

## RECORD OF THE SENATE

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1989

### RESUMPTION OF THE SESSION

*At 10:20 a.m., the session was resumed, with the Honorable Jovito R. Salonga, President of the Senate, presiding.*

**The President.** Ipinagpapatuloy ang pulong ng Senado.

Tayo ay pangungunahan sa panalangin ni Senador Vicente T. Paterno.

*Everybody remained standing for the opening prayer.*

### PRAYER

**Senator Paterno.**

Mahal na Panginoon, sa umagang ito, una po ang pasasalamat sa pagkapatibay kahapon ng aking panukalang batas, ang Senate Bill No. 744 tungkol sa COA.

Tuwing araw ng sesyon, may dalangin ako sa Iyo.

Huwag ka sanang masusot, Panginoon, na kadalasa'y ang dalangin ko'y pulos daing, reklamo, pagpula.

Huwag sanang maupos ang Iyong pasensiya na sa halip na aminin ko ang sariling kakulangan, bagkus naghahanap pa ako ng ibang masisisi.

Tinatanggap ko Po ang aking kahinaan at mga kasalanan sa Iyo, at hinihingi ko ang Iyong patawad.

Sa mga sandaling ito, Panginoon, kinikilala namin ang kadakilaan ng Iyong awa at tulong sa lahing Pilipino. Aming pinagtitiyag ang lubos na tiwala at pag-asa sa Iyo ng aming bayan.

Panginoon, tanggapin Mo po ang aming taimtim na pasasalamat sa Iyong pagmamahal, sa Iyong mga handog, at sa Iyong patuloy na pagsubaybay sa bansang Pilipino sa aming labbay tungo sa kinabukasan.

Siya nawa.

**Senator Mercado.** Mr. President, we have Additional Reference of Business and may I request the Secretary to read it.

### ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**The Secretary.** Letters from the Secretary of the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on May 11, 1989 the

House of Representatives passed the following bills in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

House Bill No. 15571.

May 12, 1989

**Mr. President:**

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on May 11, 1989 passed House Bill No. 15571, entitled

**AN ACT CHANGING THE NAME OF THE IBA ESTE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CALUMPIT, PROVINCE OF BULACAN, TO DR. VICENTE REYES MEMORIAL SCHOOL,**

in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

Very respectfully yours,

(Sgd.) QUIRINO D. ABAD SANTOS, JR.  
Secretary

The Honorable  
Jovito R. Salonga  
President of the Senate  
Manila

**The President.** Referred to the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Local Government.

**The Secretary.** House Bill No. 15572.

May 12, 1989

**Mr. President:**

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on May 11, 1989 passed House Bill No. 15572, entitled

**AN ACT CHANGING THE NAME OF THE STA. LUCIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CALUMPIT, PROVINCE OF BULACAN TO PASCUAL O. CRUZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,**

in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

Very respectfully yours,

(Sgd.) QUIRINO D. ABAD SANTOS, JR.  
Secretary

Anti-Graft Law. It is an Act to regulate the right of a Member of Congress to engage, et cetera.

Iyon naman pong isinampa ni Senador Romulo ay An Act to Amend RA No. 3019, Otherwise Known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act." Pero noon pong dumaan sa Komite, iyon pong approach ni Senador Romulo ang nangibabaw. I mean, I guess I can speak for our Colleague, Senator Romulo, who is not here, that if we are agreed on the objective, iyon pong matter of form is, I suppose, something that we can take up on the Floor, maybe in the caucus or even informally. Ako ho, my own bias is really to move away from the Anti-Graft Act dahil ang dating po ay may kabigatan. Ngunit nais ko rin naman pong pagpitaganan ang nagwaging pormularyo doon sa lupon nang aming talakayin ito.

Senator Pimentel. Yes. At any rate, perhaps, we should give that some serious thought, Mr. President. Because if the objective is really merely, among other things, to prohibit lawyer-members of Congress from actively practising the legal profession, for example, then, perhaps, the Act should be geared towards that specific objective instead of making this Act merely an amendatory legislation to the Anti-Graft Law.

Senator Saguisag. Exactly my own preference. But in fairness to Senator Romulo and the Committee, we would have to take that up with those concerned. Sa palagay ko po, ang pakilasa ko naman ay hindi naman siguro magiging isyu dahil ganoon din naman po ang diwa. So, as I said, in the absence of the distinguished Minority Floor Leader, in fairness, we should accord him every opportunity to test the validity of the theories that we, the proponents, have. And for that matter, any other Member should feel free to interpellate again, considering the far-reaching consequences of what we are trying to do here, Mr. President.

The President. The Majority Floor Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 446

Senator Mercado. Mr. President, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 446.

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

#### BILL ON SECOND READING Senate Bill No. 149 — Banning Mail-Order Brides

Senator Mercado. Mr. President, considering that we have some time, we can listen to a sponsorship speech. We have one sponsorship speech that is ready on one of the pet bills.

I move that we consider Senate Bill No. 149 as reported out under Committee Report No. 40.

The President. Consideration of Senate Bill No. 149 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 Secretary. Senate Bill No. 149, entitled

AN ACT TO DECLARE UNLAWFUL THE PRACTICE OF MATCHING FILIPINO WOMEN FOR MARRIAGE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS ON A MAIL-ORDER BASIS AND OTHER SIMILAR PRACTICES, INCLUDING THE ADVERTISEMENT, PUBLICATION, PRINTING OR DISTRIBUTION OF BROCHURES, FLIERS AND OTHER PROPAGANDA MATERIALS IN FURTHERANCE THEREOF AND PROVIDING PENALTY THEREFOR.

*The following is the full text of Proposed Senate Bill No. 149:*

AN ACT TO DECLARE UNLAWFUL THE PRACTICE OF MATCHING FILIPINO WOMEN FOR MARRIAGE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS ON A MAIL-ORDER BASIS AND OTHER SIMILAR PRACTICES, INCLUDING THE ADVERTISEMENT, PUBLICATION, PRINTING OR DISTRIBUTION OF BROCHURES, FLIERS AND OTHER PROPAGANDA MATERIALS IN FURTHERANCE THEREOF AND PROVIDING PENALTY THEREFOR.

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

Section 1. It is the policy of the State to ensure and guarantee the enjoyment of the people of a decent standard of living. Towards this end, the State shall take measures to protect the Filipino women from being exploited in utter disregard of human dignity in their pursuit of economic upliftment.

Section 2. Pursuant thereto, it is hereby declared unlawful,

a) For a person, natural or juridical, association, club or any other entity to commit any of the following acts:

- 1) To establish or carry on a business which has for its purpose the matching of Filipino women for

marriage to foreign nationals on a mail-order basis or through personal introduction;

- 2) To advertise, publish, print or distribute or cause the advertisement, publication, printing or distribution of any brochure, flier, or any propaganda materials to promote the prohibited act in paragraph a) (1) hereof;
- 3) To solicit, enlist or in any manner attract or induce any Filipino woman to become a member in any club or association whose objective is to match women for marriage to foreign nationals either on a mail-order basis or through personal introduction.

b) For the owner, manager, or other officer or officers concerned of any newspaper, magazine, television or radio station, or other media, or of an advertising agency, printing company or other similar entities, to knowingly allow, or consent to, the acts prohibited in Section 2, Paragraph a) (2) hereof.

Section 3. In case of violation of this Act by an association, club, partnership, corporation, or any other entity, the incumbent officers thereof who have participated in the violation of this Act shall be held liable.

Section 4. Any person found guilty by the court to have violated any of the acts herein prohibited shall suffer an imprisonment of not less than six years and one day but not more than eight years, and, a fine of not less than eight thousand pesos (P8,000). *Provided*, That if the offender is a foreigner, he shall be immediately deported and barred forever from entering the country after serving his sentence and payment of fine.

Section 5. All laws, decrees, orders, instructions, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved.

Senator Mercado. Mr. President, I ask that we recognize Senator Maceda.

#### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR MACEDA

Senator Maceda. Thank you, Mr. President. I will try to limit myself to five minutes or so.

May I refer to a privilege speech delivered on April 13 on the same subject matter which we will not repeat except to say that this bill is being very much awaited by STOP and several organizations that have been asking for its approval. And in

connection with this bill, may I just read the latest column that has been written about it by Mr. Ruther Batugas in the *Tempo* written about three weeks ago, entitled *Filipino Bride Sold to Japanese*.

A reader who asked not to be identified wrote us about what she considers dirty business going on in her hometown of Caba, La Union. Here is where a syndicate is said to be raking in a lot of money selling Filipino brides to Japanese tourists. The town's young and beautiful maidens are recruited by the ring, then they are paraded before Japanese tourists. The tourists simply make their choices and civil weddings are held. After the wedding, the groom pays the bride's parents P50,000 and goes home to Japan. Then the syndicate fixes the necessary papers, and in about three or four weeks, ships the bride to her new home in Japan. Of course, the syndicate makes a killing from this in commission and fees.

Our reader cited four girls from La Union who have fallen victims to this bride-for-sale ring. The four were married in civil rights in Manila last March 27. She also gave us the name of another victim, the niece of the headman of the syndicate. She said the niece, one of my dearest friends, was recruited against her will. She worries a lot about her, said our reader, for she has heard about young Filipinas in Japan being sexually exploited and abused.

If these workers have been abused, how much more these Filipinas who were married to Japanese for monetary considerations? Of course, Mr. President, we also previously called the attention to fake weddings which came out in several newspapers that was of course busted by the Commissioner on Immigration.

In the *Malaya*, it stated:

*Brides No More* - Immigration Commissioner Miriam Defensor Santiago seated, questions from left, Cristina Lea, 20; Fe Reo and Jenny Guiyab, victims of an alleged mail-order-bride racket. The three were supposed to be married yesterday at a country club in Las Piñas but the prospective bridegrooms were arrested. Santiago said the simulated weddings was a sham intended only to enable the brides to obtain visas for entry to Japan.

Mr. President, to shorten the procedure, I think I will just read some of these short sections which are self-explanatory. Announcing in advance, I have two letters from Senator Gonzales and Senator Shahani and the answer to both is common in the sense that, of course, the bill does not intend to prohibit or penalize personal introductions made by friends or clubs which are not for a fee or which are not for business.

Section 1. It is the policy of the State to ensure and guarantee the enjoyment of the people of a decent standard of living.

Towards this end, the State shall take measures to protect the Filipino women from being exploited in utter disregard of human dignity in their pursuit of economic upliftment.

Mr. President, last night, I was at a small party where some of the women were complaining that because of mail-order brides and because of the issue of domestics and entertainers and prostitutes going all over the world in every effort where a Filipino woman now comes in or goes out, she is subjected to so many indignities. And it is our hope that with this particular legislation, we are starting the effort to restore the dignity back to the Filipina and to the Filipino passport.

Section 2. Pursuant thereto, it is hereby declared unlawful,

a) For a person....to commit any of the following acts:

Number 1, to establish or carry on a business which has for its purpose the matching of Filipino women for marriage to foreign nationals on a mail-order basis or through personal introduction;

"To carry on a business," that is the key word there, Mr. President. As we could see in all the newspapers especially on Sunday, they go about it by advertising. So, it was necessary to prohibit the act of advertising, publishing, printing or distributing or causing the advertisement, publication, printing or distribution of any brochure, flier, or any propaganda material calculated to promote the prohibited act in paragraph a) (1) hereof;

All these, in addition to the publication in the newspapers here, so many catalogs and brochures are printed and sent all over the world for a fee.

Number 3, Mr. President, it is prohibited to solicit, enlist or in any manner attract or induce any Filipino woman to become a member in any club or association whose objective is to match women for marriage to foreign nationals either on a mail-order basis or through personal introduction. And in the period of amendments, we are willing to accept a clarification that what is prohibited is membership in a club or personal introduction for a fee, probably, for a substantial fee. Meaning to say, that personal introductions made through Jayceerette Clubs or Lioness Clubs or other Soroptimist clubs or sparklers clubs which are not really for this purpose are not, of course, going to be penalized.

The other prohibited act is for the manager, or other officer of any newspaper, magazine, television or radio station, or other media, or of an advertising agency, printing company or other similar entities, to knowingly allow, or consent to the acts prohibited in Section 2 hereof. Of course, in the period of amendments, we will be quite ready to accept any possible objections or any further relaxation on this paragraph.

And the usual penal provisions in Section 4,

...the imprisonment of not less than six years and one day but not more than eight years and a fine of not less than Eight thousand pesos (P8,000). *Provided*, That if the offender is a foreigner, he shall be immediately deported and barred forever from entering the country after serving his sentence and payment of fine.

I received a letter here from Senator Saguisag where he proposes to add an additional section:

Nothing in this Act shall be interpreted as a restriction on the freedom of speech and of association for purposes not contrary to law as guaranteed by the Constitution.

which we will accept in the period of amendments, as a new section.

For these reasons, Mr. President, and as part of the continuing effort of the Senate, following the example set by the Gentle Senator from Pangasinan and others in the anti-discrimination of women bill, and so many other bills that have been filed, I hope that with these series of bills, before the end of this year, this Senate can blaze the trail for pro-women legislation which is very much needed; and it is very necessary to really impress the whole world that the Filipina woman who, as I said, in my privilege speech, is "God's gift to the world" should be protected and restored to her proper dignity and stature.

Thank you, Mr. President.

#### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 149

Senator Mercado. Mr. President, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 149.

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

#### BILL ON SECOND READING Senate Bill No. 871 — Barangay Youth Council Elections

Senator Mercado. Mr. President, I move that we consider Committee Report No. 621 on Senate Bill No. 871.

The President. Consideration of Senate Bill No. 871 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 Secretary. Senate Bill No. 871, entitled