*".

SECTION 2. To ensure meaningful observance of the holiday as herein declared, all heads of government agencies and instrumentalities, including government-owned and controlled corporations especially those that are dealing directly with the farmers as well as local government units, and employers in the private sector shall encourage and afford sufficient time and opportunities for their employees to engage and participate in any activity conducted within the premises of their respective offices or establishments in support and sympathy to farmers across the country to celebrate "*National Farmer's Day*".

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect two (2) days following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.