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Gerry Rivera, PALEA president and PM vice chair declared that "The harassment case of grave coercion was filed by the old management of PAL against the PALEA 39 who valiantly defended the protest camp when

it was attacked by hired goons on October 29, 2011.”

He also announced that PALEA is going to file a motion to quash or recall the warrant of arrest and is mobilizing its members for protests at the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Aside from the case against the PALEA 39, there are two more criminal suits pending against union members due to the labor row. Rivera called on new PAL President Ramon Ang “to facilitate the resolution of the labor dispute by dropping the trumped up charges against our members which were filed under the old company management of Jaime Bautista.”

He explained that as enunciated in under DOJ Ministry Circular No. 15 (Series of 1982) and DOLE Order No. 40-G-03 (Series of 2010), no criminal information can be filed against workers without the required clearance from the DOLE. “Absent such clearance, the courts are mandated to dismiss the charges outright. Such a policy, started after the formal lifting of martial law, aims to resolve rather than aggravate labor disputes and regulate the proclivity of capitalists to engage in harassment suits against workers,” Rivera elaborated.

PALEA also lambasted Pasay Assistant City Prosecutor Orlando Mariano and Judge Bibiano Colasito of the Pasay MTC Branch 44 for finding probable cause and ordering the issuance of arrest warrants against 39 PALEA members. “These officers of the court not only defied labor statutes but infringed on our members right to due process, and thus deserve to face administrative charges,” Rivera insisted.

He also denounced PAL lawyer Atty. Santiago “Sonny” Quial for “legal machinations.” Quial is running for district representative in Pasay for the coming elections. “As many PALEA members are Pasay voters, we will make sure that a law breaker does not become a law maker,” Rivera claimed. ###

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