

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

OPENING OF THE SESSION

At 3:00 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Vicente C. Sotto III, called the session to order.

The President. The 24th session of the Senate in the First Regular Session of the Eighteenth Congress is hereby called to order.

Let us all stand for the opening prayer to be led by Sen. Juan Miguel F. Zubiri.

Everybody rose for the prayer.

PRAYER

Senator Zubiri. Thank you, Mr. President.

Let us come together in prayer to seek guidance from the wise and benevolent Lord, that He may steer us towards the right path as our people's appointed servant-leaders.

As Jesus humbled Himself to His disciples and washed their feet with no qualms, may we also submit ourselves fully to the Filipino people who are our true masters.

As the Holy Father sacrificed his only Son for the redemption of humankind, may we also be prepared to set ourselves aside in service of the greater good.

As the Virgin Mary offered herself to be a vessel for the Lord, may we also allow ourselves to be vessels of goodness and truth.

We pray that the good Lord grant us the wisdom and understanding to know what true leadership is, and the strength and conviction to accomplish it.

We pray as well that eternal rest grant unto the soul of the great Sen. Rene Espina. His legacy of leadership and service is a constant reminder of what we must strive towards.

Guide us always, O Lord, as humble servants of this great nation.

Amen.

ROLL CALL

The President. The Secretary will please call the roll.

The Secretary, reading:

Senator Sonny Angara	Present
Senator Maria Lourdes	
Nancy S. Binay	Present
Senator Pia S. Cayetano	Present
Senator Leila M. De Lima	*
Senator Ronald "Bato"	
M. Dela Rosa	Present
Senator Franklin M. Drilon	Present
Senator Win Gatchalian	Present**
Senator Christopher Lawrence	
T. Go	Present
Senator Richard J. Gordon	Absent
Senator Risa Hontiveros	Present
Senator Panfilo "Ping" M. Lacson ...	Present
Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid	Present
Senator Imee R. Marcos.....	Present
Senator Emmanuel "Manny"	
D. Pacquiao	Present
Senator Francis "Kiko"	
N. Pangilinan	Present
Senator Aquilino "Koko" L.	
Pimentel III.....	Present
Senator Grace Poe	Present**
Senator Ralph G. Recto	Present**
Senator Ramon Bong Revilla Jr.	Present
Senator Francis "Tol" N. Tolentino...	Present
Senator Joel Villanueva	Present
Senator Cynthia A. Villar	Present
Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri	Present
The President	Present

The President. With 19 Senators present, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GUESTS

Senator Zubiri. Mr. President, we have several guests in the gallery today. Most importantly, we have an honorable Senator from Guam, no other than Sen. James C. Moylan. He is accompanied by Mr. Bobby Shringi.

And, we have several local officials: Mayor Alfredo Matugas Coro II of Del Carmen, Surigao Del Norte, Mayor Vergel Meneses of Bulacan, Mayor Noel Luistro of Mabini, Batangas, and Mayor Rogelio Raymund Tongson Jr. of Himamaylan City.

We have also with us Mayor Ronald Apostol and the Liga ng mga Barangay ng Cabangan, Zambales.

* Unable to attend the session as she was under detention

** Arrived after the roll call

EMERGENCY AND TRAUMA CENTER, TO BE
KNOWN AS THE JOAQUIN VILLANUEVA
EMERGENCY TRAUMA CENTER

Introduced by Senator Angara

The President. Referred to the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance

The Majority Leader is recognized.

Senator Zubiri. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, we were supposed to tackle the bill of Senator Gordon today. Unfortunately, Senator Gordon is not feeling very well and, therefore, he asked to move it to Monday.

So, in today's agenda, we have only Senate Bill No. 1043 postponing the May 2020 barangay elections, Mr. President.

BILL ON SECOND READING
**S. No. 1043—Postponing the May 2020
Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections**
(Continuation)

Therefore, I move that we resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 1043 as reported out under Committee Report No. 4.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, resumption of consideration of Senate Bill No. 1043 is now in order.

Senator Zubiri. Mr. President, the parliamentary status of the measure is that we are in the period of interpellations. I ask that we recognize the sponsor, the distinguished lady Senator from Ilocos Norte, Sen. Imee R. Marcos; and to interpellate, we have Sen. Christopher Lawrence T. Go.

The President. Sen. Imee Marcos is recognized; and to interpellate, Sen. Christopher Lawrence Go.

Senator Marcos. Thank you, Mr. President.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Senator Zubiri. Mr. President, I move that we suspend the session for one minute to allow Senator Go to prepare.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the session is suspended for one minute.

It was 3:08 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:09 p.m., the session was resumed.

The President. The session is resumed.

Senator Marcos and Senator Go are recognized.

Senator Marcos. Thank you, Mr. President.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GO

Senator Go. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, first of all, I would like to reiterate my support for Senate Bill No. 1043, specifically as regards the postponement of the upcoming barangay and SK elections to a date following the next presidential elections. I would want to place before the consideration of this honorable Body the second Monday of October 2022 as the date for the next barangay and SK elections.

As I have said before this honorable Chamber yesterday, the interval would grant the next elected president and the barangay officials the opportunity to work hand in hand and accomplish their projects and programs together. When President Duterte was elected in 2016, he was determined to eradicate illegal drugs in the country, yet the dilemma during that time was that more than 200 barangay officials were linked to illegal drugs according to PDEA. It took two more years for the people to elect new barangay officials that can help the administration deliver reforms in their communities.

If we move the next barangay elections immediately after the national elections in 2022, we would then have a new set of leaders from the barangay all the way to the national level. The next administration can buckle down and set a direction. The shorter gap between the two elections would mean shorter waiting time for them to be able to work collectively and, in effect, align their agenda, direction, objectives, and programs sooner, ultimately for the benefit of the people who placed them in office.

Mr. President, if we have to wait a year after the presidential elections to elect new barangay officials, *baka mainip ang new president at mahirapan na siguraduhing maramdaman sa mga barangay ang pagbabagong gusto niyang iimplementa.*

With respect to Comelec, I see no reason for Comelec to defer the elections a year after the

presidential elections because they have done this before and it has been proven possible to conduct both elections in the same year.

Mr. President, pursuant to this manifestation, I would like to solicit some answers, if the distinguished lady Senator from Ilocos Norte would yield for some questions?

Senator Marcos. Gladly, Mr. President.

Senator Go. Mr. President, this representation would like to seek clarification as to why the date May 2023 was chosen? Did the Comelec give a favorable position as regards this date?

Senator Marcos. Yes, Mr. President. As previously discussed with the distinguished coauthor, Senator Go, their lack of material time has been an essential complaint of the Comelec.

Alam po natin, talagang dinanas na ito ng ating bansa noong 2010 at talagang labis-labis iyong problema noong nagkasunod iyong national election at barangay election within the same year. At that point in time, 48 million pa lamang ang botante kung maaalala po natin. Subalit noong 2010, kung maaalala natin, ay 2,512 ang barangay na may failure of election at ang hindi nakaboto ay 6,496 clustered precincts. Ang total ng ating mga botante na hindi binigyan ng kanilang karapatang bumoto ay halos dalawang milyon dahil gahol sa panahon, hindi nakapag-imprenta ng balotang maayos na verified, at hindi nakapag-distribute sa kasamaan ng panahon, at talaga naman na iyong manual and hybrid ay kakaiba.

Iyong mga SK noon ay gipit na gipit din sa registration, kung maaalala natin, dahil sa problema. And ito nga, ang pagkaka-usap ko sa ating Comelec, willing naman sila—sapagkat good soldier sila—na paagahin.

So, nag-work out kami ng bagong table of events na mag-uumpisa, halimbawa, October 2021 or thereabouts, para hindi naman maantala iyong national elections. Ang inabutan namin ay hindi talaga puwede iyong printing na four to five months; iyong verification, iyong packaging, delivery, at saka verification na naman ng distributed balota sa mga local treasurers earlier than December 2022.

Kapag December, nakaapak na tayo ng six and a half months na pagitan, at iyon ang pinaka-compressed na time frame na pinag-usapan namin, pero kaya. Pero iyong October po, gahol sa panahon, masama pati iyong weather, at iyong printing and verification baka magkaloko-loko iyong mga listahan ng mga kandidato.

Senator Go. Mr. President, did the Comelec have a difficult time holding both the national and the barangay elections in the same year of 2010? *Kinaya naman po nila noong 2010.*

Ang akin lamang po rito, maaaring mainip na po ang bagong administrasyon o kung sino man po ang bagong presidente at ibang direksyon naman po ang gusto niyang gawin, katulad po ng nangyari kay Pangulong Duterte noong 2016. Ang dami pong mga barangay captains na involved sa drugs at inip na po si Pangulo na mapalitan ang mga bagong opisyal.

So, ito naman ay to give opportunity or chance to the new administration or to the new president po pagdating ng 2022, kung kaya naman po ng Comelec.

Senator Marcos. With all due respect po, iyong kahuli-hulihang panahon na same year ang ating barangay at iyong national ay iyong 2010 na talagang sinasabi ng Comelec na bulilyaso nga talaga at hirap sila. Marami pa ngang hindi nakaboto—kawawa naman. Pagkatapos noon, iyong next election natin was already 2013 na wala pa nga iyong SK. Walang problema noon. Higit sa lahat, dahil hiniwalay iyong 2018 na eleksyon sa national, maayos—zero iyong failure of elections unlike 2010.

Senator Go. Mr. President, I would like to thank the distinguished lady from Ilocos Norte for providing clarifications as regards to my query.

Again, I would like to manifest, as indicated in my bill, that the barangay and SK elections be moved to the second Monday of October 2022 or five months after the presidential elections. It may be difficult for Comelec, but I am of the opinion that they have ample time to prepare. This, most certainly, is possible.

That is my proposal, Mr. President, and I hope that the good sponsor would give way to my suggestion.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Senator Marcos. Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you to my coauthor and sponsor.

As we discussed earlier, I am very happy to change the date. It is the lack of material time that the Comelec is protesting.

Senator Zubiri. Mr. President.

The President. Majority Leader, Senator Tolentino is asking for the Floor.

Senator Tolentino. If the good gentlelady, my cosponsor, would yield for just some clarificatory questions.

Senator Marcos. Yes. Thank you very much.

Senator Tolentino. If we postpone the elections, which I support, to a later date, which is 2023, in effect, the barangay officials, specifically the barangay chairmen, would sit for five years, am I correct?

Senator Marcos. The next election, as we see it...

Senator Tolentino. As we propose.

Senator Marcos. ...as we propose, should be one year after the national elections, 2023; thereafter, 2026—three years *pa ang tuloy-tuloy*.

Senator Tolentino. So, in effect, it is plus three years.

Senator Marcos. In effect, they will have 2018 to 2023.

Senator Tolentino. So, that will be five years?

Senator Marcos. Five years.

Senator Tolentino. Mr. President, the line of my reasoning has reference to the ex officio city councilors, board members, municipal councilors, SK federation presidents who will sit as ex officio board members, councilors, *et cetera*.

Would the good gentlelady agree with me that the law provides that a councilor board member, a regular councilor board member should sit for three years?

Senator Marcos. That is correct, Mr. President. That is what the law says.

Senator Tolentino. So, with the postponement of the barangay elections, what would now happen to the sitting ABC presidents who are now city councilors, municipal councilors, and provincial board members, and SK federation presidents who are likewise city councilors and provincial board members?

Senator Marcos. As of today, Mr. President, I think the precedent stands that the ex officio representatives held their posts from 2013 to 2018. So, in terms of a preceding occurrence, *may nangyari na niyan at na-extend nga sila ng* five years.

Senator Tolentino. So, what this would entail, Mr. President, is that we are now tolerating the

extension of terms presumably in violation of existing laws wherein the ex officio city councilors are placed in a better position than regularly elected councilors, am I correct?

Senator Marcos. I think, as discussed during the hearings, Mr. President, and as proposed by the Minority Leader, Senator Drilon, the ex officio representatives will be carrying on in their holdover capacity in accordance with law.

Senator Tolentino. So, again, Mr. President, my presumption here is that we extended the terms of office of the barangay officials and at the same time, impliedly, we are extending the terms of office of the ex officio officers, which probably might conflict with existing laws that provide for a regular term of just three years. That is my only concern.

So, my suggestion, perhaps, during the amendment period, is that another round of election be held for federation presidents to comprise a new set of ABC presidents to sit as board members, municipal councilors, and city councilors to give the extended barangay officials a fresh chance to elect new ex officio officers with the fresh mandate. Will the gentlelady accept that perhaps in the period of amendments?

Senator Marcos. Well-taken, Mr. President.

I think the ABC and the SK can submit themselves to a fresh mandate upon the assumption of office of the new officials. And perhaps within the leagues and the federations, they can organize the second round for their ex officio representative. Well-taken *po at magandang* suggestion *po mula kay* Senator Tolentino.

Senator Tolentino. One last point, Mr. President.

I also foresee some circumstances wherein an extended SK president will be sitting as an ex officio beyond the age limit.

Senator Marcos. *Sigurado po iyon*, Mr. President, *dahil iyong iba sagad-sagad na iyong pag-upo*.

Senator Tolentino. Are we now tolerating again another violation of existing laws or should there be a proviso wherein underage — underage would mean those who will not be overage by 2023 or whatever date is selected by this Body—will be the one to assume by an implied law of succession, so to speak, Mr. President?

Senator Marcos. I think the prevailing rule that, in fact, the age at the date of the election will persist. *At kung talagang nasa edad pa naman iyong SK, pasok pa rin siya. Pagkatapos noon, holdover na po, kaya nasa pederasyon na lamang at sa liga kung ibig nilang palitan na naman iyong kanilang kinatawan.*

Senator Tolentino. Thank you, Mr. President; thank you, Senator Marcos.

Senator Marcos. *Maraming salamat, Senator Tolentino, for the valuable insight and experience.*

The President. The Majority Leader is recognized.

Senator Zubiri. Mr. President, our distinguished Minority Leader would like to ask a few questions.

The President. The Minority Leader, Sen. Franklin M. Drilon, is recognized.

Senator Drilon. Thank you, Mr. President.

Will the good sponsor yield for a few clarificatory questions?

Senator Marcos. Yes, thank you very much, gladly, Mr. President.

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, I think the consensus among the members of the Chamber is that there should be a postponement of the barangay election. The only issue is when it should be held. Is that a correct assumption, Mr. President?

Senator Marcos. I think we are in full agreement with the Minority Leader in reading the temper of the Chamber.

Senator Drilon. Yes. And I will proceed from where Senator Tolentino left. He was raising the issue of the ex officio members of the different local legislative bodies holding a term longer than that of the regularly elected members.

Senator Marcos. Three years.

Senator Drilon. Precisely, that is the stand of Senator Go and Senator Binay. Under Senate Bill No. 201 and Senate Bill No. 869, which propose that the election be held on October 2022, the problem will be avoided. Because by that time, if we have an election, those elected for the Barangay and SK will have a term of office of three years. Subsequent elections will already be, more or less, synchronized. Would you agree with that?

Senator Marcos. Mr. President and our good Minority Leader, I am afraid that if we tally the term of office from 2018, which is when they were elected and if we extend it to 2022, they will still be in excess by one year of the stipulated three years for other local candidates.

So, by making it earlier in 2022, we still do not avoid the issue of an extension of term. *Magiging four years po sila; lampas pa rin sa tatlong taon na itinakda ng batas.*

Senator Drilon. *Kung ini-extend pa beyond October of 2022 ay lalo pong lalagpas doon sa tatlong taon. It becomes worse.*

Senator Marcos. That is right. Which is why upon our urging, *tinanong ko po iyong Comelec, "Magtapatan po tayo. Sabi ninyo good soldiers kayo, ano ba talaga ang pinakamaaga?" At sabi nila, kaya naman daw kapag bandang December 1st or second week ng 2022 para hindi na mahabaan nang labis.*

Senator Drilon. Mr. President, now that we are on that issue, let me refer the good sponsor to the hearings conducted by the Committee on Finance on September 16, 2019.

Senator Marcos. September 16, 2019 po? Although I was not able to attend po.

Senator Drilon. Yes, Mr. President. During the budget hearing of the Commission on Elections, the Comelec admitted, upon my questioning, that they could hold the election within 2022.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Mr. President, may I request for a one-minute suspension.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the session is suspended for one minute.

It was 3:30 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:30 p.m., the session was resumed.

The President. The session is resumed.

Senator Drilon. The principal reason, Mr. President, why the good committee of Senator Marcos has proposed May of 2023 is because of the opinion of the Comelec that they would

prefer having a one-year gap between the two elections. Is that correct?

Senator Marcos. That is correct, Mr. President. Thank you.

Senator Drilon. However, on September 16, 2019, the opinion of the executive director of Comelec, Mr. Tolentino, to use his words regarding the holding of the election earlier than May of 2023 is that the gap is too short. But as quoted also by the good sponsor, the Comelec said, “*Mahihirapan kami* but it does not mean that we cannot do it.” So, they can hold the election with less than one year of a gap.

Senator Marcos. *Kung magagawa, magagawa raw po kasi good soldier sila, pero makikita po natin na medyo mahirap dahil takot sila na maulit iyong nangyari sa 2010 na napakaraming failure of election na umabot sa halos dalawang milyon ang hindi nakaboto.*

Senator Drilon. So from the earlier answers of the good sponsor, she is amenable to an amendment which will hold the election in December of 2022. Is that a correct understanding, Mr. President?

Senator Marcos. Yes, that is correct, Mr. President. Because I, too, am not very keen to keep extending these terms forever.

Senator Drilon. So, at the appropriate time, the committee will propose as a committee amendment that the elections will be held in December 2022.

Senator Marcos. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Senator Drilon. Now, let us go to the budget aspect of this. In the present National Expenditure Program, the Comelec has a budget of P5,774,958,000 for Barangay and SK elections. If we move the elections to December of 2022, it means that we can reduce the budget of the Comelec by this much.

Senator Marcos. Certainly, Mr. President. I think there would be no reason for the P5.8-billion election budget for barangay and SK elections if we postpone them to the following year.

Senator Drilon. All right, Mr. President. That is on record, we can reduce the budget of Comelec by P5.774 billion.

Senator Marcos. And if I may recommend, Mr. President, there are so many budgets that we are hearing that have been cut and among them are very important programs such as the Salary

Standardization V for government employees including the teachers and the Agrarian Reform Program, the distribution of which should end by 2022.

Senator Drilon. Thank you, Mr. President.

Considering that the present law would call for an election next year, would the present General Appropriations Act, to the knowledge of the good sponsor, carry items as a preparation for a barangay election next year?

Senator Marcos. As far as I understand, there are no items as yet.

Senator Drilon. There are no items. Are there actual appropriations in the present 2019 General Appropriations Act?

Senator Marcos. In the 2019 General Appropriations Act, there are none.

Senator Drilon. All right. That is our common belief, Mr. President. Let me, however, quote to the good sponsor the September 16, 2019 Committee on Finance hearing of the Comelec budget. According to Ms. Alarcon, let me quote it in verbatim.

The President. Who is Ms. Alarcon?

Senator Drilon. Director Alarcon of the Comelec, I think, is with the finance section of the Comelec but she is a Comelec resource person.

The President. All right.

Senator Drilon. Let me quote the pertinent transcript:

“Ms. Alarcon: Your Honor, the Sangguniang Kabataan and Barangay Election (SKBE) has a budget of P5,744,948,000. This provides for all necessary expenses for the 63 million registered voters. It has 177,000 cluster precincts out of the 389,000 established precincts. Now, Your Honor please, based on the current statement of allotment, obligations and balances of the Comelec, it still has a balance of P3.7 billion in its current budget but these are already earmarked as follows: P1 billion for the preparatory activities of the SK and barangay election.”

So, there is actually a P1 billion budget that they have allotted out of their savings of P3.7 billion.

Senator Marcos. My information, Mr. President, is that, in fact, the P1 billion is culled from the savings. It was not a separate item. However, as the Minority Leader rightly cited, P1 billion

was earmarked for early procurements involving the carbonless paper, ballot paper, other accountable and non-accountable forms, not a cent has yet been expended. I am guaranteed.

Senator Drilon. Very good. In that case, we can reduce further the proposed budget for 2020 of the Comelec by P1 billion because there is a P1 billion earmark for an election which will not take place.

Senator Marcos. That is correct, Mr. President, they are already resigned to that. As I spoke to them earlier, it should be decreased by P1 billion.

Senator Drilon. It is P1 billion more than the P5.7 billion.

Senator Marcos. That is correct, Mr. President, a total of P6.7.

Senator Drilon. With that understanding, Mr. President, I think this representation can terminate the interpellation and we will just await the committee amendments so that we can vote properly on this measure.

The President. Do I take it, Mr. Minority Leader, that for the 2019 budget, they indeed have already a budget if elections are going to be held this October 2019?

Senator Drilon. From the way we understand it, Mr. President, the Comelec has a savings of P3.7 billion more or less. Out of the P3.7 billion in the current appropriations budget, they have earmarked P1 billion for the barangay elections.

The President. This October 2019?

Senator Drilon. No, Mr. President, for 2020.

The President. But the elections were supposed to be held this October 2019, am I right?

Senator Drilon. No, Mr. President.

Senator Marcos. The elections are supposed to be held in May of next year.

Senator Drilon. May of next year and, therefore, as part of their preparation, they have earmarked P1 billion out of their savings of P3.7 billion for SK and barangay elections and another P5.775 billion in the National Expenditure Program next year. And, in fact, they were asking for additional P2 billion for next year in their presentation. So they were looking at almost P9 billion for the SK and the barangay elections, all of which now will be

available for realignments for other worthy projects, Mr. President.

And that is why it is very important that we pass this measure as early as we can so that there is no reason anymore for the Comelec to continue with the preparatory activities towards the holding of the election next year because they will involve spending of public funds which will be useless.

The President. All right. Senator Lacson is seeking the Floor here.

Senator Marcos. Thank you very much for the urgency and full support from the minority.

Senator Lacson. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

After hearing three interpellators, I do not think I heard one very basic question. And if the sponsor would care to yield to that one very basic question, why are we postponing?

Senator Marcos. We are postponing because we are in violation of the law. Both the Local Government Code as well as RA 9164 indicate that barangay officials as well as SK officials should have a term of three years. If we carry on and have the election earlier, we will, in fact, be giving them two years — less than two years.

Senator Lacson. If that is the reason, are we not also violating the law by giving that reason? There was a barangay election in May of 2018.

Senator Marcos. That is correct.

Senator Lacson. Why do we not just follow the regular term of office and hold the next election in May of 2021?

Senator Marcos. That is correct. That was the first discussion in the first hearing we had with the Minority Leader that May 2021 could be the next election.

Senator Lacson. So, are we violating the law if we hold the barangay election in May of 2021? And are we not violating the law if we will hold the election in October or May of 2023?

Senator Marcos. Firstly, I think, we will not be in violation if May 2021. However...

Senator Lacson. So, did I hear that clearly, there is no violation of the law if we hold it in May of 2021? So, why not hold it in May 2021?

Senator Marcos. There are a number of reasons.

Senator Lacson. That is why I am asking. *Ano ang reasons?*

Senator Marcos. A number of reasons, in fact. *Unang-una, dapat mauna ang national election sapagkat ang preparasyon noon ay two and a half years. Pagkatapos, iyong issue rin po na talagang pinoproblema, iyong procurement kasi and the bids and awards. Kapag nagsapaw-sapaw ay magkakaroon ng problema.* And thirdly, I think, there are precedents in fact of 2013, 2018 and so on.

Senator Lacson. I do not get it, Mr. President. Are there political considerations here? Meaning, if we allow or we hold the barangay election one year ahead of the national and local elections, *mas magastos kasi maraming manghihinging* barangay chairmen? *Ganoon ba iyong dahilan?*

Let us just be practical and I will yield, I will submit.

Senator Marcos. No, I think, in reality the sense was, there was no desire for a proxy war in the barangay level that would presage the national election. Instead, what we preferred was there would be a new mandate for whoever the national or local officials would be and therefore a neater, more effective governance would be instituted *kung pagkatapos na ng national election iyong barangay at SK.*

Senator Lacson. *Kasi kung praktikal iyong dahilan, papayag naman po kami. Kung mas magastos kung mauuna iyong barangay election kaysa sa local and national election, then let us call a spade a spade. Pero kung violation of the law na wala naman, the difference is the same, we are violating the law anyway. So, why do we not just follow the regular term of office of barangay officials and hold the elections in May of 2021? Hindi na tayo nag-uusap ng mag-o-overlap, mag-e-extend, mag-o-overage, wala na tayong pag-uusapang ganoon, Mr. President. Why are we complicating things?*

Senator Marcos. I do not think we are complicating things. As a matter of fact, we are probably simplifying them inasmuch as we are all set for the hybrid election, and we would like to prepare for that for 2022. *Ito, manual po ito.*

Another complication *kasi nga ay ibang-iba naman ang election na manual kaysa sa hybrid na bago at iyong existing automated.* So, *napakaraming gagawin* between now and then. And at the same time, *umaalma rin iyong ating* barangay officials *kasi bitin nga iyong kanilang termino.*

Senator Lacson. *Kung May 2021, mabibitin ang termino?* I do not think so.

Senator Marcos. Well, three years *po sila pero, iyon nga, ang nais nating lahat ay talagang bigyan ng fresh mandate ang sino mang national at local officials na papasok.*

And thereafter, *gawin nang regular lahat ng* barangay and SK elections, one year after the national and local *para hindi na papalit-palit, hindi na parati na lamang pino-postpone, at inaamyendahan ang batas katulad ngayon.*

Senator Lacson. *May binulong pa sa akin iyong staff ko, ano raw ang pagkakaiba kung one year before or one year after?*

Senator Marcos. *Malaking bagay po.*

Senator Lacson. *Ano po iyong bagay na malaki?*

Senator Marcos. One year before, as we saw in the past, it becomes a proxy war at the barangay level. *Nagte-testing lahat ng national, lahat ng mayor kung sino iyong mga bata-bata nilang barangay. At least pagkatapos po ay talagang mas maayos na at fresh mandate iyong mga bagong administrasyon.*

Senator Lacson. Anyway, I am not convinced but I will vote in favor of that measure.

Senator Marcos. Thank you very much. *Puwede na rin po, Mr. President.*

The President. The Majority Leader is recognized.

Senator Zubiri. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, we have one more interpellator, Sen. Ralph Recto, but he requested if he can interpellate on Monday.

The President. We leave it up to the Majority Leader.

Senator Zubiri. Yes, Mr. President. He is the Senate President Pro Tempore; he is my boss also. He is winking at me. So, it is on Monday.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 1043

Mr. President, I move that we suspend consideration of the bill of the honorable Sen. Imee Marcos, Senate Bill No. 1043.

The President. All right, but as long as the gentleman guarantees that Senate Bill No. 1055 will go first before the interpellation.