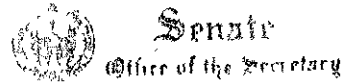


SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session



13 SEP 11 P2:33

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 1634

RECEIVED BY: *ja*

INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA


EXPLANATORY NOTE

Every democratic nation today recognizes the value of freedom of the press. The recognition and respect for this freedom is the very essence of democracy. Uncensored public discussion is a necessary condition in a society enjoying the bounty of a free and democratic State. Hence, freedom of the press is founded on the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse, and perhaps even "antagonistic" sources is essential for the enhancement and projection of the welfare and interest of the people. Indeed, government can be responsive to the will of the people only when free debate and unhampered exchange of ideas become the hallmark of the State.

In the Philippines, freedom of the press is a right protected by no less than the Constitution. At the very core of the right is the liberty to discuss publicly and truthfully all matters of public interest without prior censorship or subsequent punishment. It signifies the freedom of a person to communicate with other members of the body politics. It was in this liberal spirit that the Legislature enacted Republic Act No. 53 in 1946. The Act exempted the publisher, editor, columnist, or duly accredited reporter of any newspaper, magazine or periodical of general circulation from being compelled to reveal the source of any news report or information appearing in said publication which was related in confidence to such publisher, editor or reporter, unless the court or a House or committee of Congress finds that such revelation is demanded by the security of the State.

As in the case of anything good, Republic Act No. 53 had already outgrown its usefulness, so to speak. It would have been a very good law if only it anticipated the growth and development of mass media. Unfortunately, only members of the print media are covered under its provisions. It is beyond doubt that included within the concept of the "press" are such vehicles of communications as radio, television and printed publications. Republic Act No. 53, therefore, failed to cope with the exigencies of modernization.

In view of the foregoing, early passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA
Senator

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



73 SEP 11 P2:33

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 1634

RECEIVED BY *ja*

INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

AN ACT
FURTHER AMENDING SECTION ONE OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 53,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT TO EXEMPT THE PUBLISHER, EDITOR,
COLUMNIST OR REPORTER OF ANY PUBLICATION FROM REVEALING
THE SOURCE OF PUBLISHED NEWS OR INFORMATION OBTAINED IN
CONFIDENCE

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

SECTION 1. - Section 1 of Republic Act No. 53 is further amended to
read as follows:

"Section 1. WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO HIS LIABILITY UNDER
THE CIVIL AND CRIMINAL LAWS, [T]he publisher, editor,
COLUMNIST, or duly accredited reporter of any newspaper,
magazine or periodical of general circulation AND THE MANAGER
OR DULY ACCREDITED REPORTER OR NEWSCASTER OF
ANY RADIO OR TELEVISION STATION, NETWORK OR
FACILITY, cannot be compelled to reveal the source of any news-
report or information appearing in said publication OR EMANATING
FROM SAID RADIO OR TELEVISION STATION, NETWORK OR
FACILITY which was related in confidence to such publisher, editor
or reporter, unless the court or a House or committee of Congress
finds that such revelation is demanded by the interest of the State."

SEC. 2. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect immediately upon its
approval.

Approved,