

RECORD OF THE SENATE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2003

OPENING OF THE SESSION

At 3:55 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Franklin M. Drilon, called the session to order.

The President. The 18th session of the Senate in the Third Regular Session of the Twelfth Congress is hereby called to order.

The Minority Leader, Sen. Vicente C. Sotto III, will lead the Chamber in prayer.

Everybody rose for the prayer.

PRAYER

Senator Sotto.

Father in heaven, with contrite hearts we come before You, humbly seeking Your divine intervention in the events of our daily lives. We confess with our hearts and our lips that we are not worthy of Your holy presence, but owing to Your own goodness and love for us, You are always there when we call upon.

Yes, Lord, we now ask for the forgiveness of our sins and our transgression of Your laws and of Your statutes even as we seek for Your grace for us to be able to forgive our brothers and sisters who have caused us pain and sorrow.

Lord, there is so much that You have blessed us with and yet we fail to acknowledge and thank You for these blessings for we continue to be blinded by our inordinate desires to satisfy our wants for worldly and material success. Allow us now to thank You for our very own life for You are indeed the source of life itself. Thank You too for the food that we eat, the water that we drink, and the air that we breathe. Yes, Lord, we also praise and thank You for our democratic way of life in these beautiful land of our birth which You have given us. Thank You, Lord, for giving us the opportunity to serve You by serving others. Thank You for Your patience with us despite our unworthiness and unfaithfulness. Thank You for bearing with our infirmities. Truly Your mercy and Your compassion know no bounds, Your grace is unfathomable. O God, grant us today a fresh outpouring of Your love, Your compassion, and Your mercy.

Father, as we seek peace in our country today, remind us that real peace can be found in You alone by

Your grace. May we never forget that serenity, unity and contentment can only be found in You.

Lord, immerse our hearts, our minds, and our spirit in this truth. Father, help us to learn to accept Your will even when You answer our prayers with a no and may we also be grateful for Your yes. May we follow the example You have set for us in Your words to freely, responsibly, and lovingly express our minds and our emotions. Thank You, Lord, for the assurance that no matter what we do, Your acceptance for us will remain the same for You are a faithful God. And finally, Lord, grant us the courage, the zeal, and the strength to fight for Your Kingdom here on earth as we will traverse this earthly life only once. And may we not grow weary in planting the seeds of Your love and of Your work in the hearts of the people whom we will encounter today.

Amen and Amen.

The President. Thank you, Senator Sotto. The Secretary will please call the roll.

ROLL CALL

The Secretary, reading:

- Senator Edgardo J. Angara ..... Present\*
Senator Teresa Aquino-Oreta ..... Present
Senator Joker P. Arroyo ..... Present
Senator Robert Z. Barbers ..... Present
Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon ..... Present\*
Senator Noli "Kabayan" De Castro ..... Present
Senator Luisa "Loi" P. Ejercito Estrada ..... Present
Senator Juan M. Flavier ..... \*\*
Senator Gregorio B. Honasan ..... Absent
Senator Robert S. "JAWO" Jaworski ..... Present
Senator Panfilo M. Lacson ..... \*\*
Senator Loren B. Legarda ..... Present
Senator Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr. .... Present
Senator John Henry R. Osmeña ..... Present
Senator Sergio R. Osmeña III ..... Present
Senator Francis N. Pangilinan ..... Present
Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr. .... Present
Senator Ralph G. Recto ..... Present
Senator Ramon B. Revilla ..... Absent
Senator Vicente C. Sotto III ..... Present
Senator Manuel B. Villar Jr. .... Present
The President ..... Present

\* Arrived after the roll call
\*\* On official mission

national political parties to finance their party organization and platform development as well as election campaign expenditures.

A full and transparent audit by the Commission on Audit of all campaign expenditures is among the safeguards included in this initiative.

At the moment, Mr. President, nobody audits campaign contributions. Donors do not seek explanations how their contributions were spent because, as one magazine noted, "donating to election campaigns has become a business deal with the giver expecting to profit from it. The system is so warped that campaign funds have become a source of corruption."

The second component, Mr. President, of this reform is the transformation of political parties into public institutions and the provision of strict penalties against political turncoatism.

Any candidate who shifts party loyalty after being elected under that party will be prohibited from running for any elective position in the next election. *Kabayan* likes this provision. This candidate shall also be barred from being appointed to any government post. The erring candidate shall likewise refund any and all amounts received from the political party with an additional 25% surcharge.

We hope this measure will achieve the following: strengthen our political parties; wean them away from the grip of oligarchs and dirty money; enable them to recruit quality staff; develop better programs; and discourage political turncoatism.

Mr. President, I call on this august Chamber to end the regime of bad politics and manipulated elections. Let us usher in an era of good governance, transparency, and accountability.

In the coming elections, let us not encourage another Jose Pidal account coming from surplus campaign contributions. The cavalier and skewed treatment of campaign contributions must now come to an end.

We owe this not so much to ourselves as much as to our children and future generations of Filipinos. Let us not let them down.

Thank you, Mr. President.

**The President.** The Chair would like to thank Senator Angara. The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 2442

**Senator Legarda.** Mr. President, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 2442.

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

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON S. NO. 2553/H. NO. 5511  
(Amending Certain Sections of the Comprehensive  
Agrarian Reform Law of 1988)

**Senator Legarda.** May I manifest the Bicameral Conference Committee panel for the farmland as the collateral bill with Sen. Sergio R. Osmeña III as chairman; Sen. Noli de Castro, Francis N. Pangilinan, John H. Osmeña and Robert S. Jaworski as members.

**The President.** It is so noted.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

**Senator Legarda.** Mr. President, I move that we suspend the session for one minute.

**The President.** The session is suspended for one minute, if there is no objection. *[There was none.]*

*It was 4:55 p.m.*

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 5:14 p.m., the session was resumed.*

**The President.** The session is resumed. The Majority Leader is recognized.

**Senator Legarda.** I move that we resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 2579 as reported out under committee Report No. 231.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON  
S. NO. 2155/H. NO. 4235  
(Magna Carta for the Working Child)

**The President.** Before we do that, there was a request that we constitute the Senate contingent to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Magna Carta for the Working Child which we already approved on Third Reading.

**Senator Legarda.** Yes, Mr. President. I shall have to see the list.

**The President.** The Chair understands that it is already there.

**Senator Legarda.** Would the Chair want to have it manifested?

**The President.** Yes, please.

**Senator Legarda.** Mr. President, for the Majority: Sen. Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr., Sen. Francis N. Pangilinan, and this representation. For the Minority: Sen. Aquilino Q. Pimentel and Sen. Luisa P. Ejercito Estrada.

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

BILL ON SECOND READING  
S. No. 2579—The Philippine Librarianship Act of 2003  
(Continuation)

**Senator Legarda.** Mr. President, I reiterate my motion that we resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 2579 as reported out under Committee Report No. 231.

**The President.** Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, resumption of consideration of Senate Bill No. 2579 is now in order.

**Senator Legarda.** Mr. President, we are still in the period of interpellations. I ask that Sen. Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr. be recognized.

**The President.** This is the Library Science. Sen. Aquilino Q. Pimentel is recognized.

**Senator Pimentel.** Mr. President, this bill has been sponsored by this representation and apparently everybody is convinced about the merits of the bill because nobody wants to interpellate.

**Senator Arroyo.** Mr. President.

**Senator Legarda.** This is the Librarianship Act of 2003.

**The President.** Sen. Joker P. Arroyo is recognized.

**Senator Arroyo.** Mr. President, I want to know from the sponsor what this bill is all about.

**The President.** All right. If the gentleman will yield, Senator Arroyo is recognized in the period of interpellations.

**Senator Pimentel.** Yes, Mr. President, as long as he knows what to ask.

**Senator Arroyo.** Well, I just want to know whether the gentleman has turned to be a librarian already. *[Laughter]*

**Senator Pimentel.** I was just sponsoring a bill to make the librarians as recognized professionals of this country. That is the main thrust of the bill.

**Senator Arroyo.** (...) \* the gentleman is right. Thank you, Mr. President.

**Senator Pimentel.** Apparently, there is no more objection.

**The President.** Will the gentleman allow that to stay in the record, the statement of Senator Arroyo?

**Senator Pimentel.** May I just move that we delete the phrase "For once."

**Senator Arroyo.** I will be the one to ask for the deletion. I move that it be deleted, Mr. President.

**Senator Pimentel.** No, no. Only at least "For once." The gentleman can have it deleted and the rest of the sentence can stay.

**The President.** All right. There is a motion that the period of interpellations be terminated on this measure. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

The sponsor still has the Floor?

**Senator Pimentel.** Yes, Mr. President. There are no committee amendments, Mr. President. May I move that the period of committee amendments be closed.

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

**Senator Pimentel.** Since there are no individual amendments, I move that the period of individual amendments be terminated.

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

APPROVAL OF S. NO. 2579 ON SECOND READING

**Senator Pimentel.** Mr. President, I move that we vote on Second Reading on Senate Bill No. 2579.

**The President.** Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, we shall now vote on Second Reading on Senate Bill No. 2579. As many as are in favor of the bill, say *aye*.

Several Members. *Aye*.

**The President.** As many as are against the bill, say *nay*. *[Silence]*

Senate Bill No. 2579 is approved on Second Reading.

\*Deleted per requests of Senators Pimentel and Arroyo.