

[GENERAL ORDER NO. 17, December 01, 1972]

WHEREAS, I have decreed that our people shall be fully informed and enlightened on the provisions of the proposed Constitution in order that they can vote intelligently when it is submitted to them for ratification;

WHEREAS, therefore, our people shall be afforded the fullest opportunity to freely and publicly discuss and debate its various provisions;

WHEREAS, pursuant to this desire of mine that the proposed Constitution be fully, freely, and publicly discussed, and after consulting with leaders of Congress and the Constitutional Convention itself, I have likewise decreed that;

1. The proposed Constitution shall be printed in English and Pilipino in the *Official Gazette* as well as in newspapers of general circulation before the holding of the plebiscite to ratify the Constitution on January 15, 1973;
2. The printed copies of the Constitution shall be posted in conspicuous places in each provincial, city, municipal, and municipal district government buildings, and in at least two other conspicuous places in the city, municipality, or municipal district at least thirty days before the plebiscite, and in a conspicuous place in each polling place at least 15 days before the plebiscite.
3. The Department of Public Information shall distribute printed copies of the proposed Constitution to government agencies and instrumentalities, including national, provincial, city, municipal, municipal district and barrio governments and to civic, religious, educational, business, labor and trade institutions, and, through the use of all forms of mass media endeavor to disseminate full information on the provisions of the proposed Constitution.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers in me vested by the Constitution as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081, dated September 21, 1972, and General Order No. 1, dated September 22, 1972, as amended, order and enjoin the Armed Forces of the Philippines and/or other Departments and agencies of the Government, to allow and encourage public and free discussion and debate on the proposed Constitution, keeping in mind always my desire that the proposed Constitution be discussed fully and freely before the plebiscite on January 15, 1973, in order that our people can vote intelligently on its ratification.

More particularly, I order:

1. That no person shall be questioned, interrogated or investigated before or after the plebiscite for any speech, remarks or statements in any discussions or debates intended to explain the proposed Constitution or to enlighten our people about it, or for any views for or against it or its ratification, made in public rallies or debates, in printed or other forms of communication, radio or television, and such remarks, statements or views shall not be admissible as evidence in any investigations or suits against the person or persons making