

# RECORD OF THE SENATE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1999

## OPENING OF THE SESSION

*At 3:34 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Marcelo B. Fernan, called the session to order.*

**The President.** The 82nd session of the Senate in the First Regular Session of the Eleventh Congress is hereby called to order.

Let us all stand for the opening prayer to be led by Honorable Sen. Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr.

Since, apparently, Sen. Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr. is not here yet, we will offer a silent prayer of about five minutes and then proceed.

*Everybody rose for a five-minute silent prayer.*

## ROLL CALL

**The President.** The Acting Secretary will please call the roll.

**The Acting Secretary [Mr. Pineda], reading:**

Senator Teresa S. Aquino-Oreta .....	Present
Senator Robert Z. Barbers .....	Present
Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon .....	Present
Senator Renato L. <i>Companero</i> Cayetano ...	Present
Senator Anna Dominique M.L. Coseteng ....	Present
Senator Franklin M. Drilon .....	Present
Senator Juan Ponce Enrile .....	Present
Senator Juan M. Flavier .....	Present
Senator Teofisto T. Guingona Jr. ....	Present
Senator Gregorio B. Honasan .....	Present
Senator Robert S. Jaworski .....	Present
Senator Loren B. Legarda-Leviste .....	Absent
Senator Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr. ....	**
Senator Blas F. Ople .....	**
Senator John Henry R. Osmeña .....	Present
Senator Sergio R. Osmeña III .....	Present
Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr. ....	**
Senator Ramon B. Revilla .....	Absent
Senator Raul S. Roco .....	Present
Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago .....	Present
Senator Vicente C. Sotto III .....	**
Senator Francisco S. Tatad .....	Present
The President .....	Present

\* Absent on account of illness

\*\* On official mission

**The President.** With 17 senators present, there is a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

## THE JOURNAL

**Senator Drilon.** Mr. President, I move that we dispense with the reading of the *Journal* of the previous session and consider it approved.

**The President.** Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, the motion is approved.

**Senator Drilon.** Mr. President, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

**The President.** The Acting Secretary will please read the Reference of Business.

## REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

### RESOLUTIONS

**The Acting Secretary [Mr. Pineda].** Proposed Senate Resolution No. 426, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PROLIFERATION OF UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE REPORTED DUMPING OF FISH AND DUTY-FREE IMPORTATION OF POULTRY ENDANGERING THE COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF SMALL AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD PRODUCERS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF RECOMMENDING APPROPRIATE MEASURES ENSURING STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION AND OTHER EXISTING LAWS AND INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Serge Osmeña III

**The President.** Referred to the Committees on Agriculture and Food; and Trade and Commerce

**The Acting Secretary [Mr. Pineda].** Proposed Senate Resolution No. 427, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE

**Senator Guingona.** May I ask some questions regarding the proposal, Madam President?

**Senator Drilon.** Certainly, yes, Madam President.

**Senator Guingona.** The committee meetings have a membership of how many? Would that be tantamount to the entire Senate?

**Senator Drilon.** I cannot give the numbers as far as the membership is concerned. But whatever is the number, it is not tantamount to the Senate or this Chamber itself having the meeting. It is a committee meeting regardless of the numbers.

**Senator Guingona.** May we have the questions and answers duly recorded in that committee meeting?

**Senator Drilon.** I would think so. Yes, the committee meetings are on record.

**Senator Guingona.** Without prejudice to our raising the issues if we do not find the same satisfactory, Madam President, I will accept that on that condition.

**Senator Drilon.** Thank you, Madam President.

BILL ON SECOND READING  
S. No. 1519—General Banking Law of 1999  
(Continuation)

Madam President, I move that we resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 1519 as reported out under Committee Report No. 29. This is the proposed amendments to the General Banking Act.

**The Presiding Officer [Sen. Aquino-Oreta].** Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, resumption of consideration of Senate Bill No. 1519 is now in order.

**Senator Drilon.** Madam President, we are now in the period of interpellations. Therefore, may we ask the Chair to recognize the principal sponsor, Sen. Raul S. Roco, and also the Minority Leader who has indicated his desire to raise questions in this period.

**The Presiding Officer [Sen. Aquino-Oreta].** Sen. Raul S. Roco is recognized and Sen. Teofisto T. Guingona Jr. will interpellate the principal sponsor.

**Senator Roco.** Thank you, Madam President.

**Senator Guingona.** Because of the length of time that has elapsed, may I beg the indulgence of the distinguished gentleman

that if there are repetitions, he will just point them out to me so that I can go to another question.

If I remember correctly, Madam President, I was asking him about the role of banks today. In the United States and other advanced financial centers, the banks seem to concentrate their business activities on stocks, bonds, hedge funds, mutual funds, derivatives, et cetera, which veer away from the main function of lending in the traditional manner. Would that be correct?

**Senator Roco.** Madam President, first, it is correct that we were at this point. Although due to the length of time also, I really cannot remember where we left off. But that was one of the points of discussion. It seems to me we were at this point when we suspended consideration on this matter.

Second, it is also correct that all banks, to my knowledge, have devoted time to new ways of transacting business. It is also correct that those new ways are not traditionally in the context of traditional banking of just accepting deposits and lending money based on deposits. So that the derivatives, Madam President, have been a way of minimizing risks or making the risks acceptable.

**Senator Guingona.** The reason I ask this is, I would like to know the specific safeguards, aside from the fact that the main need of the country for development is lending facilities, et cetera. We would like to know from the distinguished gentleman what safeguards can the Bangko Sentral impose on a universal bank that would establish a subsidiary that would engage only in stocks speculation supporting the same with the resources of the bank?

**Senator Roco.** On that specific question, may I inquire if this is an actual example?

**Senator Guingona.** If I remember correctly in the case of a subsidiary of a bank in Germany, the subsidiary dealt in futures to such an extent that because of the operations, the losses amounted to about \$1.3 billion and the two big banks of Germany had to bail out that subsidiary by infusing about \$1.8 billion.

*At this juncture, the Presiding Officer relinquished the Chair to Sen. Sergio R. Osmeña III.*

**Senator Roco.** I appreciate the concern of our distinguished friend. Under the present rules of the Bangko Sentral, there are, in fact, guidelines that may prevent a similar situation. I would furnish our distinguished friend Circular No. 102, series of 1995, on the rules and regulations on financial derivative activities of banks, nonbank financial intermediaries, that are performing quasi-banking functions together with the attached Risk Management Guidelines for Derivatives.

As a direct answer then to the question, under the proposed

law, the Bangko Sentral will have sufficient powers not only to maintain its old guidelines but even to expand, because we do strengthen the supervisory powers of the Bangko Sentral.

**Senator Guingona.** Could the distinguished sponsor favor us with just the essence of Circular No. 102?

**Senator Roco.** Yes. Just to rush through, there is a statement of policy to preclude the misuse of alternative instruments for risk management. There is a general authority on engaging in financial derivatives; but there are pre-qualification requirements—there is a networth of P200 million required, and similar minimum requirements. The Risk Management Guidelines is fairly thick and it is difficult, Mr. President. I am no expert on this myself. There are accounting guidelines and reportorial requirements.

The important thing, Mr. President, is that, not only are they covered by present rules but the rules are not proposed to be changed by this new law. The new law, in fact, enhances the power of the Bangko Sentral to tighten if there are new risks that may be seen on derivative transactions.

**Senator Guingona.** I would like to thank the gentleman for that. Under the World Trade Agreement, will foreign banks be allowed to come in freely—if not foreign banks, financial institutions?

**Senator Roco.** Not under the World Trade Organization Agreement, I guess, if this is what the gentleman is referring to. But under the Bank Liberalization Law, there is reference under Section 2 to the branches of foreign banks covered by Republic Act No. 7721, which is the Foreign Banks Liberalization Act. This will not be altered.

Of course, the question of ownership and limits on ownership will be altered, and the rule on determining the nationality of a bank will now depend upon the actual nationality of the stockholders.

**Senator Guingona.** Are we abandoning the grandfather rule?

**Senator Roco.** Yes, Mr. President. We will now go on control test, the actual controlling interest.

Theoretically, a Delaware company if 51 percent owned by Filipinos as far as the banking laws are concerned can then be considered as Filipino as long as it is controlled by Filipinos.

**Senator Guingona.** On the equity of subsidiaries of banks, what ratio would they have? If it is a foreign bank, can they have a subsidiary that is also 100 percent foreign-owned?

**Senator Roco.** Under the present law, theoretically, it is possible for a publicly delisted banking corporation, let us say, Hong Kong Shanghai in Hong Kong, to be able to buy 100 percent of an existing bank. Under current regulations, that requires a specific approval that the target bank to be acquired is in dire conditions. But under Section 71 of the proposed bill, it says:

*SEC. 71. Acquisition of Voting Stock in a Domestic Bank.* - Subject to guidelines provided under Section 3 of the guidelines on the Foreign Banks Liberalization Act, the Monetary Board may authorize a foreign bank to acquire up to one hundred percent (100%) of the voting stock of only one (1) bank organized under the laws of the Philippines: *Provided,* That the Monetary Board may authorize any foreign bank, which prior to the effectivity of this Act has availed itself of the privilege to acquire up to sixty percent (60%) of the voting stock of a bank under the Foreign Banks Liberalization Act and the Thrift Banks Act, to further acquire voting shares of such bank to the extent necessary for it to own one hundred percent (100%) of the voting stock thereof.

So, this is the departure from the present limitations.

**Senator Guingona.** Thank you for that, Mr. President. May we know what is the rule as far as equity in allied enterprises are concerned for banks?

**Senator Roco.** We refer, I guess, to the universal banks.

**Senator Guingona.** Yes, Mr. President.

**Senator Roco.** The rule will be the same. I think under the present law, a universal bank can use up to 15 percent of its total resources to acquire subsidiary or allied companies. That will not change.

**Senator Guingona.** So, a universal bank, for example, can have 100 percent equity in an allied enterprise. Is that correct?

**Senator Roco.** Yes, Mr. President, as long as they do not exceed 15 percent of their total resources. That is so even under the present law. In fact, there is no proposal. We will preserve the present law on the universal banks.

**Senator Guingona.** Section 26, if I am not mistaken, limits equity in nonallied enterprises to 35%.

**Senator Roco.** Yes. We were talking of allied enterprises.

**Senator Guingona.** Yes. To nonallied enterprises, the law limits equity to 35%?

**Senator Roco.** Yes, that is correct. Yes, nonallied enterprises is the one that is totally unrelated to banking, like, I guess, real estate.

*At this juncture, the Presiding Officer relinquished the Chair to Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta.*

**Senator Guingona.** But the bank can increase its equity in a nonallied enterprise from 35 percent to 51 percent and then it becomes an allied enterprise.

**Senator Roco.** Maybe we are using the terms or understanding it differently. The rule on equity investments of a universal bank in a nonallied enterprise, let us say, in real estate, is that we are restricted to 35 percent. Earlier, I was talking about allied activities.

**Senator Guingona.** Maybe we can make it concrete.

**Senator Roco.** Yes. "The financial allied undertakings under this Section will be leasing companies, banks, investment houses, financing companies, credit card operations, financial institutions catering to small-and-medium-scale industries, provided that any such undertaking is the primary purpose for which a particular enterprise was established, and the volume of its business indicates that it is principally engaged in such undertaking."

This is a summary of, more or less, the current rules. And I quote:

No. 7. - Other companies engaged in stock brokerage or securities dealership, foreign exchange dealership or brokering, insurance companies and a holding company, provided the investments of such holding company are confined to the equities of allied undertakings and/or nonallied undertakings of expanded commercial banks, allowed under present BSP rules.

We dealt with that earlier in the Securities Act.

So, those are the allied undertakings, financially allied undertakings. The nonfinancial allied undertakings will refer to warehousing companies, storage companies, safe deposit boxes, companies engaged in the management of mutual funds, but not the mutual funds themselves. Well, the management corporations engaged in CI activities similar to the management of mutual funds, companies engaged in the provision of computer services, insurance agencies provided that no DOSRI of the bank hold or own more than 20% of the subscribed capital stock, companies engaged in home building and home development, companies providing drying or milling facilities, companies engaged in insurance brokerage, service bureaus, industrial park projects, clearing

houses, house companies, the PDHC or the Philippine Central Depository Incorporated, health maintenance organizations.

Now, nonallied activities, I guess, are all others.

**Senator Guingona.** Yes, but since a universal bank can own equity, can have equity in nonallied enterprises, brokerage firms, for example...

**Senator Roco.** No. May I just explain. The nonallied enterprises—nonallied to financial because earlier I was talking of financial allied and nonfinancial allied undertakings. But the totally nonallied will be manufacturing, public utilities, mining, quarrying as examples, just so we have the same references.

**Senator Guingona.** Since this universal bank can have many allied and nonallied firms and some of these may be financial, engaging in futures, speculative shares, my question is, since the distinguished sponsor himself said that there are only 700 auditors? I do not know the exact figure.

**Senator Roco.** In the Bangko Sentral.

**Senator Guingona.** Yes. With these additional enterprises, would the Bangko Sentral have the capacity and the power to audit these subsidiaries and allied enterprises?

**Senator Roco.** First, it can hire more. If we specifically authorize it or direct it to hire more, I think it will be very happy.

**Senator Guingona.** It is not a question of hiring more. It is also a question of authority. Does it have the power to do so?

**Senator Roco.** It would have the power.

**Senator Guingona.** Even for nonallied enterprises?

**Senator Roco.** All. In the Bangko Sentral law, the Bangko Sentral has supervision over and conduct periodic or special examinations only on banking institutions and quasi-banks including their subsidiaries and affiliates engaged in allied activities.

**Senator Guingona.** So that if the allied or the nonallied enterprises are not engaged in banking or finance, then the supervision could understandably be in other appropriate agencies of the government.

**Senator Roco.** That is correct, Madam President. In the case of manufacturing activities, the supervision lies elsewhere.

**Senator Guingona.** How about in cases of stock brokerage?

**Senator Roco.** I think these are financial allied.

**Senator Guingona.** These are basically trading and stocks.

**Senator Roco.** But under the proposed Securities Act that we have, these would fall under the SEC.

**Senator Guingona.** Under the proposed Securities Act, if I remember correctly, these would be self-regulated.

**Senator Roco.** That is one level of the regulation.

**Senator Guingona.** Self-regulated under the SEC but not under the banks.

**Senator Roco.** That is correct. But there is a tie up. There is a point where in organizing, for instance, these must have free clearance with the Bangko Sentral. If one organizes a new stock brokerage, for instance.

**Senator Guingona.** Yes. In the organization. But if it is a nonallied, I do not think the Bangko Sentral has any say.

**Senator Roco.** That is correct.

**Senator Guingona.** Then the nonallied equity can be expanded from 35 percent to 51 percent.

**Senator Roco.** No, Mr. President. I think 35 percent only is the ceiling.

**Senator Guingona.** Does the gentleman mean I cannot increase its equity to 51 percent?

**Senator Roco.** The optimum limit is 35 percent. By the way, there are two limits because the other one must be within the 15 percent of its resources.

**Senator Guingona.** I beg the gentleman's indulgence because we just want to know whether or not the universal bank can convert nonallied enterprises, with a 35-percent investment, into an allied enterprise by infusing more investments into it.

**Senator Roco.** I think the nonallied refers to the line of business. I guess if one is manufacturing, can he make it into a financial company? It will take a lot of doing because he has to modify the articles—the bylaws. I guess there will be other registrations that will be modified. It will also take a lot of management doing to convert a management firm into a financial firm, for instance, or an insurance company.

But it seems to me it would be simpler if the intention is to have

an allied activity. It seems to be simpler to organize one or acquire one rather than to convert a company engaged in nonallied activities into a company engaged in financial activity. So I am not sure that there would be interest in doing that.

**Senator Guingona.** Our main concern, which I think is the concern of the sponsor as well, is to have these banks serve the public as broadly as possible. Section 27, I think, limits equity contributions in a quasi-bank. Would this not discourage the establishment instead of branches to other areas of the country which would need them most or need them more?

**Senator Roco.** The Senate committee, Madam President, cannot visualize how that will discourage. And Section 27, I think, tries only to settle the issue of.... In fact, it is consciously using "may further limit equity investments in quasi-banks."

So there are limitations today, and under the proposed law, there may be further limits.

**Senator Guingona.** I would like to thank the sponsor for that.

**Senator Roco.** Yes, Madam President.

**Senator Guingona.** May I go to Section 36. This would limit the borrowing capability of small businesses. It seems that this would limit the capacity of companies that are only starting and other entrepreneurs who have no access to clean loans as the big businesses have. A commercial paper by a big firm is issued, but what the country needs is for credit availments other than the traditional way of collaterals, credit worthiness rather than initiative ideas and a potential for development.

**Senator Roco.** The point is well-taken, Madam President. Section 36, however, modifies only one aspect. It lowers the collateral value of real estate from 70 percent of the present law down to 60 percent, but the Senate committee is not married to that proposition and can see its way clear to returning it to 70 percent.

As to the idea of expanding, in fact, I do not remember it now. Because of the length of time, I cannot remember the other sections.

As to the idea of encouraging banks to look at alternative ways of expanding credit, again if it is not here, the committee would certainly welcome proposals to that effect. I think, we have developmental. We have something in Section 39.

The staff is calling my attention to page 19. We did add the final sentence, "In formulating rules and regulations under this Section, granting loans and other credit accommodations, the Monetary Board shall recognize the peculiar characteristics of

microfinancing such as cashflow-lending to the basic sectors that are not covered by traditional collaterals.”

The concept therefore is acceptable to the committee and if we can strengthen this, the committee will welcome such proposal.

It is important, however, that prudence and the stability of the banking sector is preserved. It is also important to resort not to compulsion but to incentives. There are banks which encourage development or microfinancing, and they must have some benefits. We leave to the market forces in the mind of the bankers and the managers a determination of how they can enhance microfinancing or lending to those who may, in fact, not qualify under the traditional collateral.

So, the concept is something that the committee is not hostile to under those guidelines.

**Senator Guingona.** We are glad to hear the views of the distinguished sponsor. But may we call his attention to the agri-agra law.

In spite of a mandate to the banks, I think the required 15 percent and 10 percent lending to farmers and fishermen have not been successful at all because of the free-market concept where the banks would rather engage in trade-in, stocks and bonds and other more lucrative activities rather than lending to farmers and fishermen. Apart from that, we are imposing here in Section 36—with due respect to Section 39—16 percent of the appraised value of the respective real estate security plus 60 percent of the appraised value of the insured improvements.

Madam President, I am afraid that the majority of small businessmen, even the medium businessmen, may not be able to come up with this kind of requirement.

**Senator Roco.** By way of answering, may we also call the attention of the gentleman to Section 45 on Development Assistance Incentives. This is what I was mentioning. I just could not remember the section earlier.

The Bangko Sentral may provide incentives to banks which, without government guarantee, extend loans to finance educational institutions—these are the less profitable. In fact, they are not looked upon as profit centers—cooperatives, hospitals, other medical services, socialized or low-cost housing—that can be profitable—local government units and other activities with social content. That is a broad area that satisfies, I think, the philosophical thrust of our good colleague.

As for the agri-agra law, Madam President, I do not propose to apologize nor explain the record of the banks. But there is another context in the agri-agra situation.

First, the agrarian reform. We had tremendous funds for agrarian reform. Whether it had been implemented correctly or wrongly, I doubt if we have time to debate that now. But certainly, one cannot argue very strongly that the agrarian reform implementation has been commendable. That is one.

Second, there was an effect of increasing or raising the interest rates because of the agri-agra law.

**Senator Guingona.** It was 15 percent and 10 percent.

**Senator Roco.** Just to give the context of the bankers. When 15 percent of loanable funds are reserved and nobody is borrowing, or somebody may be borrowing and the bank's judgment is that they do not qualify—whether they are right or wrong, that is another matter—that 25 percent lack, in fact, increased interests. It means something one can earn from, but could not earn from it because no one in agri was borrowing or was qualified.

I am just giving that context, Madam President, and this has been ongoing for a long time. The original law—I think the Agrarian Reform Law—also gave an “in lieu of” provision. So in lieu of lending to agri or to agrarian reform, if the banks' resources were put—and this was needed by the government—for instance, in treasury, it was in lieu of agri-agra, and they comply. This is again the full context of that 25 percent agri-agra loan.

Definitely, I am not justifying nor apologizing for the banks. I am just calling attention to other factors that either increased interest rates or compelled banks to put their money in government paper when the government needed the money.

**Senator Guingona.** Was that because the government needed the funds more than the farmers and the tenants?

**Senator Roco.** At a certain point, Madam President, I think in 1986-1987 the government certainly needed the funds.

**Senator Guingona.** Is that policy still true today? Is the law still being followed today? Or have they shifted to bonds? I understand that there are now bonds that would take the place of treasury bills.

**Senator Roco.** I am not familiar with that. But what I can say is that under the Foreign Liberalization Law, educational law was “in lieu of.” So it expanded the agri-agra.

But nobody or hardly anyone wants to lend to a school. Health services was put in as an incentive if one can lend. The only one that would have made money under the exceptions was low-cost housing. But both under the administration of President Ramos and under the administration of President Estrada, low-cost housing is such high priority that it is

unfortunate if that can be an alternative way of disposing loanable funds. The only advantage of the low-cost housing is that we can securitize it and some finance people can really invent ways and means of extending or lengthening the use of their funds.

**Senator Guingona.** Low-cost housing is certainly a priority. But I think the number one priority of this administration is food security. This revised banking Act should help achieve that priority. But under Section 36, with due respect to Sections 39 and 45 which are general persuasive statements but not specific mandates, the plight of the farmers, the food growers and the fishermen would not be helped any.

**Senator Roco.** We are headless, Madam President, and our distinguished friend is moving to adjourn because we do not see anybody to address. May we just complete an answer just for the record. We are very strict with our Chairperson.

Just to complete the sentence, Madam President. There is a special law on agricultural development. This was passed under the administration of the gentleman. To my knowledge, in fact that seems to be one of the causes of tension on the appointment of the next Secretary of the Department of Agriculture. So that law specifically addressed food.

**Senator Guingona.** Who is going to be the next Secretary of the Department of Agriculture?

**Senator Roco.** I guess that is addressed to the Chair, not to this representation.

**Senator Guingona.** Can we address it to the Majority Leader?  
[Pause]

At any rate, I see the trend of the answer of the distinguished sponsor. But in view of the fact that the Chair, I think, has to leave and there are very few senators left in the hall, I wonder if the distinguished Majority Leader will care to make a proper motion.

**Senator Roco.** I would like to thank our distinguished friend, Madam President.

#### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 1519

**Senator Drilon.** Madam President, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 1519 under Committee Report No. 29.

**The Presiding Officer [Aquino-Oreta].** Is there any objection? [Silence] There being none, the motion is approved.

**Senator Drilon.** Madam President, we have approved this afternoon on Third Reading Senate Bill No. 1505. There is now a need to constitute the members of the Bicameral Conference Committee to discuss the disagreeing provisions with the House of Representatives.

#### CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON S. NO. 1505/H. NO. 7083 (Requiring Disclosure of Y2K Statements of Computer Based Products)

And for that purpose, may I nominate the following as members of the Bicameral Conference Committee. As members of the Chamber representing the Majority, Sen. Vicente C. Sotto III, as chairman; Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel. And for the Minority, Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste and Sen. Juan M. Flavio. I so move that they be considered as the Chamber's representatives to the Bicameral Conference Committee on Senate Bill No. 1505.

**The Presiding Officer [Sen. Aquino-Oreta].** Is there any objection? [Silence] There being none, the motion is approved.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF THE SESSION

**Senator Drilon.** Madam President, I now move to adjourn the session until Monday, April 26, 1999, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

**The Presiding Officer [Aquino-Oreta].** Is there any objection? [Silence] There being none, the session is adjourned until Monday, April 26, 1999, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

*It was 4:57 p.m.*