

RECORD OF THE SENATE

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1991

OPENING OF THE SESSION

At 3:38 p.m. the Honorable Sotero H. Laurel, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, called the session to order.

The President Pro Tempore. The session of the Senate is called to order.

The Senate President, Dr. Jovito R. Salonga, will lead us in the opening prayer.

Everybody remained standing for the prayer.

PRAYER

Senator Salonga. Let us bow our heads in prayer.

Eternal God, Lord of all history:

We come together again in prayer to thank You for the gift of life, the gift of health and strength that enable us to serve our people from day to day, according to our best lights.

Even as we deliberate on the remaining items on this week's agenda, grant us the vision to see that there is no substitute for self-discipline and hard works and no joy in unmerited advantage.

Deliver us, O Lord, from the mistake of expecting Your guidance in our public lives while we close the door to You in our private living.

There is nothing in us--in our hearts and minds, in our innermost thoughts and secret acts--that we can hide from You. Help us to be honest with ourselves and with our people.

Teach us to choose always the hard right over the easy wrong.

Where we are wrong, give us the humility to accept

* Arrived after the roll call

** On official mission

our error and make us willing to change. When we are right, keep us from arrogance and self-pride and, Lord, make us easy to live with.

Amen.

ROLL CALL

The President Pro Tempore. The Secretary will call the roll of Senators.

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Raval].

Senator Heherson T. Alvarez	Present*
Senator Edgardo J. Angara	Absent
Senator Agapito A. Aquino	Present*
Senator Juan Ponce Enrile	Present
Senator Joseph Ejercito Estrada	Present
Senator Neptali A. Gonzales	Present*
Senator Teofisto T. Guingona, Jr.	Present
Senator Ernesto F. Herrera	Present*
Senator Sotero H. Laurel	Present
Senator Jose D. Lina, Jr.	Present
Senator Ernesto M. Maceda	Present
Senator Orlando S. Mercado	Present
Senator John H. Osmeña	Present*
Senator Vicente T. Paterno	Present
Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel	Present
Senator Santanina T. Rasul	Present
Senator Alberto G. Romulo	Present
Senator Rene A. V. Saguisag	Present
Senator Leticia Ramos Shahani	Present
Senator Mamintal Abdul J. Tamano	**
Senator Wigberto E. Tañada	Present
Senator Victor S. Ziga	Present
The President	Present

The President Pro Tempore. With sixteen Senators present, we have a quorum.

THE JOURNAL

Senator Guingona. Mr. President, I move that we dispense with the reading of the *Journal* of yesterday's session and consider the same as approved.

The President Pro Tempore. Is there any objection? [Silence] The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary will please read the Order of Business.

(Sgd.) DAVID B. TIROL

(Sgd.) LORNA VERANO-YAP

BILL ON SECOND READING
Senate Bill No. 234--Urban Development
and Social Housing Program
(Continuation)

Senator Guingona. Mr. President, there is an Additional Reference of Business. I ask the Secretary to read the Additional Reference of Business.

The President. The Secretary will read the Additional Reference of Business.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Raval].

October 17, 1991

Mr. President:

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on October 16, 1991, passed House Bill No. 31200, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING THE RADIO VERITAS GLOBAL BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INCORPORATED, A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN FOR RELIGIOUS, EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL PURPOSES RADIO BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

to which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

Very respectfully,

(Sgd.) CAMILO L. SABIO
Secretary General

The Honorable
JOVITO R. SALONGA
President of the Senate
Manila

The President. Referred to the Committees on Public Services; and Ways and Means.

Senator Guingona. Mr. President, I move that we resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 234 as reported out under Committee Report No. 1397.

The President. Resumption of consideration of Senate Bill No. 234 is now in order.

Senator Guingona. Mr. President, we are still in the period of interpellations. I ask that we recognize Senator Lina.

The President. Senator Lina is recognized.

Senator Lina. Thank you, Mr. President.

Just to refresh the memories of our Colleagues here. This is "AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL HOUSING PROGRAM, PROVIDE FOR A SOCIAL HOUSING TAX, APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE PROGRAM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

The objective of the bill, Mr. President, is to provide shelter for the underprivileged and the homeless in our country following Sections 9 and 10, Article XIII of the Constitution.

I have already sponsored this bill and discussed the components of the program. I would like to state that this will be the major legislation to be passed by the Senate regarding urban development and housing.

We have simplified the bill so that the controversial aspects of it have already been removed. Basically, this bill is an institutionalization of existing programs being undertaken by the various housing agencies, but what is needed is to strengthen said programs and institutionalize the same.

The bill also takes into account the new role that local government units will play in providing solution to the housing problems of our people.

I am ready for any question, Mr. President.

The President. Is there any interpellation?

I was made to understand, Senator Lina, that around 60 percent of the population in Navotas are squatters. How do we propose to solve that problem?

Senator Lina. First, Mr. President, the local government unit or the local government of Navotas will, under this bill, identify the land in Navotas which is suitable for housing, whether it is owned by the private sector or by the government sector. There will be a system, first, of registration.

The President. Wala na po yata roon, kaya 60 percent. Iyong squatter population sa Navotas ang pinakamataas sa buong Metro Manila.

Senator Lina. What will be done, Mr. President, is to rationalize land use. If the whole area or majority of the land area is being squatted on, what will be done under this program is to determine, first, whether the land being squatted on is owned by the private or public sector. There will be a system of registration to identify the land, Mr. President.

Second, the local government unit will formulate a framework plan so that land use is rationalized and optimized. Under the program, there is one scheme that can be used after formulating a framework plan for Navotas, and after identifying which land is suitable for housing. There are various programs that can be undertaken by the Government.

One, the community mortgage program whereby members of the community are organized so that they themselves--and this is already being done--will, through their organization, purchase the land. In Navotas, Mr. President, there are various community mortgage programs that are being undertaken. So, that is one.

Another program that can be undertaken by the local government unit is the acquisition by the Government through land-swapping. That is also included in the program. They swap the land with other government lands if the private owner would agree to such an arrangement.

Another program that can be undertaken is land-sharing. Under this scheme, the private owner will be persuaded to enter into an arrangement with the Government whereby portion of his land that is being squatted on will be cleared of the squatters so that he can use that portion of land. As to the other portions, he will be asked to enter into a joint venture housing program with the Government, but the land will not be taken by the Government. Under this bill, the landowner will be given various incentives so that the landowner can be convinced or persuaded that instead of his land being squatted on for many years and making the land unproductive and useless as far as he is concerned, he will be asked to enter into a land-sharing or joint venture agreement with the local government.

Some of the incentives that are included in this bill are, for example, exemption from the payment of capital gains tax and other kinds of taxes that are normally imposed when there is a transfer of property. Even income tax on the joint venture project will be waived for a number of years so that the landowner will really be enticed to go into a land-sharing or joint venture agreement with the Government. If the place is saturated with squatters, the rationalization or use of the land will give rise to the construction of medium-rise housing projects so that some areas can be freed, and there will be rationalization of land use and new communities can be created.

The various programs are enumerated in this bill, Mr. President. It will depend on the situation of the place or the municipality. For example, if it is Navotas, on how the local government unit will formulate the best comprehensive framework plan for Navotas, identify lands that are suitable for housing, and with the assistance of the National Housing Authority, develop a package of housing programs in the area.

The President. Karamihan po ng mga iskuwater sa Navotas ay nasa baybaying-dagat. Katulad nitong pupuntahan ng buong Kongreso, malapit diyan sa Philippine National Bank, ano ang gagawin natin sa mga iskuwater doon? Napakakapal na ngayon ng mga iskuwater doon.

Senator Lina. May sagot na po tayo tungkol sa problema sa reclamation area. Pumayag na po iyong mga

nakatira sa reclamation area na lumipat sa isang bayan sa Cavite. Sa ngayon po, dini-develop na iyong area sa Cavite. Nakalimutan ko lamang po iyong bayan.

The President. Ang ibig po ba ninyong sabihin ay malulutas na ang problemang ito?

Senator Lina. Opo. December po ang target month para lumikas iyong nakatira nating mga kababayan sa nasabing reclamation area.

The President. Kailan naman po mangyayari iyan?

Senator Lina. Sa Disyembre po. The various financial institutions which own the land in the reclamation area, Mr. President, are the ones providing the funds in the relocation of the squatters, and in the development of the resettlement areas.

I, for one, went to the reclamation area. I had the occasion to talk with the urban poor there, especially with the leaders, and majority of them have agreed. So, we foresee little problem in the relocation of our brethren who are residing in the reclamation area.

If there is political will, Mr. President, on the part of the local government unit, and they have no choice at this point in time, with the passage of the Local Government Code. One of the functions that have also been devolved from the national down to the local government unit is the function of housing, based on a bill which I introduced here in the Senate and which has been incorporated in the Local Government Code.

The local government unit will play a major role in coming up with solutions to the housing problem in the country, and this is a good development--positive at that--because housing really became an enormous problem, because the tendency of the local executives is to pass to the National Government this problem of housing. So, no fresh ideas are being introduced from the local level on how to lick this problem of housing. But this bill, will provide the component programs on how to minimize, if not totally eradicate the acute housing shortage in our country.

The President. December is very, very close already, and the Gentleman says that that problem will be

resolved this December.

Senator Lina. The reclamation area, Mr. President?

The President. Yes.

Senator Lina. Yes, Mr. President. I just talked to the Public Estate Authority--because I am monitoring this development, this problem--and the Public Estate Authority assured me that money is available. The PNB, GSIS, PNCC, I think, and other institutions, which own the lands in the reclamation area, have already put up the necessary funds so that the resettlement of the people there can be effected within this year.

The President. Harinawang mangyari iyan sinasabi ninyo.

Senator Lina. Kasama ninyo po ako doon, Mr. President. Pinagdadasal po natin.

The President. All right, Senator Guingona.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 234

Senator Guingona. Mr. President, in view of the lateness of the hour, I move that we suspend consideration of this measure.

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

Senator Lina. Thank you, Mr. President.

Senator Guingona. Mr. President, in view of the absence of Senator Angara, we have two Conference Committee Reports.

APPROVAL OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON SENATE BILL NO. 108/HOUSE BILL NO. 31366

The first is on Senate Bill No. 108, requiring all elementary and secondary schools to integrate the teaching of the dangers and evil effects of drug dependency, drug addiction, and drug abuse, and the counterpart House Bill No. 31366. And the recommendation is to adopt the House version, Mr. President.