

RECORD OF THE SENATE

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2000

RESUMPTION OF THE SESSION

At 10:03 a.m., the session was resumed with the Hon. Anna Dominique M.L. Coseteng presiding.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. The session is resumed. The Majority Leader is recognized.

Senator Tatad. Madam President, I move that we read the Seventh Additional Reference of Business.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, the motion is approved.

The Secretary will read the Seventh Additional Reference of Business.

SEVENTH ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Reyes].

December 13, 2000

The Honorable
AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL JR.
President of the Senate
GSIS Bldg. Financial Center
Pasay City 1308

Mr. President:

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on December 12, 2000 elected Representatives Jesli A. Lapus, Joey Sarte Salceda, Harry C. Angping, Joseph Ace H. Durano, Marcelino C. Libanan, Emily R. Lopez, Pedro M. Pancho, Ma. Victoria L. Locsin, Ramon M. Reyes and Angelito M. Sarmiento as conferees should the Senate ask for a conference upon approval of its counterpart version of House Bill No. 8118, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARD IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE ORGANIZATIONS IN BOTH THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS TO ATTAIN EXCELLENCE IN QUALITY IN THE PRODUCTION AND/OR DELIVERY OF THEIR GOODS AND SERVICES,

which was earlier approved on February 8, 2000.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) ROBERTO P. NAZARENO
Secretary General

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Referred to the Committee on Rules

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Reyes].

December 14, 2000

The Honorable
AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL JR.
President of the Senate
GSIS Bldg. Financial Center
Pasay City 1308

Mr. President:

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on December 13, 2000 elected Representatives Rogelio M. Sarmiento, Nestor C. Ponce Jr., Prospero A. Pichay Jr., Marcial C. Punzalan Jr., and Jose Macario Laurel IV as additional members of the Bicameral Conference Committee on House Bill No. 8118, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARD IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE ORGANIZATIONS IN BOTH THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS TO ATTAIN EXCELLENCE IN QUALITY IN THE PRODUCTION AND/OR DELIVERY OF THEIR GOODS AND SERVICES.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) ROBERTO P. NAZARENO
Secretary General

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Referred to the Committee on Rules

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Reyes].

December 14, 2000

The Honorable
AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL JR.
President of the Senate
GSIS Bldg. Financial Center
Pasay City 1308

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Reyes]. Committee Report No. 513, prepared and submitted by the Committee on Electoral Reforms, Suffrage and People's Participation on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 911 with Senator Roco and the members of the committee as authors thereof, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE AUTHORITY OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC) TO IMPLEMENT THE AUTOMATED ELECTION SYSTEM UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8436 FOR THE PURPOSES OF 14 MAY 2001 SYNCHRONIZED ELECTIONS ONLY IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (ARMM) AND PILOT TEST THE SAME IN THE CITY OF MANILA, AND POSSIBLY, PASIG CITY,

recommending its approval without amendments.

Sponsors: Senator Roco and the members of the Committee on Electoral Reforms, Suffrage and People's Participation

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

The Majority Leader is recognized.

**MOTION OF SENATOR TATAD
(Reconsideration of Referral of P. S.
Res. No. 909 to the Impeachment Court)**

Senator Tatad. Madam President, I ask that we reconsider the referral of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 909 from the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and National Defense and Security to the Impeachment Court.

The reason for this is that yesterday, I proposed the organization of a select committee precisely to investigate this matter. But we subsequently decided to refer it to the Impeachment Court, for which reason we are going to convene the Court at 10:30 this morning.

So I move that the proposed resolution be similarly referred to the Court.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, the motion is approved.

SPECIAL ORDERS

Senator Tatad. Madam President, I also move that we transfer from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders, Committee Report No. 509 on Senate Bill No. 2225, entitled

AN ACT IMPOSING THE VALUE-ADDED TAX ON CERTAIN SERVICES BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2003, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, the motion is approved.

**BILL ON SECOND READING
S. No. 2129 -- Strengthening the ARMM Organic Act
(Continuation)**

Senator Tatad. Madam President, I move that we now resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 2129 as reported out under Committee Report No. 393.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, resumption of consideration of Senate Bill No. 2129 is now in order.

Senator Tatad. We are still in the period of individual amendments. I ask that the distinguished sponsor, the Senate President, be recognized. To propose some individual amendments, I ask that the Minority Leader be recognized.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. The Senate President is recognized.

But before he starts, for the information of the Body, we are now using the version of December 13, 2000. Is that what the Senate President is using as well?

Senator Pimentel. Yes, Madam President.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Please proceed.

Senator Pimentel. Thank you, Madam President.

Senator Guingona. Thank you, Madam President. I do not have the copy of December 13.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Will the Minority Leader please be given a copy by the Secretary?

Senator Guingona. However, my amendments may be adjusted by the distinguished committee chairman.

Senator Pimentel. Yes, Madam President.

Senator Tatad. May we ask the Secretary to distribute adequate copies to all the members.

Senator Pimentel. In any event, Madam President, the proposed amendments of the Minority Leader will be intercalated

Senator Tatad. Madam President, in a previous interpellation, this representation raised the issue of the correct title for the autonomous region and the sponsor is in agreement with the observation that we simply follow the provision of the Constitution.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. May the Chair know what the proposed title should be?

Senator Tatad. The bill, as drafted, says that the region is going to be called "Muslim Autonomous Region in Mindanao." The Constitution provides for an Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

So, we propose to give the sponsor leave to insert the appropriate amendment. And since there is also an agreement now between the sponsor and Senator Drilon that certain amendments would be inserted by the sponsor, if they have not been so inserted, we give the committee leave to introduce this minor editorial amendment.

With that understanding, I move that we now close the period of individual amendments.

Senator Enrile. Madam President.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Senator Enrile is recognized.

Senator Enrile. Madam President, I would like to make a manifestation and call the attention of the Chamber that I heard that the term "Shari'a Law" was used in one of the proposed amendments. My suggestion is to check the real technical meaning of "Shari'a" because my understanding of "Shari'a" is that it is a law, and so we cannot say "law, law."

Senator Pimentel. Yes, Madam President. The observation of Senator Enrile is correct.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. So, the sponsor will make the necessary correction in the amendment of Senator Guingona.

Senator Pimentel. Yes, Madam President. And also, we confirm the manifestation of Senator Tatad regarding the change in the title.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Thank you.

Senator J. Osmeña. Madam President.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Did I hear correctly a motion to close the period of individual amendments?

Senator Tatad. Yes, that was the motion.

Senator J. Osmeña. I would like to make a reservation. I have a very keen interest in this area and to be honest, I have not had the opportunity—with the power bill, the budget, the impeachment and all other things that are before us, in our very crowded table—I have not given this bill the proper attention.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

I move that we suspend the session for one minute to talk to the Senate President.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. The session is suspended for one minute, if there is no objection. *[There was none.]*

It was 10:24 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:26 a.m., the session was resumed.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. The session is resumed. The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 2129

Senator Tatad. Madam President, in view of the fact that Sen. John H. Osmeña would like to have a little more time to prepare his amendments, I move that we temporarily suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 2129.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

BILL ON SECOND READING

S. No. 2225 -- Imposition of VAT on Certain Services

Senator Tatad. Mr. President, I move that we consider Senate Bill No. 2225 as reported out under Committee Report No. 509.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

Consideration of Senate Bill No. 2225 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary will read only the title of the bill without prejudice to inserting in the *Record* the whole text thereof.

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Reyes]. Senate Bill No. 2225, entitled

AN ACT IMPOSING THE VALUE-ADDED TAX ON CERTAIN SERVICES BEGINNING JANUARY 01, 2003, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE

SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The following is the whole text of the bill:

Senate Bill No. 2225

AN ACT IMPOSING THE VALUE-ADDED TAX ON CERTAIN SERVICES BEGINNING JANUARY 01, 2003, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Section 5 of Republic Act No. 8424, as amended by Republic Act No. 8761, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 5. Transitory Provisions. - Effectivity of the Imposition of VAT on Certain Services. - The imposition of the value-added tax on the following services shall take effect on January 1, [2001] 2003:

"(a) Services performed in the exercise of profession or calling subject to the professional tax as provided for under Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, and professional services performed by registered general professional partnerships; actors, actresses, talents, singers and emcees; radio and television broadcasters, choreographers; musical, radio, movie, television and stage directors; and professional athletes;

"(b) Services rendered by banks, non-bank financial intermediaries, finance companies, and other financial intermediaries not performing quasi-banking functions;

"(c) Services rendered by stock, real estate, commercial, customs and immigration brokers; Provided, That, [for the year] beginning January 01, 2001 up to December 31, [2000] 2002, the aforementioned brokers shall, in lieu of the value-added tax prescribed under Title IV of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, be subject to a tax equivalent to seven percent (7%) based on gross receipts from brokering services which shall be paid in the manner and in accordance with the provisions of Title V of the said Code: Provided, further, That beginning January 1, [2001] 2003, the aforementioned brokers shall be subject to the value-added tax, in lieu of the seven percent (7%) tax.

"The taxpayers rendering services mentioned under paragraphs (a) and (b) hereof, shall pay the applicable taxes prescribed under the pertinent provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code, as amended."

SEC. 2. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The Secretary of Finance shall, upon the recommendation of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 3. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 4. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect on January 01, 2001.

Approved,

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. The Majority Leader is recognized.

Senator Tatad. Madam President, for the sponsorship, I ask that the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, be recognized.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Senator Enrile is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR ENRILE

Senator Enrile. Thank you, Madam President.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, the bill that I am presenting to this Chamber, Senate Bill No. 2225, seeks to defer for another two years, meaning, from 1 January 2001 all the way to 1 January 2003, the imposition of the value-added tax on services performed by professionals, brokers and selected financial institutions, the services performed in the exercise of a profession or calling subject to the professional tax and by those in the entertainment, broadcasting, professional sports and brokering sector, as well as those rendered by banks, nonbanks, nonbank financial intermediaries, finance companies and other financial intermediaries not performing quasi-banking functions, will continue to be subject to the applicable business taxes other than the value-added tax from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2002.

During the period of deferment, professionals will be liable to pay a percentage tax equivalent to two percent of their gross quarterly sales or receipts; brokers will be subject to the seven percent tax on gross receipts from brokering services;

financial institutions will be covered by the gross receipts tax ranging from zero percent to five percent beginning January 1, 2003. These services shall be liable to the VAT.

The proposed deferment, Madam President, aims to give the Executive department ample time to devise an appropriate indirect tax system for these groups of taxpayers. It has been argued that professionals render their services in their pursuit of public service with financial gains as a minor consideration, especially the doctors. Hence, professionals should be subject to an indirect tax other than the VAT.

On the other hand, there are pending proposals to impose a Financial Institution Tax-FIT—on financial institutions. The proposed FIT endeavors to replace the GRT in lieu of the Value-Added Tax.

Executive Order No. 273, otherwise known as the Value-Added Tax Law which was implemented on 1 January 1988, made the following services VAT-exempt and liable to pay a percentage tax equivalent to two percent of gross quarterly sales or receipts:

1. Medical, dental, hospital and veterinary services;
2. Sales by the artist himself of his works of art, literary works, musical compositions and similar creations or services performed for the production of such work;
3. Services performed by actors or actresses, talents, singers, and emcees, radio and television broadcasters, choreographers, musical radio, movie, television and stage directors;
4. Services performed as professional athletes; and
5. Services performed in the exercise of professional calling except Customs brokers, subject to the Occupational Tax under the Local Tax Code and professional services performed by registered general professional partnerships.

Republic Act No. 7716, the Expanded Value-Added Tax Law which was approved on 5 January 1994, increased the VAT coverage of services and goods. Section 17 provides that the VAT shall be levied, assessed and collected on the following:

- a. Services performed in the exercise of profession or calling subject to the professional tax under the Local Government Code or Republic Act No. 7160, and professional services performed by registered general professional partnerships; actors, actresses, talents, singers, and emcees; radio and television broadcasters, choreographers; musical, radio, movie, television, and stage directors; and professional athletes.

b. Services rendered by banks, nonbank financial intermediaries, finance companies and under financial intermediaries not performing quasi-banking functions.

However, the assessment and collection of VAT from these services were deferred for two years after the effectivity of the Act. In the interim, these taxpayers continue to pay the applicable taxes prescribed by the National Internal Revenue Code.

RA No. 8241, approved on 20 December 1996, provided for another deferment of the imposition of the VAT on the abovementioned services up to 31 December 1997. Taxpayers would continue to pay the taxes prescribed under the National Internal Revenue Code in lieu of the VAT.

RA No. 8424, the current law or the Tax Reform Act of 1997, granted the third deferment of the VAT until 31 December 1999 on the abovementioned services. The tax liabilities of these taxpayers remain the same.

Finally, another deferment of the VAT on the subject taxpayers was provided in Republic Act No. 8761 until 31 December of this year 2000. Brokers who were earlier subject to the VAT became exempt and were subject to the percentage tax equivalent to seven percent of the gross receipts from brokering services. The other taxpayers were subjected to the percentage tax under the National Internal Revenue Code namely, banks, nonbank financial intermediaries, finance companies and other financial intermediaries not performing quasi-banking functions to the gross receipts tax ranging from zero percent to five percent and the professional to two percent of gross quarterly sales or receipts.

Madam President, the purpose of this law is simply to give government and this Congress a time to really study the manner by which we could tax these three groups of taxpayers. Therefore, since this is simply an extension of the present exemption of these groups of taxpayers from the Value-Added Tax, I submit that this extension should be approved.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Thank you, Senator Enrile.

Senator Tatad. Madam President.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. The Majority Leader is recognized.

Senator Tatad. May I ask that the distinguished Minority Leader be recognized for a couple of questions.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. The Minority Leader is recognized.

Senator Guingona. Thank you, Madam President.

May we know if the distinguished sponsor will just respond to some questions?

Senator Enrile. Gladly, Madam President.

Senator Guingona. The act of extending, as far as the professionals are concerned, seems to be in order. This is the second time, I understand.

Senator Enrile. No, this is the third time.

Senator Guingona. It is beginning to be like the rental law where we extended for several times and someone said, "This will be the last extension."

Senator Enrile. Madam President, may I just explain. The reason we are extending them is not lack of desire to impose the tax on them. But since we cannot yet define the definite manner of taxing the banking institutions, whether we should impose on them the value-added tax, and because of the fact that these three types of taxpayers are in *pari passu*, I think it is only fair that if we extend the noninclusion of financial institutions from the value-added tax, we should equally extend to professionals and brokers. That is the only reason in order not to affect or to intrude into the equal-protection clause of the Constitution.

Senator Guingona. I would like to thank the gentleman for that answer. How about the banks and financial institutions?

Senator Enrile. I beg the gentleman's pardon?

Senator Guingona. How about the banks and the financial institutions?

Senator Enrile. That is correct, Madam President. They are now subject to a five percent gross receipt tax. There is a real plan to change the manner by which they will be taxed from a gross receipts tax system to bring them under another system that will include not only the gross receipts tax but also the value-added tax.

Senator Guingona. May we know the effect if we do not extend the gross receipt tax?

Senator Enrile. If we will apply the value-added tax on January 1 of next year, Madam President, immediately the interest rates in the country will shoot up.

Senator Guingona. By how much?

Senator Enrile. I cannot give the gentleman the magnitude of the increase, Madam President, but that is the universal belief.

Senator Guingona. The services will be extended to the year 2002. What about the banks and financial institutions? Will the gross receipts continue up to the same 2002?

Senator Enrile. I beg the gentleman's pardon?

Senator Guingona. The services, the imposition of the value-added tax for services will be deferred to the year 2002?

Senator Enrile. That is correct, Madam President. But on the other hand, government will not be losing taxes because these classes of taxpayers will still pay. In the case of professionals, two percent of their gross quarterly sales or receipts; in the case of brokers, they will be subject to seven percent on their gross receipts from brokering services. I think this will be much higher than the 10 percent on the value added. Then in the case of financial institutions, they will pay five percent on their gross receipts.

So, actually, the government will not lose money on this. The only reason there is a deferment, Madam President, is the fact that the government is now in the process of refining the Financial Institution Tax or FIT. In order to give it time to finish the studies, it needs this much time so that we can work it out.

The reason, Madam President, for the seemingly long extension is the fact that, as we know, next year 2001, Congress can only function half of that year because we will enter into an election period beginning the first month of next year and that will end up to June 30, 2001. So, we have no time in six months to really work out this problem so it was suggested that maybe we should extend it all the way to December 31, 2002 so that we have enough time to work out the details of a really meaningful tax treatment of these three classes of taxpayers in lieu of the VAT.

Senator Guingona. Thank you, Madam President.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Thank you.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

Senator Tatad. Madam President, I move that we close the period of interpellations.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Before we do that, Sen. John Osmeña is recognized.

Senator Tatad. In that case, Madam President, because we have to convene as a Court, I move that we suspend...

Senator J. Osmeña. Only one short question for the record.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Sen. John H. Osmeña is recognized.

Senator Tatad. All right.

Senator J. Osmeña. Will the distinguished sponsor of the committee...

Senator Enrile. Gladly, Mr. President.

Senator J. Osmeña. Mr. President, this bill, the original bill was enacted, I think, it was Republic Act No. 8424. What was the original VAT bill?

Senator Enrile. The original VAT law, Mr. President, was Executive Order No. 273.

Senator J. Osmeña. No. The one that we passed here in Congress. The first time we...

Senator Enrile. Republic Act No. 7716.

Senator J. Osmeña. In 1994, Madam President.

Senator Enrile. May 5, 1994.

Senator J. Osmeña. In that bill, Mr. President, we provided for this transitory provision—exemption for actors, actresses, basketball players and the like.

Senator Enrile. That is correct, Madam President.

Senator J. Osmeña. And also for the banks.

Senator Enrile. Yes, Madam President.

Senator J. Osmeña. And also for the stock, real estate, commercial customs and immigration brokers.

Senator Enrile. That is correct, Madam President.

Senator J. Osmeña. Six years have passed, Madam President, and we still have not been able to devise a way of taxing the banks. Is that not correct?

Senator Enrile. That is correct, Madam President.

Senator J. Osmeña. When will we?

Senator Enrile. I guess, Madam President, as far as this representation is concerned, we will really finish this. I want to put on record that we will finish this. This will be the last extension. And the only reason during those years we have not really made a definite decision on this was the reluctance of the government to change the manner by which the banking sector would be taxed. Right now, it is subject to the gross receipts tax and there has been some degree of resistance for the banking sector to come under the value-added tax, first, because of the

difficulty in administering this tax as far as the banking sector is concerned; and second, because of its impact on interest rates since this is a spiraling tax, and we cannot really determine the actual extent of its impact on interest rates.

Apart from the fact that there is some degree of unfairness in the case of the banking institutions and even professionals and some of these taxpayers that are now sought to be extended noncoverage because of the problem of input tax, we cannot define what their input tax would be. So because of these problems, we need time to really definitely decide on this.

Senator J. Osmeña. Madam President, with all due respect, we had six years. As far as the banking sector is concerned, I think the banks deserve the least sympathy. Even from the time of William Shakespeare, there was a Shylock already.

Senator Enrile. I would agree with the gentleman, Madam President.

Senator J. Osmeña. And today, they are still around.

In the crisis years of this country—1984 to 1986 and 1990 to 1992—when all the sectors of our economy were doing very badly, the banking sector was raking it in. When Jobo Fernandez was governor of the Central Bank, Far East Bank made all the money it ever made in the history of its existence.

Senator Enrile. I agree with the gentleman, Madam President. But my only problem is the effect on the borrowing public. The banks will be making money because they will not change their position. But they will be passing on to the borrowing public the impact of this tax. That is the reason I am willing to go along with this last extension so that we can find a real system of taxing the banks.

If I have my way, we should establish a different system of imposing direct taxes on our banking system because they are probably the only ones making oodles and oodles of money in our depressed economy. But be that as it may, I think we should give sympathetic consideration to this bill because of its impact on the borrowing public.

Senator J. Osmeña. Madam President, we have a monetary board which can rein the banking sector, which it does not because historically, from the time of Miguel Cuaderno, the governors of the Central Bank were products of the banking sector. That is why I think we have to keep on extending this because they really do not want to face up to the problem.

So, I would like to propose an amendment that instead of giving them two years, we give them only a one-year extension.

Senator Enrile. I have no problem with that, Madam President.

Senator J. Osmeña. At the proper time, Madam President. Because my experience here is that year after year, we have been extending another government office which was the Asset Privatization Trust, the APT, and the COP. Until last year, we finally put our foot down and I appreciate the support of this Chamber. This year, they have not even been dreaming about it. They finally accepted it. I hope that next year, the banking sector will accept the fact. I know that the gentleman and I are going to be around next year. That being the case, I hope that we will put our foot down.

Senator Enrile. The gentleman can have my word, Madam President.

Senator J. Osmeña. Thank you, Madam President. I take the gentleman's word for it.

Senator Enrile. As a condition to the gentleman's very kind acceptance of this proposal, he can be assured that I will put on record my commitment to the distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee of the Senate that this will be the last extension if I were still the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means of the Senate.

Thank you, Madam President.

Senator J. Osmeña. Thank you, Madam President.

Senator Tatad. Madam President, Senator Drilon has kindly agreed to defer his interpellation until tomorrow when we shall resume consideration of this measure.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 2225

In the meantime, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 2225.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, suspension of consideration of Senate Bill No. 2225 is approved.

CONSIDERATION OF P. S. RES. NO. 910 (Naming the Blue Ribbon Committee Room as the Sen. Mariano Jesus Cuenco Room)

Senator Tatad. Madam President, with the consent of the Chamber, I move that we now consider Proposed Senate Resolution No. 910.

The Presiding Officer [Sen. Coseteng]. Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, the motion is approved.

Consideration of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 910 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary will read only the title of the resolution without prejudice to inserting in the *Record* the whole text thereof.

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Reyes]. Proposed Senate Resolution No. 910, entitled

RESOLUTION NAMING ROOM 501, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ROOM, THE SEN. MARIANO JESUS CUENCO ROOM

The following is the whole text of the resolution:

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 910

WHEREAS, the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee formally called the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its inception by virtue of Senate Resolution No. 24, adopted on May 18, 1950;

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Committee had, thru the years, the honor and distinct privilege of being chaired by distinguished Senators;

WHEREAS, two of these former Blue Ribbon Committee chairmen, Sen. Lorenzo M. Tañada and Sen. Lorenzo S. Sumulong, have Senate Committee Rooms named in their honor;

WHEREAS, among the Blue Ribbon Committee chairmen now deceased, Senator Mariano Jesus Cuenco served the earliest and the longest -- from 1957 to 1959;

WHEREAS, to highlight the golden anniversary celebration of the Committee's existence, it is only fitting that the Committee office be named after one of its outstanding chairmen; Now therefore be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of the Philippines that the Blue Ribbon Committee Office at Room 501, Fifth Floor, Senate of the Philippines be named in honor of Sen. Mariano Jesus Cuenco who was also Senate President from 1949 to 1951.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Secretary of the Senate be directed to administer all activities to implement this Resolution.

Adopted,