

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

S e n a t e

Pasay City

Journal

SESSION NO. 16

Tuesday, August 31, 2004

**THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

SESSION NO. 16
Tuesday, August 31, 2004

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:33 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Franklin M. Drilon, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Sergio R. Osmeña III led the prayer, to wit:

Dearest Lord, source of all that is good and just, grant us Your blessing as we once again endeavor to fulfill our obligations to our nation and our people; enlighten our minds, fortify our spirit, strengthen our will, and open up our hearts.

Grant us an open mind to hear what is being said to us and the humility to admit when we are wrong.

Grant us the wisdom of Your counsel as we seek to improve the lives of our people and secure the future of coming generations.

Grant us the strength to change what needs to be changed and the determination to see it to its completion.

Allow us to look beyond what divides us and build on what unites us.

May we ever seek to do not what is popular but what is right and to be ever mindful of our responsibility to You and to our people.

Amen.

ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary of the Senate, Oscar G. Yabes, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Angara, E. J. | Lacson, P. M. |
| Arroyo, J. P. | Lapid, M. L. M. |
| Cayetano, C.P.S. | Lim, A. S. |
| Defensor Santiago, M. | Madrigal, J. A. S. |
| Drilon, F. M. | Osmeña III, S. R. |
| Ejercito Estrada, J. | Pangilinan, F. N. |
| Ejercito Estrada, L. L. P. | Pimentel Jr., A. Q. |
| Enrile, J. P. | Revilla Jr., R. B. |
| Flavier, J. M. | Roxas, M. |
| Gordon, R. J. | Villar Jr., M. B. |

With 20 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator Recto arrived after the roll call.

Senator Biazon was on official mission.

Senator Magsaysay was absent.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 15 and considered it approved.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR GORDON

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Gordon informed the Body that over the weekend, as chairman of the Philippine National Red Cross, he oversaw disaster relief efforts in Central Luzon. He narrated that he saw the destroyed dikes; waters ravaging Central Luzon, Pangasinan, Northern Luzon and La Union; people, wet and cold, who would not leave their homes for fear of losing their scant possessions; people who would not leave the few cows, pigs or goats they saved from the flood because these were all they had; people who have lost their farms and crops, their source of revenue; people trapped by the inundated roads. He stated that these people were deprived of their right to choose because

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they had no choice; indeed, poverty is an absence of choice.

Senator Gordon asked the senators to be enraged that this situation persists year after year; he begged them to fight the indifference and apathy, and appealed to them to act immediately with passion and resolve for the sake of their fellow Filipinos.

He disclosed that according to the PNRC report, the rains ravaged 1,098 barangays in 109 municipalities and cities affecting 193,730 families, or 931,124 individuals. He said that 29 are confirmed dead; six, injured; and two, missing. He recounted that in Pangasinan, 44 of the 47 municipalities were under water, and last Sunday, he waded in the floodwaters of Calasiao and Dagupan. He lamented that only one-third of the victims were brought to the evacuation centers because the people could not even go to the evacuation centers. He wondered how many more are cold, wet, without food and shelter, slowly succumbing to disease, and how many, with heartbreaking hope, look at the lives they have built that are now broken.

Senator Gordon noted that this was one of the worst floods in living memory, and it seems the people would never have noticed it and the attention of the country has not been shown. Through the television programs, he noticed that the floodwaters had begun to devastate the fields of Bulacan as well. He recalled that the last disaster of this magnitude happened in 1972, after a month of heavy rains. But this time, he said, the country did not have a month but only four days of rain brought on by an intertropical convergence zone caused by typhoons that did not even hit land.

Senator Gordon stated that the rains ended yesterday but eight towns in Pangasinan, eight towns in Pampanga, and some towns in Tarlac, especially Paniqui where the dikes burst, are underwater. He said that the floodwaters have barely begun to recede, and yet, another storm is forming off the eastern coast of Luzon.

Senator Gordon believed that the flood of 1972 was purely an act of God; this time, it appears that this was an act of negligence on the part of

man. In addition, he noted the shabby rescue operations. Even the vice-mayor of Paniqui who was undertaking rescue efforts in his town had to be rescued by a helicopter from the roof top at the time when the flood was rising dramatically, he said.

Having experienced disasters -- floods, storms, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions -- he wondered whether the Filipinos have learned to be prepared and proactive in times of calamity. But, as usual, he observed that Filipinos have continued to be reactive.

Senator Gordon said he was asked what the big deal was since Central Luzon is flooded anyway during the rainy season. Precisely, if flooding occurs every year, he wondered why the government has not set aside equipment like inflatable rafts, built larger evacuation centers, stockpiled warm blankets and clothing, food and medicine. He stressed the need to build a culture of volunteerism to help fellow Filipinos who are struggling in the midst of disaster.

Moreover, Senator Gordon asked why the San Roque Dam floodgate was opened without any warning to all the affected communities downstream. He underscored that the rescue operations should have been coordinated with the national government. He noted that the government had borrowed a billion US dollars to build that San Roque Dam to minimize and control floods. He believed that the San Roque Dam floodgate should not have been opened as the waters inundated the towns of Tarlac, Pangasinan, and now, Bulacan.

Senator Gordon observed that the government had also borrowed millions to build facilities to tame the Agno River but the river still rages uncontrollably. Relative thereto, he wondered what happened to the Ambuklao Dam and Binga Dam which were supposed to be rehabilitated. In the four days of rain, he said that the waters overspilled from the Ambuklao Dam to the Binga Dam to San Roque Dam and down to the towns. He asked what the government is doing to dredge the rivers and alleviate the situation. He revealed that out of the five dredgers of the DPWH in Pangasinan, only one is working, the rest are out of order.

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He said that the people are pleading that the dredging be continued when the floodwater recedes finally.

Senator Gordon pointed out the need to know what is being done to control the dumping of mine tailings that clog the rivers in the Mountain Province area; and to preserve the forests of the Cordilleras. He said that every grade school child knows the importance of forests in preventing floods as he noted that Filipinos can no longer afford an Ormoc-like tragedy. Unfortunately, he said, the Filipinos are putting themselves in harm's way because of negligence, indifference, apathy and cynicism.

Senator Gordon noted that Dr. Kelvin Rodolfo, in an interview which appeared in the day's issue of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* pointed out that housing developments and fishponds are clogging the Agno River and its tributaries and preventing water from escaping out into the sea. In fact, he said, Dr. Rodolfo disclosed that even the Camanava area is being affected by the untrammelled development and the construction of underground water pumps that have caused subsidence in some areas in Metro Manila. Dr. Rodolfo, he said, also pointed out that the uncontrolled pumping out of groundwater has also caused the salt water to seep in, in fact, saltwater intrusion has affected Pangasinan. He disclosed that the \$1.1 billion allocation to the San Roque Dam was intended to attenuate the flooding and provide irrigation for parts of Pangasinan and Tarlac; unfortunately, to date, for no apparent reason, the irrigation project has not been continued.

Senator Gordon expressed disappointment that in spite of these projects, the area is still prone to flooding and has no water for irrigation and the people.

He said that the previous day, he filed Proposed Senate Resolution No. 61 calling for an investigation, in aid of legislation, into the flooding incident in Luzon to assist the Senate in crafting necessary laws to prevent disasters of such magnitude. He stated that Senators Pangilinan and Lapid are coauthors of the resolution.

Senator Gordon said that the problem of Central Luzon cannot be ignored; not only is

Central Luzon the food granary of the Philippines, it is also increasingly becoming a center for investment, commerce and industry; the hub for growth around which the whole of the island of Luzon shall turn, which the President has included in her ten-point program for Central Luzon. But he asked how investments would come in if Central Luzon would be seen as a picture of sheer desolation brought about by the floods caused by negligence and perhaps, graft and corruption. He informed the Body that there was a proposal that the CDF or PDAF be used for the flood-control projects. He said that the northern region should not be allowed to be inundated, especially when flooding could be controlled, if not totally prevented.

In that light, Senator Gordon urged the Body to approve Proposed Senate Resolution No. 61.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ANGARA

Senator Angara stated that he had read the account of Dr. Rodolfo's analysis of the heavy flooding of Central Luzon and, as mentioned by Senator Gordon, the main culprits are the fishpond operators and the land developers in Central Luzon who have caused the clogging of the main river arteries particularly of Pampanga. On a related matter, the unannounced release of water from the San Roque Dam which in turn draws water from the Binga Dam was the major cause of the flooding in Pangasinan, he added.

Asked who won the contract for the rehabilitation of the Binga Dam, Senator Gordon replied he does not have the information at the moment, but he had read an article written by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) stating that the rehabilitation of the Binga Dam was done under the previous administrations. He affirmed that the report concluded that the contractor did not, in fact, fulfill his part of the bargain which was to rehabilitate and desilt the dam. He said that precisely, he called the attention of the Senate on the matter because the government, in using valuable funds to rehabilitate dams, should be able to oversee these developments.

Senator Angara commented that apart from electricity and irrigation purposes, dams are built

to tame wild rivers and control the flow of water. Senator Gordon agreed, adding that silted dams was caused not by simple negligence but by criminal negligence.

On whether he has heard of Catalino Tan, Senator Gordon replied that he came across the name in the PCIJ article on the San Roque Dam.

Senator Angara informed the Body that Catalino Tan was not a contractor but an army supplier during the Ramos administration and had reportedly won the contract to rehabilitate the Binga Dam through his connection to the former President.

Recalling that Senator Osmeña brought out the issue of the Casecan Dam during one of the budget hearings, Senator Angara observed that the San Roque Dam, which was negotiated and concluded under the Ramos administration, was equally overpriced. Senator Gordon stated that the San Roque Dam has caused untold sufferings on the people of Northern and Central Luzon.

Asked if the damage was primarily man-made, Senator Gordon replied in the affirmative. Precisely, he said that he called for an investigation to find out whether the release of the water from the Binga Dam or San Roque Dam or both caused the floods in Central Luzon. He asked that the NDCC'S capacity to respond to disasters also be looked into. He agreed with Senator Angara that the effect of fishponds and other constructions on the floods be likewise included in the investigation.

Noting that the issue has been discussed at length, Senator Gordon, lamented the lack of political will to do something about it. He said that although senators delivered privilege speeches on related issues, they were just consigned to history pages until people are struck with disasters. He added that the Senate must force the issue to fix the problem and not just to put blame.

Stating that the Senate should not look for an escape goat, Senator Angara said that the investigation nonetheless should find out who caused the problem in the first place. He observed

that Central Luzon is being envisaged as a central tourist and investment destination, towards which projects are being or about to be implemented such as the road network from Tarlac to Subic, the proposed Tutuban-Malolos-Clark railway and the rehabilitation of the Clark complex. Senator Gordon stated that the billions of dollars invested in these projects would go to naught if most areas in Central Luzon remain submerged.

On a related matter, asked if he was aware that President Macapagal Arroyo would be signing in Beijing a US\$400 million project that would rehabilitate the 32-kilometer railroad from Tutuban to Malolos, Senator Gordon replied that some newspapers say that the President might not sign it. He stated that he supported the administration's plan to rehabilitate the railway system, however, \$400 million is too expensive for a 32-kilometer stretch of railroad, especially during a financial crisis.

On the information that 5% of the mobilization funds for the railway project had been released, Senator Gordon stated that he was not aware of it as he suggested that the Senate form an oversight committee to prevent unnecessary expenses.

Senator Angara pointed out that a tremendous amount of investment, in spite of scarce resources, has sunk with just four days of rain. Senator Gordon stated that an act of man could be corrected – by putting those guilty of corruption in jail.

Expressing sympathy for the people of Central Luzon, Senator Angara stated that the real crisis is not the fiscal crisis but the one that they are experiencing at the moment.

At this juncture, Senate President Drilon relinquished the Chair to Senate President Pro Tempore Flavio.

Senator Gordon stated that Central Luzon is a priced territory that needs investment that can withstand public scrutiny and is free from corruption.

Senator Angara stated that it is the dream of people from Eastern Luzon, particularly Quezon and Aurora, to establish a coast-to-coast transport

system from the Dingalan Port to Gapan to San Fernando and to Subic that would cut the sailing time of vessels from Japan and the U.S. by almost 28 hours as they would be docking at Dingalan Port instead of Manila. He said that the project envisions the unloading of cargo from the U.S. West Coast and from Japan at Dingalan Port and transported by land to Clark and from there to all areas of Luzon. He added that if the existing investments are not being taken care of and corruption persists, that dream would not be realized.

In response, Senator Gordon stated that most of the Filipinos are being punished because there exists a situation where the few are favored. He added that people in government should not waste the taxpayers' money that is supposed to provide services and benefits to those who have less in life.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Asked if the lahar deposits contributed to the floods in Central Luzon, Senator Gordon replied that although the roads have been raised, towns are still being inundated. He said that the 12-year old lahar could be mobilized by inordinate amounts of rainfall and it could threaten Central Luzon once again. He said that the dikes built in the area must be constantly checked for integrity. However, he clarified that the lahar had no bearing on the recent floods in Central Luzon. He said that the rains from the mountains of Paniqui, Tarlac caused the breach of a dike built in the '70s. He expressed dismay that water from the San Roque, Binga and Ambuklao Dams was released, when the purpose of these infrastructure is to prevent flooding.

Asked what government agency is responsible for maintaining the dams, Senator Gordon replied that it should be the Department of Public Works and Highways and the Agno Flood Control System. He believed that the NDCC should have conducted periodic inspection of these dams.

Asked which government agencies should respond to disasters, Senator Gordon stated with present technology, typhoons or torrential rains could already be predicted with a certain degree

of accuracy. However, he said that it was unfortunate that PAGASA could not give the degree of rainfall that fell on Central Luzon since it was in the process of collecting data. In anticipation of disasters, he underscored that the DSWD, the Red Cross and the NDCC should preposition equipment such as rubber boats in areas that are prone to floods; stockpile evacuation centers with sleeping equipment and cooking facilities; and follow evacuation protocols. He deplored the lack of foresight in anticipating the needs to respond to disasters.

Senator Pimentel said that his main concern was to pinpoint the government agency or office in charge of constructing and maintaining the dams. Senator Gordon said that he would support a suggestion to create a section within the DPWH that would maintain and monitor infrastructure. He further suggested that a group be created composed of all the parties involved in disasters, such as PAGASA, that would be proactive in anticipating the kind of resources and physical infrastructure that would be needed to address disasters all over the country.

Senator Pimentel underscored the need for government entities that are responsible for the building or construction of infrastructure to be accountable or to be liable for damages that arise from the destruction of facilities, for instance, during a flood which could otherwise be prevented had the infrastructure been constructed properly.

Relative thereto, Senator Gordon cited an example of such monuments of corruption in Lubok, Bohol where a bridge was built but remains unused and unfinished because to complete it would have destroyed a 400-year old church. He recalled that he suggested that a night market be put up in the area so that people could go there, hence, dissimulate an embarrassing situation that mirrors the absence of monitoring of infrastructure by government agencies.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

Senator Defensor Santiago manifested that next week, she would deliver a privilege speech against Mr. Catalino Tan and his extremely close friend and partner, Mr. Fidel Ramos.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR LAPID

Noting the remark of Senator Gordon that billions of pesos were spent on infrastructure only in Pampanga, Senator Lapid asked whether there were no similar dredging activities and construction of dikes in Zambales and Tarlac. Senator Gordon clarified that he was not insinuating that billions of pesos were spent only in Pampanga, rather, he wanted to underscore the fact that despite the billions of pesos spent in Central Luzon by the national government, flooding persists.

Senator Lapid affirmed that dredging activities in the area have been a failure. He said that for the entire nine years that he was governor of Pampanga, the local officials were not allowed to take part in the dredging activities; thus, there was no proper monitoring. He then called the DENR's attention to the fishponds and dikes that have caused the narrowing of the rivers flowing into Manila Bay. Relative thereto, he lamented that the courts ordered him to pay P12 million in damages when he had the fishponds destroyed, in spite of the DENR's certification that the fishponds were illegal. He then asked that the matter be included in the investigation.

As regards the dredgers, Senator Gordon said that the location and the condition of these equipment should have been posted by the DPWH's Bureau of Equipment in the Internet for purposes of transparency.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEES

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Chair referred the speech of Senator Gordon and the interpellations thereon to the Committee on Public Works as the primary committee and to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources as the secondary committee.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

At this point, Senator Pangilinan announced the resumption of the interpellations on the privilege speech of Senator Defensor Santiago the previous day.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ENRILE

At the outset, Senator Enrile sought leave to read into the record a portion of an article on federal deficit written by Lawrence J. Kotlikoff, an Economics Professor at Boston University, in *Fortune Encyclopedia of Economics*, to wit:

The manipulation of the definition (of "deficit") should not be surprising since everyone is sure the deficit should be zero but no one is sure how to measure it. The deficit's definition has real implications for economic and budget policy.

Choosing a definition that makes the deficit large will invite efforts to lower it by limiting spending or increasing taxes. The opposite will be true with definitions that will make the deficit appear small. The simple fact is that the deficit is not a well-defined economic concept. The current measure of the deficit or any measure is based on arbitrary choices of how to label government receipts and payments.

The government can conduct any real economic policy and simultaneously report any sized deficit or surplus it wants just through its choice of words. If the government labels "receipts" as "taxes" and "payments" as "expenditures," it will report one number for the deficit.

If it labels "receipts" as "loans" and "payments" as "return of principal and interest," it will report a very different number.

Take social security, for example. "Social security contributions" are called "taxes" and "social security benefits" are called "expenditures."

If the government taxes Mr. X by US\$1,000 this year and pays him US\$1,500 in benefits ten years from now, this year's deficit falls by US\$1,000 and the deficit ten years hence will be

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US\$1,500 higher. But the taxes could just as plausibly be labeled as a forced loan to the government and the benefits could be labeled as repayment of principal plus interest. In that case, there would be no impact on the deficit.”

Adverting to the constitutional provision that no money shall be paid out of the Treasury, except in pursuance of an appropriation by law, Senator Enrile asked whether “Treasury” refers to the National Treasury. Senator Defensor Santiago replied in the affirmative.

Senator Defensor Santiago affirmed that the monies that ought to be paid out of the Treasury are monies received by the National Treasury, adding that, in fact, all values received by the National Treasury have to be accounted for as monies available for expenditure of the Republic of the Philippines.

Senator Enrile asked if no one else can receive any money from anyone whether inside or outside the country, Senator Defensor Santiago replied in the affirmative. She added that the receiving officer is simply an intermediary who is legally obliged to immediately turn over to the Treasury whatever cash, currency or any other object of value he receives, and the inability to do so shall be considered a crime under the Penal Code. This, she said, emphasizes the fact that everything owned by the Philippine government belongs to the National Treasury. She explained further that “National Treasury” is a generic term that contemplates the entirety of all incomes, revenues and other treasures of the State.

Proceeding from that argument, Senator Enrile posited that not even the President can receive money from anyone from outside without turning it over to the National Treasury, much less spend it without an authority in the form of an appropriation from Congress.

Senator Defensor Santiago agreed, stating that such is the accurate meaning of “treasury.” She mentioned that in other countries, when royalty, the President or the First Family receives gifts of high value, he is compelled to turn it over to the State because these are placed under the category of objects belonging to the National Treasury.

Asked whether the transfer of values to the government from any source would have to be received by the national treasurer and thereafter recorded in the books of the government, Senator Defensor Santiago replied in the affirmative. She affirmed that dividends from any source including dividends from investments from private enterprises would also be received by the national treasurer and recorded in the books.* She pointed out that the concept of National Treasury implies a centripetal political force, thus, everything that the State owns or is owed to the State should go to the Treasury as soon as possible.

Senator Enrile noted that the monies received from the sale of assets, both unserviceable and valuable, shall have to enter the National Treasury and shall be disposed in accordance with the constitutional mandate that no money shall be paid out of the Treasury except in pursuance of an appropriation by law. Senator Defensor Santiago stated that such principle flows naturally from the basic definition of “treasury.”

As regards the revenues of the government that must also be received and recorded by the National Treasury, Senator Defensor Santiago said this makes for the orderliness in the bureaucracy and pinpoints responsibility for the stewardship of what is owned by the State.

Senator Enrile argued that even if the amounts received are for special purposes like trust funds, these too should be entered in the books of the Treasury, and subject to the limitation that these monies cannot be paid out except through an appropriation authorized by Congress. Senator Defensor Santiago agreed, adding that regardless of the nomenclature, as long as it is of value, it should go to the Treasury.

As regards the President’s “social fund” sourced from the Pagcor and the PCSO, Senator Enrile asked if these funds are directly received without being entered in the books of the Treasury. Senator Defensor Santiago replied that if such were the case, then it would be unconstitutional. She added that the President has no authority, under the Constitution, to receive the money, thus, the executive order allowing so is considered null and void and she violated the law.

*As corrected by Senator Enrile on September 1, 2004

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Senator Enrile disclosed that the charters of Pagcor and PCSO contain a provision that part of its earnings is allocated for the President's social fund. He then inquired if these monies should also be received and recorded by the Treasury subject to the provision of the Constitution that it shall be appropriated by Congress. Senator Defensor Santiago agreed, commenting that if Congress passed those charters, an authority was therefore given for the release of certain funds to the Office of the President. She added that even if they are special or trust funds, they would still have to go through the mediation of the Treasury before they can be released to the President.

Citing the road user's tax that is accounted for by the National Treasury as a trust fund, Senator Enrile pointed out that other funds intended for special or general use must be appropriated and controlled by Congress.*

Stating that Senator Enrile's position is supported not only by the Constitution but also by logic, Senator Defensor Santiago stated that there is a central location for all the monies and other valuables of the State, including the records of how much is received and disbursed, thus transactions in the government is orderly and transparent. She opined that in a tripartite government, the legislature has the power of the purse, thus, the only one that has the exclusive power to make any appropriations.

Asked if there is a constitutional or statutory authority of the President to utilize social funds without the authorization of the Congress, Senator Defensor Santiago replied that when the charters of Pagcor and PCSO were passed into law, the provision that reserves a certain portion of the income of these agencies was interpreted to mean that an amount would go directly to the Office of the President. She noted that Senator Enrile had a valid point - that the monies should first go to the Treasury and thereafter, released to the President.

Senator Enrile pointed out that even if there is a provision in Pagcor's charter that allocates a certain amount to the social fund, it does not mean the President can automatically disburse the monies without being appropriated by the

Congress as provided for in the Constitution. Agreeing to the remarks of Senator Enrile, Senator Defensor Santiago asserted that if such practice is allowed, the power of the purse possessed by the Congress would be diminished. She concluded that the power of the purse is rendered puerile by the expedience of providing in any law that revenues shall go directly to any office without the mediation of Congress. She further remarked that the Congress should be zealous about its power because that is a way to check the power of judicial review and the power of the commander of the armed forces.

Asked if the money coming from the proceeds of the IOUs issued to a government corporation in paying its obligations is considered as paying money out of Treasury, Senator Defensor Santiago replied in the affirmative, adding that the money of the Treasury would have to be released and used for the purposes designated.

Senator Enrile asked if there is a possible violation of the constitutional mandate should such transaction be paid out without an appropriation from Congress. Senator Defensor Santiago replied that the chances are very high as she cited an issue during the term of former Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho when bonds were issued in the amount of P200 billion. These bonds, she said, were eventually sold to the government because nobody wanted to buy them, thus, the P200 billion went to the Napocor without authority from the Congress. She further commented that the justification for the anomalous practice fell under the category of "Debt Service" but she expressed reservation if it was valid because it might just be an afterthought to justify an illegal act. She stated that each time the money of the Treasury is paid out even to a government agency itself, the Congress plays a stellar role. Thus, in the case of the P200 billion worth of bonds, there was a deliberate disregard of the power of the purse of Congress. She stressed that it is only proper that the Congress call former Secretary Camacho to give him a chance to explain.

Asked about the legal authorization for the "off-budget transactions," Senator Defensor Santiago replied that this is an accountant's

*As corrected by Senator Enrile on September 1, 2004

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term which appears to be not only irrelevant but may even imply an intent to disregard constitutional provisions. She stated that there is certainly no law that authorizes the "non-budgetary accounts" or "off-book accounts."

On Senator Enrile's concern that these labels hide certain transactions in order to go around the constitutional mandate that no money shall be paid out of the treasury except in pursuance of an appropriation made by law, Senator Defensor Santiago suggested that the Senate pass a bill criminalizing the release of public funds unless these have been so authorized by the National Treasury.

Asked whether she agreed with the view that to settle the issue openly and transparently, legislators should effect a reduction of the proposed budget of the president equal to the total of all pork barrels of members of Congress, require that all receipts of government be recorded in the books of the Treasury, and do away with Presidential Decree No. 1177 in order to go back to line budgeting, Senator Defensor Santiago disclosed that she has always been in favor of line budgeting because it serves the public's right to information on matters of public concern. The decree, she pointed out, makes it extremely difficult to read the budget since many lumpsums are included without any explanation to guide the reader.

On whether the legislators should look into all intelligence funds as well as confidential funds being disbursed by functionaries of the government and erase them completely from the budget except those that pertain to the Defense Department, the Philippine National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation, Senator Defensor Santiago stated that it has always been her position that government officials should abide by the very clear constitutional provision that discretionary funds shall be spent only for a public purpose. It is the obligation of Congress, she said, to ensure that public purpose is served by the discretionary funds even as she conceded that while these funds are usually exempted from the standard COA regulations, most of these end up as personal wealth of the person authorized to disburse the funds.

Further, Senator Defensor Santiago questioned why the reduction or removal of the pork barrel should be limited to the legislative branch of government when pork barrel is nothing but a lump-sum discretionary fund that the other branches of government also have. Even minor officials below cabinet rank have pork barrel, she disclosed. She agreed that reducing pork barrel could be a means of reducing public deficit but such cost-cutting activity should include all branches of government.

On the view that the pork barrel of a member of Congress is not actual cash or money made available to any member to be disbursed according to his will, Senator Defensor Santiago stressed that no senator receives money or its equivalent directly from the Treasury or exercises discretion on how it should be spent presumably for a public purpose. A senator, she added, is only empowered to identify certain projects that should have priority for certain localities. However, she pointed out that although this procedure was intended to prevent graft and corruption, some officials have managed to pursue their corrupt practices. This matter, she believed, has caused the public pressure for the legislators to give up their pork barrel.

On whether an audit by a people's committee is the proper remedy to find out how the money that was supposedly allocated to members of Congress was utilized, Senator Defensor Santiago said that such is an ingenious proposal which would not be difficult to do in view of the high technology methodologies that can be used for monitoring certain activities. She agreed with Senator Enrile that the audit should include all kinds of pork barrel of officials in the three branches of government.

Senator Defensor Santiago recalled that when she was a freshman senator in 1992, her office was approached by a number of contractors who offered to make sure that her projects would be taken care of on the condition that she turned over to these contractors the discretion to use the pork barrel and in return for her cooperation, she would be given 20% to 40% of the proceeds. The matter was confirmed by

Senator Flavier at that time, she said, which only shows that the contractors make the same proposition to every newly elected senator. Whether the senator accepts it or not is a deep dark secret, she surmised.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Defensor Santiago and the interpellation thereon to the Committee on Rules so that the suggestion to have a Question Hour could be looked into.

RECONSIDERATION OF THE APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body reconsidered the approval of the Journal of Session No. 15.

CORRECTIONS ON THE JOURNAL

At the instance of Senator Enrile, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body approved the corrections on the Journal of Session No. 15 on page 346, left column, seventh paragraph, third line, after the name "Corpus," to replace the comma (,) with a period (.) and delete the phrase "who accused him of being involved in the bombing," and at the instance of Senator Ejercito Estrada (J) on page 343, right column, fourth paragraph, fifth line, to replace the word "statues" with STATUTES.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL, AS CORRECTED

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body approved the Journal of Session No. 15, as corrected.

COAUTHOR

Senator Pangilinan manifested that Senator Lapid is a coauthor of Senate Bill No. 830.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 4, entitled

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION AMENDING THE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR FOR THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

The text of the resolution reads as follows:

CALENDAR OF SESSION

First Regular Session

1. Commencement of Session – July 26, 2004 – September 24, 2004
2. Adjournment of Session – September 25, 2004 – October 24, 2004
3. Resumption of Session – October 25, 2004 – [October 29, 2004]
December 17, 2004
- [4. Adjournment of Session – October 30, 2004 – November 7, 2004
5. Resumption of Session – November 8, 2004 – December 17, 2004]
- [6] 4. Adjournment of Session – December 18, 2004 – January 9, 2005
- [7] 5. Resumption of Session – January 10, 2005 – March 18, 2005
- [8] 6. Adjournment of Session – March 19, 2005 – April 10, 2005
- [9] 7. Resumption of Session – April 11, 2005 – June 10, 2005
(Sine Die Adjournment)
- [10] 8. Adjournment of Session – June 11, 2005 – July 24, 2005

REMARKS OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

Senator Pangilinan stated that the resolution seeks to amend the legislative calendar that has been previously adopted by doing away with the one-week resumption in October and the one-week adjournment in November in order to extend the session days from October 25 to December 17. He said that the House of Representatives had concurred with the proposed amendment and having conferred with Senator Pimentel, he (Senator Pangilinan) was supporting the proposed amendment.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR OSMEÑA

Noting that the proposed amendment would cancel the adjournment of session from October 30 to November 7, Senator Osmeña asked whether there would be sessions on November 1 and 2. Senator Pangilinan said that traditionally, November 1 and 2 are nonworking public holidays. He affirmed that there will only be one session day during the week which is on November 3 (Wednesday).

In this regard, Senator Osmeña suggested that sessions be held on November 3 to 5 since the budget measure would be discussed during this time. He expressed concern that the Senate might not have enough time to properly scrutinize the measure in time for its passage in the first or second week of December. He adverted to last Monday's ways and means committee hearing where the finance secretary was not able to finish her presentation and the budget secretary was not able to begin her presentation. This year's budget, he stated, is going to be crucial given the controversial tax bills that the Senate would not be ready to consider until January 2005. In effect, he pointed out, the Body would be giving the national government a spending authorization without the taxes in place.

Senator Pangilinan interposed no objection to Senator Osmeña's proposal.

The Chair said that in practice, the Senate holds sessions during Thursday and Friday per agreement of the Body.

Senator Osmeña pointed out that it has been the practice of the Senate to hold sessions on Thursday to consider bills of local application; however, no such bills would be considered at this time because the committee hearings have not yet started. He reiterated his suggestion that the Senate hold sessions on November 4 and 5, 2004 to make up for the holidays on November 1 and 2.

ADOPTION OF SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 4 was adopted by the Body.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Deputy Secretary for Legislation read the following matters and the Chair made the corresponding referrals:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 901, entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE INCENTIVES
FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR
TO UNDERTAKE RENTAL
RESIDENTIAL HOUSING AT
RATES AFFORDABLE BY LOW
AND MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

To the Committees on Urban Planning,
Housing and Resettlement; Social Justice,
Welfare and Rural Development; and Ways
and Means

Senate Bill No. 902, entitled

AN ACT TO REGULATE THE
PROCUREMENT AND TRANSPLANT
OF HUMAN ORGANS AND TISSUES
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

To the Committees on Health and
Demography; and Finance

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Senate Bill No. 903, entitled

AN ACT PENALIZING MOTHERS WHO TAKE COCAINE OR OTHER ILLEGAL DRUGS DURING PREGNANCY AND THEREBY CAUSE DEATH OR SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURY TO THE UNBORN CHILD OR NEW-BORN AND AMENDING ARTICLES 255 AND 264 OF ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws; and Youth, Women and Family Relations

Senate Bill No. 904, entitled

AN ACT REDUCING THE RATE OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY THROUGH EVALUATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROGRAMS

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Health and Demography; Youth, Women and Family Relations; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 905, entitled

AN ACT TO INSTITUTE A NATIONAL BAKERY INDUSTRY POLICY AND TO CREATE THE NATIONAL BAKERY REGULATORY AGENCY

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Trade and Commerce; Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 906, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MAGNA CARTA FOR

DISABLED PERSONS, GRANTING ADDITIONAL PRIVILEGES AND INCENTIVES TO DISABLED PERSONS SIMILAR TO THOSE ENJOYED BY SENIOR CITIZENS, AND OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 907, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING HIGHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN, ESTABLISHING A WOMEN'S HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Youth, Women and Family Relations; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 908, entitled

AN ACT MAKING R.A. 7323 MORE EFFECTIVE AND RELEVANT TO PRESENT AND FUTURE CONDITIONS BY EXPANDING ITS COVERAGE IN TERMS OF EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION, ADJUSTING THE INCOME CLASSIFICATION REQUIREMENT THEREIN, PROVIDING AUTOMATIC AND NON-DIMINUTION CLAUSES ON ITS BUDGETARY ALLOCATION AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR THOSE WHO DISHONOR THE EDUCATION VOUCHERS, AMENDING FOR THESE PURPOSES R.A. 7323 ENTITLED "AN ACT TO HELP POOR BUT DESERVING STUDENTS PURSUE THEIR EDUCATION BY ENCOURAGING

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THEIR EMPLOYMENT DURING SUMMER AND/OR CHRISTMAS VACATIONS, THROUGH INCENTIVES GRANTED TO EMPLOYERS, ALLOWING THEM TO PAY ONLY SIXTY PER CENTUM OF THEIR SALARIES OR WAGES AND THE FORTY PER CENTUM THROUGH EDUCATION VOUCHERS TO BE PAID BY THE GOVERNMENT, PROHIBITING AND PENALIZING THE FILING OF FRAUDULENT OR FICTITIOUS CLAIMS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 909, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF THE VERNACULAR AND FILIPINO IN FUNCTIONAL LITERACY AND PROVIDING GUIDELINES FOR ITS CLASSROOM USE

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture

Senate Bill No. 910, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE OPEN LEARNING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 911, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE NATIONAL MAPPING AND RESOURCE INFORMATION AUTHORITY (NAMRIA)

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; National Defense and Security; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 912, entitled

AN ACT REVISING THE SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND STUDENT YOUTH, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 913, entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE PRESERVATION AND CULTIVATION OF THE FILIPINO HERITAGE AMONG FILIPINOS OVERSEAS THROUGH THE TEACHING OF FILIPINO LANGUAGE AND HISTORY, ASSISTANCE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF PHILIPPINE SCHOOLS AND FILIPINIANA RESOURCE CENTERS ABROAD, AND THE CREATION OF A COMMITTEE ON HERITAGE AND CULTURE FOR OVERSEAS FILIPINOS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Foreign Relations; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 914, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING THAT ALL HOSPITALS, CLINICS, HEALTH CENTERS AND OTHER SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENTS RENDERING MATERNITY SERVICE SHALL ESTABLISH LITERACY PROGRAMS FOR ALL EXPECTANT MOTHERS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 915, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A PUBLIC CORPORATION TO BE KNOWN AS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN AND YOUTH, AND TO DEFINE ITS POWERS AND PURPOSES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises; Youth, Women and Family Relations; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 916, entitled

AN ACT PROCLAIMING THE CHOCOLATE HILLS AS NATIONAL PATRIMONY AND GEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS, PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR THEIR PILLAGE, DEFACEMENT AND DESPOIL, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; and Tourism

Senate Bill No. 917, entitled

AN ACT TO ABSOLUTELY PROHIBIT THE TRADE OR EXPORT OF WILDLIFE, BOTH FLORA AND FAUNA OF WHATEVER SPECIES, WHETHER DEAD OR ALIVE, PROVIDING PENALTY THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; and Agriculture and Food

Senate Bill No. 918, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE OPENING OF SUBDIVISION ROADS TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC FOR ALTERNATIVE ACCESS TO MAIN THOROUGHFARES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Public Works; and Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement

Senate Bill No. 919, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED FORTY-EIGHT HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIX (4846), AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CULTURAL PROPERTIES PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION ACT

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Finance

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Senate Bill No. 920, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED SIX THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED FIFTY-SEVEN (R.A. 6657), AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM LAW OF 1998," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committee on Agrarian Reform

Senate Bill No. 921, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7743, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL, CITY, AND MUNICIPAL LIBRARIES AND BARANGAY READING CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 922, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING AND ESTABLISHING RIVERS, RIVER SYSTEMS, BEACHES, SHORES AND WATERWAYS AS ECOLOGICAL ZONES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 923, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE COLLECTION OF A TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FEE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committee on Tourism

Senate Bill No. 924, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A NATIONAL ECOTOURISM POLICY, ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK FOR ITS INSTITUTIONALIZATION, PROVIDING THE MECHANISMS FOR ITS APPROPRIATE IMPLEMENTATIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Tourism; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 925, entitled

AN ACT PLACING ALL GOVERNMENT COTTAGES AND RESTHOUSES IN BAGUIO CITY AND BENGUET PROVINCE UNDER THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, ALLOWING THE LEASE OF THE SAME OR THEIR CONVERSION INTO TOURIST PLACES, SUBJECT TO CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Tourism; and Public Works

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Senate Bill No. 926, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PROTECTION, PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF NATIONAL LANDMARKS, ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL LANDMARKS COUNCIL FOR THE PURPOSE, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 927, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE URBAN AND COUNTRYSIDE GREENING IN THE PHILIPPINES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 928, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 929, entitled

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

BY MAKING THE APPOINTMENT OF AN ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICER MANDATORY FOR PROVINCIAL, CITY AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE SECTION 484(A) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Local Government; and Environment and Natural Resources

Senate Bill No. 930, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 426 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, "THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991," BY MANDATING THE SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN TO IMPLEMENT AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAM IN THEIR RESPECTIVE BARANGAYS, PROVIDING THE MECHANISM FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Local Government; and Environment and Natural Resources

Senate Bill No. 931, entitled

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, PRESCRIBING ITS FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on National Defense
and Security; Foreign Relations; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 932, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING A NATIONAL
PEACE POLICY THEREBY
CREATING A COMMISSION ON
PEACE

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Peace, Unification
and Reconciliation; Civil Service and Government
Reorganization; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 933, entitled

AN ACT TO INSTITUTIONALIZE
THE BASIC SERVICE OF
INTEGRATED SOLID WASTE
COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL
IN ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENT
UNITS, AMENDING FOR THAT
PURPOSE THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991,
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

To the Committee on Local Government

Senate Bill No. 934, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE LOCAL
HOUSING BOARD AND AMENDING
SECTIONS 447 AND 458 OF
R.A. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CODE OF 1991, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Local Government;
and Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement**

Senate Bill No. 935, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL
TOURISM POLICY, CREATING
THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
ADVISORY COUNCIL, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

To the Committees on Tourism; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 936, entitled

AN ACT FURTHER AMENDING
SECTIONS THREE AND FOUR OF
REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED
THREE THOUSAND FOUR
HUNDRED FIFTY-SIX, AS
AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT
NUMBERED ONE THOUSAND
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-SEVEN,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
INTERNAL AUDITING ACT OF
1962

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Finance; and Civil
Service and Government Reorganization**

Senate Bill No. 937, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING A ONE (1)
MONTH NON-CUMULATIVE
LEAVE WITH PAY TO WOMEN
WORKERS WHO UNDERGO
MAJOR SURGICAL INTERNAL
OPERATIONS ON THEIR
REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Labor, Employment
and Human Resources Development; and
Civil Service and Government Reorganization**

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Senate Bill No. 938, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE POSITION OF BARANGAY NUTRITION WORKER IN EVERY BARANGAY PROVIDING INCENTIVES THERETO, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1569

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Health and Demography; Local Government; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 939, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE CREATION OF A COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN EACH LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Local Government; and Environment and Natural Resources

Senate Bill No. 940, entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR TOY SAFETY LABELING

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committee on Trade and Commerce

Senate Bill No. 941, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM, PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR DEVELOPERS, MANUFACTURERS AND USERS

OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Energy; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 942, entitled

AN ACT CREATING AND ESTABLISHING THE INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Civil Service and Government Reorganization; National Defense and Security; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 943, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC RESTROOMS

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Public Works; Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 944, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING NEWLY APPOINTED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES TO UNDERGO ORIENTATION COURSES UPON ASSUMPTION TO OFFICE AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committee on Civil Service and Government Reorganization

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Senate Bill No. 945, entitled

AN ACT ALLOCATING THE COLLECTIONS FROM THE TRAVEL TAX TO THE PHILIPPINE TOURISM AUTHORITY, AMENDING THEREBY PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1183, AS AMENDED, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7722, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Ways and Means; and Tourism

Senate Bill No. 946, entitled

AN ACT TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND OTHER VULNERABLE SUBPOPULATIONS FROM EXPOSURE TO CERTAIN ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTANTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Youth, Women and Family Relations; Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 947, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS, CITY AND MUNICIPAL MAYORS, AND PUNONG BARANGAY TO POST AND PUBLISH WITHIN THE TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION OF THEIR LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS A SUMMARY OF ALL INCOME AND REVENUE FROM BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SOURCES AND UTILIZATION OF FUNDS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committee on Local Government

Senate Bill No. 948, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLE 341 (WHITE SLAVE TRADE) OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE TO PROVIDE A DETERRENT TO THE PROMOTION OF THE PROSTITUTION AND INCREASING THE PENALTY OF IMPRISONMENT AND FINE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws

Senate Bill No. 949, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING BENEFITS FOR EARLY RETIREMENT AND VOLUNTARY SEPARATION FROM THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE, PROVIDING A SYSTEM OF FUNDING THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committees on Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 950, entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN SECTIONS OF R.A. 7431, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1992, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committee on Civil Service and
Government Reorganization**

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCE
OF BUSINESS**

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 62, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON
HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY
TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, THE ALLEGATION
THAT SENIOR CITIZENS ARE
UNABLE TO AVAIL OF 20%
DISCOUNT ON MEDICINES

Introduced by Senator Luisa "Loi" P. Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Health and
Demography; and Social Justice, Welfare and
Rural Development**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 63, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY TO
INQUIRE AND LOOK INTO IN
AID OF LEGISLATION, THE
CONTINUOUS SURGE IN THE
PRICE OF ELECTRIC POWER
USED BY END CONSUMERS
FROM THE TIME OF THE
PASSAGE OF R.A. 9136 OR THE
ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY
REFORM ACT OF 2001 (EPIRA),
WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY
ENVISIONED TO IMPROVE AND
MAKE EFFICIENT THE
OPERATIONS OF THE POWER
INDUSTRY EVENTUALLY
PULLING DOWN THE PRICE OF
ELECTRIC POWER, WITH THE
END IN VIEW OF DETERMINING
WHETHER THE PROVISIONS OF
EPIRA OR OTHER RELATED
LAWS FOR THAT MATTER,
PARTICULARLY THOSE
PERTAINING TO PASS-ON

CHARGES NEEDS TO BE
AMENDED IF THE SAME HAVE
BEEN FOUND TO BE
UNWARRANTED ON THE PART
OF THE ELECTRIC CONSUMERS

Introduced by Senator Magsaysay Jr.

To the Committee on Energy

COMMUNICATION

Letter from Executive Secretary Alberto G.
Romulo of the Office of the President of the
Philippines, transmitting to the Senate the
letter of Her Excellency, President Gloria
Macapagal Arroyo, addressed to Speaker
Jose C. De Venecia Jr. of the House of
Representatives, certifying to the necessity
of the immediate enactment of House Bill
No. 2258, entitled

AN ACT SETTING THE DATE OF
THE REGULAR ELECTIONS OF
THE REGIONAL GOVERNOR,
REGIONAL VICE-GOVERNOR
AND MEMBERS OF THE
REGIONAL LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY OF THE AUTO-
NOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM
MINDANAO, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

pursuant to the provisions of Article VI,
Section 26(2) of the Constitution.


To the Committee on Rules

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there
being no objection, the Chair declared the
session adjourned until three o'clock in the
afternoon of the following day.

It was 5:33 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the
foregoing.


OSCAR G. YABES
Secretary of the Senate

Approved on September 1, 2004