



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

S e n a t e

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Journal

SESSION NO. 44

Monday, December 17, 2007

**FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

SESSION NO. 44
Monday, December 17, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:52 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Manny Villar, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Juan Miguel F. Zubiri led the prayer, to wit:

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till and keep it."

Genesis 2:15

Father, we and all Your creations depend on You, our Lord, on one another and the rest of Your wonderful creations for our existence. Give us wisdom, a kind heart, and a strong will to be good stewards of all that You have given us — to tend, to nurture, to cherish, and to protect. Help us banish from our minds and deeds all greed and animosity.

Instill in us the reverence for every living thing, lest in the hardness of our hearts we lose our reverence for life itself.

We thank You for all Your graces and blessings. Help us to treasure Your priceless gift of pure life-giving water and teach us to conserve and protect the Earth's springs, brooks, rivers, and oceans.

Help us make prudent use of our fertile soil and forests. Help us clean the air that we breathe and heal the atmosphere that protects us. May we always share the wealth of knowledge about using Your gifts more efficiently for the benefit of all.

We pray that we live a life of peace, love and service.

Amen.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The Senate Choir led the singing of the National Anthem and thereafter rendered the song entitled, *Angels We Have Heard on High*.

ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary of the Senate, Emma Lirio-Reyes, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Angara, E. J.	Lacson, P. M.
Aquino III, B. S. C.	Lapid, M. L. M.
Arroyo, J. P.	Legarda, L.
Cayetano, A. P. C. S.	Madrigal, M. A.
Cayetano, C. P. S.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Defensor Santiago, M.	Pimentel Jr., A. Q.
Ejercito Estrada, J.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Enrile, J. P.	Villar, M.
Gordon, R. J.	Zubiri, J. M. F.
Honasan, G. B.	

With 19 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator Escudero arrived after the roll call.

Senator Roxas was on official mission.

Senator Biazon was absent.

Senator Trillanes was unable to attend the session.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS**

At this juncture, Senator Pangilinan acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Mayor Maria Piasas, Vice Mayor Marivic Dolosino and the Sangguniang Bayan members of the Municipality of Guindulman, Bohol.

The Senate President welcomed the guests to the Senate.

106

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. 43 and considered it approved.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary of the Senate read the following matters and the Chair made the corresponding referrals:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1959, entitled

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MAGNA
CARTA OF WOMEN**

Introduced by Senator Ramon "Bong"
Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Youth, Women and
Family Relations**

Senate Bill No. 1960, entitled

**AN ACT GIVING MEANING TO THE
CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEE
ON THE PROMOTION OF THE
PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL AND MORAL
WELL-BEING OF THE FILIPINO
YOUTH, PROVIDING FOR MECHAN-
ISMS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO
ACHIEVE THE SAME AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

**To the Committees on Youth, Women and
Family Relations; and Social Justice, Welfare
and Rural Development**

Senate Bill No. 1961, entitled

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE
RIGHTS OF FILIPINO WOMEN BY
INTEGRATING THE TEACHING OF
SELF-DEFENSE AND PROVIDING
ITS FREE ACCESS TO FEMALE
CONSTITUENTS, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

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

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 251, entitled

**RESOLUTION URGING THE APPRO-
PRIATE COMMITTEES OF THE
SENATE TO CONDUCT AN
INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, TO SCRUTINIZE
THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE
CONTINUING DEPRECIATION OF
THE UNITED STATES DOLLAR ON
THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF
FILIPINOS IN OUR COUNTRY AND
TO PUT IN PLACE MEASURES TO
ALLEVIATE THE SAME**

Introduced by Senator Gordon

**To the Committees on Economic Affairs;
and Labor, Employment and Human Resources
Development**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 252, entitled

**RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN
INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, BY THE PERTINENT
COMMITTEES TO EXAMINE THE
ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE
CONTINUING DEPRECIATION OF
THE UNITED STATES DOLLAR ON
UNITED STATES DOLLAR EARNERS
UNDER THE EMPLOY OF THE
GOVERNMENT AND TO DEVISE
MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE SAME**

Introduced by Senator Gordon

**To the Committees on Economic Affairs;
and Labor, Employment and Human Resources
Development**

COMMUNICATION

Letter from Executive Secretary Eduardo R. Ermita of the Office of the President of the Philippines, dated 12 December 2007, transmitting to the Senate

10

the letter of even date 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. 3124, entitled

AN ACT ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RETAIL COMPETITION AND OPEN ACCESS IN THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 31 AND 43 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9136 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY ACT OF 2001" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

pursuant to the provisions of Article VI, Section 26 (2) of the 1987 Constitution.

To the Committee on Rules

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1962, entitled

AN ACT CLASSIFYING TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AS ZERO PERCENT (0%) VALUE-ADDED TAX (VAT) TRANSACTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 108 (B) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9337, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE TAX REFORM ACT OF 1997, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator MAR Roxas

To the Committees on Ways and Means; and Energy

Senate Bill No. 1963, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9184, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT REFORM ACT

Introduced by Senator Francis "Chiz" G. Escudero

To the Committees on Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws; and Finance

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 253, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE BRILLIANT STUDENTS OF GRACE CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL, ALYSSA SHEENA TAN, BRYAN LAO, AND MARK IAN TAN, FOR HONOURING THE PHILIPPINES WITH A GOLD IN THE 2007 WORLD ROBOTICS OLYMPIAD HELD IN TAIWAN ON NOVEMBER 17, 2007, A BEAMING SYMBOL OF FILIPINO STUDENTS' COMPETITIVE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE AND ADVANCED SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committee on Rules


Proposed Senate Resolution No. 254, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON CURBING DELIBERATE INACCURACY IN POLITICAL OPINION POLLS, AND DIRECTING THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE PHILIPPINE STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION, TO DESIGN A SYSTEM OF ACCREDITATION FOR FIRMS THAT CONDUCT POLITICAL SURVEYS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committees on Public Information and Mass Media; and Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws

COMMUNICATION

Letter from Assistant Governor and General Counsel Juan de Zuñiga Jr. of the *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas*, dated 6 December 2007, furnishing the Senate with a certified copy of BSP Memorandum No. M-2007-038, dated 29 November 2007, 



in compliance with Section 15 (a) of Republic Act No. 7653 (The New Central Bank Act)

To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Report No. 23, submitted by the Committee on Justice and Human Rights, on Senate Bill No. 1710, introduced by Senator Benigno S. Aquino III, entitled

AN ACT BANNING THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE JUDICIAL BAR COUNCIL (JBC) WHO HAS ALREADY SERVED THE FULL TERM,

recommending its approval without amendment.

Dissenting: Senator Alan Peter "Compañero" S. Cayetano

Sponsors: Senators Francis "Chiz" G. Escudero and Benigno S. Aquino III

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

INQUIRY OF SENATOR LACSON

Senator Lacson sought clarification whether Senate employees would receive the P10,000 performance bonus granted by President Arroyo to government employees, P7,000 of which would come from the DBM, and the remaining P3,000 from the concerned agency.

The Senate President clarified that agencies with fiscal autonomy are excluded from the order of the President; nevertheless, he disclosed that the Senate employees would be given a bonus to be announced at the Christmas party later in the day.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Pimentel delivered the following speech:

**ARE WE A RACE OF SUCKERS?
OR JUST A HAPPY-GO-LUCKY
KIND OF PEOPLE?**

Are we a race of suckers? Or are we just a plain happy-go-lucky kind of people?

I use the question to bring to the fore what appears to be our wishy-washy attitude towards science and technology as a concrete means to propel the country into the developed world. Not only do we fail to provide the Department of Science and Technology with adequate funds to pursue research and development, neither are we outraged by the neglect of our officials to support our inventors, so that their creativeness may benefit the nation.

Concretely, I would like to advert to two things to which I was a witness where the government failed to extend the support needed to two inventors. Their inventions would have helped to rid the nation of overdependence on fossil fuel.

One event took place soon after Cory Aquino took over the presidency from Mr. Ferdinand E. Marcos in 1986. I was, then, the Minister of Local Government.

The other happened 17 years later, to be exact, in 2003. I was, then, about to end my term as a senator.

Water-run car

In 1986, an Ilonggo by the name of Daniel Dingle came over to see me at my office as MILG Minister. Mr. Dingle said he had an invention that made it possible for cars to run on water.

I asked him why he came over to my office instead of seeing people who had the power and the authority to do something about his invention.

Shameless

He told me that for a long time, that is, even before the Cory government came to power, he had been asking the support of government authorities but to no avail. Some officials, he said, first asked shamelessly what was in there for them before they would consider helping him. He said that the oil industry and its minions made it difficult for him to get government recognition and support for his invention.

I decided to accompany him and present his problem directly to President Aquino. After explaining the matter to the President, she agreed to ride in the "water-run" car of the inventor for a test drive within the premises of the presidential palace.

Referral to MOST

After the short ride, she asked me to refer the invention to the Ministry of Science and

Technology (MOST) for evaluation and possible support. Immediately after the test drive, I did exactly as she asked me to do. I referred the matter to the MOST.

After waiting for three weeks, there was still no reply from the Ministry. So I called to find out what they had done to the referral I made upon instructions of the President.

No merit?

A bureaucrat replied that there was no merit to the claim of Dingle. The car, he said, ran on a mix of gasoline and water.

When I asked Dingle about it, he explained that the so-called mix of gasoline water was only partially true because he had to use gasoline to start the engine. Once the engine gets started, water would replace the gasoline to run the car.

Lackadaisical attitude

The lackadaisical attitude displayed by the bureaucrat at the MOST towards the Dingle invention, I believe, has cost us billions of pesos that we are spending and have spent through the years that kept our vehicles gurgling on gasoline instead of on water.

Losing to Honda

I say that because only a few days ago, Honda engineers formally announced that the company is now marketing water-powered cars. Water, as any Chemistry 101 student would know, has two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen. By coming up with an engine that manipulates the mixture, Honda water-run cars are now ready for the world market.

In that respect, we lost the race to come up with our own native discovery of water-run vehicle. From 1986 to 2007 is 21 long years. For 21 years, we took no note at all of that invention that had the potential to save millions of dollars worth of gasoline imports – money that could have been used to build roads, schools, hospitals, and a thousand other things, and make us less dependent on the Middle East for our fuel needs and on other super powers for our other needs.

Harnessing waves

The second invention that the government bureaucrats did not give adequate support to involved a discovery by Isidro Umali Ursua. I have no idea where Mr. Ursua hails from but I know that Marikina has adopted him as a son

of the city because of the invention that everybody, but the government authorities, believes can provide renewable energy to the country.

Like Dingle, Ursua saw me at my office probably in utter frustration over the fact that the authorities had not shown any serious interest in the viability of his invention despite the positive endorsement of the then Department of Trade and Industry Secretary, now Senator, Mar Roxas.

Scientific breakthrough

In his letter to me dated December 16, 2003, Ursua said that, "A group of Filipino inventors, through a scientific breakthrough in power generation, have discovered a way to produce all of our electrical power requirements without the use of diesel or fossil fuel. The power will be extracted from the tidal flow of our ocean."

His letter continued: "We have filed a patent application with the World Intellectual Property Office. This invention had already been presented to several government authorities, for example, NAPOCOR, in front of 18 of their best engineers, DOE with six of their best engineers present, and the National Electrification Administration, witnessed by 12 of their best engineers."


Lament

He concluded the paragraph with the lament: "They are convinced but no one seems to care or help."

When I talked with Mr. Ursua in my office, I was surprised that:

1. The Department (formerly Ministry) of Science and Technology was not among the government entities to which he presented his invention for evaluation; and

2. He had applied for patent protection, not with the Intellectual Property Office here in Manila but with the World Intellectual Property Office in Geneva, Switzerland under application number WO 02/38954 A1 for the invention which he called, "Skyla Turbine." Incidentally, Ursua's application for patent protection with WIPO in Geneva, rather than with the IPO in Manila, sadly speaks volumes of the mistrust of our own people of the latter.

In any event, since I wanted to get the DOST involved in evaluating Ursua's invention, I requested the department, in early February of 2003, to evaluate Mr. Ursua's invention. On February 4, the DOST, through Undersecretary 

Rogelio A. Panlasigui, sent me a three-page letter. In essence, the DOST communication listed a number of things explaining why the evaluation of the invention did not materialize. Certain "steps" had to be undertaken that apparently had not been taken. And that was how the DOST cavalierly disposed of Ursua's "breakthrough" idea.

By themselves, the DOST excuses appear valid but I would like to say that with a little creativity, they could have been more proactive and helped overcome whatever Ursua's problems were.

Bureaucratic failings

That they did not is, I guess, one of the major failings of the bureaucracy that are correctible and need to be corrected.

The idea of harnessing the ocean waves for electricity as Ursua had suggested to our officials at the turn of the current century now appears to be the subject of separate experimental runs by companies from the UK, the U.S., Canada and Australia.

Waiting for government help

What riles me up is the fact that the two inventions that I mentioned in this statement were in the hands of Filipino inventors waiting for the government authorities to get them off the drawing board into the government testing field, then, hopefully into the national market, and eventually into the world market.

At the very least, had both inventions or even individually been supported by the government, we could already have looked forward to the:

1. Reduction of our fossil fuel import costs which best estimates place at over \$4 billion a year; and
2. Cleansing the atmosphere at least in our country by lessening the releases of carbon dioxide and sulphur oxide into it.

But the ideas behind the inventions seem to have slipped from our hands into the hands of foreign entities.

Government acrobats

Let me repeat; what kind of a people are we? Are our people just plain suckers in the game of life? Or, are we simply too happy-go-lucky as a people, we do not feel the need to plan for our future as a nation?

In either case, the masses of our people are not primarily to blame for the malaise our country is in. We, as public officials, I submit, are perhaps more blameable for the mess we are in because we appear to be more convinced with form rather than with substance in our so-called commitment to public service. Often, we dupe our people into believing that we are their servants, not their masters. I hate to say it but the way it looks, we tend to comport ourselves as the masters, not the servants of the people. Many of us in politics act in the manner that Maurice Barre, a member of the *Academie Francaise* and a member of Parliament some two centuries ago, said of French politicians, "Like acrobats, they keep their balance by saying the opposite of what they do."

In making this statement, I do not wish to project myself as any better than any of our colleagues. But I am disgusted, distressed and discombobulated by the sufferings that our people unnecessarily undergo which are preventable by government action.

Missing two boats

We have missed two boats, so to speak, in preparing our country for the oil crunch that everybody foretells will come sooner than later. We did not help Dingle with his water-car invention. And we did not help Ursua with his machine to harness the waves for our energy needs.

In the meantime, we only shake our heads when monies, even if officially appropriated, vanish from our people's sight and view. Witness the disappearance of some P11 billion intended for the modernization of the armed forces. Where did the money go? Nobody seems to know. Witness the misapplication of the fertilizer fund of some P723 million that went into the pockets of certain political personalities. Witness the misuse of some P1.1 billion for the construction of the six-kilometer road in the reclamation area in Pasay City that is inappropriately named Diosdado Macapagal road.

Boost DOST funds

Anyway, just so that we do not end this talk on such a pessimistic note, I suggest that it is not yet too late in the day for the legislature to support the needs of the DOST. We are, after all, still doing the bicameral conference committee meetings on the national appropriations act. In fact, Senator Enrile, the chair of the Committee on Finance, was there. Majority Leader, Senator Francis Pangilinan, and Senators Zubiri and

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Lacson, and of course, Senator Angara, were also there.

We can, for instance, commit at least some P200 million additional funds for the research and development projects of the DOST and for the training of teachers in physics and other scientific fields and scholarship grants for science education.

Having gotten that off my chest, I cannot but close this intervention with a sigh of regret that public corruption goes on its merry way and public service deteriorates by the day in this land so blessed by God but so cursed by acrobats masquerading as government officials.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ANGARA

At the outset, Senator Angara commended Senator Pimentel for raising a timely issue considering that the Body has just passed the 2008 budget. He expressed amazement that the hydrogen car would be produced commercially, and that, in fact, tidal wave-generated electricity has been produced commercially in Germany as well as in Nordic countries and both are the brainchild of *Filipino inventors*.

Asked why Filipino inventors opt to file for patent at the World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO) in Geneva rather than at the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) in Manila, Senator Pimentel explained that it is the fear of inventors that the IPO in Manila cannot guarantee that their inventions would be protected against being copied by interested parties.

Senator Angara said that the fear of Filipino inventors that their patent would be stolen is indicative of the failure of the IPO in Manila to protect the secrecy and confidentiality of their applications. He believed that this is the primary reason why the number of applications for patents in the Philippines is one of the lowest in the whole region and why the country's technological capacity is very low.

Senator Angara disclosed that erythromycin, a widely sold common antibiotic extracted from Philippine soil, was invented by Dr. Abelardo but was patented by Eli Lilly and Co., a Swiss-based American pharmaceutical company. Moreover, he pointed out that a painkiller, which is a thousand times more powerful than morphine, was invented by Dr. Baldomero Olivera and Dr. Lourdes Cruz but was patented by

Elan Pharma of Newrex, U.S.A. and was developed by Elan Pharma of U.K. He expressed dismay that the country has been losing valuable intellectual properties developed by Filipino genius to foreigners because of the country's inhospitable climate to invention.

Senator Pimentel lamented that Filipino scientists are being deprived of world recognition for inventions that are perhaps worthy of a Nobel prize, adding that nothing has emerged from the country to merit a nomination for a Nobel prize.

Senator Angara pointed out that Dr. Olivera was honored by Harvard University as an outstanding alumnus; and that Mr. Dado Banatao, a very creative technologist and engineer born in Cagayan, invented the power chip for computers and is probably the richest Filipino in the U.S. He noted that these people are working on foreign soil, a reflection of the kind of incentive and reward system the Philippines has for its inventors and scientists. He lauded the increase in the 2008 budget for the research and development of the DOST and the Department of Agriculture (DA); for forest and biodiversity studies of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR); for scholarships in science and mathematics of CHED, as he underscored that while the increase might not be substantial, it is nonetheless proof of tangible support.

For his part, Senator Pimentel commended Senator Angara for initiating the increases in the budget, saying that much as he would like to raise the budget, he realized that there are limitations to the availability of finances.

Senator Angara pointed out that Senator Pimentel's suggestion to increase the Department's allocation by P200 million, including the recommendation of Senator Lacson, was followed.

In addition, he said that the Oversight Committee on Science, Technology and Engineering, of which Senator Pimentel and himself are members, would now focus on raising the level of science, mathematics and engineering education in the country. He expressed hope that their work in the Committee would give a boost to science and technology innovation in the Philippines.

Senator Pimentel expressed appreciation that during the first meeting, Senator Angara, as chair of

the Committee, made it clear that the Committee would be biased in favor of the development of science and technology as the engine of growth for a third world country like the Philippines.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Preliminarily, Senator Zubiri congratulated Senator Pimentel for taking up the cudgels for many frustrated Filipino scientists. He recalled that as a member of the House of Representatives, he met with different organizations of inventors whose main problem was the lack of funding for R&D and support for inventions and patents.

Senator Zubiri noted that the inventor of the fluorescent light was a Filipino but it is the General Electric which is making a lot of money because it was able to secure the patent for the invention. He informed the Body that the DOST has already proposed the use of recycled garbage as a component in the production of asphalt which could reduce the construction of roads from P12 million to P7 million per kilometer.

Senator Pimentel thanked Senator Zubiri for the information.

Expressing his full support for the proposal to increase the budget allocation on research and development, Senator Zubiri asked Senator Pimentel if he is in favor of setting up a system similar to that in the United States whereby the government gives grants to state universities and schools for R&D. He said that the P200-million increase in the DOST allocation could be given, for instance, to the University of the Philippines-Los Banos for agriculture, De La Salle University for technology, and Ateneo de Manila University for arts and sciences, instead of allocating it to the government agencies which may not have the manpower and expertise to go into research and development.

Senator Pimentel said that the suggestion was a beautiful idea which should be specifically put as an instruction to the departments concerned.

Asked if he would support the Inventors' Act which he refiled in the present Congress that would protect the patents of investors and shield them from pirates and patents thieves, Senator Pimentel replied in the affirmative.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) commended Senator Pimentel for bringing up the issue at this time precisely because of the energy concerns of the country. However, she asked whether it has been brought to Senator Pimentel's attention that a lot of Filipinos abroad are well-placed in engineering and construction companies while some are involved in inventing various innovative processes in their fields of specialization.

Senator Pimentel stated that he was aware that Filipino immigrants in the United States and OFWs in Saudi Arabia and other Middle East and Asian countries like Indonesia are doing very well. However, he expressed concern that the Philippines is continuously losing its experts and scientists to foreign lands.

Senator Cayetano (P) expressed the view that the automatic appropriation provisions in the national budget, which was started during the martial law regime in response to the debt crisis, was no longer attuned to the crisis in social service the country is facing at present. She pointed out that the limited supply but big demand for health workers, school teachers, scientists and engineers abroad has taken its toll on the quality of health services and education in the country.

Senator Pimentel asserted that the so-called "automatic repayment of debt" under Presidential Decree No. 1177 was issued under martial law and without a Congress to speak of. But he pointed out that long after the authoritarian regime of Mr. Marcos, the government was still bound by the decree which, he believed, was no longer valid and cannot be justified under the present set-up.

Senator Cayetano (P) expressed concern over the big increase in questionable or "illegitimate" debts of the government. Senator Pimentel said that he would fully support efforts to reexamine loans that did not benefit the people but only vested interest parties.

Senator Cayetano (P) stated that she has already filed a resolution seeking the review of the Automatic Appropriations Law to look into these kinds of loans.

Senator Pimentel requested that he be considered a coauthor of the resolution, pointing out that it was

time that the Senate put its foot down against foreign impositions because the capacity to pay is the primary consideration why lenders should extend loans to the government.

On the assertion that the repeal of the Automatic Appropriations Law would scare away investors, Senator Cayetano (P) argued that the *legitimate* creditors who have been in the business of lending would want to weed out creditors who precisely undercut the rates just to get a deal to secure big chunks of loans for under-the-table payments. She expressed hope that with Senator Pimentel as coauthor, the resolution would be given priority and support as soon as possible.

Senator Cayetano (P) recalled that in hearings she conducted as chairperson of the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; and Health and Demography, it was found out that a lot of equipment that were requested were actually available in the DOST but there were no sincere efforts to get them from local sources using local materials to save on scarce resources of the government.

Senator Pimentel lamented the lack of creativity and dedication of public officials to really go out of their way to support new or novel ideas. Instead, he noted that such creative ideas are dismissed or discouraged right away instead of providing funds for such worthy efforts.

Senator Cayetano (P) believed that people should not be discouraged by the experience of the inventor of the water-powered vehicle, but that they should propagate determination and self-reliance.

Senator Pimentel pointed out that since many of the Filipino inventors could barely make a living, they cannot be expected to finance their invention which are mostly ideas that still need to be fleshed out into a comprehensive concept.

In closing, Senator Cayetano (P) expressed support to the initiative and efforts of Senators Pimentel and Angara as she gave the assurance that she would be willing to work with them in strengthening science and technology in the country.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech

of Senator Pimentel and the interpellations thereon to the Committee on Science and Technology.

SECOND ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Deputy Secretary for Legislation, Edwin B. Bellen, read the following matters and the Chair made the corresponding referrals:

RESOLUTIONS

Senate Joint Resolution No. 7, entitled

JOINT RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING
THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO
ISSUE THE IMPLEMENTING RULES
AND REGULATIONS ON THE TREATY
ON THE TRANSFER OF SENTENCED
PERSONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE
KINGDOM OF SPAIN AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor
Santiago

**To the Committees on Justice and Human
Rights; Foreign Relations; and Finance**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 255, entitled

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE
OF THE SENATE THAT THE
MILITARY AND POLICE OFFICERS
WHO UNDERTOOK, OR OTHERWISE
PARTICIPATED IN, THE UNWARRANTED AND ILLEGAL ARREST OF
MEDIA PERSONNEL DURING THE
MANILA PENINSULA STANDOFF
ON 29 NOVEMBER 2007 SHOULD
BE METED OUT THE APPROPRIATE
PENALTIES SUCH AS, BUT NOT
LIMITED TO, THE ISSUANCE OF
STERN REPRIMANDS AND THE
RECORDING OF SUCH REPRIMANDS
IN THE OFFICERS' RESPECTIVE
PERSONNEL OR "201" FILES

Introduced by Senator M.A. Madrigal

**To the Committees on Justice and Human
Rights; and Public Order and Illegal Drugs**

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

It was 4:51 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:52 p.m., the session was resumed with Senate President Pro Tempore Ejercito Estrada presiding.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

Senator Pangilinan announced that the Body would take up the U.P. Charter and the Credit Information Bureau bill that were identified as priority measures in the all-senators' caucus because both were passed in the 3rd Regular Session of the 13th Congress.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

It was 4:52 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:53 p.m., the session was resumed.

SPECIAL ORDER

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 17, on Senate Bill No. 1881, from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 17 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1881

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 1881 (Committee Report No. 17), entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CREDIT
INFORMATION SYSTEM AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, only the title of the bill was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

The Chair recognized Senator Angara for the sponsorship.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR ANGARA

In his sponsorship of Senate Bill No. 1881, Senator Angara delivered the following speech:

On behalf of the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies, it is my pleasure and honor to sponsor this Act Establishing the Credit Information System.

Borrowing is necessary to fuel businesses and to sustain growth in an economy. It is a fact that the ability to borrow money to be able to engage in an enterprise or expand that business is largely affected by one's perceived creditworthiness or his supposed ability to pay back his debt.

To assess a borrower's creditworthiness, lending institutions gather vast information which, at present, is quite difficult and costly. Worse, the information gathered may either be incomplete or erroneous. As a result, lenders are constantly exposed to excessive and unnecessary credit risk, thereby increasing their portfolio of uncollectible loans or non-performing assets.

Meanwhile, credit becomes costly, if not completely inaccessible, to small borrowers who are required to present valuable physical collateral before being allowed to borrow.

In addition, they are charged with high interest rates. This has brought business to loan sharks who, although easily accessible, are often not entirely honest.

Both the exposure to credit risk by lenders and the cost of credit to borrowers may be minimized if financial institutions would have ready access to a reliable and comprehensive credit database.

In the 13th Congress, the Senate approved on Third Reading this bill that I am sponsoring today and the House did exactly the same. Unfortunately, some technical reasons intervened during the Bicameral Conference and time defeated both Houses, for lack of time.

Structure of the Credit Information System

The Credit Information System will gather *consumer credit information from financial institutions* such as banks, credit card companies and government lending institutions.

In effect, financial institutions shall consolidate their records and contribute their credit experience on consumers to the system. To ensure the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the system, banks and their subsidiaries and affiliates will be compelled, in effect, legally, to provide full credit information.

A Central Credit Information Corporation will process the information gathered and distribute them through the "accessing entities," who are likewise the primary providers of credit data (i.e. banks).

Credit-rating agencies can source information from the system and may use them to create credit reports and credit ratings, and may add value to the report as required by their customers.

Access to the system will be basically limited to the credit institutions which are likewise the contributors of information.

The Credit Information System will cover all borrowers. It will gather both positive and negative information.

To avoid damage to one's financial reputation, borrowers would have the immediate and full right to know the credit information about them. They shall be able to dispute and correct inaccurate information.

There are also safeguards to be imposed against breach of confidentiality and misuse of borrower information. Protection of the public and confidentiality of information are given utmost importance.

What is the Credit Information System? This is going to be a powerful tool for financial development.

A tool for financial development

The establishment of a centralized credit information system will make credit more available, especially to small yet responsible borrowers, as their good track record in paying their obligations will be made known to financial institutions.

What is happening now? Currently, the absence of reliable credit information makes financial institutions hesitant to grant credit

especially to small borrowers, leaving the latter no choice but to resort to what is commonly known as "five-six" borrowing.

Here is the irony. The banks and financial institutions are flushed with cash. The money is practically coming out of their ears and yet, there are fewer and fewer borrowers, at least, credit-worthy borrowers.

Quality and efficient credit information will lower the cost of financing since the cost of gathering credit information will be less, the amount to be passed on to borrowers will likewise be lower.

When I was the chair of the Philippine National Bank, we have one big division just on credit information gathering tasked solely to gather credit information about applicants. We will save on that if we have this credit information system.

Banks will no longer charge high interests to known responsible borrowers as the credit risk will be reduced. I think this is very important especially to small- and medium-scale firms. Excessive dependence on physical collateral to secure credit facilities will be lessened, if not avoided.

From the regulatory perspective, a centralized credit information system will contribute to a healthier and more stable financial system because lending institutions would have access to accurate and reliable credit information, enabling them to make sound credit decisions. In other words, it is much easier now to manage credit risks. Moreover, this will encourage responsible borrowing as debtors will know that a negative credit behavior will remain in their record.

In conclusion, there are tremendous benefits to be derived from a centralized credit information system which this bill embodies, and we hope this will create a better financial and stable sector for our country. Therefore, I ask my colleagues in this Chamber to join me in passing this highly desirable and urgent measure.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

It was 5:02 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:19 p.m., the session was resumed.

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**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION
OF SENATE BILL NO. 1881**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being *no objection*, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

**THIRD ADDITIONAL
REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

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

RESOLUTION

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 256, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC OFFICERS AND INVESTIGATIONS (BLUE RIBBON); AND ENERGY TO EXPEDITE THE INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED RIGGED BIDDING PROCESS OF THE NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO) IN FAVOR OF MONTE ORO GRID RESOURCES CONSORTIUM WHICH IS CONTROLLED BY A KNOWN ALLY OF THE PRESIDENT, INCLUDING THE APPARENT PARTIALITY AND UNDUE HASTE OF PSALM IN PROCEEDING WITH THE BIDDING DESPITE SERIOUS UNRESOLVED ISSUES

Introduced by Senators M.A. Madrigal and Pimentel Jr.

To the Committees on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations; and Energy

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Report No. 24, prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Finance; and Ways and Means, on Senate Bill No. 1964 with Senators Pangilinan, Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV, Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada, Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., Francis "Chiz" Escudero, Juan Miguel F. Zubiri,

"Compañera" Pia S. Cayetano, Manny Villar, Gordon and Alan Peter "Compañero" S. Cayetano as authors thereof, entitled

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES AS THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 132, 158, 792, 1236, 1540, 1700, 1871 and 1903.

Sponsor: Senator Alan Peter "Compañero" S. Cayetano

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

SPECIAL ORDER

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being *no objection*, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 24 on Senate Bill No. 1964 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

**COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 24
ON SENATE BILL NO. 1964**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being *no objection*, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 1964 (Committee Report No.24), entitled

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES AS THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, *only* the title of the bill was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Cayetano (A) for his sponsorship speech.

**SPONSORSHIP SPEECH
OF SENATOR CAYETANO (A)**

At the outset, Senator Cayetano (A) informed the Body that the Members had previously agreed to give priority to bills that were passed in the 13th Congress such as the UP bill which has been pending approval in the Senate for the past seven

years. He explained that the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture had even formed a technical working group to study the measure. He also noted that Senator Pangilinan had agreed to the Committee's review of all suggestions until the bill, which is considered to be a certified measure, is finalized.

Thereupon, at the instance of Senator Cayetano (A.), upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body approved the insertion of his sponsorship speech into the Journal and Record of the Senate.

The following is the full text of the sponsorship speech of Senator Cayetano (A):

I praise God for the opportunity to be part of the University of the Philippines, not only as an alumnus, but as a member of the University Student Council. This day is a special and meaningful day because we are being given this opportunity to give our part in strengthening the Charter of the University of the Philippines now that UP is poised to celebrate its milestone centenary.

It is, therefore, my honor to sponsor this afternoon Senate Bill No. 1964 under Committee Report No. 24 on the "Act to Strengthen the University of the Philippines as a National University."

The Charter of the University of the Philippines is a century old. It is time that the present Charter of the UP be replaced with one that will sufficiently reflect the realities of the times, preserve the historical idealism of the UP Community, and enable the University to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

UP strongly deserves to be conferred the status of a national university by virtue of four reasons that were stated by UP President Emerlinda Roman during our committee hearing. In the words of Dr. Roman – First, because the scope and range of the degree programs offered by UP is so wide and deep; second, UP is indubitably the leading university in the Philippines based from an international ranking of academic institutions, in the same way that Tokyo University is the National University of Japan and the University of Malaysia is the National University of Malaysia; third, UP is the Philippines' national university in the geographic sense. UP has 12 campuses around the country; and fourth, but not the least, Dr. Roman pointed out that everything they do in UP is in the service of the nation. UP's orientation remains firmly nationalist.

Among the issues this bill seeks to address are:

1. *Affirmation of UP's role in National Development;*
2. *Consultation with the Public.* It institutionalizes a more comprehensive consultation with the UP community on important issues concerning the University;
3. *Exemption from the Salary Standardization Law;*
4. *Grant of Tax Incentive.* The bill grants additional tax exemptions and provides incentives that will allow the University to be more creative in meeting the challenges of the times.

This bill does not seek to cure all ills plaguing the University system, nor be the only tool to enable UP face the many problems and challenges of being a national university. However, once this bill is enacted into law, it will give UP the legal framework, flexibility and authority it needs to survive and excel as the Philippines' National university.

For now, allow me to refer to the author of this bill, the Majority Leader, Senator Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan, who has persistently worked for the enactment of this measure for the past six years. I now ask again for the support of all my colleagues to support future bills endorsing the modernization of other state universities and colleges as well because I know we all believe that these institutions will play a vital role in our national development.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body approved the insertion of his sponsorship speech into the Journal and Record of the Senate.

The following is the full text of the sponsorship speech of Senator Pangilinan:

THE LAW FETTERS OUR UNIVERSITY

I rise to sponsor Committee Report No. 24, entitled "AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES AS THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY."

Act No. 1870, passed by the Philippine Legislature on June 18, 1908, almost 100 years

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ago, created the University of the Philippines, to provide advanced instruction in literature, philosophy, science and arts, and give professional and technical training to every qualified student. This law authorized the creation of this university to be established in the Philippine Islands. The law also speaks of a Governor General as the head of state of the Philippines. It details the "visitorial" prerogative of the Governor General over the University.

Today, we no longer refer to our state as the Government of the Philippine Islands. The Governor General has ceased to be the head of state. The present head of state no longer exercises her "visitorial powers" over the University of the Philippines. More importantly, the *University of the Philippines is now a system of seven constituent universities located in Diliman, Manila, Los Baños, Baguio, Visayas, Mindanao and an open university. It operates in 12 campuses nationwide. At any given time, it teaches about 52,000 students. Its 4,000 faculty members are among the best and the brightest this country can produce. It has more than 600 different degree programs in almost all fields of imaginable human endeavor. After 100 years, the University of the Philippines has succeeded in occupying a permanent place of excellence in the academic community in the Philippines and all over the world.*

Many things have changed in our university. The only thing history has not changed is the century-old UP Charter that continues to authorize the way the University of the Philippines should carry out its policies, programs and procedures. The UP Charter is one hundred years old; it is older than any of the acacia trees that neatly line the avenues of the university; it is much older than the carillon that has been damaged and weakened by long use. The carillon, by the way, has been revived and refurbished since it was established in 1952. In fact, tomorrow, the bells of Diliman will toll once again to the delight of students, the community and even to passersby. The UP alumni association has raised funds to purchase 36 new bells from Holland. This is their gift to our university on the eve of its centennial. After 55 years, the carillon will spring back to life.

The UP Charter is very old and has become brittle with age. It is about time we did the same to the UP Charter because it has outlived its usefulness. I am bewildered because I cannot think of any other charter that is as old as the UP Charter, which continues to exist and which continues to govern the state of affairs of a

university as reputable as the University of the Philippines.

The University of the Philippines is indeed our best state university.

Yet, on the eve of its centennial, it is still governed by Act No. 1870, passed when we were colonials of the United States of America, when there was still a governor general and when we were still the Government of the Philippine Islands.

For the past 19 years, several sessions of this legislature have labored to perfect an amended charter. Four separate UP administrations have conducted consultations among their constituents. Several committee hearings and technical working group meetings were held during the Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Congresses. In truth, this is the third time that I now come before you, to again sponsor this bill amending the charter of the University of the Philippines.

The Filipino people demand much from the University of the Philippines, and the country expects the university to reinvent itself to maintain excellence in academic training, research and development. Despite understandable difficulties and limitations, UP has delivered and continues to indulge the proverbial education that every student aspires. How many of the Presidents of the Republic read arts and letters at the University of the Philippines? How many of us, who sit now in the Senate and in the House of Representatives, pursued higher education at the UP? How many judges and justices, including those that sit in the present Supreme Court, are products of this prestigious educational institution? There are simply too many to enumerate.

Then there is the recent Times Higher Education Survey. For the past few years, the University of the Philippines has consistently topped all other Philippine universities – including the exclusive private universities. Based on research output and internationally recognized scholarly publications, depth of faculty experience, extent of degree programs offered and excellence in varying fields of endeavor, UP bested all other universities in the Philippines. UP has in fact the most number of centers of excellence.

But, the University of the Philippines can do more. And, if we are to ensure that our premier national university be counted as one of the best in the world, we have to amend the century-old UP charter. Many of its provisions are out-of-

date and need to be superseded by more efficient and up-to-date provisions.

Sadly, the current charter now fetters our beloved University. Some of the best faculty members from UP migrate to other universities here and abroad. Our best minds are compensated with woeful salaries. A full professor in the University of the Philippines only gets a third of the average pay of equivalent faculty in other Philippine universities. It takes a lot of internationally recognized publications and long years of service to become full professor. A tenured assistant professor of the university in fact can get less than what a call center operator receives.

It is true that we give to UP a large share of the allocation for all state universities and colleges. Being the research university that has become the model for all state universities, it deserves even more financial support. If we want excellent education for our young people, let us build on making our research and development capabilities strong and competitive. But first we have to amend the century-old UP charter, because some of the provisions do not allow flexibility in achieving the goals of the university.

I, therefore, submit to my colleagues in the Senate for consideration and approval, Committee Report No. 24, which seeks to strengthen the University of the Philippines as the national university.

2008 is the centennial commemoration of the University of the Philippines. If Dr. Emerlinda Roman is the centennial president, the 14th Congress is the centennial Congress that made it all happen for the University of the Philippines. As I have said, this is the third time that I am sponsoring this measure; there has been a long list of disagreements in previous debates. But we have devoted sufficient time to it. And this time our people can allay their fears and rest assured that the interests of the academe as a whole are safe and secure. We have made sure of that.

In conclusion, my journey in defending this measure has been long over due. But now, I am indulging the thought that my colleagues will unanimously approve this measure and will no longer prolong the agony of delay. I, therefore, urge my distinguished colleagues to join me in passing this important historical measure. Let this be our gift to the university on the eve of its centennial.

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I am calling on all UP and non-UP alumni, friends, ladies and gentlemen in the gallery, let

*As corrected by Senator Pangilinan on December 19, 2007.

us join in the celebration of the 100 years anniversary of the University of the Philippines!
Tara na, kita kits tayo sa UP!

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR LEGARDA

At the instance of Senator Legarda, there being no objection, the Body approved the insertion of her cosponsorship speech into the Journal and Record of the Senate.

The following is the full text of the cosponsorship speech of Senator Legarda:

He that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator.

~ Francis Bacon, "On Innovation,"
Essays, 1597

I humbly submit my cosponsorship for Committee Report 24, which is the substitute bill of the University of the Philippines Charter.

The University of the Philippines is coming close to its centennial year. Changes have already taken place; it had expanded from its original 1908 composition of one campus to a system of seven campuses accommodating more than 50,000 of bright young students; it created new courses, traditions, and many more in light of the modernizing country and the academe; it had witnessed many regimes and caused the fall of a couple. However, its charter essentially remained the same as that of its first version. And that was 99 years ago.

Times are changing. It was always said that for one to flourish, he/she must adapt to changes. And such adaptations have been long overdue, with the first efforts to do so go back as far as 1982.

The expansion of the university has created challenges, as well as opportunities. The university is fast losing its hold of competent teachers because of the Salary Standardization Law. Facilities have become decrepit and inadequate. The budget granted to this premiere university can simply never be enough to finance its operations and maintain its excellence. One can only sadly shake his head as we see the place of UP among the world's finest universities slip lower and lower due to such conditions.

Amidst the challenges that the university faces, it continues to top the country's ranks of

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universities. It continues to attract the finest young minds and its prestige still stands tall. But this cannot go on forever. Beneath that prestige lays a struggling institution, seeking strength, stability and independence in order to fully bloom as the country's national university.

The recognition of UP as a national university bestows the following essential roles that it shall play:

(1) Lead in setting academic standards and initiating innovations in teaching, research and faculty development in philosophy, the arts and humanities, the social sciences, the professions and engineering, natural sciences, mathematics, and technology; and maintain centers of excellence in such disciplines and professions;

(2) Serve as a graduate university by providing advanced studies and specialization for scholars, scientists, writers, artists and professionals, especially those who serve on the faculties of state and private colleges and universities;

(3) Serve as a research university in its various fields of expertise and specialization by conducting basic and applied research and development, and promoting research in the various colleges and universities, and contributing to the dissemination and application of knowledge;

(4) Lead as a public service university by providing various forms of community, public, and volunteer service, and scholarly and technical assistance to the government, the private sector, and civil society while maintaining its standards of excellence;

(5) Protect and promote the professional and economic rights and welfare of its academic and non-academic personnel;

(6) Provide opportunities for training and learning in progressive leadership, responsible citizenship, and the development of democratic values, institutions and practice through academic and non-academic programs, including sports and national identity; and

(7) Serve as a regional and global university in cooperation with international and scientific unions with networks of universities and scholarly and professional associations in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world.

The role of the University shall go beyond the usual functions of providing education for our crème of the crop. It has so much to offer;

such shall contribute to the development of the nation as a whole, as what had already been transpiring for the past 99 years. The difference is the strengthening of the university to maintain its service. And we shall accomplish this by providing the necessary mechanisms included in this bill that in effect shall secure the university's growth.

The University of the Philippines deserves this much, as it brought the country tides of honours from its brilliant members. As cosponsor of this very significant piece of legislation, I call on the Members of the Senate to support its immediate enactment and help build great channels for the development of our youth and our country.

COAUTHORS

Senator Pangilinan manifested that Senators Gordon and Legarda are coauthors of Senate Bill No. 1964.

REMARKS OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

Senator Pangilinan informed the Body that although Senate Bill No. 1964 was approved by the Senate on Third Reading and ratified by the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of the measure during the 13th Congress, the House of Representatives failed to act on the bicameral conference committee report; therefore, it had to go through the same process during the present Congress. However, he said that the Members had agreed that measures such as the UP bill which had been approved on Third Reading and with Bicameral Conference Committee reports which had been ratified by the Senate but not acted upon by the Bigger House are considered priority measures and as such, the Committee has complied with the required holding of only one committee hearing on the bill wherein all stakeholders were present.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR MADRIGAL

At the outset, Senator Madrigal stated that she had no material on which to base her interpellation as she had yet to receive copies of the sponsorship speeches and the committee report on Senate Bill No. 1964. She expressed her interest to interpellate on and propose amendments to the bill following new developments that have arisen concerning the measure, adding that she intended to safeguard the

rights of those stakeholders who continue to oppose the commercialization of the UP.

For his part, Senator Pangilinan expressed surprise over Senator Madrigal's intent to interpellate on and propose amendments to Senate Bill No. 1964 which, he stressed, is basically the same measure that had been ratified in the 13th Congress of which Senator Madrigal herself was a member. He noted that Senator Madrigal not only voted in favor of the measure on Third Reading, but also did not object to the ratification of the Bicameral Conference Committee Report in the past Congress.

Senator Pangilinan said that all the pertinent provisions that he accommodated during the period of individual amendments in the 3rd Regular Session of the Thirteenth Congress are reflected in Senate Bill No. 1964. He appealed to Senator Madrigal to allow the Body to enact the bill into law and thereby give the University of the Philippines ample time to fully implement it in time for the Centennial Celebration.

However, Senator Madrigal stated that she would like to read the Committee Report as reported out in the previous Congress, insisting that she would also interpellate on the measure.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

It was 5:32 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:41 p.m., the session was resumed.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

Senator Pangilinan manifested that his and Senator Madrigal's staff would sit down together to discuss the latter's proposed amendments and if

they agree thereon, these would be incorporated as committee amendments. He said that the measure would be taken up as the first item in the agenda for the next day's session.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1964

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of Senate Bill No. 1964.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

Senator Pangilinan announced that the Body would also take up the Credit Information Bureau bill in the next day's session. He stated that Senator Arroyo has reservation to interpellate on the measure and, hopefully, afterwards, the Body could proceed to the period of committee amendments.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Senate President Pro Tempore declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, December 18, 2007.

It was 6:43 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.


EMMA LIRIO-REYES

Secretary of the Senate

Approved on December 18, 2007