



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**Senate**  
Pasay City

# Journal

**SESSION NO. 34**  
Monday, October 17, 2016

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
**FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

At 3:18 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel, called the session to order.

**PRAYER**

Sen. Risa Hontiveros led the prayer, to wit:

*O Panginoon, na may iba't ibang matamis na Pangalang mga sambayanan sa Pilipinas;*

*O diwa ng humanismo na nagpapakilos sa bawat Pilipinong may mabuting kalooban;*

*O kasaysayan, marami pong salamat para sa lahat ng biyaya na ipinagkaloob Ninyo sa amin: ang aming mga sarili; ang aming mga magulang na nag-aruga sa amin dala ng kanilang mga pangarap at sa kabila ng kanilang limitasyon; ang ligaya at pag-asa ng pag-ibig; ang mga anak na atin namang mga pangarap para sa kinabukasan; mga natututunan na sa pagdaan ng panahon ay nahihinog sa karunungan; ang makahulugang trabaho; si Inang Bayan na hinahamon*

*ng di tiyak na panahon ngunit umaasa para sa isang makataong bukas.*

*Ipagkaloob Ninyo po sa aming mga senador at sa minamahal naming Senado na maging malakas at independiyente sa aming pakikipagsapalaran sa demokrasya.*

*Pagalawin po Ninyo ang mga diwa na gunitain at dugtungan ang unang sentenaryo ng Senado upang maging tuntungan ng patuloy na reporma sa aming bansa para sa kanyang mga mamamayan lalo na sa ganitong panahon ng sakuna na dulot ng bagyong Karen at para sa ating rehiyon at daigdig.*

*Sa lahat nito, ipagkaloob po Ninyo sa amin na kumilos nang marangal para sa kadakilaan ni Inang Bayan.*

*Siya Nawa/Inshallah/Harinawa.*

**NATIONAL ANTHEM**

The Philippine Normal University (PNU) Chorale led the singing of the national anthem and thereafter the PNU Angklung Rondalla Ensemble performed a medley of Filipino folk songs.



## ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate, Atty. Lutgardo B. Barbo, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Angara, S.	Lacson, P. M.
Aquino, P. B. IV B.	Legarda, L.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Pacquiao, E. M. D.
De Lima, L. M.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Drilon, F. M.	Pimentel III, A. K.
Ejercito, J. V. G.	Poe, G.
Escudero, F. J. G.	Recto, R. G.
Gatchalian, W.	Sotto III, V. C.
Gordon, R. J.	Villanueva, J.
Honasan, G. B.	Villar, C. A.
Hontiveros, R.	Zubiri, J. M. F.

With 22 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator Cayetano was on official mission abroad as he accompanied President Duterte in his state visits to Brunei and China.

Senator Trillanes was absent.

## APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journals of Session No. 32 (October 11, 2016) and 33 (October 12, 2016) and considered them approved.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Sotto acknowledged the presence in the gallery of the following guests of the Senate President: Secretaries Rodolfo Salalima of DICT, Mike Sueno of the DILG, and Adelino Sityo of the PLLO.

Senate President Pimentel welcomed the guests to the Senate.

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

## CENTENNIAL MESSAGE OF SENATE PRESIDENT PIMENTEL

On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the Senate of the Philippines, Senate President Pimentel recalled the time when then Senate President Manuel L. Quezon banged the gavel on October 16, 1916, to convene the First Congress of the Senate even as he greeted and congratulated the Senate family for their excellent service.

*The full text of the Senate President's centennial message follows:*

The institution we love and serve is now 100 years old.

I would like to take this opportunity to greet all my fellow senators, their staff, the officials and employees of the Senate, a happy once in a lifetime centennial!

After a hundred years, most organizations, except the most exceptional, face decline or irrelevance, assuming that they still exist.

After a hundred years, most wine, except the most exceptional, would go sour or lose spirit even if it is kept under the best conditions.

After a hundred years, most songs, except the most exceptional, would go forgotten, or even if remembered, would no longer please like it used to do.

A hundred years is a long time and it is my privilege to be a part of something exceptional, which is the Senate of the Philippines. We remain as strong and as committed to the service of the nation since we were first convened on October 16, 1916, as we are today when we celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> year.

What a difference a hundred years make! In 1916 when Manuel Quezon first banged the gavel of the Senate President, we were an American colony of 9.5 million souls. Our main objective then was independence and the freedom to chart our own course for our nation.

Today, we are a nation of more than 100 million Filipinos, an independent nation facing the challenges of continued rampant poverty, the rise of drugs and criminality, and intrusions into our national patrimony. While our tasks remain the same – to enact relevant laws, to check abuses, to review international treaties and, above all, to uphold democratic ideals – the context in which we fulfill them always changes.

We have weathered war, dictatorship, and coups in a hundred years. We remained, we



prevailed. For these, we must give credit not just to the senators past and present but to the employees of the Senate as well. We, the senators, may make many headlines with our words and debates in the session hall, but without the efforts of our staff and the employees of the Senate, our institution would not have made history the way it did.

With your permission and that of my esteemed colleagues, I wish to express my congratulations to all the members of the Senate family – officials, staff and employees – for their excellent service. On behalf of this Body, I thank them for their selfless devotion. We would not be where we are now without them.

As we celebrate our achievements and look back to the glory of the past, let us remember that our watch is not yet done. We have the future to look forward to, a future full of opportunities to serve our countrymen.

Our current Majority here in the Senate has a legislative program of government for change which I will no longer mention. I reminded you about this during the centennial dinner.

The success of this program depends on all of us here in the Senate – senators, officials, staff, employees, and all the members of the Senate family. We remember those who have served before us, many of whom already passed away, and honor them, by giving the same level of excellence, dedication and service as they did.

We cannot rest on our laurels. We must also continue the tradition of excellence, that we may serve as an example to those who would follow us in serving the Senate in the future. Only then will our program of government for change succeed.

The struggle for a better life for every Filipino never ends. As we climb one mountain, there is another summit to reach. Our people deserve only the best. We cannot make them settle anything for less. We must be ready to fulfill the Filipino people's dream of a better Philippines. We must stay true to our duty and continue to be relevant to our people's lives and our country's history.

And let me say that I have every trust and confidence in the members of the Senate family. Whatever the future may hold for us, I trust that we can overcome any problem so long as we have each other and help each other.

As we continue our journey, I cannot ask for better companions. We will live up to our centennial motto: "*Ang Senado, Sandigan ng Demokrasya, Dangal ng Sambayanang Pilipino!*"

*Mabuhay ang Senado ng Pilipinas!*

*Maraming salamat po* and congratulations to all of us.

## **CENTENNIAL MESSAGE OF SENATE MINORITY LEADER RECTO**

On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the Senate of the Philippines, Senate Minority Leader Recto cited the role of the Senate in shaping the country's history.

*The full text of Senator Recto's centennial message follows:*

The burden of being a senator is that we are not only answerable to the present and to the future, but also to the past.

And we are reminded of our being trustees of a proud heritage when we walk past the names of our predecessors etched on the plaques that hang on the corridor near the session hall.

For some of us, the link is personal because in the roster is an ancestor, so in times of great decisions, as we ponder our choices, we inevitably ask ourselves what would he have done if he were alive today.

Indeed, we summon the past to chart the future, and reading the Senate's records never fails to be a teachable moment for those who seek wisdom from this institution's storied past.

The Senate's story in the past 100 years is interwoven with the nation's.

Whatever the era, the Senate played a major role in shaping our country's history.

Any chronicle of the struggle of our race – for independence, against occupation and in the restoration of freedom – will not be complete if this institution's contribution is not faithfully recalled.

During colonial rule, the Senate was a bastion for independence.

Amid the rubble of war, it lifted the spirits of a people whose homes may have been shattered but whose hopes were not, and rallied them to reconstruction.

When democracy was stifled, it did not go gently into the night; many of its members carried the torch until the second dawn of freedom.

Recall any watershed in our history, and the senators were right there in the middle of it, not





as mere or mute witnesses but as lead actors, dictating the tempo and defining the outcome.

For this has always been the role of this institution: A few good men and women fighting the good fight, serving as protectors of the people.

Whenever the state overreaches to dilute rights and snatch liberties, the Senate steps forward and stands in front of the people.

Whenever a leader is tempted to perpetuate himself to power, the Senate foils his selfish ambition.

Whenever a harm is committed, whether to one man whose name has been tarnished or to the nation whose honor has been stained, the Senate rectifies it.

There's also one freedom that the Senate has fought for through the ages – freedom from want.

It has birthed brave legislation to spur growth, to level the playing field, to end economic bondage, to create wealth, and to make sure that it is enjoyed by all.

And in all of these, senators were guided by what was not popular but what was right.

In many crusades, it sailed against the wind and defied convention.

Many members fought solitary fights, never seeking refuge in the strength of numbers but in the strength of their ideas.

Each one of them believed that one man with conviction is enough to constitute a majority.

People see them as tilting the windmills. They, on the other hand, imagine their lances as pricking the nation's conscience.

The labors of our predecessors were so prodigious that it can be said that the complete history of modern Philippines can be written by just patching together the excerpts of their biographies.

For this indeed is true: For what is the history of our country for the last 100 years but the combined life stories of the members of the Senate?

Since Quezon and 23 other originals borrowed the sala of the Goldenberg Mansion, which is the stately house beside DBM, to hold the Senate's inaugural session 100 years ago, the Senate has remained small.

There is also one tradition it has adhered to since: To do its work in rented buildings.

With 24 members who cannot fill half a bus, this Senate is one of the smallest in the world.

As befits its size, it holds session in a rented hall whose floor area is smaller than a volleyball court. Some call it the tiniest legislative plenary hall in the world, but I call it cozy.

And if there is a beauty contest among senatorial edifices in the world, the Philippine Senate, with its bunker-type concrete façade, will never win.

All its members may be prone to hyperbole but none would ever dare to call their rented digs "magnificent" or "imposing."

Compared to, say, Hungary's beautiful Parliament building by the Danube, ours has the unkempt look of a tool shed.

As a book must not be judged by its cover, a legislature must not be by its façade, or by the size of the real estate it occupies.

I am proud of the prodigious output of this 24-person crew in studying bills, churning out laws, appropriating funds, conducting zealous oversight, confirming appointees, ratifying treaties, and yes, probing scams.

While the latter makes for good TV, they do not even represent a tiny fraction of the work we do. Lawmaking is the main event; telenovela-like probes are sideshows.

The fact is, most of our labors are done outside the glare of klieg lights — in conference rooms where the humdrum of policymaking is endured for hours, in senators' and secretariat offices where staff work on ideas which do our nation good even if they do not on our reelection chances.

The beating heart of the Senate is not in this volleyball court-size chamber which comes to life at three p.m. three times a week, but in rooms where policies are discussed and debated.

The session hall may be the showroom, but the production line lies somewhere else. It has been said that the Senate in session is exhibition. But the Senate conducting committee hearings is at work.

Laws do not incubate in the plenary. They arrive here almost complete except for the finishing élan, cancelling the need for finish-line oratory as it would be repeating what has been said in the committees.

When the vetting is rigorous, the voting becomes anti-climactic. And while the division of

*psmt*

the house may tally votes, it does not record the work that goes into the measure.

I have to stress this to abuse the popular notion that we are preoccupied with probes and not with policy. Nothing is farther from the truth.

The fact is, each one of us here have introduced and heard more bills than we have interrogated witnesses. As it is true in life as in legislation, the essential is invisible to the public eye.

Today, we celebrate 100 years of the Senate, including the 25 years when it was padlocked or abolished, because as much can be learned when it was in session, as it was when shuttered.

And the period when the Senate was closed coincided with our nation's darkest – for 15 years when Martial Law raged, and five years under the Japanese occupation.

For that was how liberty probably died – through the loud clanging of the chains that locked the Senate doors.

There was also a brief period of five years from 1936 to 1941, when we experimented with unicameralism, but soon this folly was rectified by the same way it was imposed: through a constitutional amendment.

Mr. President, it gave me great relief when I heard you made the solemn pledge in the old Senate hall, where your father and my grandfather once walked, that as a custodian of its legacy, you will not allow the Senate to perish during your watch.

Although yours is a powerful voice, it merely echoes what the people want, so that even if we sign our own death warrants, the sovereign would overrule us, out of the belief that their interests are served more by a Senate in existence than a Senate extinguished.

It is also what the names on the wall near this hall would want. If they could speak, their centennial message would be that of another senator, that we must toil as hard as they did, be as vigilant as they have been, and better than they were because “the work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives, and the dream shall never die.”

*Mabuhay ang Senado!*

## **CENTENNIAL MESSAGE OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER SOTTO**

As the Senate celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> year of existence, Senate Majority Leader Sotto delivered the following speech:

Today marks the first day of the 100<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of this noble institution. After all its highs and lows — from enacting notable laws that shaped the nation, to changing its form, and even being abolished — here we are today, still independent, remains to be resilient, persists to ensure its integrity, and continues to echo the voice of the people.

It is with great honor and pride, together with Senate President Pimentel, that I am shepherding the same Philippine Senate that exactly 100 years today, was steered by great Filipino senators led by then Senate President Manuel Luis Quezon and coincidentally joined, among others, by my great grand uncle, Sen. Filemon Sotto representing the 10<sup>th</sup> senatorial district of Cebu; thus making this Representation the sole member of the Philippine Congress today who has the fate of having an ancestor in the “first” Philippine Legislature and became part of the same august Chamber 100 years after.


In light of the foregoing, allow me to move for the adjournment of the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress as we celebrate our 100 years of existence, with the message to the Filipino people – that the Senate of the Philippines will continue to serve with the virtues of dignity, honesty and integrity.

## **ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION**

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

*It was 3:49 p.m.*

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

  
**ATTY. LUTGARDO B. BARBO**  
*Secretary of the Senate*  
 11/18

Approved on October 18, 2016