

tion on the base authorities that when they contract certain works, it is not just to anybody but see to it that the rights of the workers, and laws of the Philippines are being respected and that the workers are paid salaries or wage scales the same as the direct hire.

**Senator Gonzales.** Or would the Gentleman go one step farther by outlawing this system of indirect employment through the contractors? If they are to contract jobs at all, then it should now be directly to individual workers or employers who actually comply with the requirements. Does the Gentleman think that they would be better off that way or they would be worse off?

**Senator Herrera.** I think that would be a better arrangement if our panel will be able to succeed.

**Senator Gonzales.** The privilege hour is already consumed, Mr. President and I only want to assure the Gentleman that I associate myself with the sentiments that he has expressed before this Body. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

**The President.** Thank you. The Majority Floor Leader.

**BILL ON SECOND READING**  
**House Bill No. 2528 (Free Public Secondary Education)**  
*(Continuation)*

**Senator Mercado.** Mr. President, I move that we consider Committee Report No. 99 on House Bill No. 2528.

We are in the period of individual amendments. I move that we recognize Senator Angara, and Senator Laurel would like to make a manifestation with regard to this bill.

**Senator Laurel.** Mr. President.

**The President.** Senator Laurel is recognized.

**Senator Laurel.** Mr. President, last night we approved in this Chamber my amendment to the effect that education is free, secondary education is compulsory. Not only free but compulsory.

The session was suspended thereafter in order to enable this Representation to present at a later date, today or Monday, the other amendments to reconcile said amendment to the other provisions of this House Bill No. 2528.

I was thinking, Mr. President, that because of my amendment, deliberation on the bill would be an extended one. The result of the voting last night showed that there was a close vote, somehow a divided Chamber approved my amendment. This means that consideration of other priority bills which we have targeted may be delayed and we have only about six weeks left before the final adjournment of this Chamber.

I could insist, Mr. President — because that amendment of mine was approved — that there is a greater reason for my taking the floor now, not to pursue my amendment with all its implications and others, including further amendments which would be debated on, but that greater reason is the fact that for a bill of such great importance to the nation — free secondary education — to pass this Chamber on a very close vote would not be a welcome result.

Imagine, free secondary education, mandated by the Constitution, passing this Chamber by a vote of, if I remember right, seven to eight, that would give a wrong impression to our people. And that would not be the image that we would like to project in this Chamber; that we have had doubts as to the implementation of the Constitutional mandate to provide free secondary education to our people.

And so, Mr. President, for that reason, I have the honor and the duty to withdraw my

amendment which had already been admitted, of course, subject to the permission of my distinguished Colleague, Senator Angara, the Sponsor of the bill, and with the permission of this Chamber.

Thank you, very much.

Senator Mercado. Mr. President.

The President. The Majority Floor Leader.

Senator Mercado. I move for a reconsideration of the approval of the amendment as proposed by Senator Laurel.

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

Senator Angara. Mr. President.

The President. Senator Angara is recognized.

Senator Angara. Mr. President, let me thank most sincerely my Colleague and close associate in education for his very statesman-like position this morning.

Senator Enrile. Mr. President.

The President. The Minority Floor Leader.

Senator Enrile. Mr. President, may I pose a parliamentary inquiry. What proposed amendment was being withdrawn? Was it the proposed amendment after we approved the amendment calling for a compulsory attendance in high school? Because I remember the parliamentary situation last night — we have approved the Laurel amendment calling for the compulsory attendance in secondary school. And thereafter, the Chamber was confronted with another proposed amendment, and at that point, there was a motion to suspend consideration of this measure for a much later date. And then, the Chamber adjourned. And so I would like to know what amendment has been withdrawn.

Senator Angara. If I may help clarify the parliamentary situation, Mr. President? At the time we suspended consideration, there was a

pending motion presented by Senator Laurel on definition, defining what “compulsory” means. That was the point when we adjourned. But earlier on, the Body voted to accept his amendment incorporating the concept “compulsory” into Section 2 of the Declaration of Policy. So, the way I understood the motion of the Majority Floor Leader, and the request made by the proponent, is that he is withdrawing his pending motion which has not been acted on and we are trying to reconsider Section 2 in order to remove “compulsory.”

Senator Enrile. So what has been withdrawn so far?

Senator Angara. The motion to define what “compulsory education” means.

Senator Enrile. Thank you.

The President. The Chair would like to call the attention of the Gentleman on the floor to pages 26 to 30 of the *Journal*, and the effect of the withdrawal by Senator Laurel is with respect to the Laurel amendment found on pages 26 to 27. I understand these remarks to mean that he is withdrawing the whole concept of compulsory education in order to ensure the immediate passage of the Angara bill.

Senator Enrile. Then, in that case, I must respectfully state that that kind of a motion is out of order because the proper remedy would be to seek for a reconsideration of the approval of the Chamber or the approval of the amendment, and then, thereafter, the proponent of the amendment could probably withdraw it.

The President. Yes. The Majority Floor Leader already sought the reconsideration and that was approved.

Senator Enrile. Thank you.

The President. Now, let us go back to Senator Angara.

Senator Angara. So, if there are no more amendments, Mr. President, . . .

**The President.** How about the title? Has that been duly amended?

Senator Angara will recall that when he wanted to amend the title, I called attention to the fact that under the *Rules*, the title is the last to be amended.

**Senator Angara.** That was in reference to another bill, Mr. President. But since he mentioned it, may I ask that on Section 1, line 2, this bill be known as "Free Public Secondary Education Act of 1988."

**The President.** All right.

**Senator Maceda.** Mr. President.

**The President.** Senator Maceda is recognized.

**Senator Maceda.** I beg permission to submit another amendment which was already accepted in principle during the interpellation.

**The President.** Shall we first dispose of the amendment of Senator Angara?

**Senator Maceda.** All right.

**The President.** Is there any objection to the amendment on line 2 of page 2? So that it will read: "Free Public Secondary Education Act of 1988?" [Silence] Hearing none, the same is approved.

Senator Maceda.

MACEDA AMENDMENT

**Senator Maceda.** This will have to be a new section probably after Section 5. And the import is that IN CASE PRESENT FACILITIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY CANNOT ACCOMMODATE ALL OF THOSE APPLYING FOR ENROLLMENT TO THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS, THE GRADUATES OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THAT MUNICIPALITY SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY IN ADMISSION.

**The President.** Does the Sponsor accept it?

**Senator Angara.** It is accepted, Mr. President.

**The President.** Subject to refinement and style, is there any objection? [Silence] Hearing none, the same is approved.

Is there any other amendment?

The Majority Floor Leader.

**Senator Mercado.** Mr. President, if there are no other amendments, I move that we close the period of amendments.

**The President.** Is there any objection? [Silence] The Chair hears none; the same is approved.

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 2528 ON SECOND READING

**Senator Mercado.** Mr. President, I move for the approval of House Bill No. 2528, as amended, on Second Reading.

**The President.** We shall now vote on the bill as amended, on second Reading.

As many as are in favor will please say Aye. [Several Senators: Aye]

As many as are against will please say Nay. [Few Senators: Nay]. House Bill No. 2528 is approved on Second Reading as amended.

MOTIONS OF SENATOR MERCADO

- (Referral of Senate Bill No. 27 to the Committee on Women and Family Relations;
- Senate Bill No. 282 to the Committee on Justice & Human Rights;
- Senate Bill No. 299 to the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigation; and
- Senate Bill No. 394 to the Committee on Justice and Human Rights)

**Senator Mercado.** Mr. President, I move that Committee Report No. 19 on Senate Bill No. 27,