

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2000

OPENING OF THE SESSION

*At 3:43 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Blas F. Ople, called the session to order.*

**The President.** The 3rd session of the Second Special Session of the Eleventh Congress is hereby called to order.

Let us all stand for the opening prayer of Sen. Anna Dominique M.L. Coseteng to be read by Sen. Franklin M. Drilon.

*Everybody rose for the prayer.*

PRAYER

**Senator Drilon.** Yumuko po tayo at manalangin nang mataimtim.

Diyos na makapangyarihan, sambahin ang ngalan Mo, purihin ang Iyong kadakilaan at kaluwalhatian.

Patawarin Mo ang aming pagkakasala at basbasan kami ng Iyong grasya.

Patnubayan Mo kami upang hindi kami lumihis sa landas ng katarungan.

Sa bungad ng bagong milenyo, pagtibayin Mo ang aming katapatan sa Inyo at sa sambayanan.

Bigyan Mo kami ng katatagang harapin ang lahat ng pagsubok upang magampanan ang aming sinumpaang katungkulan, na mapabuti ang bayan at maiangat sa kahirapan ang aming mga kapatid na hanggang ngayon ay baon pa rin sa karalitaan.

Sa harap ng napakaraming pag-aalinlangan at pangambang bumabalot sa amin, nananaig pa rin ang taos-pusong paniniwala na kami ay hindi Mo pababayaan.

Sa piling Mo, ang aming kaligtasan ang mangingibabaw ngayon at mapagkailan pa man.

Siya nawa.

ROLL CALL

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

The Secretary, reading:

|                                          |         |
|------------------------------------------|---------|
| Senator Teresa Aquino-Oreta .....        | Absent  |
| Senator Robert Z. Barbers.....           | Present |
| Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon.....           | *       |
| Senator Renato L. Compañero Cayetano ... | Present |
| Senator Anna Dominique M. L. Coseteng .. | Absent  |
| Senator Franklin M. Drilon .....         | Present |
| Senator Juan Ponce Enrile .....          | Present |
| Senator Juan M. Flavie .....             | 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. ....      | Absent  |
| Senator John Henry R. Osmeña .....       | Present |
| Senator Sergio R. Osmeña III .....       | Present |
| Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr. ....    | Present |
| Senator Ramon B. Revilla .....           | Absent  |
| Senator Raul S. Roco .....               | Present |
| Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago .....   | Present |
| Senator Vicente C. Sotto III .....       | Absent  |
| Senator Francisco S. Tatad.....          | Absent  |
| The President .....                      | Present |

**The President.** With 14 senators present, there is a quorum.

**Senator Drilon.** Mr. President.

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

The Secretary will read the Reference of Business.

\* On official mission

Sponsor: Senator Enrile

**The President.** To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

**The Secretary.** Committee Report No. 168 submitted jointly by the Committees on Public Works; and Finance on House Bill No. 356 by Representative Liban, *et al.*, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A SEPARATE ENGINEERING DISTRICT IN THE SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IN QUEZON CITY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF,

recommending its approval with amendments by substitution.

Sponsors: Senators Revilla and Osmeña (J.)

**The President.** To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

**Senator Drilon.** Mr. President.

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

**BILL ON THIRD READING**  
**S. No. 1851—Deferment of Imposition of VAT**

**Senator Drilon.** Mr. President, I move that we resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 1851 as reported out under Committee Report No. 166.

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

**Senator Drilon.** We are about ready to vote on Third Reading on the said measure. This is a certified measure, may I ask the Secretary to read the certification of the President.

**The President.** The Secretary will read the certification.

**The Secretary.**

December 20, 1999

HON. BLAS F. OPLE  
Senate President  
Philippine Senate  
Pasay City

Dear Senate President Ople:

Pursuant to the provisions of Article VI, Section 26 (2) of the Constitution, I hereby certify to the necessity

of the immediate enactment of Senate Bill No. 1851, entitled

AN ACT TO FURTHER DEFER THE IMPOSITION OF THE VALUE-ADDED TAX ON THE TAXPAYERS SPECIFIED IN SECTION 17 (a) AND (b) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7716, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8241 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

to address public emergency of time constraints on the necessity to defer for one year the implementation of the imposed value-added tax on banks, non-bank financial intermediaries, finance companies, other financial intermediaries and certain professions pursuant to Republic Act No. 8424.

Best wishes.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA

cc: HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City

**Senator Drilon.** Mr. President, in view of this certification for the immediate enactment of Senate Bill No. 1851, we submit that it is now appropriate to vote on Third Reading on that measure.

For that purpose, I move that we vote on Third Reading on Senate Bill No. 1851 under Committee Report No. 166. Copies of the bill have been distributed to the members.

**The President.** Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, voting on Third Reading on Senate Bill No. 1851 is now in order.

The Secretary will please read only the title of the bill.

**The Secretary.** Senate Bill No. 1851, entitled

AN ACT TO FURTHER DEFER THE IMPOSITION OF THE VALUE-ADDED TAX ON THE TAXPAYERS SPECIFIED IN SECTION 17(a) AND (b) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7716, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8241 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

**The President.** We shall now vote on the bill and the Secretary will call the roll.

**The Secretary.** Senators

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Aquino-Oreta .....      |     |
| Barbers .....           | Yes |
| Biazon .....            |     |
| Cayetano .....          |     |
| Coseteng .....          |     |
| Defensor Santiago ..... | Yes |
| Drilon .....            | Yes |
| Enrile .....            | Yes |
| Flavier .....           | Yes |
| Guingona Jr. ....       | Yes |
| Honasan .....           | Yes |
| Jaworski .....          | Yes |
| Legarda-Leviste .....   |     |
| Magsaysay Jr. ....      |     |
| Osmeña (J.) .....       | Yes |
| Osmeña III .....        | Yes |
| Pimentel Jr. ....       | Yes |
| Revilla .....           |     |
| Roco .....              | Yes |
| Sotto III .....         |     |
| Tatad .....             |     |
| The President .....     | Yes |

#### APPROVAL OF S. NO. 1851 ON THIRD READING

**The President.** With 13 affirmative votes, no negative vote, and no abstention, Senate Bill No. 1851 is approved on Third Reading.

**Senator Drilon.** Mr. President.

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

#### MOTION OF SENATOR DRILON (To Increase the Membership in the Local Government Committee)

**Senator Drilon.** There is a request by the chairman of the Committee on Local Government to increase the membership in the Committee on Local Government in order to accommodate the desire of some of our colleagues to become members of the said committee.

Under Rule 10, Section 13, paragraph 17 of our *Rules*, the Committee on Local Government has 11 members. In view thereof, I move that the composition of the Committee on Local Government be increased to 13 from the present 11.

**The President.** From 11 to 13?

**Senator Drilon.** That is correct, Mr. President.

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

#### MOTION OF SENATOR DRILON (Sen. Honasan as Member of Local Government Committee)

**Senator Drilon.** I move that Sen. Gregorio B. Honasan be elected as a member of the Committee on Local Government.

**The President.** Is there any objection? [Silence] There being none, the motion is approved. Sen. Gregorio B. Honasan is elected as a member of the Committee on Local Government.

**Senator Drilon.** Mr. President, may I ask the Chair to recognize, on a point of personal privilege, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

**The President.** Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile is recognized.

#### QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF SENATOR ENRILE (Reminder on the Responsibility of Senators to be Present During Sessions)

**Senator Enrile.** Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I do not want to impose on the time of this Chamber but I am constrained to rise on a matter of personal privilege because yesterday, while I was watching television, I was surprised to hear my name mentioned on television, on PTV 4, I think it is Channel 14, no, I think it is Channel 10, not PTV 4, Channel 5 or any one of the stations anyway, where they said that I am No. 6 among the absentee senators of the republic. They mentioned that I have 13 absences.

Mr. President, I am not trying to play hero here or claim that I am perfect but the records will show that I never have been absent from this Chamber except for three days since 1998 when the present Congress convened. I have been late in coming to the Session Hall for a few minutes for 12 days, but to brand me as No. 6 absentee senator is, I think, a little unfair.

Mr. President, I think we should now realistically meet the problem of this Chamber. I am not trying to impose on my colleagues and I regret to take this stand. But I have been in this Chamber since 1987 with Sen. Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr., Sen. Teofisto T. Guingona Jr. and Sen. John H. Osmeña. I think, with due respect to my colleagues, this is the first time that I notice this