

RECORD OF THE SENATE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1995

February 16, 1995

RESUMPTION OF THE SESSION

At 5:00 p.m., the session was resumed with the Honorable Edgardo J. Angara, Senate President, presiding.

The President: The session is resumed.

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

The President: The Secretary will do so.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Secretary:

February 16, 1995

Mr. President:

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on February 16, 1995, agreed to the amendments of the Senate to House Bill No. 1432, as embodied in Senate Bill No. 1690, entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE SOUTHERN AGUSAN NATIONAL AGRICULTURE COLLEGE OF BUNAWAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR INTO A STATE COLLEGE, TO BE KNOWN AS THE AGUSAN DEL SUR STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) CAMILO L. SABIO
Secretary General

The Honorable
EDGARDO J. ANGARA
President of the Senate
Manila

The President: To the Archives.

The Secretary:

Mr. President:

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on February 16, 1995, agreed to the amendments of the Senate to House Bill No. 4622, as embodied in Senate Bill No. 1638, entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE BICOL REGIONAL TRAINING AND TEACHING HOSPITAL INTO BICOL MEDICAL CENTER, DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, POWERS AND AUTHORITY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) CAMILO L. SABIO
Secretary General

The Honorable
EDGARDO J. ANGARA
President of the Senate
Manila

The President: To the Archives.

The Secretary:

February 17, 1995

Mr. President:

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on February 16, 1995, agreed to the amendments of the Senate to House Bill No. 322, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TEN-BED CAPACITY MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAN JOSE, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL NORTE, TO BE KNOWN AS THE SAN JOSE MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Very respectfully,

(Sgd.) CAMILO L. SABIO
Secretary General

first step is good enough.

At this point, I would like to rest content with the hope that in the course of the deliberations of the Joint Executive-Legislative Water Crisis Commission, they would arrive at the ineluctable conclusion that unless we do something drastic to protect our forests, we are going to inhabit a desert in the end. And should that conclusion arise, Madam President, and should Providence guide our journey back to the Senate, we pledge to our Colleagues that we shall not tire; we shall push again, for the third round for the Senate to pass a Total Logging Ban as something that is intimately linked to the solution of the water crisis.

Thank you very much, Madam President.

Senator Osmeña: Madam President.

The President Pro Tempore: Senator Osmeña is recognized.

Senator Osmeña: Just a small correction, Madam President. I was under the impression that the quotation "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step" is attributed to the late President John F. Kennedy. I am told that that belongs to Chairman Mao Tse Tung. Therefore, I would like to give him credit for that quotation and acknowledge that at least there is one thing that Mao Tse Tung and I agree on. [Laughter]

Thank you, Madam President.

Senator Maceda: Madam President.

The President Pro Tempore: Senator Maceda is recognized.

Senator Maceda: May we ask the Secretariat for our turn to research on that because I was under the impression that that was a statement by Confucius. [Laughter]

The President Pro Tempore: The Chair thinks that it might even be a poem by Robert Frost. [Laughter]

Senator Romulo: That really adds to the confusion, Madam President. [Laughter]

At this juncture, the Senate President Pro Tempore relinquished the Chair to Senator Agapito A. Aquino.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON
S. NO. 1913/H. BILL NO. 3043
(Party-List System)

Senator Romulo: At any rate, Mr. President, the Bicameral

Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 3043 and Senate Bill No. 1913, the Party-List bill, has been filed with the Senate. Both the Members of the Senate panel and the Members of the House panel, the majority of them, have signed this Bicameral Conference Committee Report urging and recommending the approval thereof.

For a fuller account, may I ask that the Chairman of the Senate panel, the distinguished Gentleman from Laguna, Senator Lina, be recognized.

The Presiding Officer [Senator Aquino]: Senator Lina is recognized.

Senator Lina: Thank you very much, Mr. President, the future Congressman of the Second District of Makati unless the decision of the Court says the bill that we passed into law is unconstitutional. [Laughter]

The two panels met this noon, Mr. President, to harmonize the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 3043 and Senate Bill No. 1913. On the part of the Senate, the following were present in that Conference: this Representation, Senator Herrera and Senator Shahani. On the part of the House of Representatives, the following were present: The Chairman of the House Panel, Hon. Tito Espinosa, Rep. Raul Daza, Rep. Michael Mastura, Rep. Leonardo Montemayor, and Rep. Edcel Lagman.

Mr. President, the summary of the harmonized version has the following features:

The first election under the party-list system will be in May of 1998. In the May 1998 party-list election, the first five major political parties on the basis of party representations in the House of Representatives at the start of the Tenth Congress of the Philippines shall not be entitled to participate in the party-list system.

Let me explain the reasons behind these agreements. Between tomorrow and May 8, 1995, only 69 days are remaining. As pointed out very succinctly by our Colleague, Senator Herrera, there will be little time to educate the electorate on the party-list system. Perhaps, creating confusion in the minds of our people, if election under the party-list system is held on May 8, is to which of the two lines or three lines in the ballot will be for the regular Member of the House or for the sector or for the party.

Effectively, there will only be about 49 days, Mr. President, in which period the Comelec can undertake the necessary information campaign if we hold the party-list election on May 8, 1995. Sectors will have to be organized; they will have to

register; they will have to put up their own network nationwide.

We were convinced that a meaningless election is not advisable. Therefore, there is wisdom in holding the first election under the party-list system in May 1998.

There was much debate on whether to agree or not to agree with the prohibition on the participation of the five major political parties in the election under the party-list system in 1998. But after a long discussion and debate, the panels agreed to have a one-term prohibition on the first five major political parties in the election starting 1998.

So from 1998 to the year 2001, the first five major political parties based on the party representation at the start of the Tenth Congress will be prohibited or not entitled to participate in the party-list system.

As to the allocation of seats, Mr. President, the following procedure was agreed upon:

That the party's organization and coalition shall be ranked from the highest to the lowest based on the number of votes they garnered during the elections; and that the party's organizations and coalitions receiving at least 2 percent of the total votes cast for the party-list system shall be entitled to one seat each, provided, that those garnering more than 2 percent of the votes shall be entitled to additional seats in proportion to their total number of votes. And provided, finally, that each party organization or coalition shall be entitled to not more than three seats.

Mr. President, it was also agreed that the following shall be the procedure in allocating seats for party-list representatives:

The Comelec shall tally all the votes for the party's organizations or coalitions on a nationwide basis; rank them according to the number of votes received; and allocate party-list representatives proportionately according to the percentage of votes obtained by each party organization or coalition as against the total votes nationwide cast for the party-list system.

Those are the major or salient features of the harmonized version, Mr. President, and I will just be so happy if this Bicameral Conference Committee Report is approved.

The Presiding Officer [Senator Aquino]: Is there any question regarding...

Senator Maceda: Mr. President.

The Presiding Officer [Senator Aquino]: Senator Maceda is recognized.

Senator Maceda: Mr. President, I will not belabor the matter except for one point.

Will the distinguished Gentleman give us the justification, for the record, why the panel agreed to a ban on the first five political parties in the elections of 1998? It is my position that there is no basis for this in the Constitution; and that I believe it was the Sponsor himself who informed this Representation that in the earlier Conference Committee meetings, very well prepared and succinct position papers on this had been submitted to the effect that any ban on the political parties in any form is unconstitutional.

Senator Lina: That is correct, Mr. President. I was adverting to the position paper prepared and even presented by the Liberal Party outlining the arguments against the prohibition or restriction of certain political parties from participating under the party-list system.

Fact No. 1 is that the very same president of that party withdrew his objection and agreed to the prohibition of the five major political parties from participating under the party-list system.

Mr. President, the original proposal by the House panel based on its House version is to bar the five major political parties from participating under the party-list system for three consecutive terms or for nine years.

As a matter of compromise, considering that there are two sides to a constitutional issue, the Senate panel agreed to a one-term ban. That was the agreement among those who participated in this Bicameral Conference Committee from the Senate panel, although this Representation still has this reservation that under the Constitution, the party-list system is to be participated in by national and regional parties or organizations.

It was presented by the House panel, to which we may find some wisdom, that indeed in these past many years, the marginalized and under-represented sectors have not really had ample representation in the House of Representatives. There are other sectors who have been outside of the mainstream of politics and participation in the affairs of government that have been clamoring for a little leeway so that they can present themselves and be part of the democratic process. But they request that they be given time to organize and strengthen themselves so that in the scramble for seats in the House of Representatives, they will have some possibilities or potentialities even to win seats under the party-list system.

This can be argued, one way or the other, Mr. President, but the Bicameral Conference Committee, as we all know, is a give-

and-take affair. After all, we made sure that there is a Separability Clause so that when the bill is attacked on the basis of being unconstitutional, the unconstitutional provisions can be so declared by the appropriate court without affecting the entire bill.

Senator Maceda: So, would the distinguished Gentleman at least admit that there is no specific wording in the party-list provision of the Constitution that directly or expressly supports a ban on political parties from participating in any election for party-list members to the House of Representatives.

Senator Lina: It is already on record, Mr. President, that I have taken that position. But as I said, this is not a white- and-black affair and therefore, in the process of the deliberation in the Bicameral Conference, a compromise was forged.

Senator Maceda: Of course, as the distinguished Gentleman has indicated the other night, the original Conference Committee Report which the Senate panel validly signed and which the House of Representatives agreed to, but subsequently a majority did not sign, did not include such a ban.

Senator Lina: That is correct, Mr. President.

Senator Maceda: And that if ever the distinguished Gentleman agreed to include such a ban as he said, it was for purposes of compromising so as to finally be able to pass this bill and for us to finally adjourn. Would that be correct?

Senator Lina: The matter of adjournment is not entirely correct, Mr. President. An agreement has to be forged, one way or the other. We can prolong the debate in that Bicameral Conference meeting but somehow a consensus was arrived at and we were present there with Senators Herrera, Osmeña and Shahani. We felt that the deliberation had reached a point that taking everything into consideration, a compromise was necessary and a harmonized version could already be ironed out.

Mr. President, I think it is a better situation if we already put into motion this provision in the Constitution calling for an election under the party-list system. This is a new element in our political life. I even consider this party-list system as not conducive or relevant under a presidential system. A party-list system may be true and useful under a parliamentary system of government. But it is part and parcel of the Constitution — this party-list system.

So, it is better to give this provision of the Constitution flesh and blood and let the idea evolve in the future. If amendments are necessary and corrections are needed when we are faced with actual experiences on the ground, then let those amendments or changes be forthcoming in the future under a new Congress.

Senator Maceda: I just want to put this on the record to support an appropriate challenge in the Supreme Court at the proper time. I just want to say in ending that it is a little bit ironical, if not funny, that we were called to extension of sessions several times principally because of this measure, among others, and now we come out with a final version that is going to take effect in 1998 yet. I suppose that justifies again the certification of this bill; that it is certified as an urgent bill so that it could be effective in 1998.

Senator Lina: Well, I thank the Gentleman for his comment, but let me just say something about that, Mr. President.

As I said, after all is said and done, the report was made available to us already close to our scheduled date of adjournment. And considering the time limitation between now and May 8 and the needed publication of this and the needed educational campaign or information campaign to inform the electorate on the matter of the party-list system, the panel saw the wisdom of having more time to educate the people on this matter. That is the reason for the holding of the first election under this system in May 1998.

That will be all, Mr. President.

The Presiding Officer [Senator Aquino]: The Majority Leader is recognized.

LINA AMENDMENT

Senator Lina: I just would like to say that there is a typographical error in Section 2. It is the word "marginalize." It should have a "D." It is "marginalized," Mr. President.

The Presiding Officer [Senator Aquino]: Is there any objection? [*Silence*] Hearing none, the amendment is approved.

APPROVAL OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON S. NO. 1913/H. NO. 3043

Senator Romulo: Mr. President, we vote on this Bicameral Conference Committee Report.

The Presiding Officer [Senator Aquino]: Is there any objection to the approval of this Bicameral Conference Committee Report? [*Silence*] Hearing none, the Bicameral Conference Committee Report is unanimously approved.

The following is the full text of the Conference Committee Report:

The Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 3043, entitled

"AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ELECTION OF PARTY-LIST REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH THE PARTY-LIST SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

and Senate Bill No. 1913, entitled

"AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A SYSTEM OF ELECTING MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH A PARTY-LIST SYSTEM"

having met, after full and free conference, has agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses that House Bill No. 3043 and Senate Bill No. 1913, be approved in accordance with the attached copy of the Bill as reconciled and approved by the conferees.

Approved,

**CONFEREES ON THE PART
OF THE SENATE**

(Sgd.) HON. JOSE D. LINA, JR.

(Sgd.) HON. ALBERTO G. ROMULO

(Sgd.) HON. RAUL S. ROCO

(Sgd.) HON. ERNESTO M. MACEDA
Dissent: Any ban on parties is unconstitutional

(Sgd.) HON. ERNESTO F. HERRERA

(Sgd.) HON. LETICIA R. SHAHANI

(Sgd.) WIGBERTO E. TAÑADA

**CONFEREES ON THE PART
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

(Sgd.) HON. TITO R. ESPINOSA

(Sgd.) HON. RAUL A. DAZA

(Sgd.) HON. MANUEL A. ROXAS

(Sgd.) HON. MICHAEL O. MASTURA

(Sgd.) HON. ALFREDO AMOR E. ABUEG, JR.

(Sgd.) HON. LEONARDO B. MONTEMAYOR

(Sgd.) HON. EDCEL C. LAGMAN

(Sgd.) HON. RONALDO B. ZAMORA

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ELECTION OF PARTY-LIST REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH THE PARTY-LIST SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Party-List System Act".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - The State shall promote proportional representation in the election of representatives to the House of Representatives through a party-list system of registered national, regional and sectoral parties or organizations or coalitions thereof, which will enable Filipino citizens belonging to marginalize and underrepresented sectors, organizations and parties, and who lack well-defined political constituencies but who could contribute to the formulation and enactment of appropriate legislation that will benefit the nation as a whole, to become members of the House of Representatives. Towards this end, the State shall develop and guarantee a full, free and open party system in order to attain the broadest possible representation of party, sectoral or group interests in the House of Representatives by enhancing their chances to compete for and win seats in the legislature, and shall provide the simplest scheme possible.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - a) The *Party-List System* is a mechanism of proportional representation in the election of representatives to the House of Representatives from national, regional and sectoral parties or organizations or coalitions thereof registered with the Commission of Elections (COMELEC). Component parties or organizations of a coalition may participate independently provided the coalition of which they form part does not participate in the party-list system.

b) A *party* means either a political party or a

sectoral party or a coalition of parties.

c) A *political party* refers to an organized group of citizens advocating an ideology or platform, principles and policies for the general conduct of government and which, as the most immediate means of securing their adoption, regularly nominates and supports certain of its leaders and members as candidates for public office.

It is a national party when its constituency is spread over the geographical territory of at least a majority of the regions. It is a regional party when its constituency is spread over the geographical territory of at least a majority of the cities and provinces comprising the region.

d) A *sectoral party* refers to an organized group of citizens belonging to any of the sectors enumerated in Section 5 hereof whose principal advocacy pertains to the special interest and concerns of their sector.

e) A *sectoral organization* refers to a group of citizens or a coalition of groups of citizens who share similar physical attributes or characteristics, employment, interests or concerns.

f) A *coalition* refers to an aggrupation of duly registered national, regional, sectoral parties or organizations for political and/or election purposes.

SEC. 4. *Manifestation to Participate in the Party-List System.* - Any party, organization or coalition already registered with the Commission need not register anew. However, such party, organization, or coalition shall file with the Commission, not later than ninety (90) days before the election, a manifestation of its desire to participate in the party-list system.

SEC. 5. *Registration.* - Any organized group of persons may register as a party, organization or coalition for purposes of the party-list system by filing with the COMELEC not later than ninety (90) days before the election a petition verified by its president or secretary stating its desire to participate in the party-list system as a national, regional or sectoral party or organization or a coalition of such parties or organizations, attaching thereto its constitution, by-laws, platform or program of government, list of officers, coalition agreement and other relevant information as the COMELEC may require: *Provided*, That the sectors shall include labor, peasant, fisherfolk, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, elderly, handicapped, women, youth,

veterans, overseas workers and professionals.

The COMELEC shall publish the petition in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

The COMELEC shall, after due notice and hearing, resolve the petition within fifteen (15) days from the date it was submitted for decision but in no case not later than sixty (60) days before election.

SEC. 6. *Refusal and/or Cancellation of Registration.* - The COMELEC may, *motu proprio* or group verified complaint of any interested party, refuse or cancel, after due notice and hearing, the registration of any national, regional or sectoral party, organization or coalition on any of the following grounds:

- 1) It is a religious sect or denomination, organization or association organized for religious purposes;
- 2) It advocates violence or unlawful means to seek its goal;
- 3) It is a foreign party or organization;
- 4) It is receiving support from any foreign government, foreign political party, foundation, organization, whether directly or through any of its officers or members or indirectly through third parties for partisan election purposes;
- 5) It violates or fails to comply with laws, rules or regulations relating to elections;
- 6) It declares untruthful statements in its petition;
- 7) It has ceased to exist for at least one (1) year; or
- 8) It fails to participate in the last two (2) preceding elections or fails to obtain at least two *per centum* (2%) of the votes cast under the party-list system in the two (2) preceding elections for the constituency in which it has registered.

SEC. 7. *Certified List of Registered Parties.* - The COMELEC, shall, not later than sixty (60) days before election, prepare a certified list of national, regional, or sectoral parties, organizations or coalitions which have applied or who have manifested their desire to participate under the party-list system and distribute copies thereof to all precincts for posting in the polling places on

election day. The names of the party-list nominees shall not be shown on the certified list.

SEC. 8. *Nomination of Party-List Representatives.*

- Each registered party, organization or coalition shall submit to the COMELEC not later than forty-five (45) days before the election a list of names, not less than five (5), from which party-list representatives shall be chosen in case it obtains the required number of votes.

A person may be nominated in one (1) list only. Only persons who have given their consent in writing may be named in the list. The list shall not include any candidate for any elective office or a person who has lost his bid for an elective office in the immediately preceding election. No change of names or alteration of the order of nominees shall be allowed after the same shall have been submitted to the COMELEC except in cases where the nominee dies, or withdraws in writing his nomination, becomes incapacitated in which case the name of the substitute nominee shall be placed last in the list. Incumbent sectoral representatives in the House of Representatives who are nominated in the party-list system shall not be considered resigned.

SEC. 9. *Qualifications of Party-List Nominees.*

- No person shall be nominated as party-list representative unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines, a registered voter, a resident of the Philippines for a period of not less than one (1) year immediately preceding the day of the election, able to read and write, a bona fide member of the party or organization which he seeks to represent for at least ninety (90) days preceding the day of the election, and is at least twenty-five (25) years of age on the day of the election.

In case of a nominee of the youth sector, he must at least be twenty-five (25) but not more than thirty (30) years of age on the day of the election. Any youth sectoral representative who attains the age of thirty (30) during his term shall be allowed to continue in office until the expiration of his term.

SEC. 10. *Manner of Voting.* - Every voter shall be entitled to two (2) votes: The first is a vote for candidate for Member of the House of Representatives in his legislative district, and the second, a vote for the party, organization, or coalition he wants represented in the House of Representatives: *Provided*, That a vote cast for a party, sectoral organization, or coalition not entitled to be voted for shall not be counted: *Provided, finally*, That the first election under the party-list

system shall be held in May 1998.

The COMELEC shall undertake the necessary information campaign for purposes of educating the electorate on the matter of the party-list system.

SEC. 11. *Number of Party-List Representatives.*

- The party-list representatives shall constitute twenty per centum (20%) of the total number of the Members of the House of Representatives including those under the party-list.

For purposes of the May 1998 elections, the first five (5) major political parties on the basis of party representation in the House of Representatives at the start of the Tenth Congress of the Philippines shall not be entitled to participate in the party-list system.

In determining the allocation of seats for the second vote, the following procedure shall be observed:

a. The parties, organization and coalitions shall be ranked from the highest to the lowest based on the number of votes they garnered during the elections.

b. The parties, organizations and coalitions receiving at least two percent (2%) of the total votes cast for the party-list system shall be entitled to one seat each: *Provided*, That those garnering more than two percent (2%) of the votes shall be entitled to additional seats in proportion to their total number of votes: *Provided, finally*, That each party, organization or coalition shall be entitled to not more than three (3) seats.

SEC. 12. *Procedure in Allocating Seats for Party-List Representatives.* - The COMELEC shall tally all the votes for the parties, organizations, or coalitions on a nationwide basis, rank them according to the number of votes received and allocate party-list representatives proportionately according to the percentage of votes obtained by each party, organization or coalition as against the total nationwide votes cast for the party-list system.

SEC. 13. *How Party-List Representatives are Chosen.* - Party-list representatives shall be proclaimed by the COMELEC based on the list of names submitted by the respective parties, organizations, or coalitions to the COMELEC according to their ranking in said list.

SEC. 14. *Term of Office.* - Party-list representatives

shall be elected for a term of three (3) years which shall begin, unless otherwise provided by law, at noon on the thirtieth day of June next following their election. No party-list representatives shall serve for more than three (3) consecutive terms. Voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time shall not be considered as an interruption in the continuity of his service for the full term for which he was elected.

SEC. 15. *Change of Affiliation; Effect.* - Any elected party-list representative who changes his political party or sectoral affiliation during his term of office shall forfeit his seat: *Provided*, That if he changes his political party or sectoral affiliation within six (6) months before an election, he shall not be eligible for nomination as party-list representative under his new party or organization.

SEC. 16. *Vacancy.* - In case of vacancy in the seats reserved for party-list representatives, the vacancy shall be automatically filled by the next representative from the list of nominees in the order submitted to the COMELEC by the same party, organization, or coalition, who shall serve for the unexpired term. If the list is exhausted, the party, organization or coalition concerned shall submit additional nominees.

SEC. 17. *Rights of Party-List Representatives.* - Party-List Representatives shall be entitled to the same salaries and emoluments as regular members of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 18. *Rules and Regulations.* - The COMELEC shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 19. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be provided in the regular appropriations for the Commission on Elections starting Fiscal Year 1996 under the General Appropriations Act.

Starting 1995, the COMELEC is hereby authorized to utilize savings and other available funds for purposes of its information campaign on the party-list system.

SEC. 20. *Separability Clause.* - If any part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts or provisions thereof shall remain valid and effective.

SEC. 21. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof,

inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.

SEC. 22. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON S. NO. 2061 (Water Crisis Bill)

Senator Romulo: Mr. President, on the disagreeing provisions of the House and the Senate versions of Senate Bill No. 2061, the Water Crisis Bill, I ask that for the Senate panel, we constitute it with Senators Osmeña, Shahani, Romulo, Aquino, Maceda and Tañada.

The Presiding Officer [Senator Aquino]: Is there any objection? [*Silence*] Hearing none, the motion is approved.

Senator Romulo: Mr. President, the next time we meet would be May 29, 1995.

SUSPENSION OF THE SESSION

May I ask for a one-minute suspension of the session?

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

It was 8:53 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF THE SESSION

At 9:12 p.m., the session was resumed.

The Presiding Officer [Senator Aquino]: The session is resumed.

Senator Romulo: Mr. President, we have a bill here, Senate Bill No. 2065, entitled: "AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 27 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7166, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE SYNCHRONIZED ELECTION AND ELECTORAL REFORM LAW OF 1991."

Mr. President, since there is no Committee Report and it is a bill that has been filed, I ask the unanimous consent of our Colleagues in this Chamber that we consider this bill on Second Reading.