

Senator CEA. That is a very good suggestion and I shall consider it.

Senator PÚYAT. Thank you very much.

MOCIÓN DE AFLAZAMIENTO

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, I ask that the consideration of this Senate Bill No. 469 be suspended until tomorrow.

The PRESIDENT. If there is no objection, the motion is carried. (*There was none.*)

SUSPENSIÓN DE LA SESIÓN

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, I ask for the suspension of the session for a few minutes.

The PRESIDENT. The session is suspended for a few minutes if there is no objection. (*There was none.*)

Eran las 5:55 p.m.

REANUDACIÓN DE LA SESIÓN

Se reanuda la sesión a las 6:15 p.m.

The PRESIDENT. The session is resumed.

CONSIDERACIÓN DEL S. NO. 438

(*Continuación*)

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, I ask that we now resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 438.

The PRESIDENT. Consideration of Senate Bill No. 438 is now resumed. The gentleman from Batangas has the floor.

Senator LAUREL. Are we now in the period of amendments, Mr. President? I have nothing more to say regarding the bill.

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, before we proceed to the period of amendments, will the distinguished gentleman from Batangas have the kindness to answer a few questions to clarify certain matters on my mind?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

Senator LAUREL. Very gladly, Mr. President.

Senator PRIMICIAS. Your Honor is a member of the Board of National Education provided for by Republic Act No. 1124?

Senator LAUREL. I understand I am, because the chairmen of the committees on education of both Houses are ex-officio members. As I happen to be chairman of the Committee on Education on the part of the Senate, I am and I have been for quite some time a member of the Board of National Education.

Senator PRIMICIAS. I only asked that question as a preliminary because I know Your Honor was also one of the authors of the bill that created the Board of National Education.

Senator LAUREL. I sponsored the bill at the time it was approved unanimously by this body.

Senator PRIMICIAS. Your Honor remembers very well that during the deliberations of the Committee on Education I even had occasion to ask for Your Honor's opinion on matters of this bill as a technical man and not as a Senator because Your Honor is an honored member of the Board of National Education.

Senator LAUREL. Well, presumably I know something about education, but whether I am a good technician or not in that field, that I don't know.

Senator PRIMICIAS. Now, this morning the distinguished gentleman from Zamboanga had been asking Your Honor some questions about the term "basic texts" used in the first paragraph of section 1, and the idea given by Your Honor as to the significance of the term "basic text" has been in the form of questions and answers. I expect that in the future, if the bill is approved as now being proposed by Your Honor, some questions will arise as to the real significance of the term "basic text." Now, as sponsor of this measure, as chairman of the Committee on Education, as member of the Board of National Education, and as one of the recognized educational authorities in this country, may I ask Your Honor to please make a definition of this term "basic text" as used in this first paragraph of section 1, so that in the future, if any controversy may arise, I may cite Your Honor's definition?

Senator LAUREL. That is a very difficult question to answer, because the phrase "basic texts" should undoubtedly, I think, be passed upon and determined in the deliberations of the National Board of Education. Now, of course, I have my own ideas, I have my own interpretation, I have my own concept, both philosophical and practical.

But being a member of that board, and I am referring to a matter which may be of great importance, I would really reserve my opinion as to the meaning and extent and scope and other unforeseen things that may occur, when I shall have heard the opinion and also the views of the technicians of the board of education, because there are quite a number of interpretations which may be given, and I do not want to commit myself to any given interpretation. I want to have the benefit and enlightenment of the expert opinion of those who are educators and technicians in that board.

Senator PRIMICIAS. Thank you very much, Your Honor. But may I be enlightened on this point, reserving your right later on to modify your opinion, if and when you shall have heard the opinion of

experts on this matter, and because in the country today you are considered one of the experts on educational matters, as a matter of fact, I have enjoyed reading your books on education. Now, we are deliberating on this matter in the Senate of the Philippines, and we are going to make an important decision, and we have not had the opportunity of listening to the opinion of experts. Would not Your Honor give us your opinion, subject to revision later on, because your opinion might guide us in voting on this measure?

Senator LAUREL. I am purposely reserving my opinion on that, because it is better to transfer this question of what is the meaning or scope or interpretation of "basic texts" from the Congress; and because we are not educators and technicians, it would be better to leave this subject to the National Board of Education when it is taken up. In that way, there will not be too much discussion on this subject; and this being a technical subject, much of which should be passed upon and determined by the technicians of the National Board of Education, so we transfer the work, the interpretation, the procedure and the manner of debating before the technical people, rather than before a political body such as the Congress of the Philippines.

Senator PRIMICIAS. But Your Honor, we are now being called upon to vote on a provision of this bill containing this term. If Your Honor's idea is to transfer the interpretation to the National Board of Education, because this matter must be taken up by experts on this line, how can Your Honor expect the members of the Senate to vote intelligently on this matter if, not being experts on this line, they are not being guided by opinion of these experts, not even only the personal opinion of Your Honor, whose opinion carries weight in this body?

Senator LAUREL. Well, the most that I can say is, in my opinion whenever something is *basic*, that means that you cannot depart from that which is *basic*. So whether the interpretation is that we can act, the word "basic" being used with reference to the very novels of Rizal, or in any textbook on the basis of the original, the truth is, *basic* means that we cannot separate from that which is *basic* and, therefore, we must base whatever act we do on the basis of the novels themselves in their original form and in their unexpurgated edition.

Senator PRIMICIAS. I wish to thank the distinguished Senator for his personal opinion. May I take the liberty to say that I take it from Your Honor that so long as the original and unexpurgated edition of these two novels are being used only as a basis, the courses on the life and writings of José Rizal prescribed in section 1 may be given in

collegiate courses without necessarily having to use these books themselves as text, but as basis for the courses, as basic text to be given to students taking collegiate courses.

Senator LAUREL. That may be an interpretation. That is why I do not want to venture, because I am not the National Board of Education. But whenever anything is *basic*, and as a matter of good educational orientation and procedure, if I were to have had opportunity I would use the unexpurgated the original text because, then, that must be the *basic text*. But as I said I would like to have the privilege of discussing this matter with my colleagues in the National Board of Education and with technicians. I do not want to bind myself to any definite interpretation without the opinion of the members of the National Board of Education.

Senator PRIMICIAS. May I ask your indulgence for the next question. If Your Honor is of the opinion that this matter should be transferred to the hands of the National Board of Education, because in that board all important elements of the country are represented, including labor, sectarian organizations or religious bodies, and many others; as a matter of fact, I still remember when it was presented by Your Honor in the Senate, it practically covered every important segment of the population of the country.

Senator LAUREL. You are right.

Senator PRIMICIAS. If Your Honor is in favor of transferring this matter into the hands of the board, are you not being unfair to this board by providing in this bill beforehand and before their opinions have been heard, or before their opinion is expressed, that these two novels can be used as *basic texts*?

Senator LAUREL. No, if that is my opinion, why should I be afraid to make that as a starting point for the board of education?

Senator PRIMICIAS. Does not Your Honor believe that even if this proviso is not in this bill, the National Board of Education under the power granted to it in the second part of section 1, may yet provide not only the use of these books, but they may even compel the reading or the memorizing of certain portions of these books?

Senator LAUREL. Well, that is one interpretation. There are quite a number of interpretations that may be made but the question is to strike a reasonable interpretation that will promote and educate in the public interest particularly on the bill on education. Personally I believe that in the colleges and universities the students ought to be permitted to read, of course, also the teachers, to read the unexpurgated and the original edition and as Your Honor

in the original bill it was the purpose to compel the reading of these two books, the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, in all schools, colleges and universities but in the first section of the bill we authorize the preparation of primers and textbooks for schools inferior to colleges and universities. But in the colleges and universities we almost impose as an obligation on the part of the colleges and universities not only the reading now but the adoption of these two books as part of the curricular activities of the colleges and universities.

Senator PRIMICIAS. According to the second paragraph, section 1, of this proposed amendment by substitution, the Board of National Education is hereby authorized and directed to adopt forthwith measures to implement and carry out the provisions of this section, including the writing and printing of appropriate primers, readers and textbooks, and also must adopt rules and regulations including disciplinary measures to carry out or enforce the provisions of this Act. Is this provision not general enough to include not only the use of these books as basic texts on the part of colleges and universities but also to compel the students to read and not necessarily memorize the most important part of these books if the Board itself so decides?

Senator LAUREL. If the Board so decides they can do that although I do not think they would because they would not ask people to memorize.

Senator PRIMICIAS. They could if they want to.

Senator LAUREL. I do not know whether this will reach certain limits that the students will be compelled to memorize. If that will be the case, the rules might be interpreted as unreasonable by our courts.

Senator PRIMICIAS. That is why I used the word "could" instead of "would". I want to be sure whether or not under this section it is within the power of this Board to prescribe these books not only as texts or course but even go beyond that, because if I were a member of that Board I would not mind telling Your Honor that I would even require the students to memorize the highlights of these books, for instance, the conversation between Ibarra and Elías, the conversation between Father Florentino and Simoun and other highlights of the books because I believe they are inspiring. Your Honor believe these are within the power of the Board?

Senator LAUREL. I think so, but I do not think it is a good method to require the students to memorize passages in the books.

Senator PRIMICIAS. I remember in 1953 when Your Honor was being the subject of prosecution

about unjust assessment in taxes Your Honor delivered a brilliant and memorable speech in this hall where Your Honor quoted some passages from these books from memory without reading these books, and I would like to see also our students to quote from these books of Rizal from memory like Your Honor did.

Senator LAUREL. There was a time when I used to retain in memory those passages, but since my memory is weakening lately, I cannot be sure.

Senator PRIMICIAS. If Your Honor's memory has weakened during the last few days, then nobody knows how that memory may weaken yet. Thank you very much.

Senator SABIDO. Mr. President, will the gentleman yield?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may yield if he wishes.

Senator LAUREL. Very gladly.

Senator SABIDO. I respect Your Honor's position on this matter, but can we agree at least on the fact that the words "basic text" are susceptible of more than one interpretation?

Senator LAUREL. Undoubtedly.

Senator SABIDO. And that it is to be expected that the Board of National Education will construe these words in the manner that will best insure the objectives of the law and in accordance with the provisions of our Constitution?

Senator LAUREL. Yes, I have no doubt about that, Your Honor.

Senator SABIDO. And in a manner that the rights of everybody may be respected and that no rights of any person or group may be injured by the interpretation of said Board?

Senator LAUREL. Your Honor is right. I am expecting that at least.

Senator SABIDO. Thank you.

El Sen. CUENCO. Señor Presidente, para algunas preguntas aclaratorias al ilustre compañero.

El PRESIDENTE. El orador puede contestar si le place.

El Sen. LAUREL. Con mucho gusto, señor Presidente.

El Sen. CUENCO. De acuerdo con el artículo primero del proyecto especialmente de acuerdo con las siguientes palabras: "Provided, That in the collegiate courses, the original or unexpurgated editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* or their English translation shall be used as basic texts", de acuerdo con esta disposición, repito, la Junta Nacional de Educación podría disponer que

las dos novelas íntegras, sin ningún expurgo, sean declaradas obras de texto, ¿no es así?

El Sen. LAUREL. Sí.

El Sen. CUENCO. Siendo obras de texto, ¿no será obligación de todo alumno estar al corriente, o, al menos, tomar las lecciones que indique el maestro?

El Sen. LAUREL. No he entendido bien la pregunta, señor Senador.

El Sen. CUENCO. En el caso de que la Junta Nacional de Educación declare libros de texto estas dos . . .

El Sen. LAUREL. Sí.

El Sen. CUENCO. Si un alumno rehusa estudiar estas dos obras, ¿no será culpable de indisciplina y, por tal motivo, estará sujeto a una sanción?

El Sen. LAUREL. Si rehusa estudiar o no estudia la asignatura, lo más probable es que sea suspendido en tal asignatura y, por lo tanto, no tendría a su crédito ninguna de las unidades correspondientes a esa asignatura, porque no la ha estudiado, o se negó a ello.

El Sen. CUENCO. No solamente será posible que sea desaprobado, sino que también, si su negativa es insistente, ese alumno podría ser inclusive expulsado del colegio o escuela, ¿no es así?

El Sen. LAUREL. No creo que se llegue a ese extremo, aunque el caso dependerá completamente de las autoridades de la universidad o colegio; no lo creo, porque todo el castigo que un estudiante debe merecer cuando no estudia una asignatura es hacerle caer en ella o ser reprobado.

El Sen. CUENCO. Vamos a suponer que el alumno no quiere estudiar esa asignatura porque no le da la gana, puesto que contiene doctrinas contrarias a sus creencias religiosas, pero el maestro insiste en que la estudie. Después de tantas amonestaciones del maestro, ¿no podría suceder que ese alumno fuera expulsado de la escuela?

El Sen. LAUREL. No creo que pueda ser expulsado si ofrece una buena razón, como, por ejemplo, que la materia es contraria a su conciencia.

El Sen. CUENCO. ¿Y si el maestro es intolerante?

El Sen. LAUREL. Pues tal vez le suspenda en esa asignatura.

El Sen. CUENCO. Pero, ¿no podría ser expulsado el alumno?

El Sen. LAUREL. No creo que se llegue a ese extremo, porque con su suspensión en esa asignatura, el alumno estaría más que suficientemente castigado, en mi opinión. Y en el supuesto de que haya autoridades que llegaran a ese extremo de adoptar medidas disciplinarias como la de expulsión, el alumno tendría un buen asunto para acudir a los tribunales. Esa es mi opinión personal.

El Sen. CUENCO. Muchas gracias.

Senator TAÑADA. Mr. President, I would like to ask a few questions to the distinguished gentleman. The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Senator LAUREL. Very gladly, Mr. President.

Senator TAÑADA. This is in line with the questions asked by our distinguished Floor Leader in connection with the interpretation of the phrase "basic texts". I would like to clarify this point with Your Honor's help. Is it not true, Your Honor, that it is a fundamental rule of statutory construction that in construing a statute, the one construing the statute must understand the terms in that statute in the ordinary usual meaning in which those terms are accepted?

Senator LAUREL. Yes, that is how I understand also the rules of statutory construction.

Senator TAÑADA. And is it not true, Your Honor, that the views and opinions expressed here in the course of the debates in legislative proceedings are at best persuasive in character, and that they are considered only as an extrinsic aid in the interpretation of the terms of the statute when the interpreter can no longer find the meaning with the four corners of the law?

Senator LAUREL. Yes, that is true.

Senator TAÑADA. So that when the board of education is to interpret the term "basic text" or "basic subject", the first thing it should do is to find out what is the ordinary meaning of this term "basic subject" or "basic text".

Senator LAUREL. Yes.

Senator TAÑADA. And is it not true, Your Honor, that the term "basic text" in its ordinary meaning is, as Your Honor said, a text or something from which one cannot depart, in other words, something that is required because that is the plain meaning. We would like to really face the issue squarely here—basic text. When a text is basic, it is so considered because of its importance such as, for example, when you take or when you work for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, there are certain basic subjects such as Mathematics I, English I, Mathematics II, Spanish I and others. If you do not pass these subjects, you do not get the degree. Don't you think so, Your Honor?

Senator LAUREL. Yes. Your Honor is correct 100%.

Senator TAÑADA. Thank you very much. I wanted only to be clear on that.

Senator PELÁEZ. Mr. President, will the gentleman yield?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Senator LAUREL. Very gladly to the gentleman from Misamis Oriental.

Senator PELÁEZ. I am forced to ask a few questions for clarification because after the questions of the distinguished Floor Leader and now of the distinguished gentleman from Quezon, I am a bit confused as to the meaning of the term "basic text". As Your Honor knows, I had a modest part in the preparation of this bill.

Senator LAUREL. Yes.

Senator PELÁEZ. And I sat in conferences where, in a sincere effort to find an acceptable bill, we have, for instance, drafted this bill. I understood then, as the one who prepared the text, that the term "basic text" was something on which the manner in which the course was to be given would be just the basis. In other words, it would not be compulsory reading. Now, I understand from the questions of the gentleman from Quezon that this might be compulsory reading again. May I put the question to Your Honor quite sincerely. I have not had the chance to hear Your Honor this morning because I was in the province on an important matter, but it has been said in the papers, it has been charged, that the requirement of a "basic text" is worse than compulsory reading. Now, may I have Your Honor's guidance on that, not only for my guidance in the voting but also for the guidance of the Board of National Education.

Senator LAUREL. Well the word "basic" as it is used, I think, has been correctly interpreted by Senator Tañada, in the sense that if there is a basic subject that is required for the obtaining of a degree or the finishing of a course, that means that you cannot graduate unless you have successfully passed that subject because that subject is a requirement and, therefore, a basic subject which if a student has not finished will not permit him to terminate his course or to graduate. Now, that is a basic subject of course, and I have no doubt that many or quite a number of the members of the Board of Education know that basic text means something from which you cannot depart. So that if you prepare another text based on the basic text, basically and fundamentally that is in compliance with the requirements of the law. And as I said before, being a member of the Board of National Education, I want to have complete freedom and not bind myself now as to what should be the interpretation because I would like to have amplitude and greater opportunity to educate myself, at least from the point of view of the opinions and experience of the

educators who compose that National Board of Education. That is the reason why I am reluctant to give a definite interpretation as to that, because if I give an interpretation now, it may be difficult for me to give another interpretation when I appear there as a technician. I accept that that is susceptible of two interpretations, although from the philosophy of what I said here, after the schools, I would want to permit the people in the universities to read the unexpurgated books, the entire books in their original forms. I believe in that thing.

Senator PELÁEZ. May I have a clarification on that?

Senator LAUREL. Yes.

Senator PELÁEZ. Is it the purpose, therefore, when the term "basic text" is used, and is it our intention to compel college students to read the unexpurgated editions or the original editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and the *El Filibusterismo* according to this wording?

Senator LAUREL. The originals in their unexpurgated forms in the colleges and universities.

Senator PELÁEZ. In other words, this is the same as compulsory reading.

Senator LAUREL. Well, perhaps, yes, a little bit more in the sense that you must take that course because it is a basic requirement. I do not know, but I want to discuss that with the technicians.

Senator PELÁEZ. The amendment by substitution says: "* * * in the collegiate courses, the original or unexpurgated editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* or their English translation shall be used as basic texts."

Senator LAUREL. That is why it must be read at least in its unexpurgated form. An interpretation may be given in the sense that you must read the unexpurgated edition.

Senator PELÁEZ. But can an interpretation be given in this respect, and that was my interpretation when I took part in the drafting of this substitute, and that is, that in preparing the collegiate course the Board of National Education shall have as a basis the original or unexpurgated edition of the *Noli Me Tangere* and the *El Filibusterismo* without necessarily compelling the students to read them?

Senator LAUREL. Or it may mean that in preparing the curriculum of the college or university, the unexpurgated original edition of the *Noli Me Tangere* and the *El Filibusterismo* must be either basic subjects in the sense of using them as text or using another text based on the *El Filibusterismo* and the *Noli Me Tangere*.

Senator PELÁEZ. Yes, but under this wording, could the Board of National Education prepare a

text on the *Noli Me Tangere* and the *El Filibustero* and use the unexpurgated text as a reference in the study of these two books?

Senator LAUREL. I doubt whether that can be done, because you would not make it a basic text, because they may use only one chapter of that in preparing the new book.

Senator PELÁEZ. I mean the text itself.

Senator LAUREL. It must be there, it must be in the university in its unexpurgated edition, because if it is to be the text, it must be as it was written, because they are now in the collegiate level. Now if the university is permitted to adopt any other text which is simply based on a chapter of that book, then I am afraid that it would not be complying with the requirement in the sense that it should use the basic text. It must have the whole book available to the professors and students of the university.

Senator PELÁEZ. I am not referring to a case where the board will refer to only one chapter, but suppose they have a text on a study where the outline of the story is given, the highlights and the main story are given, but certain passages which are not considered important are not included but as a point of reference the unexpurgated text will be used.

Senator LAUREL. If it is a reference book, it will not be a basic text.

Senator PELÁEZ. Because I understood Your Honor to say that the basic text is the starting point.

Senator LAUREL. Yes, that is why before I come to definitely interpret as to what should be understood by *basic text*, I want that problem definitely determined and solved after a careful study by educators and technicians, and as I am a member of that board, if I commit myself to a definite definition, it will be difficult for me to make a change and I want to be left free, knowing and having participated in the proceedings leading to the adoption of this measure. That is why I want to be very careful of what I am going to do when this question is presented in relation to a given subject. I don't want to commit myself to any statement that I may make now. I want to be free and perhaps help in the solution of problems that may arise before the Board of National Education. That is the only reason. On the other hand, prudence is always the better part of wisdom, and it is better not to make any definite commitment except with reference to the transfer of these activities to a group of technicians and educators who, I have no

doubt, will be in a better position to pass upon and determine this question.

Senator PELÁEZ. For that same reason, if Your Honor would like to have that freedom, I suppose that these members of the board would like to have the same freedom. As Your Honor says, they are technicians. Then if that is so, why don't we just say that these two books in their original or unexpurgated edition shall be used in the manner which the board shall consider best from the pedagogical standpoint.

Senator LAUREL. Then there will be no problem for the board to pass upon and determine.

Senator PELÁEZ. Well, the problem really is how to design the course, taking into account the pedagogical viewpoint and other viewpoints so that they can be assimilated by the students. So why don't we give them the same liberty as Your Honor has?

Senator LAUREL. I think it is good enough for the parties, for the Catholics, for everybody, that this matter which would involve technical considerations be transferred to the Board of National Education instead of trying to determine the meaning and the extent of that phrase. I think it would be better for all concerned, because there will be less publicity, less scandal, less opposition, and people will be appearing before a technical body to discuss this problem as to the meaning and extent of the phrase "basic text." That is my humble opinion.

Senator PELÁEZ. In other words, to all intents and purposes, the Board of National Education shall have more or less wide discretion in determining how this bill can be implemented.

Senator LAUREL. Yes, and then, after all, if they make a wrong interpretation, we can change the law perhaps and correct the interpretation made by the administrative board or administrative body, but in the meantime I think it would be for the good of our people and all the parties concerned that we put an end to this question, leaving this to the administrative body before which people can appear for the purpose of determining this question.

Senator PELÁEZ. In other words, this administrative body can hear the objections of all groups?

Senator LAUREL. Yes.

Senator PELÁEZ. They can hear all objections on the ground of freedom of conscience, and that will be taken into account?

Senator LAUREL. Yes. I have no doubt about that. At least I can promise to the Senator that as long as I am there I will act in the interest of our people and in the promotion of educational interest of the country.

Senator PELÁEZ. I have just one more question to ask because this question has been in my mind.

In the course of the debate one of the Senators put up this question to me and which has remained in my mind since then. Suppose the unexpurgated text is required and the student is made to read it and the student or the parents of the student object on religious grounds, what would be the position of the student there? Would that be a valid ground for exemption on the ground that this is against his religious beliefs?

Senator LAUREL. Well, Your Honor, in reality, from the beginning of the discussion of this measure, I think that we created the impression of some kind of a fear that this may be done and another thing may be done when in reality, considering our idiosyncrasies as a people and our religious respect and conviction, although the situation Your Honor has put up may arise, I don't think that that will be quite a problem, because if that should happen, the likelihood is that it may be considered as an individual case and the student may transfer from one place to another, and I don't think that any school will compel or require what the parents do not want to require of their child. In the academic field, of course, everything is possible. But I think we are exaggerating in the enumeration of things that might happen, but in the reality of actual life in the field of education here, I think there will be very few cases, if at all.

Senator PELÁEZ. I am very happy that Your Honor has made that statement because there has been an impression that the purpose of those in favor of the bill is to run down the throats of the Catholics something against their conscience.

Senator LAUREL. I don't think so, and I will be against it myself. The Senator will remember that in my sponsorship I was very careful to quote passages from the books of Rizal which in my opinion are the passages that should perhaps be infiltrated in the minds of the students. I don't recall having quoted the utterances of Tasio about purgatory, or the mockery of the Catholics which those novels make of certain people, but those pronouncements which I think are lofty, patriotic, nationalistic, instructive, of great educational value, from this point of view, are the principles that should be disseminated and propagated and taught to the Filipino youth. Now, of course, there may be teachers who, like ourselves, have their own human frailties, but I think those will not be quite a problem for the Government of the Republic.

Senator PELÁEZ. That is why we provided in section 4 the prohibition about religious aspects.

Senator LAUREL. Yes, section 927 of the Administrative Code; is that it?

Senator PELÁEZ. Yes, that is it. If Your Honor please, I am saying this for the record, in that case of *Aglipay vs. Ruiz* which Your Honor penned, the statement was made by the Supreme Court, through Your Honor, that the separation of church and state is not an inhibition against religion, and that as a matter of fact, when the Filipino people invoked Divine Providence in their Constitution, they thereby made patent their deep religiousness. Now, can I say therefore that in sponsoring this bill, with the text as it is, the intention of Your Honor and of Congress is that in the implementation of this bill, that basic fact must be remembered?

Senator LAUREL. Yes, and that is vital, the influence of religion; but of course, not necessarily to favor; that must not extend to any religion, but the equal treatment to all denominations or sects and the recognition of the basic fact of the principles of purity and Christian life should be emphasized in connection with the teaching of any Christian life.

Senator PELÁEZ. Therefore in the implementation of the bill, the freedom of conscience of the students must be safeguarded!

Senator LAUREL. I think so, definitely!

Senator PELÁEZ. Thank you very much.

Senator ROSALES. Mr. President, will the gentleman yield to a few questions?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

Senator LAUREL. Very gladly.

Senator ROSALES. In the first part of section 1 of this bill, we read the following:

"Courses on the life, works and writings of José Rizal, particularly his novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, shall be included in the curricula of all schools, colleges and universities, public or private."

May I know from the gentleman from Batangas whether under this provision, the National Board of Education can prescribe the *Noli* and the *Fili* as textbooks in the colleges and universities.

Senator LAUREL. Yes, but that is not the only thing that the National Board of Education may do; it may also prescribe and adopt a textbook or anything prepared by some individual or individuals.

Senator ROSALES. Thank you. So therefore under the first part of this section 1, the National Board of Education may prescribe the *Noli* and the *Fili* as textbooks for these courses, so that when the proviso was added which reads:

"Provided, That in the collegiate courses, the original or unexpurgated editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* or their English translation shall be used as basic texts."

the intention of the second part of this proviso is to make compulsory the prescription of these two books as textbooks as courses of study in the collegiate level?

Senator LAUREL. The first part of the *Noli* and the *Fili*, that is to say, the courses on the life and writings of José Rizal, it is not necessary to make the *Noli* and the *Fili* as texts. Now, in the colleges and universities it was felt that the students could be made as part of the curricular activities of the colleges and universities to read the basic texts, that is, to read the unexpurgated, original *Fili* and *Noli*.

Senator ROSALES. So that, gentleman from Batangas, it is not necessary for the National Board of Education to prescribe the *Noli* and the *Fili* under the first part of this section, but as you said it is empowered, or it may, rather under the first part of this section, prescribe the *Noli* and the *Fili*, but with this proviso the National Board of Education is not given any discretion at all? Under this proviso, necessarily, the National Board of Education must prescribe and must compel the reading of the *Noli* and the *Fili* as courses in the collegiate level?

Senator LAUREL. Yes, as the basic texts.

Senator ROSALES. Thank you.

Senator RODRIGO. Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. Gentleman from Bulacán.

Senator RODRIGO. As I announced this morning, I am submitting an amendment to the amendment by substitution.

SUSPENSIÓN DE LA SESIÓN

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, I ask that we suspend for a moment the consideration of the bill, and the session for a few minutes.

The PRESIDENT. If there is no objection, the motion is approved, and the session is suspended for a few minutes. (*There was none.*)

Eran las 7:10 p.m.

REANUDACIÓN DE LA SESIÓN

Se reanuda la sesión a las 7:50 p.m.

The PRESIDENT. The session is resumed.

CONSIDERACIÓN DEL S. NO. 438

(Continuación)

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, I ask that we resume the consideration of Senate Bill No. 438. We are now in the period of amendments.

The PRESIDENT. The consideration of Senate Bill No. 438 is resumed. We are now in the period of amendments.

ENMIENDAS RODRIGO-ROSALES-BRIONES

Senator RODRIGO. Mr. President, as I announced this morning, I submit the following amendments: On page 1 of the amendment by substitution, line 4 delete the semi-colon (;) after the word "private" and in lieu thereof put a period (.) and delete everything from the word "Provided" on line 4 up to the period (.) after the word "texts" on line 7. And on page 2, line 2, after the word "textbooks" change the period to a comma (,) and add the following words: "and to determine the pedagogical and academic level in which the studies of Rizal in the schools, colleges and universities shall be given and the kind of books and courses which are to be used in each level." As amended, the whole Section 1 will be:

"SECTION 1. Courses on the life, works and writing of José Rizal, particularly his novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, shall be included in the curricula of all schools, colleges and universities, public or private.

"The Board of National Education is hereby authorized and directed to adopt forthwith measures to implement and carry out the provisions of this Section, including the writing and printing of appropriate primers, readers and textbooks, and to determine the pedagogical and academic level in which the studies of Rizal in the schools, colleges and universities shall be given and the kind of books and courses which are to be used in each level. The Board shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate rules and regulations, including those of a disciplinary nature, to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act. Said rules and regulations shall take effect thirty (30) days after their publication in the Official Gazette."

The PRESIDENT. What does the sponsor say?

Senator LAUREL. The sponsor regrets that he cannot accept the amendment, after consultation with the other members of the Committee on Education.

EL SEN. RODRIGO RAZONA SU ENMIENDA

Senator RODRIGO. Mr. President, with the permission of the Chair and the indulgence of the sponsor, may I make the arguments in favor of the amendment to the amendment?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman from Bulacán has the floor.

Senator RODRIGO. Mr. President, as I have made clear in my speeches and statements before this Board regarding Senate Bill No. 438, we who opposed the original bill 438 are not against the reading by the people of the works of our greatest national hero.

Dr. José Rizal. We would like our people to read Rizal. As a matter of fact, from the very beginning I have announced to the gentlemen of the press who interviewed me that I was in favor of the objective of this bill. I was only against the method proposed in the bill, and that method is compulsion. I also made it clear, that in view of the statement made by the Philippine Catholic Hierarchy, I would want to avoid a situation where our Catholic citizens will be placed between the two horns of a very difficult dilemma; namely, if they obey the law passed by our government they will violate their religious conscience or the law of their Church. On the other hand, if they obey their religious conscience or the laws of their Church, they will violate the law of our government. So, in my approach to the study of this bill, I have that in mind. I would go to the full extent of having the books of Rizal, especially these two novels, read by our people especially by our students, but I would not want to go to the extent of placing our Catholic students and the parents of Catholic students in the dilemma I mentioned. And another point which I have always emphasized from the very beginning is this: That in solving this problem, we should try our best to do it in such a manner as not to drive a wedge to the unity of our people. If we can do it very quietly without raising a rumpus or hullabaloo thereby creating disunity, discontent and recriminations among our people. I think that is the method we should follow. I mentioned this, Mr. President, because these are the basis of my amendment. But before I explain my amendment, I would like to say that I and those who are with me—and I would like to announce that this amendment to the amendment is introduced not only by me but also by Senators Briones and Rosales—have gone as far as we think we can go in conscience to attain the objective of having these two books and other works of Rizal read by our people especially by our students. For example, in Section 1 we agree and we conserve in the text of the bill the provision that the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* shall be included in the curricula of all schools, colleges and universities, public or private. Secondly, in section 2, we have agreed that we conserve in the bill or in this amendment the provision that it shall be obligatory on all schools, colleges and universities to keep in their libraries an adequate number of copies of the original and unexpurgated editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, as well as all Rizal's other works and biography.

You will remember, Mr. President, that during the interpellations here, during the debates, somebody tried to bring out the allegation that in some Catholic schools these two novels are banned or are not allowed in the libraries of these schools. And so we agree and we propose this provision that it be made compulsory on all schools, colleges and universities, whether public or private, sectarian or non-sectarian, Catholic or non-Catholic, to have the unexpurgated and original editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* in their libraries. Then, in that same section 2, we provide and we agree that these two books, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, be included in the list of approved books for required reading in all public or private schools, colleges and universities. Not only do we agree that these books be placed in the libraries of all schools, colleges and universities, public or private, sectarian or non-sectarian, but we also want to provide or require that these books be included in the list of approved books for required reading. As I said, we want to go as far as we can, but not compulsion, and so I think we have gone as far as we can when we said that these books should be included in the list of required reading. I do not have to repeat here my arguments against compulsion. Many arguments were given, both constitutional and pedagogical, regarding the wisdom of compulsion, but I will not repeat them now. However, we have gone as far as to agree and provide in the bill that these be included in the list of books for required reading even in Catholic schools, colleges and universities, and there should be sufficient number of books in the libraries. In other words, a Catholic school, for example, with an enrolment of 5,000 cannot just comply with this provision by putting in its library four copies of these novels, because in this same Section 2 which we are submitting to the Senate, it says: "The Board of National Education shall determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of the school, college or university." Then, we have gone further in section 3 where we provide and we agree to have in the bill, if enacted into law, the provision that the Board of National Education shall cause the translation of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, as well as other writings of José Rizal into English, Tagalog and the principal Philippine dialects. And another, we also provide in this same section that these writings, the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, as well as their translations, be printed at public expense by the Board of National Education in cheap, po-

pular editions and cause them to be distributed, free of charge, to persons desiring to read them, through the Purok organizations and barrio councils throughout the country. We are willing to have our money coming from the taxes of our people, most of whom are Catholics, to be used for the printing of cheap editions of these two novels and their translations to be distributed free to our people. And then in Section 5, in one of the amendments proposed to the Committee on Education which met, and of which I am a member, it was proposed that the sum of P200,000 be appropriated for the expenses in connection with this bill, including the printing. Those members who were present at that meeting will remember that I suggested that the amount of P200,000 be increased to P500,000. Some of the members of the Committee said that P500,000 is too much, and so they said: "Why not just increase it to P300,000?" And so in the bill now, the amount appears as P300,000. But, Mr. President, I suggested in the Committee that that amount be increased to P500,000. And so, Mr. President, that is our approach, that is our attitude towards this bill. When I said that I am in favor of the objective of this bill, I was not merely paying lip service to these two novels. This bill which I am submitting now shows that I am willing to go to the full extent but without that compulsory aspect in order to popularize and to distribute as much as possible these two novels of Dr. Rizal. But it is this compulsory aspect in the unexpurgated versions that is the bone of controversy, and so that was the reason why in my amendment to the amendment, I asked for the deletion of the words found in lines 4 to 7, page 1 of the amendment by substitution which reads as follows: "Provided, That in the collegiate courses, the original or unexpurgated editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* or their English translation shall be used as basic texts."

Senator CEA. Mr. President, will the gentleman yield?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

Senator RODRIGO. With pleasure.

Senator CEA. I gather from Your Honor's speeches and remarks that you are against the compulsory aspect of the bill. Supposing that instead of the amendment that you proposed, using as the basis of my proposal the amendment by substitution submitted by Senator Laurel, on page 1 thereof, line 7, we delete the words "basic texts" and in lieu thereof we insert the words "required reading". Would this amendment be acceptable to Your Honor?

Senator RODRIGO. I would like to state this. The term "required reading" can be again a subject of different interpretations. But if we use that same wording as it is now found in Section 2 of the bill meaning to say, delete the words "used as basic texts", but don't use just the two words "required reading", but using the very clear terms in Section 2 of the amendment by substitution "included in the list of approved books for required reading in all public or private schools, colleges and universities." I shall agree.

Senator CEA. But does not Your Honor believe that the term "required reading" does not prohibit the schools from including other books in the list of required reading?

Senator RODRIGO. All right, if that is the meaning of that, then why not make it very clear?

Senator CEA. I think it is clear enough.

Senator RODRIGO. Then why not use the wording in section 2 which admits of no more doubt, no more discussion, no more quibbling? Instead of saying "required reading", make the law very clear and say "shall be included in the list of approved books for required reading in all public and private schools, colleges and universities."

Senator CEA. The emphasis should be on the "Noli", "because under your amendment "Noli" will play a secondary role. Under my amendment "Noli" and "Fili" will play an important role, and I want the "Noli" and the "Fili" first and primary and the other books secondary.

Senator RODRIGO. Precisely that is the difference.

Senator CEA. So if we say "required reading" that will not prohibit the inclusion of other books in addition to the "Noli" and the "Fili", and in your amendment "Noli" and "Fili" will be relegated to a secondary role and I for one am not in favor of that.

Senator RODRIGO. I think the gentleman means to say now that when we call it required reading the meaning will be that these two books will be included in the list of these others.

Senator CEA. They will determine if the school does not want to include other books than "Noli" and "Fili", so it is optional to the schools to require other books, while in your amendment "Noli" and "Fili" will only play a secondary role.

And another point. When you say "basic texts" that means that the student must pass these texts in the first year college or in the college liberal arts that require the "Noli" and the "Fili" as basic texts. The student must pass these two books because he will be given units of credit for these books, and so if the student does

not pass these texts, he will not receive the units corresponding to these texts and he will not finish the fourth year college of liberal arts. But if it is not required reading, he may be a very poor student of "Noli" and "Fili" and yet he may pass the college of liberal arts because he will not be required to receive units for these two subjects. I am only trying to explore Your Honor's attitude. To me this is a very good compromise because we make "Noli" and "Fili" as required reading without prejudice to the inclusion of other books.

Senator RODRIGO. Well, as I said, I agree to a compromise that the reading of these two books will be included among other books, and I shall also provide that these two books shall not be included with other kinds of books, meaning any kind of books, that these books shall be included with patriotic books. I will not say that these books shall be included with Silas Marner or other books by Shakespeare, but this list shall include five or six other patriotic books, so that the students will have their choice. Those who believe it is against their religious conscience to read these two books may not pick them, but their choice will be limited to four other books which are also books on patriotism. But as I said, if we require only the use of "Noli" and "Fili" as required reading, that is liable to be misinterpreted, and since we are enacting a law and since we know that this matter is a very delicate one and has even attracted the attention of our people and is even threatening to divide our people and our country, I will agree that instead of just saying "required reading", you use the phrase that I have in section 2, namely, "shall be included in the list of approved books for required reading."

Senator CEA. I disagree with Your Honor in that, because among this list of patriotic books, does not Your Honor believe that "Noli" and "Fili" should play a primary role?

Senator RODRIGO. Yes.

Senator CEA. That it is required first. Because other schools may not require their reading, so they may only except "Noli" and "Fili" but other schools may include other books in the list of required reading. This will not prevent them from including other books—I am only following Your Honor's interpretation in the sense that under Your Honor's proposed amendment, you want to relegate "Noli" and "Fili" to a secondary role, viz., with other patriotic books.

Senator RODRIGO. Well, I see the point of the gentleman. I think his point is that this should be given preferential position.

Senator CEA. Yes.

Senator RODRIGO. I should say I will agree to this wording: "shall be included in the top of the list of approved books."

Senator CEA. Supposing there are twenty top books.

Senator RODRIGO. Yes, put this on the top, because I go back to my basic objection that we want to give the students a choice.

Senator CEA. I think my amendment meets Your Honor's position more than half-way because other schools can include other books in their required reading list. But certainly I would not want to relegate "Noli" and "Fili" to a secondary role.

Senator RODRIGO. Well, in my wording, it says "shall be included in the list of approved books." Well, that will not prevent any school, if they can do it, to have only these two books.

Senator CEA. No, but the meaning of that is that "Noli" and "Fili" are not as important as other books. I want to say, as a declaration of the policy of Congress, that the "Noli" and the "Fili" are the two top books among other patriotic books. That is my position.

Senator RODRIGO. I think it is very clear from this bill that the "Noli" and the "Fili" have a preferential position. Why? Because these two novels are in the bill. No other book, no other novel by any other patriotic Filipino is included in the bill. In other words, these two books must be included in the list. The other books of Del Pilar or López Jaena or Mabini may or may not be included in the list, but according to the bill, these two books must be included in the list. I think that that means preferential treatment for these two books.

Senator CEA. If that is Your Honor's position that these two books be given preferential position, what is Your Honor's opposition to the words "required reading"?

Senator RODRIGO. I go back to the basic premise that what I am against is compulsion, and I am also against using words in the law which are not clear in meaning. I think that if we have to enact a law, we should make our meaning very clear, and as I said, the phrase that I used as found in section 2 of this bill, I think, will eliminate all doubts or confusion regarding the real intention of Congress when it says "required reading".

Senator CEA. I understand Your Honor's position. I still prefer my amendment to Your Honor's amendment.

Senator RODRIGO. Mr. President, I already mentioned that we have gone as far as in conscience we can go in order to popularize the books of Rizal, especially "Noli" and "Fili" and in order to attain the objective of the bill.

(Continuing.) Now let us come to the phrase which I suggest be deleted. This phrase says that these two books in their unexpurgated versions shall be basic texts. Mr. President, I hope the Gentlemen of the Senate will understand our position when we say that that proviso here is harder, is more onerous, than even the original bill No. 438. Under the original Bill No. 438, what is provided for is only compulsory reading. As a matter of fact, the distinguished gentleman from Batangas and Quezon during his speeches was always emphasizing that this bill only compels reading but does not compel believing. However, under this proviso in this amendment by substitution, if these two books or novels are made as basic texts and read in conjunction with the preceding sentence, that these two novels are included in the curriculum of the schools, colleges and universities, then the two novels in their unexpurgated form become basic texts in the curriculum. What is the meaning of that? Not only the reading becomes compulsory, but the teaching and the studying and the learning are made compulsory. So, how can we agree to this proviso, Mr. President? If we disagree with the original bill making just the reading compulsory, how can we now agree to a provision which makes compulsory not only the reading but the teaching, the studying and the learning? That is why, I ask the members of the Senate for the deletion of this proviso in section 1 of the amendment by substitution.

But, Mr. President, I want to make one thing clear, that by deleting this proviso it does not mean that we entirely eliminate the possibility or probability that the unexpurgated version of these two novels be made compulsory reading in certain levels of our collegiate department. What then is our suggestion? Our suggestion is simply this; that instead of deciding in the Senate whether or not the unexpurgated version of these two novels shall be made compulsory, let us pass that decision and that study to the National Board of Education. As Senator Laurel himself stated . . .

The PRESIDENT. The Chair wishes to call the attention of the gentleman that his time has expired.

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, if we were going to follow the rules strictly, the time taken up by the interpellation should not be counted, and I have noted that Senator Cea commenced interpellating Senator Rodrigo at 8:01 p.m. and he was through at 8:08 p.m. At any rate, I ask that the gentleman from Bulacán be given more time.

The PRESIDENT. How much more time?

Senator PRIMICIAS. Twenty minutes more.

The PRESIDENT. Is there any objection to the extension of time of the Senator from Bulacán? (Silence.) The Chair hears none. Approved. For the information of the Senate, Senator Cuenco has asked to speak in favor of the amendment to the amendment of the gentleman who is now speaking.

Senator RODRIGO. Mr. President, may I proceed?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may proceed.

Senator RODRIGO. So I would like to repeat that in my amendment to the amendment I did not exclude entirely the desire of some of the proponents of the bill that these two novels be made compulsory reading. That is not excluded in my amendment to the amendment. The only meaning of my amendment to the amendment is that instead of that question being decided here by us in the Senate, that that be decided by our National Board of Education. Senator Laurel himself stated, Mr. President, and I tried to take down what he said as exactly as I could. He said that it is better to transfer this whole thing to technical people instead of in a political body. Then I have read very thoroughly, the book written by Senator Laurel entitled, "EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION OF FILIPINOS." That book of Senator Laurel talks about the establishment of the National Board of Education. In that book, Senator Laurel laid down the very wise policy that deals in the planning of the education of our youth, should not be legislative but didactic; that Congress should not be the one to pass upon the plan of education of our youth but it must be entrusted to a body of technical men, experts in the field of education, representative men representing the whole sector of our country, and that was the reason why the National Board of Education was established. I believe, Mr. President, that will be a very very wise policy.

Senator ROSALES. Mr. President, will the gentleman yield?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

Senator RODRIGO. Gladly.

Senator ROSALES. Under the proposed amendment presented by Your Honor, is the National Board of Education prevented from prescribing the Noli and the Fili as textbooks in the collegiate level?

Senator RODRIGO. No, the National Board of Education may do so, if it so desires.

Senator ROSALES. Can the gentleman point to the Senate the particular portion of his amendment which will give the National Board of Education the power or the authority to prescribe these two books as textbooks for the university?

Senator RODRIGO. That portion, is the portion which I inserted in my amendment to the amendment which reads as follows: And I would like to acknowledge the fact that this amendment to the amendment which I inserted was taken from the amendment proposed by our distinguished colleague from Cebú, Senator Briones, our President Pro Tempore. So I read it: "The Board of National Education is hereby authorized." That is the original. I will read the portion inserted by me: "The Board of National Education shall determine the pedagogical and academic level in which the studies of Rizal in the schools, colleges and universities shall be given, and the kind of books and courses which are to be used in each level." Under that provision which I inserted, the Board of National Education has ample power to decide on the kind of books and courses which are to be used in each level, and I think that is as it should be. The Board of National Education is composed of experts and technical men of education representing the different sectors of our country, and aside from that, the deliberation of the Board of National Education will not stir the hysteria in the hullabaloo that is being stirred now by our discussion of this bill. It will not threaten our national unity. It will not drive a wedge in our solidarity as a people. In my proposed amendment, we can pass that bill. Then if it is approved, this controversy will subside. This will no longer be in the front pages of the newspapers. This will no longer be broadcast in the radio. Our people will forget little by little this controversy, and the unity established little by little. In the meanwhile our National Board of Education composed of experts can use their technical knowledge, study the technical and salient points, and the best way to implement the

objectives of this law. There will be no headlines, no radio broadcast, no gallery cheering, no recriminations. They will study silently and objectively. As a matter of fact, Senator Laurel himself is a member of that committee. Then they can decide what to do from the pedagogical science with these two books, whether in the first year college they will prescribe a deleted edition of certain portions or in a higher level they will make compulsory the reading of the unexpurgated edition. We will leave that to them and thereby accomplish many things. Instead of we in the Senate who are not technical men, who are not experts on education, passing upon this bill, it will be in the hands of technical experts on education. We are now busy in the study of hundreds of bills and instead of trying to solve this problem, we should give it to the Board composed of expert technical men in education who can devote their full time to the study of this bill. We should devote most of our time here in the Senate on more pressing bills covering economic matters and the budget and we should pass this problem on to this technical group, the Board of National Education. While in the study and solution of this problem we may create disunity and discord among the people because our discussions are public and always hit the front pages of the papers and broadcast over the radio, the Board of National Education will work silently but effectively. Our national unity will not be endangered, and instead of this endangering even our party, this will be studied by a non-political group of educational experts. It does not mean anybody will lose. If this amendment of mine is approved, neither side loses, neither side wins. Nobody loses face. If this amendment is approved, it does not mean that those who supports the banning of the unexpurgated edition have lost; it does not mean that those who are against that have won or lost. It only means that this problem has been transferred to a technical group, the group that should decide, the Board of National Education. Nobody will lose, nobody will win except our people. We will save them from chaos and confusion which have already arisen in the past few days because of the discussion of this bill.

Senator ROSALES. The gentleman from Bulacán has emphasized on the capacity of the Board of National Education to act on this matter. May we know from the gentleman from Bulacán who are the members of the Board of National Education?

Senator RODRIGO. The names of the members are here in this book.

Senator ROSALES. But what group do they represent, the members of that Board?

Senator RODRIGO. The members of this Board, as of 1955 when this book "Educational Orientation for Filipinos" by Dr. José P. Laurel was published, were the following. I do not know if these are still the present members.

BOARD OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

Ex-officio Members:

- Hon. Gregorio Hernandez, Jr., Secretary of Education
- Hon. Jose P. Laurel, Chairman, Committee on Education, Senate
- Hon. Carmen D. Consing, Chairman, Committee on Education, House of Representatives
- Dr. Venancio Trinidad, Director of Public Schools
- Dr. Jesus Perpiñan, Director of Private Schools
- Dr. Vidal A. Tan, President, U. P.
- Dr. Mariano V. de los Santos, UNESCO

Appointive Members:

- Leon O. Ty, Labor.
- Toribio Teodoro, Industry and Management.
- Marcelo H. Acayan, Agriculture.
- Jesús Paredes, Jr., National Catholic Education Assn.
- Salih Ututalum, Mohammedan or other cultural minorities.
- Benicio Catapusan, Philippine Association of Christian Schools
- Teodoro Evangelista, Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities
- Mrs. Felicidad Silva, Teaching Profession.

Senator ROSALES. So that the members of that Board of National Education are composed of people representing important groups in the country including different sectarian sects or religious institutions in the country, and Congress is also ably represented in that administrative body by the Chairmen of the Committees on Education of both Houses?

Senator RODRIGO. Yes, Your Honor.

Senator ROSALES. Thank you.

Senator LIM. Mr. President, will the gentleman yield to a few questions?

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman may yield, if he wishes.

Senator RODRIGO. Gladly.

Senator LIM. Your Honor stated that this amendment by substitution is more onerous, to use Your Honor's words, than the original Senate Bill No. 438 in the sense that, while in the original bill only the reading is compulsory, in the present bill which is an amendment by substitution, the studying or teaching and learning

are made compulsory. But are you not aware of the fact, Your Honor, that in the original bill the reading is compulsory in all schools, universities and colleges, whether public or private, whereas in the present case it is only in the collegiate level because in the case of schools lower than the category of colleges and universities only courses on the life, works and writings of Rizal, particularly the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, will be included in the curricula, whereas in the bill amended by substitution it is only compulsory in the collegiate level wherein the original or unexpurgated edition of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* are to be basic texts? Don't you agree with me, Your Honor?

Senator RODRIGO. I would like to answer that question this way. I think that in effect the original bill No. 438 was also for college alone.

Senator LIM. It is also for schools.

Senator RODRIGO. As a matter of fact, before Senator Laurel delivered his sponsorship speech, I talked with Senator Recto here on the floor informally when the Senate was not yet in session about the reading of these two novels and he said it was only for colleges and universities because the high school students cannot understand the philosophical discussion of Rizal. So that I feel that the Senate bill was intended only for colleges and universities and even the title of the bill says only colleges and universities. And when Senator Laurel sponsored the bill he said in his speech that because the two novels cannot be made compulsory reading in the primary schools because the pupils there do not even know how to read, he said we can prescribe the reading of these two books in the high school may be in the third or fourth year, if I remember what Senator Laurel said in his sponsorship speech. But my idea is this. My understanding, my belief, from the very beginning and before Senator Laurel made his sponsorship speech, and this I got from Senator Rodri- himself, was that the real intention of the original bill, Senate Bill No. 438, was to make it apply to colleges and universities.

Senator LIM. Your Honor, the original Senate Bill No. 438, reads: "SECTION 1. José Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* are hereby declared compulsory reading matter in all public and private schools, colleges and universities in the Philippines." That was only to straighten the records.

Now, I would like to propose an amendment to Your Honor's amendment, but before I do I would like to mention it as a proposal

Suppose, instead of the wordings in your proposed amendment on page 1, we insert this proviso: "Provided, That in the collegiate courses, the Board of National Education is hereby authorized to determine whether the original or unexpurgated editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* or their English translations shall be used as basic texts.", and then for Your Honor to forget the other amendment that you proposed on page 2. Would that be acceptable?

Senator RODRIGO. Well, in principle, I accept that with a little change in the wording or polishing the wording. That is precisely my suggestion, to leave this matter to the Board of National Education.

Senator LIM. Because I agree with the gentleman from Bulacán, and particularly when he reminded me of what the distinguished gentleman from Batangas, Senator Laurel, said that we politicians should leave this matter to technical men and most of the technical men are in the Board of National Education; that indeed, it might be better for us to leave the determination of whether or not the unexpurgated or original editions of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* should be made as basic texts in collegiate courses to the Board of National Education.

Senator RODRIGO. That is what I believe sincerely.

Senator LIM. I may, therefore, propose an amendment to your amendment.

Senator RODRIGO. Well, depending on the wording as I said, I agree to the principle stated.

Senator LIM. On condition that you withdraw your amendment on page 2.

Senator RODRIGO. Well, I would like to see . . .

Senator LIM. After all, your amendment on page 2 would be superfluous if my amendment to your amendment is approved by the Senate.

I, therefore, would like to propose an amendment to the amendment of the gentleman from Bulacán in this manner: On page 1, line 4 from the word "Provided" up to the period (.) on line 7 should read as follows: "Provided, That in the collegiate course, the Board of National Education is hereby authorized to determine whether or not the original or unexpurgated editions of

the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* or their English translations shall be used as basic texts."

Senator RODRIGO. Mr. President, with the permission of the Floor Leader, may I ask for a suspension of the session for a few minutes in order that we can study that amendment and agree on the draft and the wording of the amendment?

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, the amendment of the gentleman from Zamboanga to the amendment is not being presented yet formally because we have not reached that stage. The gentleman from Zamboanga was only asking exploratory questions. Now, at the time when that period will be reached when the gentleman from Zamboanga will propose the amendment, maybe we could ask for the suspension of the session. But now, the gentleman from Zamboanga is only exploring . . .

Senator RODRIGO. Well, in that case, I just want to make my position clear again. I would like to make use of the few minutes I have left to finish my speech and with the permission of the Floor Leader I ask that the consideration of the bill be postpone for tomorrow.

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, I ask that we postpone the consideration of this bill for tomorrow and to suspend the session for a few minutes.

SUSPENSIÓN DE LA SESIÓN

The PRESIDENT. If there is no objection to the motion on the part of the Senate the consideration of the bill is postpone for tomorrow and the session is suspended for a few minutes. (*There was none.*)

Eran las 8:45 p.m.

REANUDACIÓN DE LA SESIÓN

Se reanuda la sesion a las 8:55 p.m.

The PRESIDENT. The session is resumed.

LEVANTAMIENTO DE LA SESIÓN

Senator PRIMICIAS. Mr. President, in view of the advanced hour, I ask that we adjourn until tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

The PRESIDENT. If there is no objection the session is adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock. (*There was none.*)

Eran las 8:56 p.m.