

RECORD OF PLENARY PROCEEDINGS

NO. 1

Monday, July 23, 2001

OPENING OF THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION

At 10:00 a.m., the Presiding Officer, the honorable Secretary General Roberto P. Nazareno, called the House to order.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, today, the fourth Monday of July 2001, is the day mandated by the Constitution for convening the First Regular Session of the Twelfth Congress of the Republic of the Philippines.

Pursuant to parliamentary rules and procedure, I call the session to order. *(Gavel)*

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Everybody will please rise to sing the Philippine National Anthem to be led by the House Chorale.

Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Everybody will please remain standing for the Invocation to be led by the distinguished Gentleman from the Lone District of Agusan del Sur, the Honorable Rodolfo Rodrigo G. Plaza.

INVOCATION

REP. PLAZA. Almighty Father, we offer our love and thanksgiving to You on this beautiful Monday morning as we mark the start of a special mission to serve You through this public office to which we have all been called.

Bless us, Father, with a steadfast love like Yours so that we may discover even more the true beauty and deep joy of being a servant to others. Give us the gift of a clear mind and unbridled wisdom, toilsome hands, so that we may labor without letup to empower others whose faith and confidence we have won.

Father, we are gathered today as an august Body in these challenging times in our nation's history, a period when many of our compatriots cry out in hunger and their need for jobs, peace, education and good health.

Lord, we are pained by the deafening noise of guns ablaze in

Mindanao. We hear the stifled screams for safety of those deprived of their freedoms. Our hearts bleed for those who have lost their homes and farms to the furies of Mount Mayon and Storm Fera.

Amid these tribulations, Father, we come to Your aid.

Make us then useful instruments of Your Divine compassion. Turn us into effective leaders free from the myopia of partisan politics, and into judicious Christian managers of the often-misunderstood CDF. For only through this can we claim to deserve our mandate.

Transform us, Father, into true hands-on legislators. Steer the Chamber towards the right direction. Heal our ranks and our relationships from months of political rifts and unite the Members of the Congress so that we may deliver our promises of peace, good health, education and jobs to our countrymen. For only then can we deserve Your generosity and promise of salvation and eternal happiness.

These we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son.

Amen.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Deputy Secretary General for Operations will now call the roll of Members elected from the legislative districts apportioned among the provinces, cities...

REP. SUPLICO. Mr. Nazareno.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Iloilo is recognized.

REP. SUPLICO. I wanted to know under whose authority was the Secretary General calling this House to order. Is he a duly elected Member of this House? Who gave him authority to preside over today's session?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). I request the indulgence of the Gentleman from Iloilo to ask questions after we shall have called the roll to determine the presence of a quorum.

REP. SUPLICO. Calling the roll is already presiding over the session of this august Body and this Representation wanted to ask the Secretary General who gave him authority to preside over the session of this House.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). But we cannot transact business unless the presence of a quorum is determined. So, I beg the indulgence of the Gentleman from Iloilo.

REP. SUPLICO. Before we determine whether or not we have a quorum, can the Secretary General tell this Representation, a duly elected Member of this House, by what authority he is calling this House to order?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Secretary General's presiding over the session is based on previous practices and precedents since the 1946, 1954 and 1958 Congresses and the immediately preceding Ninth, Tenth and the Eleventh Congresses. It has always been the Secretary General who presided over the session prior to the election of the Speaker.

The Deputy Secretary General for Operations will please proceed to call the roll.

ROLL CALL

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION (NCR)

CALOOCAN CITY

First District

Not yet proclaimed

Second District

Not yet proclaimed

LAS PIÑAS CITY

Lone District

Hon. Cynthia A. Villar..... Present

MAKATI CITY

First District

Hon. Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. Present

Second District

Hon. Agapito A. Aquino..... Present

MALABON AND NAVOTAS

Lone District

Hon. Federico S. Sandoval II..... Present

MANDALUYONG CITY

Lone District

Hon. Neptali M. Gonzales II..... Present

MANILA

First District

Hon. Ernesto "Banzai" A. Nieva Present

Second District

Hon. Jaime C. Lopez..... Present

Third District

Hon. Harry C. Angping..... Present

Fourth District

Hon. Rodolfo C. Bacani..... Present

Fifth District

Hon. Joey D. Hizon..... Present

Sixth District

Hon. Mario "Mark Jimenez" B. Crespo Present

MARIKINA CITY

Lone District

Hon. Del R. De Guzman..... Present

MUNTINLUPA CITY

Lone District

Hon. Rozzano Rufino B. Biazon..... Present

PARAÑAQUE CITY

Lone District

Hon. Eduardo C. Zialcita Present

PASAY CITY

Lone District

Hon. Consuelo A. Dy..... Present

PASIG CITY

Lone District

Hon. Henry P. Lanot..... Present*

PATEROS AND TAGUIG

Lone District

Hon. Alan Peter S. Cayetano Present

QUEZON CITY

First District

Hon. Reynaldo A. Calalay Present*

Second District

Hon. Ismael G. Mathay III..... Present

Third District

Hon. Ma. Theresa T. Defensor..... Present

Fourth District

Hon. Nanette C. Daza Present

SAN JUAN

Lone District

Hon. Ronaldo B. Zamora Present

*Appeared after the roll call

VALENZUELA CITY**First District**

Hon. Sherwin T. Gatchalian..... Present

Second District

Hon. Magtanggol T. Gunigundo I Present

REGION I**ILOCOS NORTE (with the City of Laoag)****First District**

Hon. Roque R. Ablan Jr. Present

Second District

Hon. Imee R. Marcos..... Present

ILOCOS SUR (with the Cities of Vigan and Candon)**First District**

Hon. Salacnib F. Bateria Present

Second District

Hon. Eric D. Singson Present

LA UNION (with the City of San Fernando)**First District**

Hon. Manuel C. Ortega..... Present

Second District

Hon. Tomas M. Dumpit..... Present

PANGASINAN (with the Cities of Dagupan, San Carlos, Urdaneta and Alaminos)**First District**

Hon. Arthur F. Celeste Present

Second District

Hon. Amado T. Espino Jr. Present

Third District

Hon. Generoso DC. Tulagan..... Present

Fourth District

Hon. Jose De Venecia Jr. Present

Fifth District

Hon. Mark O. Cojuangco..... Present

Sixth District

Hon. Conrado M. Estrella III Present

REGION II**BATANES****Lone District**

Hon. Florencio B. Abad..... Present

CAGAYAN (with the City of Tuguegarao)**First District**

Hon. Jack Enrile..... Present

Second District

Hon. Celia Taganas Layus Present

Third District

Hon. Manuel N. Mamba Present

ISABELA (with the Cities of Santiago and Cauayan)**First District**

Hon. Rodolfo B. Albano Jr. Present

Second District

Hon. Edwin C. Uy..... Present

Third District

Hon. Faustino G. Dy III Present

Fourth District

Hon. Antonio M. Abaya Present

NUEVA VIZCAYA**Lone District**

Hon. Carlos M. Padilla..... Present

QUIRINO**Lone District**

Hon. Junie E. Cua Present

REGION III**BATAAN (with the City of Balanga)****First District**

Hon. Antonino P. Roman..... Present

Second District

Hon. Enrique T. Garcia Jr. Present

BULACAN (with the Cities of San Jose del Monte and Meycauayan)**First District**

Hon. Wilhelmino M. Sy-Alvarado..... Present

Second District

Hon. Wilfrido B. Villarama Present

Third District

Hon. Lorna C. Silverio..... Present

Fourth District

Hon. Reylyna G. Nicolas Present

NUEVA ECIJA (with the Cities of Cabanatuan, Palayan, San Jose, Gapan and Science City of Muñoz)**First District**

Hon. Josefina M. Joson..... Present

Second District

Hon. Eleuterio R. Violago Present

Third District

Hon. Aurelio M. Umali..... Present

Fourth District

Hon. Raul L. Villareal..... Present

PAMPANGA (with the Cities of Angeles and San Fernando)**First District**

Hon. Francis "Blueboy" L. Nepomuceno Present

Second District

Hon. Zenaida G. Cruz-Ducut Present

Third District

Hon. Oscar S. Rodriguez Present

Fourth District

Hon. Juan Pablo "Rimpy" P. Bondoc Present

TARLAC (with the City of Tarlac)**First District**

Hon. Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr. Present

Second District

Hon. Benigno S. Aquino III..... Present

Third District

Hon. Jesli A. Lapus..... Present

ZAMBALES (with the City of Olongapo)**First District**

Hon. James J. Gordon Jr. Present

Second District

Hon. Ruben D. Torres..... Present

REGION IV**AURORA****Lone District**

Hon. Bellaflor J. Angara-Castillo Present

BATANGAS (with the Cities of Batangas, Lipa and Tanauan)**First District**

Hon. Eileen Ermita-Buhain..... Present

Second District

Hon. Francisco S. Perez II Present

Third District

Hon. Victoria H. Reyes..... Present

Fourth District

Hon. Oscar L. Gozos..... Present

CAVITE (with the Cities of Tagaytay, Cavite and Trece Martirez)**First District**

Hon. Plaridel M. Abaya Present

Second District

Hon. Gilbert C. Remulla Present

Third District

Hon. Napoleon R. Beratio..... Present

LAGUNA (with the Cities of San Pablo and Calamba)**First District**

Hon. Uliran T. Joaquin Present

Second District

Hon. Joaquin M. Chipeco Jr. Present

Third District

Hon. Danton Q. Bueser..... Present*

Fourth District

Hon. Rodolfo S. San Luis Present

MARINDUQUE**Lone District**

Hon. Edmundo O. Reyes Jr. Present

OCCIDENTAL MINDORO (with the City of Calapan)**Lone District**

Hon. Josephine Y. Ramirez-Sato Present

ORIENTAL MINDORO**First District**

Hon. Charity P. Leviste..... Present

Second District

Hon. Alfonso V. Umali Jr. Present

PALAWAN (with the City of Puerto Princesa)**First District**

Hon. Vicente A. Sandoval Present

Second District

Hon. Abraham Kahlil B. Mitra Present

QUEZON (with the City of Lucena)**First District**

Hon. Rafael P. Nantes Present

Second District

Hon. Lynnette A. Punzalan..... Present

Third District

Hon. Aleta C. Suarez Present

Fourth District

Hon. Georgilu R. Yumul..... Present

RIZAL (with the City of Antipolo)**First District**

Hon. Michael John R. Duavit Present

Second District

Hon. Isidro S. Rodriguez Jr. Present

City of Antipolo

Hon. Victor R. Sumulong Present

ROMBLON**Lone District**

Hon. Perpetuo B. Ylagan Present

REGION V**ALBAY (with the Cities of Legaspi, Ligao and Tabaco)**

*Appeared after the roll call

First District

Hon. Krisel B. Lagman-Luistro Present

Second District

Hon. Carlos R. Imperial Present

Third District

Hon. Joey Sarte Salceda Present

CAMARINES NORTE

Lone District

Hon. Renato J. Unico Jr. Present

CAMARINES SUR (with the Cities of Naga and Iriga)

First District

Hon. Rolando G. Andaya Jr. Present

Second District

Hon. Sulpicio S. Roco Jr. Present

Third District

Hon. Felix William B. Fuentesbella Present

Fourth District

Hon. Felix R. Alfelor Jr. Present

CATANDUANES

Lone District

Hon. Joseph A. Santiago Present

MASBATE (with the City of Masbate)

First District

Hon. Vida V. Espinosa Present

Second District

Hon. Emilio R. Espinosa Jr. Present

Third District

Hon. Fausto L. Seachon Jr. Present*

SORSOGON (with the City of Sorsogon)

First District

Hon. Francis G. Escudero Present

Second District

Hon. Jose G. Solis Present

REGION VI

AKLAN

Lone District

Hon. Gabrielle V. Calizo Present

ANTIQUE

Lone District

Hon. Exequiel B. Javier Present

CAPIZ (with the City of Roxas)

First District

Hon. Rodriguez D. Dadivas Present

Second District

Hon. Fredenil H. Castro Present

GUIMARAS

Lone District

Hon. Edgar T. Espinosa Present

ILOILO (with the City of Passi)

First District

Hon. Oscar G. Garin Present

Second District

Hon. Augusto "Boboy" Syjuco Present

Third District

Hon. Arthur D. Defensor Present

Fourth District

Hon. Narciso D. Monfort Present

Fifth District

Hon. Rolex T. Suplico Present

ILOILO CITY

Lone District

Hon. Raul M. Gonzalez Present

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL (with the Cities of San Carlos, Cadiz, Bago, La Carlota, Silay, Kabankalan, Sagay, Victorias, Escalante, Sipalay and Himamaylan)

First District

Hon. Julio A. Ledesma IV Present

Second District

Hon. Alfredo G. Marañon Jr. Present

Third District

Hon. Jose Carlos V. Lacson Present

Fourth District

Hon. Carlos O. Cojuangco **

Fifth District

Hon. Jose Apolinario L. Lozada Jr. Present

Sixth District

Hon. Genaro M. Alvarez Jr. Present

BACOLOD CITY

Lone District

Hon. Monico O. Puentevella Present

REGION VII

BOHOL (with the City of Tagbilaran)

First District

Hon. Edgardo M. Chatto Present

Second District

Hon. Roberto C. Cajés Present

* Appeared after the roll

** On official mission abroad

Third District

Hon. Eladio "Boy" Jala..... Present

CEBU (with the Cities of Danao, Lapu-Lapu, Mandaue, Toledo and Talisay)**First District**

Hon. Jose R. Gullas..... Present

Second District

Hon. Simeon L. Kintanar..... Present

Third District

Hon. Antonio P. Yapha Jr. Present

Fourth District

Hon. Clavel A. Martinez..... Present

Fifth District

Hon. Joseph "Ace" H. Durano..... Present

Sixth District

Hon. Nerissa Corazon Soon-Ruiz..... Present

CEBU CITY**First District**

Hon. Raul V. del Mar..... Present

Second District

Hon. Antonio V. Cuenco Present

NEGROS ORIENTAL (with the Cities of Bais, Canlaon, Dumaguete, Bayawan and Tanjay)**First District**

Hon. Jacinto V. Paras..... Present

Second District

Hon. Emilio C. Macias II..... Present

Third District

Hon. Herminio G. Teves..... Present

SIQUIJOR**Lone District**

Hon. Orlando A. Fua Jr. Present

REGION VIII**BILIRAN****Lone District**

Hon. Gerardo S. Espina Present

LEYTE (with the Cities of Tacloban and Ormoc)**First District**

Hon. Ted Failon..... Present

Second District

Hon. Trinidad G. Apostol Present

Third District

Hon. Eduardo K. Veloso..... Present

Fourth District

Hon. Ma. Victoria L. Locsin..... Present

Fifth District

Hon. Carmen L. Cari..... Present

SOUTHERN LEYTE (with the City of Maasin)**Lone District**

Hon. Aniceto G. Saludo Jr. Present

EASTERN SAMAR**Lone District**

Hon. Marcelino C. Libanan Present

NORTHERN SAMAR**First District**

Hon. Harlin Cast. Abayon..... Present

Second District

Hon. Romualdo T. Vicencio Present

SAMAR (with the City of Calbayog)**First District**

Hon. Reynaldo S. Uy Present

Second District

Hon. Antonio Eduardo B. Nachura..... Present

REGION IX**BASILAN (with the City of Isabela)****Lone District**

Hon. Gerry A. Salapuddin Present

ZAMBOANGA CITY**Lone District**

Hon. Celso L. Lobregat..... Present

ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE (with the Cities of Dapitan and Dipolog)**First District**

Hon. Romeo G. Jalosjos..... ***

Second District

Hon. Roseller L. Barinaga Present

Third District

Hon. Angel M. Carloto Present

ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR (with the City of Pagadian)**First District**

Hon. Isidoro E. Real Jr. Present

Second District

Hon. Filomena S. San Juan..... Present

*** Officially notified the House, through the Secretariat, of his absence

ZAMBOANGA-SIBUGAY**Lone District**

Hon. Belma A. Cabilao Present

REGION X**BUKIDNON (with the Cities of Malaybalay and Valencia)****First District**

Hon. J.R. Nereus O. Acosta Present

Second District

Hon. Berthobal R. Ancheta Present

Third District

Hon. Juan Miguel F. Zubiri Present

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY**Lone District**

Hon. Constantino G. Jaraula Present

CAMIGUIN**Lone District**

Hon. Jurdin Jesus M. Romualdo Present

MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL (with the Cities of Oroquieta, Ozamiz and Tangub)**First District**

Hon. Ernie D. Clarete Present

Second District

Hon. Herminia M. Ramiro Present

MISAMIS ORIENTAL (with the City of Gingoog)**First District**

Hon. Oscar S. Moreno Present*

Second District

Hon. Augusto H. Baculio Present

REGION XI**COMPOSTELA VALLEY****First District**

Hon. Manuel E. Zamora Present

Second District

Hon. Prospero S. Amatong Present

DAVAO CITY**First District**

Hon. Prospero C. Nograles Present

Second District

Hon. Vincent J. Garcia Present

Third District

Hon. Ruy Elias C. Lopez Present

DAVAO DEL NORTE (with the Cities of Tagum, Panabo and Island Garden City of Samal)**First District**

Hon. Arrel R. Olaño Present

Second District

Hon. Antonio R. Floirendo Jr. Present

DAVAO DEL SUR (with the City of Digos)**First District**

Hon. Douglas RA. Cagas Present

Second District

Hon. Claude P. Bautista Present

DAVAO ORIENTAL**First District**

Hon. Corazon N. Malanyaon Present

Second District

Hon. J. Mayo Z. Almario Present

SARANGANI**Lone District**

Hon. Erwin L. Chiongbian Present

SOUTH COTABATO (with the Cities of General Santos and Koronadal)**First District**

Hon. Darlene Magnolia R. Antonino-Custodio ... Present

Second District

Hon. Arthur Y. Pingoy Jr. Present

SULTAN KUDARAT (with the City of Tacurong)**Lone District**

Hon. Angelo O. Montilla Present

REGION XII**LANAO DEL NORTE (with the City of Iligan)****First District**

Hon. Alipio Cirilo V. Badelles Present

Second District

Hon. Abdullah D. Dimaporo Present

NORTH COTABATO (with the City of Kidapawan)**First District**

Hon. Emmylou J. Taliño-Santos Present

Second District

Hon. Gregorio T. Ipong Present

*Appeared after the roll call

CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION (CAR)**ABRA****Lone District**

Hon. Luis P. Bersamin Jr. Present

APAYAO**Lone District**

Hon. Elias C. Bulut Jr. Present

BENGUET (with the City of Baguio)**First District**

Hon. Mauricio G. Domogan Present

Second District

Hon. Samuel M. Dangwa Present

IFUGAO**Lone District**

Hon. Solomon R. Chungalao Present

KALINGA**Lone District**

Hon. Laurence B. Wacnang Present

MOUNTAIN PROVINCE**Lone District**

Hon. Roy S. Pilando Present

AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (ARMM)**LANAO DEL SUR (with the City of Marawi)****First District**

Hon. Faysah Maniri-Racman Dumarpa Present

Second District

Hon. Benasing O. Macarambon Jr. Present

MAGUINDANAO (with the City of Cotabato)**First District****Second District**

Hon. Guimid P. Matalam Present

SULU**First District**

Hon. Hussin U. Amin Present

Second District

Hon. Munir M. Arbison Present

TAWI-TAWI**Lone District**

Hon. Soraya C. Jaafar Present

CARAGA REGION**AGUSAN DEL NORTE (with the City of Butuan)****First District**

Hon. Leovigildo B. Banaag Present

Second District

Hon. Edelmiro A. Amante Present

AGUSAN DEL SUR**Lone District**

Hon. Rodolfo Rodrigo G. Plaza Present

SURIGAO DEL NORTE (with the City of Surigao)**First District**

Hon. Glenda B. Ecleo Present

Second District

Hon. Ace S. Barbers Present

SURIGAO DEL SUR (with the City of Bislig)**First District**

Hon. Prospero A. Pichay Jr. Present

Second District

Hon. Jesnar R. Falcon Present

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The roll call shows that 199 Members responded to the call. Therefore, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

REP. SUPPLICO. Mr. Nazareno.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from the Fifth District of Iloilo is recognized.

REP. SUPPLICO. I did not hear the Presiding Officer's answer to my earlier query because of the noise in the session hall. For the record, could he please repeat his answer to my question if he still remembers my question?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Yes, the Secretary General presides over the session today pursuant to established practices and precedents. Until the election of the Speaker, it is the duty of this Presiding Officer to maintain order and decorum in the House. During the 1946, 1954, 1958, and the latest, meaning the preceding, Congresses, the Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Congresses, the Secretary General presided over the initial session of the Congress.

REP. SUPPLICO. I remember that during the time of Speaker Villar, this question was also raised and I think the question was answered vaguely because of a hiatus provided by

the Constitution. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). I agree.

REP. SUPLICO. But as I was going through the Rules of the House, I did not find any provision at all that carries the effectivity of the Rules of the 10th, 11th and 12th Congresses. Again, I ask the same question, Mr. Nazareno. By what express provision in the Rules, laws or regulations is the Secretary General allowed to preside over the opening of the 12th Congress?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). As I was saying, the Secretary General presides over the session today based on established practices and precedents. No such rule or law specifies or provides for the Secretary General presiding over the session, not being a Member of this Congress.

REP. SUPLICO. Well, I have no more question for the meantime, Mr. Nazareno. But just the same I still do not understand why the Secretary General is standing before us this morning.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). I thank the Gentleman from Iloilo.

REP. CHIPECO. Just for a parliamentary inquiry.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Laguna is recognized.

REP. CHIPECO. May I know if any bill has been filed between the last Congress and today that is supposed to govern the period of June 30 up to the fourth Monday of July, for purposes of opening the session and electing the Speaker?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Will the Gentleman from Laguna kindly repeat his question.

REP. CHIPECO. Mr. Presiding Officer, there seems to be a hiatus between June 30 up to the fourth Monday of July during which the Secretary General is supposed to be the presiding officer. This has been a perennial question being raised Congress after Congress, so I would like to inquire if any law so far has been passed that will correct this?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Insofar as the recollection of the Chair is concerned, no such bill has ever been filed. Perhaps the reason is that if we have to pass a bill, it has to pass the Senate and has to be approved by the President. Such action will in effect be an encroachment over these two departments and the sole prerogative of the House.

REP. CHIPECO. In other words, the Presiding Officer is saying that it might be unconstitutional, if I heard him right. In the two previous Congresses of which I was a Member, this matter had always been raised. Therefore, I am standing to clarify this matter once and for all, and I hope this would be

remedied for the benefit of the other Members and for future Congresses. That is all.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Thank you.

REP. BATERINA. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. BATERINA. Parliamentary inquiry.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from San Juan is recognized.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Yes, thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. In the interest of orderly procedure, may I suggest that the Presiding Officer appoint at this time a representative of the majority who can take care of all these questions. I am uncertain that the Presiding Officer, not being a Member of the House of Representatives, is in an authoritative position to answer questions from our Members. May I suggest that this time he appoint a representative from the majority who will take care of all these questions.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). I thank the Gentleman from San Juan. Before we recognize any Member of the House further ...

REP. BATERINA. Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). What is the point of order of the Gentleman from Ilocos Sur?

REP. BATERINA. Mr. Presiding Officer, may I ask...

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Before I recognize any Member of the House, may I announce that in the interest of solely ensuring orderly proceedings in this morning's session, the Chair designates the honorable Gentleman from Mandaluyong as Acting Floor Leader.

REP. JARAULA. There are now two acts that are questionable. One, the Secretary General's authority to preside that was raised by the Honorable Rolox Suplico of Iloilo. Before such action could be disposed of, another action is now being done, the act of appointing. By what authority does the Secretary General have to appoint? The role of a Presiding Officer is vital. In the sound administration of any assembly, I understand from the Secretary General's answers that this issue has been with us from Liberation. I hope it will not continue until kingdom come. But the Honorable Joaquin Chipeco Jr. of Laguna raised and/or suggested that we should tackle this problem once and for all. He suggested some kind of legislation that will provide for the interim, from June 30 up to the election of the Speaker on the

Fourth Monday of July, unless otherwise provided by law. The Secretary General mentioned that no legislation was made and that no legislation should rather be made because it will transgress the independence of this House since any legislation will have to go through for approval of the Senate and the President. I do not know if the Gentleman has considered that any and all legislation that we pass will have to be approved by the Senate and concurred in by the Senate and approved by the President. But never have we questioned that process as transgressing the independence of this House. It may be argued that this is something different because it relates to an office within the House. Still may I finish this.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Presiding Officer. This Representation is rising on a parliamentary inquiry because I want to know for what reason the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro City is rising. Is he delivering a speech or is he objecting or what, Mr. Presiding Officer?

REP. JARAULA. The Gentleman from Mandaluyong...

REP. GONZALES (N.). Nobody can simply stand on the floor without any purpose, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. JARAULA. I am happy with that. Whether the Gentleman from Mandaluyong considers it a parliamentary inquiry or point of order, I am laying the premise for that. As I was saying before I was graciously interrupted, will it be too much to our sensibilities and independence of the House if we pass legislation providing for this interim and save the House this very important time that we are devoting to this debate just because previous Congresses miserably failed to tackle the issue? Will the coming administration assume the responsibility of having this issue laid to rest finally by legislation?

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). I am sure the Members of the House will take up that matter when the Gentleman files a bill to that effect.

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Nazareno.

REP. BATERINA. Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Ilocos Sur is recognized.

REP. BATERINA. Mr. Presiding Officer, is it in order to file a motion at this point? Because my motion would be that upon a declaration of the presence of a quorum, it would be in order for the most senior Member of the House to now take the podium and become the Presiding Officer. That would be my suggestion, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Nazareno.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, these are the usual points of conflicts during the opening of each Congress. It happened during the Tenth Congress, it happened in the Eleventh Congress, and even before. Precisely, to prevent a vacuum or a hiatus, the House has consistently recognized the power of the Secretary General to temporarily preside over the opening of the session until a regular Speaker has been elected.

Now, this is the first day of the life of the Twelfth Congress of the Philippines and, as mandated by the Constitution, we meet today to comply with the provision that on the fourth Monday of July, we must meet as a Body. And our highest constitutional duty is to organize first by electing a Speaker. Therefore, for this purpose, in compliance with that highest constitutional duty, I now move that we open the table for the nomination of the Speaker of the Twelfth Congress of the Philippines.

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Nazareno.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). There is a motion to begin the nomination for the Speaker.

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Nazareno, parliamentary inquiry.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The speakership is now open for nomination.

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Nazareno, I spoke before and you signalled me to wait. Will I be recognized?

REP. GONZALES (N.). Point of order.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). What is the point of order of the Acting Floor Leader?

REP. GONZALES (N.). There was a previous motion to open the table for the nomination of the Speaker. It was submitted to a vote and nobody objected. Therefore, it was carried unanimously, Mr. Presiding Officer. I now move that we recognize the distinguished Gentleman from the First District of Camarines Sur, the Honorable Rolando G. Andaya Jr., for the purpose of delivering his nominating speech.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Honorable Andaya is recognized for the nomination of the Speaker.

REP. JARAULA. Parliamentary inquiry before the nomination. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Point of order, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). What is the point of order of the Acting Floor Leader?

REP. GONZALES (N.). As we stated a while ago, our highest constitutional duty today is to organize by electing our Speaker. Therefore, any motion, statement, or manifestation that has nothing to do with the election of the Speaker or on the contrary will derail it should be ruled out of order, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. JARAULA. I agree with that.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman's point of order is well taken.

REP. JARAULA. Yes, but my query will have something to do with the composition of this House and therefore the manner of election. Article VI, Section 5 of the Constitution provides that this House shall be composed of the Representatives from the legislative districts throughout the country and those elected under the party-list system, 20 percent of whom shall be seated. My query is: Are there now party-list Members in the House?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). No party-list Member has yet been proclaimed and, therefore, no Members of the House belong to the party-list system as of today.

REP. JARAULA. Considering that the party-list Members constitute 20 percent of the House, it becomes imperative...

REP. GONZALES (N.). Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). What is the point of order of the Gentleman?

REP. JARAULA. ...that we do not go through with the election...

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Order, please.

REP. JARAULA. ...and I therefore move...

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Order, please.

REP. JARAULA. ...for the postponement of the election...

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Order, please.

REP. JARAULA. ...of the Speaker...

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Order, please.

REP. JARAULA. ...until the party-list Members are seated.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, point of order.

REP. PARAS. Mr. Speaker, I object to the motion.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Point of order.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). There is a point of order that we must dispose of.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). The motion of the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro City partakes of the nature of a motion for reconsideration considering that the previous motion has been voted upon and approved unanimously. We have already stated that our highest constitutional mandate at this time is to elect our Speaker. For purposes of expediency, may we find out how many on record are eligible to vote at this particular time, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). There are 206 Members who are duly proclaimed.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from San Juan is recognized.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). May I address a few questions to the Presiding Officer or, in his stead, the Acting Floor Leader as this concerns my right to vote. Mr. Presiding Officer, is it understood that those who will be presented to compete for the position of Speaker will come from both the majority and the minority coalitions in the House?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Acting Floor Leader will please respond.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Traditionally, Mr. Presiding Officer, the Member who wins as Speaker becomes the Speaker and, of course, the head of the majority coalition. On the other hand, traditionally, the losing nominee for Speaker becomes the Minority Leader.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Does that answer the Gentleman from San Juan?

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Mr. Speaker, is it understood that minority in this case also means opposition? Or is it possible that we are contemplating a situation where both the winner and the loser may come from the majority coalition?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). We just followed the tradition, Mr. Presiding Officer, that the losing candidate becomes the Minority

Leader. As to whether or not they will actively play the role of a critical opposition, collaborating opposition or friendly opposition is left to the minority to decide.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). In short, is my distinguished colleague from Mandaluyong accepting that it is completely possible that at some point in time we may end up with both the Speaker and the Minority Leader coming from the same majority coalition?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). That is the understanding of the Chair.

REP. GONZALES (N.). That is very possible, Mr. Presiding Officer, because of the multi-party system now recognized by the Constitution. At times, there are party differences or even personal differences among Members coming from the same political party.

REP. PARAS. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Again, Mr. Presiding Officer, may I just reiterate what I have said. I wish to be guided in the way that I will vote. Let me ask now, Mr. Presiding Officer and distinguished Acting Floor Leader: If I choose not to vote for any of the candidates or if I choose to abstain, how will the House of Representatives treat me since I do not choose to be part of the majority neither do I choose to be part of the minority under the circumstances?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Acting Floor Leader will please respond.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, to my mind he will be viewed as an independent unless in his subsequent actions he continuously aligns himself either with the minority or the majority.

REP. AQUINO (A.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Mr. Presiding Officer, in short...

REP. PARAS. Mr. Presiding Officer, point of order.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). What is the point of order of the Gentleman from Negros Oriental?

REP. PARAS. Mr. Presiding Officer, is not the parliamentary inquiry quite speculative because answers to certain questions will be provided from the query when we still do not know who will be the candidates for Speaker? It is quite speculative to assume that both the candidates belong to the same party or to the majority. I think we should wait until the proper time when such questions would have been raised.

Also, there is no prohibition for any Member of the House regardless of party affiliation to run for the speakership. So I think this is a matter of choice, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The session is suspended for a few minutes.

It was 10:51 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:53 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The session is resumed.

The Gentleman from Negros Oriental is recognized.

REP. PARAS. Mr. Presiding Officer, in view of the fact that we are vying for time, so as not to prolong the deliberation, I am withdrawing my point of order.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Thank you.

REP. AQUINO (A.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Makati City is recognized.

REP. AQUINO (A.). Regarding the question earlier on whether those who abstain or those who fail to vote will be with the majority or minority, in the past, if you abstain or if you are absent during the time of voting, you are considered in the minority.

Of course, I do not agree with this long-standing tradition. I think if you are abroad, for instance, and you fail to vote, you can actually tell the Speaker when you come back if you want to be with the majority and signify accordingly. Why should you be lumped with the minority if you refuse to belong to it?

So, Mr. Presiding Officer, I think this should be clarified. Maybe the Rules Committee can come up with something on this so we will be clarified in the future on our status. Just because you did not vote or you voted for the minority makes you minority permanently is not necessarily the case because you can change parties and join a new alliance. In this particular case, you are no longer in the minority; you may opt to join the majority. And for some of the brave ones in the majority who want to join the minority should be free to do so, but they should signify their desire for record purposes.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). I thank the Gentleman from Makati. We will now proceed with the nomination process.

REP. LOBREGAT. Parliamentary inquiry.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). We recognize the Gentleman from Camarines Sur for the

nomination.

REP. LOBREGAT. Parliamentary inquiry regarding the elections.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Zamboanga City will please state his parliamentary inquiry.

REP. LOBREGAT. May I ask if the election for Speaker has already been finished because earlier the Presiding Officer appointed the Gentleman from Mandaluyong as the Floor Leader?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Correction.

REP. LOBREGAT. Now, how can we have a Majority Floor Leader when we have not elected a Speaker? Or does the Presiding Officer already know the results of the election – who will be in the minority and who will be in the majority?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The designation of the Gentleman from Mandaluyong City is only as an Acting Floor Leader, not as the Majority Leader.

REP. LOBREGAT. No, Mr. Presiding Officer, the Congressman from San Juan suggested that for orderly proceedings, the Presiding Officer should designate somebody from the majority. And that was very clearly stated; I heard it very clearly. The Presiding Officer then appointed the Gentleman from Mandaluyong as the Majority Floor Leader. Can we check the transcript?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Well, I am pretty sure that the designation made by the Chair was for the Gentleman from Mandaluyong to be the Acting Floor Leader solely for the interest of ensuring orderly proceedings.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Mandaluyong City is recognized.

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Presiding Officer, can we check the transcript.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, point of information. May I inform the distinguished Gentleman from Zamboanga City that my recollection is, I was designated Acting Floor Leader for the purpose of maintaining an orderly procedure for this day only. I wish to assure him that the Chair can never designate an actual Floor Leader because the Gentleman from Zamboanga City, who is my classmate in the 11th Congress of the Philippines, and the rest of the Members are aware that the election of the Majority Leader is by means of election of the contingent in the Rules Committee. And we have not yet elected members of the minority nor the majority in the Committee on Rules, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Presiding Officer, may we check the transcript of plenary proceedings.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. GONZALES (N.). I now move that we recognize the distinguished Gentleman from Camarines Sur for his nomination speech.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Camarines Sur is now recognized for his nomination speech.

REP. ANDAYA. Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Presiding Officer, parliamentary inquiry, regarding the elections.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Camarines Sur may proceed.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. ANDAYA

REP. ANDAYA. My esteemed colleagues of this august Chamber:

I rise to nominate a man whose talents, skills, experience, discipline and work ethic, quality of leadership and audacity of vision should make him a unanimous choice for the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the 12th Congress.

He is a man cut out for this job, considering the temper of the times.

Just as in the 1990s, we live today in an extraordinary decade of change and crisis.

Just as in the 1990s, we need today a man who could move this House and advance the national agenda.

Just as in the 1990s, we need a leader of his mold to steer this House,...

REP. AQUINO (A.). Point of order, Mr. Presiding Officer.

REP. ANDAYA. ...the same man lavishly praised by Asian and world leaders alike, and lionized by our leading opinion writers, as probably...

REP. AQUINO (A.). Excuse me, Gentleman from Camarines Sur, I believe the Chair recognized the Gentleman from Muntinlupa.

REP. ANDAYA. ...the best Speaker the country ever had.

REP. AQUINO (A.). May we just be clarified if the Gentleman from Muntinlupa was recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). He is not yet

recognized.

REP. ANDAYA. Mr. Presiding Officer, my dear colleagues, it is hard to imagine a House of Representatives without him. He carried both the institution's glory and burden. *(Applause)* He was its apogee and perigee – the heroic leader when the House did its job well and the punching bag for criticisms when it did not.

He was the best argument for why the House effectively functioned as a bastion of social and economic reforms during the Ramos presidency from 1992 to 1998.

REP. AQUINO (A.). We will reserve our comments after the speech of the Gentleman from Camarines Sur.

REP. ANDAYA. He represented traditional politics at its shining best – politics that delivered results, politics that built consensus and coalitions to efficiently move vital legislation in Congress, and politics that performed and achieved highly.

My dear colleagues, five decades ago, John F. Kennedy praised the politician who built consensus and who was not inflexible as a man of courage. Politics and legislation, Kennedy said, are not matters for inflexible principles or unattainable ideals. He said that legislation under a democratic way of life requires compromise between the desires of each individual and group and those around them.

My dear friends, it might as well have been the honorable Gentleman from the Fourth District of Pangasinan speaking, for our nominee is the master of the fine art of conciliating and balancing interests. Few can rival him in the practice of this art. It is an art that is essential to keeping our nation united and enabling our government to function.

Today, as perhaps in the early 1990s, the Filipino nation needs to see a government that is functioning, that is in control of the national agenda, and that can pinpoint the rich possibilities for recovery and growth in the future. It is a situation perfect for the gentleman's perfectly honed political skills for today we are going through a stormy passage.

The South is still on fire with its Muslim insurgency. The communist threat has not been tamed. Crime syndicates have struck with alarming regularity in Metro Manila. We have an economy short on investor confidence and roiled by unrest from its labor force. And millions of desperate poor Filipinos cry out for redemption from poverty – or we face the thunder of their anger in the streets.

His track record in performance politics and innovative reforms makes him a standout in the race for Speaker. He knows how to skillfully steer the House – having already served two terms as Speaker – and he is, my colleagues, the best suited to help President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo turn the economy around, win the fight against poverty, and end the prevailing culture of violence in the country.

He has an economic action plan to fight poverty – his plan 747 that aims for a 7 percent growth over seven years beginning in 2003. By the seventh year of his program, millions of poor Filipinos would move into the threshold of the middle class.

He is the father of many economic measures that have made a difference in our national life. One is the successful dollar-

remittance program which has given the country over \$60 billion since its inception in 1968 and helped prop up the economy in times of crisis. Another is the Build-Operate-Transfer Law that built power plants, highways, irrigation dams, airports, seaports without cost to the government.

He is a peacemaker, having played heroic roles in the peace process with various insurgent groups.

He risked his life and career in the deserts of North Africa and in the mountain lairs of Central Mindanao to find common ground with rebel leaders.

When no one could do it, my dear colleagues, he provided the breakthroughs that led to peace amongst the brave with the RAM-YOU in 1992 and the MNLF in 1996.

He was close to bringing the National Democratic Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to similar peace agreements. But everything came undone with his defeat in the 1998 presidential elections.

My dear friends, today, it is clear that the nation needs a leader like him.

It is clear that the House needs his leadership more than before.

My esteemed colleagues, it is my privilege therefore to nominate for Speaker of the House of Representatives the Honorable Jose de Venecia of the Fourth District of Pangasinan.

Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I ask that the Gentleman from the First District of Tarlac, the Honorable Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr., be recognized to second the nomination.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Tarlac, the Honorable Gilberto Teodoro, is recognized to second the nomination.

SPEECH OF REP. TEODORO SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. TEODORO. Mr. Presiding Officer, my dear colleagues.

Today, our country is facing another test of economic survival that demands political and economic statesmanship from all our leaders.

The economy remains laggard for several complex reasons. Among these are the lingering effects of the 1997 currency crisis, terrorism and criminality, and the political upheaval that left gaping wounds from which the nation continues to bleed.

For the nation to survive, there is a need for healing and unity, not blaming each other for the pains we now suffer, and staying together to employ our best skills to move this nation forward.

This is a time that calls for sacrifice, for sharing of burdens. This is a time for collective solutions, a time for synergy between agencies of the government and within these agencies.

We believe that a House divided in this Twelfth Congress will only make the national situation worse. A House divided against itself is our own worst enemy.

We need a leader in the House to unify the political parties

and factions and put everything together in the proper mix for us.

It is therefore the position of the entire House contingent of the Nationalist People's Coalition to support Representative Jose de Venecia and nominate him for the position of Speaker.

We believe that the times call for us to unite in the House in a principled coalition and help turn the economy around.

We believe that at this time Representative Jose de Venecia is one leader who could bring together the House under his able leadership.

He is a coalition-maker and consensus-builder of the first order which led to the formation of the Rainbow Coalition in 1992 and the present Sunshine Coalition in 2001. We recognize his skills and we bow to his wisdom.

He did his work famously in 1992 and 1995 when, as Speaker of the House, he helped produce the modest economic miracle that enabled the country to be one of the best-performing economies in Southeast Asia.

We have no doubt at this time that Representative de Venecia can do the same again. He is excellent at what he does. And he does best as an economic visionary, coalition-builder and consensus-maker.

It is therefore my privilege on behalf of the Nationalist People's Coalition to nominate Representative Jose de Venecia for Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Twelfth Congress.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I ask that the Gentleman from the First District of Surigao del Sur, the Honorable Prospero A. Pichay Jr., be recognized to second the nomination.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Honorable Prospero Pichay Jr. is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. PICHAY SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. PICHAY. Mr. Presiding Officer, my distinguished colleagues:

In behalf of my party, Lakas-NUCD, I consider it a distinct honor to be a part of history that is unfolding today.

The man I am privileged to nominate is someone who, for many reasons, was written off as a "political has-been" following his defeat in the 1998 presidential elections.

But he is a man not easily written off or even forgotten.

In public life as in private, he has resurrected himself time and again because of his enormous talents as a business leader, a political leader, and a visionary. He always rises from the ashes, so to speak, like the proverbial phoenix.

In bouncing back, he has bucked overwhelming odds.

In 1992, with only 37 Lakas-NUCD Congressmen, he won overwhelmingly as Speaker of the House – thanks to the Rainbow Coalition that he built from scratch. He saw with his political acumen that at the heart of democracy is coalition-building.

It is this Rainbow Coalition that gave then President Ramos solid backing in the legislature although the former Defense

Chief won as minority President with only 23 percent of the votes in 1992.

Even the way he built Lakas in partnership with President Ramos is a stuff of political legend. The Lakas originals were so few, it is said, that they could all fit in a van on the way to the airport.

His leadership qualities are now engraved in the country's recent political history and are recognized in most parliaments of the world as the only Filipino who rightfully occupies the post of Vice-President of the Christian Democrats International.

His humility, creativity and unbending will to serve the Filipino are, among others, the qualities a Speaker of this House must have.

Ladies and Gentlemen of this honorable Chamber, it is my distinct honor and privilege to nominate for Speaker of the Twelfth Congress "the man for all seasons," Representative Jose de Venecia of the Fourth District of Pangasinan.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). May I ask that the Gentleman from the Fourth District of Manila, the Honorable Rodolfo C. Bacani, be recognized to second the nomination.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Honorable Rodolfo C. Bacani is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. BACANI SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. BACANI. Mr. Presiding Officer, distinguished Members and esteemed colleagues in this august Chamber of the House of Representatives:

It has been said that the heart of governance is consensus and coalition-building.

It is what makes Congress work.

It is the reason the country has not been torn apart by divergent ideologies.

Today, as our democratic way turns a new leaf, we are called upon to elect a leader in the House who would best embody the workings of democracy in the legislature and, in effect, instill much needed unity among its Members.

I rise to nominate for Speaker of the House of Representatives the man who can best lead this Chamber.

He is a consensus-builder par excellence, whose performance as Speaker enabled both the Ninth and Tenth Congresses to achieve much for the country especially in the area of economic growth and development.

This miracle worker has shown time and again his great talent at persuasion.

He can bring together people and even political parties of disparate ideas and ideologies, seeking consensus and common ground; guided always by the highest ethical standard of public office, whose primordial goal is service for the common good.

Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen, we need to unite the

House and heal the nation at this time. We need a new political consensus to advance the national agenda.

In these perilous times, we need this distinguished gentleman's wisdom, experience, devotion and expertise. He is the best man for the position of Speaker.

My dear colleagues, it is my privilege to nominate for Speaker of the House of Representatives the Honorable Jose de Venecia from the Fourth District of Pangasinan.

Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, may I ask that the Lady from the First District of Lanao del Sur, the Honorable Faysah Maniri-Racman Dumarpa, be recognized to second the nomination.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Honorable Faysah Maniri-Racman Dumarpa is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. DUMARPA SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. DUMARPA. Distinguished Members and esteemed colleagues of the House of Representatives, I rise today to second the nomination for Speaker of our honorable colleague, a Christian and a devoted Catholic who feels and bleeds for Muslim Mindanao as though he were our own brother by blood and by religion.

As Speaker of the Ninth Congress in 1992 and of the Tenth Congress in 1995, during the Ramos administration, he did much for the Muslims, Mindanao women and the *Lumads*. Visiting the Muslim's havens, his conscience was struck by what he saw that moved him to take action: the incredible poverty of our brother Muslims; the underdevelopment of the regions; and their lack of opportunities for education and employment – a place that Manila, as the seat of central government, may have forgotten too often when talking about economic development. No wonder then that he took a leading role in forging peace with the Moro National Liberation Front in 1992 and no wonder again that he took the giant step in seeking peace with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in 1997 and 1998, only to be stopped by his defeat in the 1998 presidential elections. I remember he was the first Christian political leader from Imperial Manila to set foot at Camp Abubakar in the mountain's stronghold of Central Mindanao. His peace initiatives both parallel economic programs among Muslim leaders and Muslim lands, especially the irrigation system for the Muslims and their rice fields. His vision for Muslim Mindanao was peace with the rebels and a mini-Marshall Plan-type of economic development. This vision is far from being realized. But we hope that by electing him Speaker of the House, we can start again the process of realizing it.

My esteemed colleagues in the House, it is my great honor and privilege to second the nomination for Speaker of the House the distinguished Gentleman from the Fourth District of Pangasinan, the Honorable Jose de Venecia.

Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Acting

Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I now move that the distinguished Gentleman from Iloilo, the Honorable Augusto Syjuco, be recognized to second the nomination.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Honorable Syjuco is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. SYJUCO SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. SYJUCO. Mr. Presiding Officer, honorable brothers and sisters, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Every Filipino is black and blue from a series of wild punches thrown from all directions: kidnappings here, inflation there, a dwindling economy, a restive labor sector, a fetid bureaucracy. Traditional alliances have broken up and new and broader formations are coalescing.

We are thrust into the maelstrom, inured by demands of everyday survival, challenged by oppressions that confront us, and now sinking into the quicksand of our times.

But all is not lost! We will not default! We will rise from the maladies of the past and triumph over the afflictions of today: To pull our people out of the dungeons of apathy; to unite our country and wage an all-out war against the cruelty and institutionalized injustices of our society; to win the battle against crime and poverty, against graft and corruption; to create a society adherent to the foundations of social, economic, and civil liberties that our democracy holds sacred.

We will now close ranks and embrace the one person in this House who will lead us out of the quagmire. We choose today the most experienced among us, the best among us, and the "First Among Equals."

More than nine out of 10 Congressmen in this House today know and agree that that man is Representative Jose de Venecia Jr.

Emerging from the Rainbow Coalition he forged and steered so knowingly and successfully in the Ninth and Tenth Congresses, he now represents and presents the radiant and healing rays of the new Sunshine Coalition that he has fashioned for our Twelfth Congress to break our people free from the chains of poverty, lack of education, development and opportunities, and the injustices of our society.

Our newfound unity and cohesion in the House under the leadership of Jose de Venecia Jr. will henceforth propel our country out of its political and economic woes, transcending political affiliations, even just to get things done. We will share one vision, one mission – to sustain and advance the supreme virtue of freedom for our people.

And so today, we lock arms together, gather our inner strengths together, lift our spirits together, summon our conviction together to embark on our noble mission to make of our House of Representatives of the 12th Congress the most productive, the most united, and the most socially responsive House of Representatives in history.

Today, we seize our power for destiny!

Mr. Presiding Officer, honorable brothers and sisters, Ladies

and Gentlemen, it is my distinct honor and gratifying privilege to second the nomination for Speaker of the House of Representatives Honorable Jose de Venecia Jr. of the Fourth District of Pangasinan to lead our House, here and now, to the fullness of our destiny.

Thank you and good morning.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I now move that we recognize the distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Makati City, the Honorable Agapito A. Aquino, to deliver his nominating speech.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Makati City, the Honorable Agapito Aquino, is recognized.

REP. AQUINO (A.). Mr. Presiding Officer, it was agreed that the Gentleman from Cavite will speak first.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Cavite is recognized.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. REMULLA

REP. REMULLA. My dear colleagues, good morning:

Today I stand before this Body to nominate a man who I believe can bring a new image, new politics and new leadership to this House of Representatives, a man whose experience is vast in both local and national politics, and who through his legislation has shown his priorities are right, a man who stands his ground and stands by his word.

As a neophyte Member of this House and a young one at that, I search for a new image for this august Body, an improved image. With this, I also yearn for new politics, politics concerned with national interest, with issues most important to every Filipino like the economy, education, employment, environment and not personal prosperity, politics to regain the public's trust in politics. Thus, a leader who can build consensus as good as any other – a new image, new politics, new leadership.

My dear colleagues, it is my privilege to nominate Speaker Carlos Padilla.

Thank you and good morning. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I now move that we recognize the distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Palawan, the Honorable Abraham Kahlil Mitra.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Palawan, the Honorable Abraham Kahlil B. Mitra, is recognized.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. MITRA

REP. MITRA. Mr. Presiding Officer, colleagues in the House of Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning:

This is a time of great challenge in our nation, a time to look forward and start the foundation of trust, ability and performance

between the government and the people it serves. This is a time to build upon the trust of our countrymen through hard work, no nonsense politics, quality planning and, above all, sincerity in public service.

The times call for new politics – politics free from the bounds of traditional practices; politics prioritizing public trust over personal prosperity; politics of honesty, decency, dedication and high quality legislation.

As a former town mayor of Nueva Vizcaya, Representative Padilla acquired the trust of his constituents by demonstrating his ability to quickly learn the ropes of public service and deliver as much basic services the way Nueva Vizcaya has never seen from a public official before.

As a political detainee, Representative Padilla epitomizes the essence of new politics by standing by what he believes should be said and done. This he did by sacrificing his personal security for the sake of defending public trust with government.

As a Member of the Batasang Pambansa and the Eighth, Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Congresses, Representative Padilla has achieved so much experience, respect and trust from both the general populace and from his colleagues in the legislature.

On behalf of the citizens of the Republic of the Philippines who are in dire need of “real” politicians, on behalf of my fellow Members of the House of Representatives who believe as well as practice new politics, I would like to express my honor and privilege in nominating Representative Carlos Padilla as the next Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Thank You. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, to second the nomination, I ask for the recognition of the Lady from the Lone District of Aklan, the Honorable Gabrielle Calizo.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Lady from Aklan, the Honorable Calizo, is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. CALIZO SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. CALIZO. Mr. Presiding Officer, distinguished colleagues.

All of us gathered here received our fresh mandate from our people only four months after the EDSA II and 15 days after the EDSA III. Both events in EDSA showed us that the people are clamoring for service and result-oriented public officials who will help improve their lives. People are clamoring for new politics – politics that shuns away from the traditional politics of concession, compromise and promises.

As a neophyte Member of this honorable Chamber, I look forward to working with a leader who advances a different kind of politics. I believe that all of the aspirants for the coveted position of Speaker of the House are committed to serve the people – they are all adhering to a politics of service. However, two of them chose to give up their bid for the sake of party unity or for some other personal reasons.

I have thought about whom to vote for this morning and after thinking about it thoroughly, one person I believe possesses the quality of a leader I would like to follow – a leader I can look

up to, a leader who stands his ground and remains true to his commitment.

Thus, Mr. Presiding Officer, my distinguished colleagues, it is my distinct honor to nominate Congressman Carlos Padilla from the Lone District of Nueva Vizcaya to be the Speaker of the House.

In my brief encounter with him during our meetings in the LDP, he inspired me to stay with the opposition despite the temptation being offered by the perceived majority. He himself was given an attractive option to join the many others, but he opted to stay with the party and instead rose above his personal interest. He decided to pursue the less traveled road in the interest of preserving the system of check and balance.

Presently, the country is beleaguered with seemingly insurmountable difficulties. There is a mounting feeling of hopelessness and despair amongst our people. Our people are uncertain of what lies ahead. This is a great challenge for public servants like us. This is a challenge for our leaders. We need someone who can inspire and motivate, someone who has a track record of being selfless and has untainted reputation. For this reason, distinguished colleagues, I earnestly seek your support for Congressman Carlos Padilla.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I now move that we recognize the distinguished Gentleman from the Fifth District of Iloilo, the Honorable Rolex T. Suplico, to second the nomination.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Nazareno). The distinguished Gentleman from the Fifth District of Iloilo is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. SUPLICO SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. SUPLICO. Mr. Presiding Officer, my dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen:

This morning, the House is once again given the sacred opportunity to be another beacon of hope in this unhappy land. We have begun the process of selecting the new captain of the ship – the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The exercise of this right could not come at a more crucial time.

We live in extraordinary times. A world economic meltdown looms in the horizon. Our economy is in crisis. The peso is being murdered daily, stabilization plots are being unleashed, kidnappings occur frequently. Parts of this country are in a state of siege. The election of a new Speaker could not come then at a more crucial time.

This House is the repository of representative democracy. The founding fathers have made that so. It is, thus, the last refuge of every Filipino. If a persecuted Filipino seeks justice, he should go to this House. If he seeks economic reforms, he should go to this House. If he seeks peace and order in this land, then he should come here and enjoy the vast, soothing powers that this House can offer. That is our role, and we cannot evade that without violating our oaths. The prospect, therefore, of selecting the next Speaker of this House could not come at a

more crucial time.

I would like to believe that this new Speaker holds real promise. He should not be a mere promising Speaker like what a stalwart of this House said a few days ago. He should not be a consummate salesman – the type who can sell sand to the Bedouin and ice to the Eskimo. He should not be a widely acknowledged expert of patronage politics. He should not be known for his excessive grandiloquence that is matched only by his expertise in the sordid business of unprincipled political addition and expediency. He should not be a *trapo*, albeit a good one as a pretender claimed. He should not be tainted by scams and scandals. He should never compromise the independence of this House, its very source of power. Certainly, my dear friends, we do not need to resurrect Harry Houdini to be the Speaker of this House.

By what strict standards then do we elect our new Speaker?

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo boldly offered an answer in her inaugural speech when she said that, and I quote:

To achieve true reforms, we need to outgrow our traditional brand of politics based on patronage and personality. Traditional politics is the politics of the status quo. It is a structural part of the problem. x x x We need to promote a New Politics of true party programs and platforms... a structural part of the solution.

I say that we do exactly as the President proposes. Let us heed the call for new politics. We need a Speaker who understands the dynamics of traditional politics yet bold enough – and able – to defy it. With one voice and regardless of political parties, we have called for such a man who shall lead us towards new politics. And nobody would deny that!

We should put our votes where our mouths are because we have such a man among us. And he is no other than Honorable Carlos Padilla of the Lone District of Nueva Vizcaya – a martial law political detainee charged with subversion, a municipal mayor from 1971 to 1978, a Member of the 1978 Interim Batasang Pambansa, a Member of the Eighth, Tenth and Eleventh Congresses, author of RA 6655, the Free High School Law, and most of all, a good man.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great honor that I nominate the Honorable Carlos Padilla, former Deputy Speaker for Luzon of the Eleventh Congress, to the post of Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Thank you and long live the Filipino people! *(Applause)*

REP. ABAYON. Mr. Presiding Officer. May I be recognized, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Gentleman from Samar is recognized.

REP. ABAYON. Northern Samar, Mr. Presiding Officer.

This is just a point of parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Presiding Officer. Earlier, the Gentleman from Iloilo questioned the authority of the Presiding Officer to preside. And since he has nominated the Honorable Carlos Padilla as a candidate for Speaker, may we know, to straighten the record, if he is waiving his objection to the authority of the Presiding Officer now. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, the query is not directed to this Representation.

At any rate, Mr. Presiding Officer, may we now proceed with the business at hand by recognizing the distinguished Gentleman from the Lone District of Cagayan de Oro, the Honorable Constantino Jaraula, to second the nomination.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The Honorable Jaraula is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. JARAULA SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. JARAULA. Mr. Presiding Officer, as we go through this ritual of electing the Speaker, thousands upon thousands of people are demonstrating outside. As we stand here, the Philippine peso is facing its worst crisis in the history of this Republic. As we stand here, shooting is still going on in many parts of Mindanao. As we stand here, thousands upon thousands of people are wondering whether there is hope at the end of the tunnel. This ritual of electing a Speaker, which we look forward to, will give some hope to these people. I am therefore honored to second the nomination of someone who exemplifies honesty, for in the political landscape of the country that is a quality that is very much lacking. I am seconding the nomination of someone who personifies humility – from the humility of his home in the fastnesses of Nueva Vizcaya to the humility of his office in Congress. But that quality is the missing link between the leadership of the country and the suffering masses of Filipino people. I take pride in seconding the nomination of a man whose sincerity and not grandiosity is something that we need today. I am nominating a man who is committed to be transparent and therefore will go through a cleansing process, even of this House, starting with a periodic publication of the documents and papers of the Committee on Accounts. I am seconding the nomination of a man who is committed to cleanse the image of this House, that in the last three years we have seen has gone on with the practice of approving bills even without a quorum. I am seconding the nomination of a man who would exact from every Member the minimum fulfillment of a duty, that of being present everyday whenever we have sessions. Such a man is the Honorable Carlos Padilla of Nueva Vizcaya. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). May we ask for the recognition of the distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Makati, the Honorable Agapito Aquino, to second the nomination.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Makati City, the Honorable Agapito Aquino, is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. AQUINO (A.) SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. AQUINO (A.). Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

There are some qualities of the candidate for Speaker that many of our colleagues probably do not know, so I will no longer mention his legislative achievements like being Deputy Speaker or Congressman of Nueva Vizcaya for the third term or even a Member of the Batasang Pambansa before. But I would like to state that he was once in his teens and a laborer. He was a laborer at the Bureau of Reforestation of the Philippine Tobacco Redrying Company. He worked as a clerk, rose to become a lecturer, instructor and served as a member of the Board of Regents of UP, Tarlac State University, Davao Oriental College of Science and Technology, Philippine Normal College, Polytechnic University, et cetera. He was also an activist. But most of all, I like this Gentleman because he served in prison during martial law for no less than seven months which reminds me of a brother who stayed for seven years. But his idea of new politics is as follows: We have agreed what this seems to be... everybody is talking about new politics but nobody wants to define it. It has to do with the acronym TRADE, where T stands for transparency; R for result-orientedness; A for accountability; D for discipline; and E for economy and environmental concerns. This Gentleman espouses this kind of new politics. It is therefore a great honor to second the nomination of Honorable Carlos Padilla.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, there being no other nominations for the position of Speaker, I move that the nomination be closed.

I so move.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). There is a motion to close the nomination.

Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I now move that we proceed to the election of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Deputy Secretary will now call the roll, and upon being called, each Member will please state clearly the name of his or her candidate.

ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman). Roll call of Members for the election of the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

Abad.....Jose de Venecia *(Applause)*
Abaya, Antonio M.Joe de Venecia
Abaya, Plaridel M.

REP. ABAYA (P.). Hon. Jose de Venecia, from the Fourth District of Pangasinan. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De

Guzman), *reading*:

Abayon.....

REP. ABAYON. I still vote for the best choice, Jose de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Ablan.....

REP. ABLAN. The man of the hour, J. de V. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Acosta

REP. ACOSTA. Mr. Speaker, I vote as my party president has voted. Jose de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Albano.....Jose de Venecia
Alfelor.....Jose de Venecia
Almario.....Jose de Venecia
Alvarez.....Jose de Venecia
Amante.....Jose de Venecia
Amatong.....Jose de Venecia
Amin

REP. AMIN. I will vote for my partymate, the Honorable Carlos Padilla. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Ancheta

REP. ANCHETA. For the speakership, I am going to vote for Joe de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Andaya.....Joe de Venecia
Angara-Castillo.....Carlos Padilla (*Applause*)
Angping

REP. ANGPING. Mr. Presiding Officer, we vote for the candidate of the NPC, Speaker Joe de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Antonino-Custodio.....

REP. ANTONINO-CUSTODIO. The candidate of the NPC, Manong Joe de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Apostol.....Joe de Venecia (*Applause*)

Aquino, Agapito A.

REP. AQUINO (A.). Of course, Carlos Padilla, baka magkamali pa. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Aquino, Benigno S.

REP. AQUINO (B.). Mr. Presiding Officer, please record my vote – the same as our party president – consistent with the party stand.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. Nazareno). Will the Gentleman please state the name of his candidate.

REP. AQUINO (B.). De Venecia, Mr. Presiding Officer. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Arbison.....Joe de Venecia
Bacani.....Jose de Venecia
Baculio.....Jose de Venecia
Badelles.....de Venecia
Banaag.....Joe de Venecia
Barbers.....de Venecia
Barinaga.....Joe de Venecia
Baterina.....

REP. BATERINA. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for the pride of Region I, Joe de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Bautista.....Joe de Venecia
Beratio.....Joe de Venecia
Bersamin.....Jose de Venecia
Biazon.....Carlos Padilla
Bondoc.....Joe de Venecia
Bueser.....de Venecia
Bulut

REP. BULUT. Manong Joe, the big "J" de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Cabilao.....Jose de Venecia
Cagas.....

REP. CAGAS. The NPC has endorsed Joe de Venecia. As a Member of NPC, I am for Joe de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Cajes.....Joe de Venecia
Calalay.....Jose de Venecia
Calizo.....Carlos Padilla

CariJose de Venecia
 Carloto

(Applause)

REP. CARLOTO. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for my colleague in the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Congresses, Joe de V. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Castro

REP. CASTRO. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for Jose 747 Sunshine, Jose de Venecia. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Cayetano

REP. CAYETANO. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote not for the past President but for a future President, Jose de Venecia. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Celeste.....

REP. CELESTE. I vote for the pride of the Province of Pangasinan, Jose de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Chatto.....

REP. CHATTO. Mr. Presiding Officer, it is my honor and privilege to vote for the man for all seasons, Jose de Venecia. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Chiongbian.....Jose de Venecia
 Chipeco

REP. CHIPECO. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for our party's candidate, the LDP, Carlos Padilla. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 ChungalaoJose de Venecia
 Clarete.....Jose de Venecia
 Cojuangco, Carlos O.
 Cojuangco, Mark O.Jose de Venecia
 CrespoJose de Venecia
 Cruz-DucutJose de Venecia
 Cua.....Jose de Venecia
 Cuenco

REP. CUENCO. My choice for a Speaker goes to the man who is a rare combination of velvet and steel, Joe de V.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:

DadivasJose de Venecia
 DangwaJose de Venecia
 DazaJose de Venecia
 De GuzmanJose de Venecia
 De Venecia.....

REP. DE VENECIA. With your permission, I would like to vote for my distinguished rival, Carlos Padilla. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Defensor, Arthur D.de Venecia
 Defensor, Ma. Theresa T.

REP. DEFENSOR (M.). My name is Maria Theresa Defensor, and I vote for Honorable Jose de Venecia. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Del MarJose de Venecia
 Dimaporo

REP. DIMAPORO. Mr. Presiding Officer, it is a privilege to vote for a friend of Mindanao, Jose de Venecia. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Domogan.....Jose de Venecia
 DuavitJose de Venecia
 Dumarpa

REP. DUMARPA. I vote for a man, the hope of the land of promise especially in the peace process in Muslim Mindanao, Jose de Venecia. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Dumpit.....de Venecia
 Durano

REP. DURANO. Of course, for my Ninong, and also the candidate of the NPC, JDV. (Applause)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), reading:
 Dy, Consuelo A.Jose de Venecia
 Dy, Faustino III G.Jose de Venecia
 EcleoJose de Venecia
 Enrile.....Jose de Venecia
 Ermita-Buhain.....Jose de Venecia
 Escuderode Venecia
 Espinade Venecia
 EspinoJose de Venecia
 Espinosa, Edgar T.de Venecia

Espinosa, Emilio Jr. R.de Venecia
 Espinosa, Vida V.de Venecia
 Estrella

REP. ESTRELLA. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for my distinguished provincemate, Representative Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

FailonJose de Venecia
 FalconJoe de Venecia
 FloirendoJose de Venecia
 FuaJoe de Venecia
 Fuentebella.....

REP. FUENTEBELLA. The youngest Member of this House votes for the colleague of my father and the colleague of my grandfather, Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Garcia, Enrique Jr. T.Padilla
 Garcia, Vincent J.de Venecia
 Garin

REP. GARIN. I vote for a man who I believe still remembers people. Although he will reign when he reigns in His kingdom Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

GatchalianJose de Venecia
 Gonzales, Neptali II M.de Venecia
 Gonzalez, Raul M.

REP. GONZALEZ (R.). For the Speaker of all seasons, Joe de V. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

GordonJoe de Venecia
 GozosJoe de Venecia
 Gullas.....

REP. GULLAS. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for a man for every moment, Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

GunigundoJose de Venecia
 Hizon.....

REP. HIZON. Choice of the Liberal Party, I vote for Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Imperial.....de Venecia
 Ipong.....de Venecia
 Jaafar.....Joe de Venecia
 Jalade Venecia
 Jalosjos.....
 JaraulaPadilla
 Javier.....Jose de Venecia
 Joaquin.....

REP. JOAQUIN. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for the candidate of the NPC, Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Joson

REP. JOSON. Mr. Presiding Officer, I loved working with Reps. Butch Abad and Caloy Padilla in the Eleventh Congress but the NPC supports the speakership of Joe de Venecia. I vote for JDV.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

KintanarJose de Venecia
 Lacson.....Joe de Venecia
 Lagman-Luistro

REP. LAGMAN-LUISTRO. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for a true Bicolano, Bicolano by choice, Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

LanotJoe de Venecia
 Lapus.....Jose de Venecia
 Ledesma.....

REP. LEDESMA. Mr. Presiding Officer, our party has spoken but it is also my privilege to vote for my Speaker in the Tenth Congress, a man who guided me, prepared me and exposed me so that in the Eleventh Congress I was able to chair both the House Labor and the House Energy Committees. And I know that in this Congress, he shall also prepare and guide all the new Congressmen so that they may be prepared and equipped to help our country in legislation.

I vote for Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Leviste.....Joe de Venecia
 LibananJose de Venecia
 Lobregat.....

REP. LOBREGAT. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for the Speaker of the Filipino people, Carlos Padilla. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Locsin, Teodoro Jr. L. Joe de Venecia
 Locsin, Ma. Victoria L.

REP. LOCSIN (M.). I vote for the NPC's choice and ladies' choice, Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Lopez, Jaime C. Joe de Venecia
 Lopez, Ruy Elias C. Jose de Venecia
 Lozada..... Jose de Venecia
 Macarambon

REP. MACARAMBON. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for a man for peace. I vote for Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Macias.....

REP. MACIAS. I vote for the Gentleman from Pangasinan, Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Malanyaon

REP. MALANYAON. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for my personal choice and the choice of the NPC, Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Mamba Joe de Venecia
 Marañon..... Joe de Venecia
 Marcos

REP. MARCOS. It is my pride to choose between two Ilocanos but I stand with the First Region – de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Martinez.....

REP. MARTINEZ. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for the man who promises to bring the sunshine into Congress and into the country, Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Matalam Joe de Venecia
 Mathay Joe de Venecia
 Mitra

REP. MITRA. Mr. Presiding Officer, I stand by the principles and the party of my father. And today I would like to cast my vote to a person who does not only believe but practices

new politics, Carlos Padilla.
 Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Monfort.....

REP. MONFORT. Mr. Presiding Officer, I like the program and I like to ride 747, Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Montilla..... Joe de Venecia
 Moreno.....

REP. MORENO. Mr. Presiding Officer, I would like to join my distinguished colleague, the Honorable Butch Abad, in voting for Mr. Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Nachura..... de Venecia
 Nantes Joe de Venecia
 Nepomuceno Joe de Venecia
 Nicolas Jose de Venecia
 Nieva..... Jose de Venecia
 Nograles.....

REP. NOGRALES. Mr. Presiding Officer, kindly register my vote for Speaker JDV, Joe de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Olaño..... Joe de Venecia
 Ortega

REP. ORTEGA. My personal choice, NPC's choice, the majority's choice, Jose Claveria de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Padilla

REP. PADILLA. Mr. Presiding Officer, I consider the Honorable Joe de Venecia as the second Congressman from the Lone District of Nueva Vizcaya. I am voting for him. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Paras.....

REP. PARAS. JDV, alias Joe de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Perez Joe de Venecia *(Applause)*
 Pichay de Venecia

Pilando

REP. PILANDO. We vote for Joe DV, kasama na diyan si Gina. *(Laughter) (Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Pingoy

REP. PINGOY. I am casting my vote for JDV. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Plaza

REP. PLAZA. Mr. Presiding Officer, Agusan del Sur, Mindanao needs a man of vision and solid economic framework. I cast my vote for Representative Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Puentevella

REP. PUENTEVELLA. Mr. Presiding Officer, representing the city of smile, Bacolod City, I vote Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Punzalan.....Joe DV

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Ramirez-Sato

REP. RAMIREZ-SATO. Mr. Presiding Officer, it is my honor to cast my vote in favor of Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Ramiro

REP. RAMIRO. My vote goes to Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Real

REP. REAL. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote not out of party loyalty but I vote for a truly great leader of this Chamber. I vote for Joe DV. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Remulla

REP. REMULLA. The people of the Second District of

Cavite vote for Carlos Padilla. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Reyes, Edmundo Jr. O. Jose de Venecia
Reyes, Victoria H. Jose de Venecia *(Applause)*
Roco de Venecia
Rodriguez, Isidro Jr. S. Jose de Venecia
Rodriguez, Oscar S.

REP. RODRIGUEZ (O.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I admire and respect Caloy, he being a colleague in the Eighth, Tenth, Eleventh and this Congress, but I vote for Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Roman..... Jose de Venecia
Romualdo..... Jose de Venecia
Salapuddin

REP. SALAPUDDIN. Mr. Presiding Officer, my vote is for a man of peace and a good consensus builder, and my personal choice, Jose de Venecia for Speaker. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Salceda..... de Venecia
Saludo Jose de Venecia
San Juan

REP. SAN JUAN. Mr. Presiding Officer, from the Second District of Zamboanga del Sur, I vote for the person who can bring peace and progress in Mindanao, Honorable Jose de Venecia. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

San Luis

REP. SAN LUIS. I vote for the candidate of our party, the LDP, Carlos Padilla. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading:*

Sandoval, Federico II S. Jose de Venecia
Sandoval, Vicente A. Jose de Venecia
Santiago Jose de Venecia
Seachon..... de Venecia
Silverio..... Jose de Venecia
Singson Jose de Venecia
Solis

REP. SOLIS. Mr. Presiding Officer, my dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, this Representation from the Second District of Sorsogon finds it hard to choose from two equally distinguished gentlemen, but I will vote for a man who loves a Bicolana, Joe DV. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Soon-Ruiz Jose de Venecia
 Suarez Jose de Venecia
 Sumulong Joe de Venecia
 Suplico

REP. SUPLICO. I stand on the party, the LDP. I therefore cast my vote for Carlos Padilla. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Sy-Alvarado

REP. SY-ALVARADO. As a loyal party man, a believer, I vote for Jose de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Syjuco

REP. SYJUCO. Mr. Presiding Officer, on behalf of the people of the Second District of Iloilo, I cast our vote for Jose de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Taganas Layus

REP. TAGANAS LAYUS. I am a native of Asingan, Pangasinan but now a Cagayano by choice. I belong to the NPC, hence, I vote for JDV. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Taliño-Santos

REP. TALIÑO SANTOS. I am an independent candidate and I am supposed to vote for Butch Abad but he withdrew. Congratulations to the next Speaker but I will vote for Padilla. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Teodoro

REP. TEODORO. Together with the Nationalist People's Coalition, I am privileged to vote for the Honorable Jose de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Teves Jose de Venecia
 Torres Jose de Venecia
 Tulagan

REP. TULAGAN. Mr. Presiding Officer, of course, I would like to vote for a man who will spread equally the sunshine, Joe

de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Umali, Alfonso Jr. V. Joe de Venecia
 Umali, Aurelio M.

REP. UMALI (A.V.). Mr. Presiding Officer, please register my vote for the Hon. Jose C. de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Unico

REP. UNICO. I vote for the unanimous choice of Bicolandia, JDV.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Uy, Edwin C. Jose de Venecia
 Uy, Reynaldo S.

REP. UY (R.). Mr. Presiding Officer, hanggang ngayon nahahati ang puso ko sa dalawa dahil parehong magagaling. Kung pwede lang bumoto ng Carlos de Venecia. But I would like to register from the First District of Samar a vote of the Liberal Party, a vote for Joe de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Veloso

REP. VELOSO. Mr. Presiding Officer, I vote for the NPC's choice, and the choice of the majority of the Members of the Twelfth Congress, the Honorable Jose de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Vicencio

REP. VICENCIO. I have finished my tabulation, but I do not know if my vote will still be necessary because we already know who the winner is. So, I vote for the winner, Speaker Jose de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Villar Carlos Padilla
 Villarama

REP. VILLARAMA. The Aksyon Demokratiko supports Joe de Venecia. I vote for Manong Joe.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Villareal Jose de Venecia
 Violago Jose de Venecia
 Wacnang

REP. WACNANG. I vote for the candidate of the Liberals, Joe de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Yapha.....Jose de Venecia
Ylagan.....Jose de Venecia
Yumul.....

REP. YUMUL. Kagalangalang na Tagapangulo, sa ngalan po ng mamamayan ng Ikaapat na Distrito ng Lalawigan ng Quezon at paninindigan po ng partido patungo sa bagong politika, ang boto ko po ay para kay Kagalangalang Carlos Padilla.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Zamora, Manuel E.Joe de Venecia
Zamora, Ronaldo B.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Mr. Presiding Officer, may I take a few minutes to explain my vote.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). No explanation of vote please. Just state the name of the candidate without explanation.

REP. ZAMORA (R.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I choose to abstain and may I now explain my vote.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Nazareno). Voting for the Speaker is cast without any explanation of vote. However, the Gentleman may insert in the Record his explanation.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Zialcita.....

REP. ZIALCITA. The people of Parañaque vote for Jose de Venecia.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (Mr. De Guzman), *reading*:

Zubiri.....

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Presiding Officer, we vote for the pilot of the 747, no other than smoking Joe de Venecia. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The results of the voting show that the Gentleman from the Fourth District of Pangasinan, the Honorable Jose C. de Venecia Jr., received 186 votes and the Gentleman from the Lone District of Nueva Vizcaya, the Honorable Carlos Padilla, received 17 votes. There was one abstention.

Therefore, on the basis of the results of the votes, the Chair declares the honorable Gentleman from the Fourth District of Pangasinan as the duly elected Speaker of the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Presiding Officer, I move that a committee of three Members composed of the Honorable Cielo Krisel Lagman-Luistro, the Honorable Trinidad G. Apostol, and the Honorable Soraya C. Jaafar be constituted to notify the Honorable Jose C. de Venecia Jr. of his election as Speaker of the House of Representatives and thereafter to escort the Speaker-elect to the rostrum.

I so move, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Members so named are requested to inform the Speaker-elect, the Honorable Jose de Venecia Jr., and escort him to the rostrum of the session hall of the House.

The Chair also invites the family of the Speaker-elect to join him at the rostrum for the oath-taking.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The session is suspended.

It was 12:34 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 12:35 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). The session is resumed.

Upon the express wish of the Speaker-elect, the distinguished Gentleman from the Third District of Camarines Sur, the Honorable Felix William B. Fuentebella, will administer the oath of office.

The Honorable Fuentebella is requested to come up the rostrum and administer the oath of office of the Speaker-elect.

May I request the family of the Speaker-elect to please ascend the rostrum to witness the oath-taking.

At this juncture, the family of Speaker-elect Jose de Venecia ascended the rostrum to witness the oath-taking.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Nazareno). All Members of the House are requested to rise.

All Members rose.

OATH-TAKING

At this juncture, the Honorable Jose de Venecia took his oath of office as Speaker of the House of Representatives before the Honorable Felix William B. Fuentebella.

REP. FUENTEBELLA. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me.

"I, Jose de Venecia, of Dagupan City, having been elected to the position of Speaker of the House of Representatives, hereby

solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties of my present position and of all others I may hereafter hold under the Republic of the Philippines; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Philippines; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the laws, legal orders, and decrees promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God." (Applause)

At this juncture, the Presiding Officer relinquished the Chair to the Speaker, the Honorable Jose de Venecia.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH OF SPEAKER DE VENECIA

THE SPEAKER. With your permission, the Chair would like to make a statement.

I thank you all my colleagues from my heart for the confidence and faith you have shown in my ability to lead the House of Representatives in these perilous times.

At the outset, I should say the task of this House – your task and mine – is to help President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo get this nation moving again. Our recent history, marked by a People Power uprising that succeeded and another that failed, has inexorably thrust us into this courageous role.

This task demands the best of our talents, our skills, our energies, our experience, our creativity and our devotion to lift the pall of gloom and doom, of fear and loathing that has oppressed the national life and created a sense of despair if not fatalism among our businessmen and many of our people.

Many times in the past, our nation endured rough and tough passages only to emerge into a period of peace and prosperity. We are in the midst of one such passage once again.

In the first years of the 21st century, the politics-as-usual, business-as-usual attitude toward national problems no longer works. These problems beg Congress to confront them decisively and urgently.

We know of one way to do this – and we believe it is the only way. It is to transform our House into an activist, reformist, achievement- and performance-oriented House, a bastion of good politics, which we must strive to attain as its enduring standard.

The Almighty has given us a good start. He has enabled you and I to unite the House – because a house divided cannot stand. And in uniting our House, we have begun to unite and heal the nation.

I am, therefore, grateful to the leaders of all the political parties and factions: Reps. Gilbert Teodoro, Butch Abad, (Applause) Caloy Padilla, Congressman Sandoval and all the others that make up our historic Sunshine Coalition. For today, we have set aside the dark passions of partisan politics and have primed ourselves to make a difference in our people's lives – and get this nation moving again.

The single biggest task of the House under the Constitution is to enact a national budget that will have the great impact on economic growth and poverty alleviation.

Unfortunately, government projects a deficit of P145 billion this year, about P130 billion next year, an estimated P80 billion in 2003 and P50 billion in 2004 when our three-year term comes to an end.

These deficits, like a runaway horse, must be reined in if we are to defeat poverty and sustain economic growth. We should, thus, aim for a balanced budget and a surplus by the time our term ends, as our best gift to the nation. (Applause)

When we had the privilege to be Speaker twice from 1992 to 1998, mobilizing the Committees on Appropriations and Ways and Means and the Departments of Budget and Management and Finance under President Ramos, we managed to balance the budget and achieve modest surpluses in 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997 until the Asian financial crisis struck in July and, complicated by corruption and inefficient tax collection, created huge holes of deficit of P50 billion in 1998, P111 billion in 1999 and P120 billion in the year 2000.

So, now my dear friends, my dear colleagues, where is the money coming from? How can we finance the needs of the country so we can lift our people from poverty, defeat the insurgents and crime syndicates, and turn the tide so that we can get this nation moving again?

Before, growth was led by the outward strategy – exports – and investments that were strongly dependent on foreign investments.

Today, our main markets and sources of investments and capital, the United States, Japan and Europe are in various stages of decline.

So, where then, how then, should we reform? Therefore, today you and I must modify the strategy as we look for pockets of opportunity to stimulate economic growth despite the dismal global environment.

I propose a combination of an outward-inward strategy, with equal if not more focus on the mobilization of our internal assets while we await forward movements in the economies of the US, Japan and Europe, and for Argentina and similarly situated nations to sort out their problems.

The Philippines has committed access to \$10 billion in official development assistance (ODA) from Japan and Europe largely in concessional 30-year funds, with 1/3 of 1.0 percent interest and grace periods on principal of 10 years. This huge pool of funds is untapped and unutilized because the President and Congress have failed all these years to provide the 25-percent counterpart funds of \$2.5 billion or P125 billion.

Within two to three years, under a multi-year plan, we in Congress should provide this counterpart fund of \$2.5 billion so we could capture the \$10-billion in multi-year plan and thus provide the new government a total fund of \$12.5 billion or P625 billion.

This would be enough then to build 250,000 houses a year, with its major jobs-creating multiplier effects on the economy. This would enable us to plant one billion trees that would create hundreds of thousands of tree-planting entrepreneurs, and reforest the bald mountains of Mindanao, Cebu, Samar, Leyte, Bicol, the Ilocos Region, the Cordilleras, and the Cagayan Valley, put an end to floods, preserve the ecological balance, and enable us to stop importing foreign wood.

Furthermore, this would allow us to train hundreds of thousands of our work force in computer engineering, science and information technology to develop a new generation of skilled workers-technicians and high-earning overseas contract workers in the first years of the 21st century.

The provision of this fund will enable us to use our own internally generated funds to augment the limited funds for education, health, agriculture and infrastructure, and to modernize the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police since ODA cannot be utilized for purposes of external or internal defense.

It is our hope to fund the irrigation of one million hectares of farmland and the conversion of a million hectares more of public lands, under the Agricultural Modernization and Fisheries Act of 1997, to also create a new generation of Filipino farmers-entrepreneurs and to build irrigation in all the congressional districts of the Philippines. *(Applause)*

But how should we source the US\$2.5 billion? Where can we source this \$2.5 billion so that we can capture the \$10 billion? We should thus source the \$2.5 billion and other requirements through:

1. Honest and stronger tax collection without imposing new taxes;
2. Equity securitization of up to US\$1 billion of a portion of the national government share of the huge Malampaya offshore Palawan national gas project that will be producing in a few weeks;
3. A final resolution of the coconut levy which will provide the nation at least P70-billion for the rehabilitation and modernization of the coconut industry and reduce pressure on the national budget for countryside development; and
4. A final resolution of the Marcos wealth deposits of more than \$650-million placed in escrow with the Philippine National Bank, with Congress appropriating an amount for the indemnification of the claims of human rights victims and using the balance for economic development.

To ease the pressure on Congress to provide capital funds through the budget, I appeal to all our Congressmen and Congresswomen, governors and mayors to use the successful Build-Operate-Transfer Law and all its variations to build in their communities public and private markets, electricity and water systems, reclamation, reforestation and irrigation projects, transport terminals and highways, regional airports and seaports, railroads, garbage and solid waste recycling and disposal systems at no cost to the provincial, city and municipal governments, and clustering several townships if necessary to achieve viability.

We also task the local governments as well to campaign for investments for their communities, including the mobilization of capital of hundreds of thousands of affluent Filipinos in the US, Australia, Europe and Canada to build B-O-T projects which may cost only from \$500,000 or P25 million or \$50 million per project in their respective congressional districts.

To successfully compete in the global market for investments, we need governance that is honest and competent, and able to provide fair and clear rules for all players. This will reduce the risks and cost of doing business, boost investment and

create jobs.

Our people are no longer content with excuses and explanations for our poor economic growth. They want concrete results and a higher quality of governance.

To fulfill our people's expectations, we have formulated Economic Action Plan 747 that aims to achieve 7.0 percent growth over seven years beginning in 2003. Plan 747 aims to free our people from the bondage of poverty and move millions of poor Filipinos to cross into the threshold of the middle class by the end of the seventh year.

We are honored that NEDA Secretary General Dante Canlas has formally endorsed our Plan 747.

Indeed, our entire House agenda and advocacy should center on helping President Arroyo achieve these high-growth targets.

Legislation lays the solid foundation for state policies that will free our people from poverty. Let us ensure the integrity of these policies so that they will serve the common good – and not some powerful or well-connected interest groups.

Let us pass a political and electoral campaign reform measure that will benefit all political parties that will make government provide campaign funds to all political parties. *(Applause)* We can, thus, begin to stamp out corruption in high office and in the provinces, cities and towns and stop drug and gambling lords from influencing our political parties and public policy by financing electoral campaigns. *(Applause)*

Indeed, in our present expensive election environment, a poor family's daughter or son cannot expect to win a public office.

We have discussed this with other political leaders in Asia who have agreed to support our initiative to reduce political corruption in the Philippines and in the whole of Asia.

We must live by example. In the interest of full informational transparency, the House committee and plenary proceedings will soon be posted in a website accessible to the public. *(Applause)*

And to ensure that the people's money we appropriate is spent wisely, we will seriously exercise our congressional powers of oversight.

Today, let us unleash the power of our greatest asset and of our greatest resource – the Filipino people, our people.

In the hard-fought global economic arena, our people are our greatest competitive advantage, and corruption in government is our greatest disadvantage.

It is time for government to be an asset instead of our nation's liability.

And because we live in a global community where national barriers have been effectively torn down, I propose that we initiate in this House our vision of an Asian Parliament, an Asian Monetary Fund, an Asian Common Market, an Asian currency, and eventually an Asian Union in the first quarter of the 21st century. *(Applause)*

I believe we must look to an Asian Community created by political and economic integration in Asia as a vehicle to contain big-power nationalism, whether Chinese, Japanese or Indian, and turn it into a force for prosperity in Asia, just as the European Community transformed German nationalism into a force for peace and prosperity in a united Europe.

And I do not think it should matter that this House and our

generation may never see the fruits of our labors. What should matter is that you and I are taking the first steps – on a journey of many, many steps – to arrive someday at the Asian ideal.

We are in the dawn of a final peace with our Muslim brothers in the MILF, a logical sequel to the peace of the brave that we forged with the MNLF in 1996. Hopefully, the establishment of an autonomous Bangsa Moro homeland – repeat, Bangsa Moro homeland not MNLF nor MILF, but Bangsa Moro homeland – should isolate the terrorist Abu Sayyaf and force it to surrender in a final settlement. *(Applause)*

President Arroyo must be credited for restoring the peace talks with the Communist New People's Army and National Democratic Front in the next few weeks and for the initial breakthrough agreement with the MILF in Tripoli a few weeks ago.

Now, we ask our Muslim Congressmen and Congresswomen to join our movement for a global Christian-Muslim coalition as our contribution to the lessening of Christian-Muslim conflicts and tensions in various parts of the world and to increase the dialogue among civilizations and cultures in this first decade of the 21st century.

We did not run for public office – you and I – to become rich or to become powerful. Neither do we seek today the pomp and perks of high office. Indeed, after my defeat in the 1998 presidential elections, I now return to public life wanting neither glory, neither power, nor material wealth.

All we wish for is for us to serve our people faithfully and well, because by working for the common good and the national interest, we will have become servants of God and servants of the people.

For, as the Holy Book says, what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and suffers the loss of his immortal soul?

My friends, three years ago when I bade this House an emotional farewell, I said I still held a youthful hope for the country's future.

Today, I am animated both by the wisdom of our senior colleagues and by the youthful idealism of our more than 100 first-term Representatives.

Courage, it was said by a young John F. Kennedy, is the most admirable of human virtues. It takes courage to stand for one's principle and also to be flexible and accept the necessity to conciliate for the common good for conciliation and mutual respect make up the glue that bind this House and this nation.

Today, as we begin the first day of our three-year term, let us, with God's help, stand courageously by our nation and by our people, to do what is right, to do what is necessary rather than what is popular, to sacrifice our selfish and narrow interests for the common good and be guided always by the politics of performance and by the politics of reform. *(Applause)*

My dear colleagues, let us get moving for we have so many things to do and a future to win. I know you and I together, we cannot fail.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. The distinguished Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). I ask that the House now proceed with the oath-taking of its Members before the Speaker.

OATH-TAKING OF MEMBERS

At this juncture, all Members of the House of Representatives took their oath of office before Speaker Jose de Venecia.

THE SPEAKER. May I ask all the Members of the House of Representatives to stand and take their oath. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me.

"I, _____ of _____, having been elected to the position of Representative, hereby solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties of my present position and of all others I may hereafter hold under the Republic of the Philippines; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Philippines; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the laws, legal orders, and decrees promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God."

THE SPEAKER. Congratulations. *(Applause)*
The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

ADOPTION OF THE HOUSE RULES

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt the existing Rules of the 11th Congress, copies of which have been distributed to the Members without prejudice to any amendments that may be submitted later.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Rules of the 11th Congress is hereby adopted.

CONSIDERATION OF H.RES. NO. 36

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 36.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, since copies of the resolution have been previously distributed, I move that we dispense with the reading of the text of the resolution.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Consideration of House Resolution No. 36 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary General will read only the title of the resolution without prejudice to inserting in

the Record the text thereof.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 36, entitled: RESOLUTION INFORMING THE SENATE THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS BEEN ORGANIZED AND HAS ENTERED UPON THE EXERCISE OF ITS FUNCTIONS.

The following is the text of the resolution:

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 36

Introduced by Reps. Neptali M. Gonzales II and Agapito A. Aquino

RESOLUTION INFORMING THE SENATE THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS BEEN ORGANIZED AND HAS ENTERED UPON THE EXERCISE OF ITS FUNCTIONS

RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, That the Senate be informed that the House of Representatives has been organized and has entered upon the exercise of its functions.

(Sgd.) AGAPITO A. AQUINO (Sgd.) NEPTALI M. GONZALES II

ADOPTION OF H.RES. NO. 36

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 36.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

CONSIDERATION OF H.RES. NO. 37

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 37.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, since copies of the resolution have been previously distributed, I move that we dispense with the reading of the text of the resolution.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Consideration of House Resolution No. 37 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary General will read only the title of the resolution without prejudice to inserting in the Record the text thereof.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 37,

entitled: RESOLUTION INFORMING HER EXCELLENCY, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS BEEN ORGANIZED AND HAS ENTERED UPON THE EXERCISE OF ITS FUNCTIONS.

The following is the text of the resolution:

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 37

Introduced by Reps. Neptali M. Gonzales II and Agapito A. Aquino

RESOLUTION INFORMING HER EXCELLENCY, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS BEEN ORGANIZED AND HAS ENTERED UPON THE EXERCISE OF ITS FUNCTIONS

RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, That Her Excellency, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, be informed that the House of Representatives has been organized and has entered upon the exercise of its functions.

(Sgd.) AGAPITO A. AQUINO (Sgd.) NEPTALI M. GONZALES II

THE SPEAKER. The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

ADOPTION OF H.RES. NO. 37

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 37.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

CONSIDERATION OF H.CT. RES. NO. 1

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, since copies of the concurrent resolution have been previously distributed, I move that we dispense with the reading of the text of the concurrent resolution.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Consideration of House Concurrent Resolution No. 1 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the

Secretary General will read only the title of the concurrent resolution without prejudice to inserting in the Record the text thereof.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Concurrent Resolution No. 1, entitled: CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO HOLD A JOINT SESSION TO HEAR THE MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES.

The following is the text of the concurrent resolution:

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

Introduced by Reps. Neptali M. Gonzales II and Agapito A. Aquino

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO HOLD A JOINT SESSION TO HEAR THE MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That both Houses of Congress of the Philippines hold a Joint Session on July twenty-three, year Two Thousand and One, at four-o'clock in the afternoon in the Session Hall of the House of Representatives, to hear the message of the President of the Philippines.

(Sgd.) AGAPITO A. AQUINO (Sgd.) NEPTALI M. GONZALES II

ADOPTION OF H.CT. RES. NO. 1

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, to communicate said message to the Senate, I move for a few minutes' suspension of session.

THE SPEAKER. The session is suspended for a few minutes.

It was 1:06 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:07 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE SPEAKER. The session is resumed.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I understand that there are certain Messages from the Senate. I ask that the Secretary General read the same.

THE SPEAKER. The Secretary General is so directed.

MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated July 23, 2001, informing the House of Representatives that on even date the Senate adopted Senate Resolution No. 1 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate has been organized with the election of its officers and that the Senate has entered upon the exercise of its function.

TO THE ARCHIVES

Message dated July 23, 2001, informing the House of Representatives that on even date the Senate concurred with House Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

TO THE ARCHIVES

Message dated July 23, 2001, informing the House of Representatives that on even date the Senate adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1 to which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives.

TO THE CALENDAR OF BUSINESS FOR THE DAY

CONSIDERATION OF S.CT. RES. NO. 1

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, since copies of the concurrent resolution have been previously distributed, I move that we dispense with the reading of the text of the concurrent resolution.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Consideration of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary General will read only the title of the concurrent resolution without prejudice to inserting in the Record the text thereof.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1, entitled: CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CREATING A JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT THAT THE CONGRESS IS NOW CONVENED INTO A REGULAR SESSION AND IS READY TO RECEIVE HER MESSAGE IN A JOINT SESSION.

The following is the text of the concurrent resolution:

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1
Introduced by Senator Sotto III

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CREATING A JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT THAT THE CONGRESS IS NOW CONVENED INTO A REGULAR SESSION AND IS READY TO RECEIVE HER MESSAGE IN A JOINT SESSION

Resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring, That both Houses of Congress of the Philippines hold a Joint Session on July 23, 2001 at four-o'clock in the afternoon, in the Session Hall of the House of Representatives, to hear the State-of-the-Nation Address of the President of the Philippines.

ADOPTION OF S.CT.RES. NO. 1

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, in view of the approval of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1 authorizing the appointment of a joint committee of both Houses to notify the President of the Philippines that the Congress is convened and ready to hear her message, on the part of the House, I move that the following be named to the joint committee: Representatives Juan Miguel Zubiri, Ace Barbers, Felix William Fuentebella, Abraham Kahlil Mitra, Nerissa Corazon Soon-Ruiz, Herminia Ramiro, Clavel Martinez, Nanette Daza and Narciso Monfort.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, to give the Members of the joint committee time to perform their assigned tasks and until the House counterpart is ready to report back their accomplishment to this House, I move for the suspension of the session.

THE SPEAKER. The session is suspended.

It was 1:09 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:10 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE SPEAKER. The session is resumed.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that we

proceed with the election of the three Deputy Speakers as called for by the Rules.

I move that we recognize the Honorable Manuel Ortega of La Union to deliver his nominating speech.

THE SPEAKER. The Gentleman from La Union is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. ORTEGA
NOMINATING REP. ESPINOSA (E.R.)
AS DEPUTY SPEAKER FOR LUZON

REP. ORTEGA. Mr. Speaker, I nominate for Deputy Speaker of Luzon a man who is well experienced, a walking encyclopedia as far as legislation is concerned, having been a Member of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth Congresses, the Interim Batasang Pambansa and the Eleventh and Twelfth Congresses. A gentleman and a statesman, he is somebody whom we can approach and ask advice from. He is very easy to talk to. It is my distinguished honor and privilege to nominate the Honorable Emilio Espinosa of Masbate. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER. The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Honorable Jacinto Paras to deliver his nominating speech.

THE SPEAKER. Congressman Paras is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. PARAS
NOMINATING REP. GONZALEZ (R.)
AS DEPUTY SPEAKER FOR THE VISAYAS

REP. PARAS. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, I am honored and privileged to nominate for the position of Deputy Speaker for the Visayas one of the most distinguished Members of this House and a respected leader of the Visayas, the Honorable Raul M. Gonzalez from the Lone District of Iloilo City.

With the third change of leadership in the Eleventh Congress, he was elected Deputy Speaker for the Visayas, a position which he held with humility and distinction.

An erudite spokesman for the rule of law, a veteran and distinguished parliamentarian, a loyal friend and statesman, Congressman Raul Gonzalez is the epitomé of a leader who renders public service, so God gave him the light to do so.

In Iloilo City, he is sincerely loved by the people for the social justice programs which alleviated his people from the valley of despair to the mountaintop of hope. No wonder his people elected and reelected him to represent them in Congress. No wonder in the last elections he won with a resounding 92,000 votes over his closest opponent and was reelected to an unprecedented third term, which has never happened in Iloilo City.

Congressman Raul Gonzalez stands on solid ground when he talks about the Constitution and the law. When he was Tanodbayan, he was fearless in his advocacy for justice, was

uncompromising in his principles, and left that office with no breath of scandal nor corruption. Always in the legal or political battles which he fought, his head gets bloodied but never unbowed.

My distinguished colleagues, our beloved Speaker Jose de Venecia will lead this House to the morning glory of sunshine after the long dark night, but he will need able hands to assist him in achieving good things for the nation and our beloved people. He will need a Deputy Speaker in the caliber and competence of Rep. Raul Gonzalez who will help him steer the ship of this Congress to surmount all challenges and obstacles so it will reach the shore of plenty and abundance for a Philippines of happy and contented people.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, once again, I am honored and privileged to nominate for Deputy Speaker of the Visayas my fellow Visayan, the Honorable Raul M. Gonzalez of Iloilo City.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

REP. ESPINA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, to second the nomination, may I ask for the recognition of the distinguished Gentleman from the Lone District of Biliran, the Honorable Gerardo Espina.

SPEECH OF REP. ESPINA SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. ESPINA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have known Congressman Raul Gonzalez for over 30 years. I lived across the street, had been a neighbor for several years to Raul Gonzalez. About 30 years ago, Raul Gonzalez and I worked for a presidential candidate.

Raul Gonzalez is my *compadre*, but these are not so much the reasons I am seconding the nomination of Raul Gonzalez to become one of the three Deputy Speakers of the House. I second the nomination of Raul as a Representative of Eastern Visayas and the primary reasons behind seconding the nomination of Raul are: I know him to be a mild mannered man; I know him as very knowledgeable in all aspects of law; I know him as a very respectful person; I know him to have great integrity and good working habits; I know him as an experienced public servant; But most of all, I know him as a just and fair human being. As one of the Deputy Speakers, he will perhaps one day become Speaker because, under our Rules, when there is a vacancy, the three Deputy Speakers choose among themselves who will perform the function of Speaker. And it is primarily for this reason – his being just and fair – that qualifies him to become one of the Deputy Speakers. As we have witnessed this morning, the Presiding Officer plays a vital role in making democracy work in any deliberative body.

For this reason, Mr. Speaker, I have the honor to second the nomination of Raul Gonzalez to become one of the three Deputy Speakers of the House of Representatives during the Twelfth Congress. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER. The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I ask for the recognition of the Honorable Suplico to second the nomination.

THE SPEAKER. The distinguished Gentleman from Iloilo, the Honorable Suplico, is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. SUPLICO SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. SUPLICO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today I take pride in seconding the nomination of one of the greatest Ilonggo legislators, the Honorable Raul Gonzalez, as Deputy Speaker for the Visayas.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Agusan del Norte, the Honorable Edelmiro Amante, to deliver a nominating speech.

SPEECH OF REP. AMANTE NOMINATING REP. GERRY SALAPUDDIN AS DEPUTY SPEAKER FOR MINDANAO

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, I nominate a man from the troubled, beleaguered Island of Basilan because I, too, share what John Donne said:

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main....

In fact, John Donne admonishes us "...never send to know to whom the bell tolls; it also tolls for thee." The nominee, while living in an island, makes that island a part of all of us for he will not serve only an island. He will serve the main, which is the Republic of the Philippines. The nominee has been a warrior wounded four times. He knew the pains of suffering. Thus, he opts for peace so that others, particularly his countrymen, will not suffer anymore or, if ever they would suffer, it would be less.

The nominee was once a governor, having been elected three times. As a governor, he learned the lesson that he who is the greatest among us, including perhaps the Speaker, shall be the servant of all. And being a Muslim, he is part of that aspiration of no less than the Speaker who once formed the Rainbow Coalition. And everybody loves a rainbow because it promises a beautiful tomorrow. This coalition is like a sunshine rising from the darkness of dawn to break into the day whose rays shall give us light that we may walk our paths clearly and find the destiny of peace, unity and harmony.

I am proud of being from Mindanao. Thus, I occupy the center microphone for Mindanao has to be listened to and Mindanao's voice must be spoken, for we have wounds that nobody would feel as much as we do, particularly my nominee who is now involved actively in the healing process, so we will become one and whole and will participate in that sublime oneness that all of us will be workers and disciples of greatness in the oneness of this country.

I nominate with all my heart and the hearts of Mindanao – and I hope the people of Luzon and the Visayas will join this sentiment – the Honorable Gerry Salapuddin to be our Deputy

Speaker for Mindanao in this House.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, to second the nomination, I ask for the recognition of the distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Lanao del Sur, the Honorable Benasing Macarambon Jr.

THE SPEAKER. The distinguished Gentleman from Lanao del Sur is recognized.

SPEECH OF REP. MACARAMBON
SECONDING THE NOMINATION

REP. MACARAMBON. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the complex problem in Southern Philippines has preserved the administrations of President Ferdinand Marcos, President Cory, President Ramos, President Erap and the present administration. The problem on the Abu Sayyaf abductions of both foreigners and local citizens has affected the socioeconomic and political structure of our country.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, this nation might as well need a man who deeply understands the conflict in Southern Philippines. And as Deputy Speaker for Mindanao, I am very confident that the Honorable Gerry Salapuddin is the man of the hour and can steer and lead our colleagues in Mindanao for more beneficial legislation to improve and develop Mindanao into a land of peace and progress for all the people of Mindanao and our nation.

The honorable Gentleman nominee for Deputy Speaker for Mindanao is a man who distinguished himself both in war and peace. As a member of the Moro National Liberation Front, he has distinguished himself as one of the most respected commanders in the field, particularly in Western Mindanao.

As a politician, he distinguished himself in the field of politics as the undefeated Governor of the Island Province of Basilan and now reelected as Congressman of the Lone District of Basilan.

It is therefore my distinct honor and privilege to second the nomination for Deputy Speaker for Mindanao the Honorable Gerry Salapuddin.

THE SPEAKER. The distinguished Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, there being no other nominee, I now move that we close the period of nomination for the position of Deputy Speakers.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). And there being three nominees, Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider them to have been elected unanimously.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. *(Applause)*

May we invite the distinguished Deputy Speaker for Luzon, Congressman Emilio Espinosa, to proceed to the rostrum with the members of his family for his oath-taking.

May we also request the Members of the House to please rise for this important oath-taking.

OATH-TAKING OF REP. ESPINOSA (E.R.)

At this juncture, the Honorable Emilio R. Espinosa Jr. took his oath of office as Deputy Speaker for Luzon before the honorable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me.

"I, Emilio R. Espinosa Jr. of Masbate, having been elected to the position of Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, hereby solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties of my present position and of all others I may hereafter hold under the Republic of the Philippines; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Philippines; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the laws, legal orders, and decrees promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God."

Congratulations! *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER. I call on the distinguished Gentleman from Iloilo City, Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez, to take his oath, accompanied by the members of his family.

All the Members of the House are requested to rise.

OATH-TAKING OF REP. GONZALEZ (R.)

At this juncture, the Honorable Raul M. Gonzalez took his oath of office as Deputy Speaker for the Visayas before the honorable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me.

"I, Raul M. Gonzalez of Iloilo City, having been elected to the position of Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, hereby solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties of my present position and of all others I may hereafter hold under the Republic of the Philippines; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Philippines; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the laws, legal orders, and decrees promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God."

Congratulations! *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER. I now call on the distinguished Muslim leader, Congressman Salapuddin, to take his oath as Deputy Speaker of the House for Mindanao. He may be joined by his

family.

The Members of the House will please rise.

OATH-TAKING OF REP. SALAPUDDIN

At this juncture, the Honorable Gerry A. Salapuddin took his oath of office as Deputy Speaker for Mindanao before the honorable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me.

"I, Gerry A. Salapuddin of the Lone District of Basilan, having been elected to the position of Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, hereby solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties of my present position and of all others I may hereafter hold under the Republic of the Philippines; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Philippines; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the laws, legal orders, and decrees promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God."

Congratulations! *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. The distinguished Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). To complete the members of the Joint Committee on Notification, I move for the inclusion of the following Members: the Honorable Abdullah Dimaporo and the Honorable Augusto Syjuco.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that we elect the Honorable Roberto P. Nazareno as the Secretary General of the House of Representatives.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations, Secretary General Nazareno! *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). May I move that the Honorable Bayani N. Fabic be elected as our Sergeant-at-Arms. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations, Sergeant-at-Arms General Fabic!

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, the majority will submit for election of the Body a partial list of their nominees for the membership in the Rules Committee, and I understand that the minority will be partially electing their members by

tomorrow, Mr. Speaker. To begin with, the Body elected the following as members of the Committee on Rules on the part of the majority:

1. Rep. Neptali M. Gonzales II
2. Rep. Francis G. Escudero
3. Rep. Juan Pablo "Rimpy" P. Bondoc
4. Rep. Alan Peter S. Cayetano
5. Rep. Benasing O. Macarambon Jr.
6. Rep. Arthur D. Defensor
7. Rep. Ma. Theresa T. Defensor
8. Rep. Felix William B. Fuentebella
9. Rep. Francisco S. Perez II
10. Rep. Del R. de Guzman

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. The distinguished Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I understand that the newly elected Secretary General and Sergeant-at-Arms will now take their oath.

THE SPEAKER. They may ascend the rostrum and may be joined by their respective families.

OATH-TAKING OF SECRETARY GENERAL NAZARENO AND SERGEANT- AT-ARMS FABIC

At this juncture, the Honorable Roberto P. Nazareno and the Honorable Bayani N. Fabic took their oath of office as Secretary General and Sergeant-at-Arms, respectively, before the Speaker of the House.

THE SPEAKER. The Secretary General and the Sergeant-at-Arms of the House, please raise your right hand and repeat after me.

"I, _____, having been elected to the position of _____, hereby solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties of my present position and of all others I may hereafter hold under the Republic of the Philippines; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Philippines; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the laws, legal orders, and decrees promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God."

Congratulations! *(Applause)*

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. The distinguished Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). We have just received a report from the Joint Committee on Notification that the President has been informed that Congress will convene in joint session at four o'clock this afternoon to hear her State-of-the-Nation Address. For the occasion, we wish to remind the Members of this

Chamber that all of us must be here an hour before the joint session at four o'clock. Mr. Speaker, to give way to the joint session, I move that we adjourn the session until four o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

THE SPEAKER. The session is adjourned until tomorrow at four o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 1:35 p.m.