

JOURNAL NO. 1
Monday, July 23, 2001

CALL TO ORDER

This being the day fixed in accordance with the Constitution for the beginning of the First Regular Session of the Twelfth Congress, the Secretary General of the House of Representatives, the Honorable Roberto P. Nazareno, called the session to order at ten o'clock in the morning.

NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PRAYER

Subsequently, the House Chorale led the singing of the National Anthem and thereafter, Rep. Rodolfo Rodrigo G. Plaza from the Lone District of Agusan del Sur delivered the following invocation:

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 Feria.

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 Twelfth 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.

MANIFESTATION OF THE
PRESIDING OFFICER

Whereupon, the Presiding Officer directed Deputy Secretary General Rafael R. De Guzman Jr. to call the Roll of Members.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF
REP. SUPLICO

At this point, Rep. Rolex T. Suplico inquired under whose authority was the Secretary General presiding over the plenary session and whether the latter was a duly-elected Member of the House.

The Presiding Officer requested Rep. Suplico to defer his questions until after the Roll Call.

Rep. Suplico however noted that calling the Roll already meant presiding over the session of the House.
The Presiding Officer replied that the Body cannot go on with its business unless the presence of a quorum is first determined.
Further pursuing his query, Rep. Suplico asked the Presiding Officer to inform him, a duly-elected Member of the House, the authority under which he was presiding over the session.
Secretary General Nazareno replied that his 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 Eleventh Congresses wherein the Secretary General of the House presided over the session prior to the election of the Speaker of the House.

ROLL CALL

Thereafter, upon direction of the Presiding Officer, Deputy Secretary General De Guzman called the Roll of Members, to wit:

ROLL OF MEMBERS

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGIONAL (NCR)

CITY OF MANILA

First District

ERNESTO "BANZAI" NIEVA

Second District

JAIME C. LOPEZ

Third District

HARRY C. ANGPING

Fourth District

RODOLFO C. BACANI

Fifth District

JOEY D. HIZON

Sixth District

MARIO "MARK JIMENEZ" B.
CRESPO

QUEZON CITY

First District

REYNALDO A. CALALAY *

Second District

ISMAEL G. MATHAY III

Third District

MA. THERESA T. DEFENSOR

Fourth District

NANETTE C. DAZA

KALOOKAN CITY

First District

Second District

MAKATI CITY

First District

TEODORO L. LOCSIN JR.

Second District

AGAPITO A. AQUINO

PASAY CITY

Lone District

CONSUELO A. DY

MANDALUYONG CITY

Lone District

NEPTALI M. GONZALES II

PASIG CITY

Lone District

HENRY P. LANOT *

MARIKINA CITY

Lone District

DEL R. DE GUZMAN

LAS PIÑAS CITY

Lone District

CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

MUNTINLUPA CITY

Lone District

ROZZANO RUFINO B. BIAZON

PARAÑAQUE CITY

Lone District

EDUARDO C. ZIALCITA

VALENZUELA CITY

First District

SHERWIN T. GATCHALIAN

Second District

MAGTANGGOL T. GUNIGUNDO I

SAN JUAN

Lone District

RONALDO B. ZAMORA

MALABON/NAVOTAS

Lone District

FEDERICO S. SANDOVAL II

TAGUIG/PATEROS

Lone District

ALAN PETER S. CAYETANO

REGION I

ILOCOS NORTE (with the City of Laoag)
First District

ROQUE R. ABLAN JR.

Second District

IMEE R. MARCOS

ILOCOS SUR (with the Cities of Vigan and Can-don)

First District

SALACNIB F. BATERINA

Second District

ERIC D. SINGSON

LA UNION (with the City of San Fernando)

First District

MANUEL C. ORTEGA

Second District

TOMAS M. DUMPIT

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

First District

ARTHUR F. CELESTE

Second District

AMADO T. ESPINO JR.

Third District

GENEROSO DC. TULAGAN

Fourth District

JOSE C. DE VENECIA JR.

Fifth District

MARK O. COJUANGCO

Sixth District

CONRADO M. ESTRELLA III
REGION II

BATANES

Lone District
FLORENCIO B. ABAD
CAGAYAN (with the City of Tuguegarao)

First District
JACK ENRILE
Second District
CELIA TAGANAS LAYUS

Third District
MANUEL N. MAMBA
ISABELA (with the Cities of Santiago and Cauayan)

First District
RODOLFO B. ALBANO
Second District
EDWIN C. UY
Third District

FAUSTINO G. DY III
Fourth District
ANTONIO M. ABAYA

NUEVA VIZCAYA
Lone District
CARLOS M. PADILLA

QUIRINO
Lone District
JUNIE E. CUA

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

ANTONINO P. ROMAN

Second District

ENRIQUE T. GARCIA JR.

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

First District

WILHELMINO M. SY-
ALVARADO

Second District

WILFRIDO B. VILLARAMA

Third District

LORNA C. SILVERIO

Fourth District

REYLINA G. NICOLAS

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

First District

JOSEFINA M. JOSON

Second District

ELEUTERIO R. VIOLAGO

Third District

AURELIO M. UMALI

Fourth District

RAUL L. VILLAREAL

PAMPANGA (with the Cities of Angeles and San Fernando)

First District

FRANCIS "BLUEBOY" L.
NEPOMUCENO

Second District

ZENAIDA G. CRUZ-DUCUT

Third District

OSCAR S. RODRIGUEZ

Fourth District

JUAN PABLO "RIMPY" P.
BONDOC

TARLAC (with the City of Tarlac)

First District

GILBERTO C. TEODORO JR.

Second District

BENIGNO C. AQUINO III

Third District

JESLI A. LAPUS

ZAMBALES (with the City of Olongapo)

First District

JAMES J. GORDON JR.

Second District

RUBEN D. TORRES

REGION IV

AURORA

Lone District

BELLAFLOR J. ANGARA
CASTILLO

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

First District

EILEEN ERMITA-BUHAIN

Second District

FRANCISCO S. PEREZ II

Third District

VICTORIA H. REYES

Fourth District

OSCAR L. GOZOS

CAVITE (with the Cities of Tagaytay, Cavite and Trece Martires)

First District

PLARIDEL M. ABAYA

Second District

GILBERT C. REMULLA

Third District

NAPOLEON R. BERATIO

LAGUNA (with the Cities of San Pablo and Calamba)

First District

ULIRAN T. JOAQUIN

Second District

JOAQUIN M. CHIPECO JR.

Third District

DANTON Q. BUESER *

Fourth District

RODOLFO S. SAN LUIS

MARINDUQUE

Lone District

EDMUND O. REYES

OCCIDENTAL MINDORO

Lone District

JOSEPHINE Y. RAMIREZ-SATO

ORIENTAL MINDORO (with the City of Calapan)

First District

CHARITY P. LEVISTE

Second District

ALFONSO V. UMALI JR.

PALAWAN (with the City of Puerto Princesa)

First District

VICENTE A. SANDOVAL

Second District

ABRAHAM KAHLIL B. MITRA

QUEZON (with the City of Lucena)

First District

RAFAEL P. NANTES

Second District

LYNNETTE A. PUNZALAN

Third District

ALETA C. SUAREZ

Fourth District

GEORGILU R. YUMUL

RIZAL (with the City of Antipolo)

First District

MICHAEL JOHN R. DUAVIT

Second District

ISIDRO S. RODRIGUEZ JR.

City of Antipolo

VICTOR R. SUMULONG

ROMBLON

Lone District

PERPETUO B. YLAGAN

REGION V

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

First District

CIELO KRISEL LAGMAN

LUISTRO

Second District

CARLOS R. IMPERIAL

Third District

JOEY SARTE SALCEDA

CAMARINES NORTE

Lone District

RENATO J. UNICO JR.

CAMARINES SUR (with the Cities of Naga and Iriga)

First District

ROLANDO G. ANDAYA JR.

Second District

SULPICIO S. ROCO JR.

Third District

FELIX WILLIAM P. FUENTEBELLA

Fourth District

FELIX R. ALFELOR JR.

CATANDUANES

Lone District

JOSEPH A. SANTIAGO

MASBATE (with the City of Masbate)

First District

VIDA V. ESPINOSA

Second District

EMILIO R. ESPINOSA JR.

Third District

FAUSTO L. SEACHON JR.*

SORSOGON (with the City of Sorsogon)

First District

FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

Second District

JOSE G. SOLIS

REGION VI

AKLAN

Lone District

GABRIELLE V. CALIZO
ANTIQUÉ

Lone District

EXEQUIEL B. JAVIER
CAPIZ (with the City of Roxas)

First District

RODRIGUEZ D. DADIVAS
Second District

FREDENIL H. CASTRO

GUIMARAS

Lone District

EDGAR T. ESPINOSA

ILOILO (with the City of Passi)

First District

OSCAR G. GARIN

Second District

AUGUSTO "BOBOY" SYJUCO

Third District

ARTHUR D. DEFENSOR

Fourth District

NARCISO D. MONFORT

Fifth District

ROLEX T. SUPILICO

ILOILO CITY

Lone District

RAUL M. GONZALEZ

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

First District

JULIO A. LEDESMA IV

Second District

ALFREDO G. MARAÑON JR.

Third District

JOSE CARLOS V. LACSON
Fourth District

CARLOS O. COJUANGCO **

Fifth District

J. APOLINARIO L. LOZADA JR.

Sixth District

GENARO M. ALVAREZ JR.

BACOLOD CITY

Lone District

MONICO O. PUENTEVELLA

REGION VII

BOHOL (with the City of Tagbilaran)

First District

EDGARDO M. CHATTO

Second District

ROBERTO C. CAJES

Third District

ELADIO "BOY" JALA

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

First District

JOSE R. GULLAS

Second District

SIMEON L. KINTANAR

Third District

ANTONIO P. YAPHA JR.

Fourth District

CLAVEL A. MARTINEZ
Fifth District

JOSEPH "ACE" H. DURANO

Sixth District

NERISSA CORAZON SOON-RUIZ

CEBU CITY

First District

RAUL V. DEL MAR

Second District

ANTONIO V. CUENCO

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

First District

JACINTO V. PARAS

Second District

EMILIO C. MACIAS II

Third District

HERMINIO G. TEVES

SIQUIJOR

Lone District

ORLANDO A. FUA JR.

REGION VIII
BILIRAN

Lone District

GERARDO S. ESPINA

LEYTE (with the Cities of Tacloban and Ormoc)

First District

TED FAILON

Second District

TRINIDAD G. APOSTOL
Third District

EDUARDO K. VELOSO

Fourth District

MA. VICTORIA L. LOCSIN

Fifth District

CARMEN L. CARI

SOUTHERN LEYTE (with the City of Maasin)

Lone District

ANICETO G. SALUDO JR.

EASTERN SAMAR

Lone District

MARCELINO C. LIBANAN

NORTHERN SAMAR

First District

HARLIN CAST. ABAYON

Second District

ROMUALDO T. VICENCIO

SAMAR (with the City of Calbayog)

First District

REYNALDO S. UY

Second District

ANTONIO EDUARDO B. NACHURA

REGION IX

BASILAN (with the City of Isabelita)

Lone District

GERRY A. SALAPUDDIN

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

First District

ROMEO G. JALOSJOS ***

Second District

ROSELLER L. BARINAGA

Third District

ANGEL M. CARLOTO

ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR (with the City of Pagadian)

First District

ISIDORO E. REAL JR.

Second District

FILOMENA S. SAN JUAN

ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY

Lone District

BELMA A. CABILAO

ZAMBOANGA CITY

Lone District

CELSO L. LOBREGAT

REGION X

BUKIDNON (with the Cities of Malaybalay and Valencia)

First District

J.R. NEREUS O. ACOSTA

Second District

BERTHOBAL R. ANCHETA

Third District

JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI

CAMIGUIN

Lone District

JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

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

First District

ERNIE D. CLARETE

Second District

HERMINIA M. RAMIRO

MISAMIS ORIENTAL (with the City of Gingoog)

First District

OSCAR S. MORENO *

Second District

AUGUSTO H. BACULIO

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY

Lone District

CONSTANTINO G. JARAULA

REGION XI

COMPOSTELA VALLEY

First District

MANUEL E. ZAMORA

Second District

PROSPERO S. AMATONG

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

First District

ARREL R. OLAÑO

Second District

ANTONIO R. FLOIRENDO JR.

DAVAO DEL SUR (with the City of Digos)

First District

DOUGLAS RA. CAGAS

Second District

CLAUDE P. BAUTISTA

DAVAO ORIENTAL

First District

CORAZON N. MALANYAON

Second District

J. MAYO Z. ALMARIO

DAVAO CITY

First District

PROSPERO C. NOGRALES

Second District

VINCENT J. GARCIA

Third District

RUY ELIAS C. LOPEZ

SARANGANI

Lone District

ERWIN L. CHIONGBIAN

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

First District

DARLENE MAGNOLIA R.
ANTONINO-CUSTODIO

Second District

ARTHUR Y. PINGOY JR.
SULTAN KUDARAT (With the City of Tacurong)

Lone District

ANGELO O. MONTILLA

REGION XII

LANAO DEL NORTE (with the City of Iligan)

First District

ALIPIO CIRILO V. BADELLES

Second District

ABDULLAH D. DIMAPORO

NORTH COTABATO (with the City of Kidapawan)

First District

EMMYLOU J. TALIÑO-SANTOS

Second District

GREGORIO T. IPONG

CORDILLERA AUTONOMOUS REGION (CAR)

ABRA

Lone District

LUIS P. BERSAMIN JR.

APAYAO

Lone District

ELIAS C. BULUT JR.

BENGUET (with the City of Baguio)

First District

MAURICIO G. DOMOGAN

Second District

SAMUEL M. DANGWA
IFUGAO

Lone District

SOLOMON R. CHUNGALAO

KALINGA

Lone District

LAURENCE B. WACNANG

MOUNTAIN PROVINCE

Lone District

ROY S. PILANDO

AUTONOMOUS REGION IN
MUSLIM MINDANAO (ARMM)

SULU

First District

HUSSIN U. AMIN

Second District

ABDULMUNIR M. ARBISON

TAWI-TAWI

Lone District

SORAYA C. JAAFAR

LANAO DEL SUR (with the City of Marawi)

First District

FAYSAH MANIRI-RACMAN
DUMARPA

Second District

BENASING O. MACARAMBON JR.

MAGUINDANAO (with the City of Cotabato)

First District

Second District

GUIMID P. MATALAM

CARAGA REGION

AGUSAN DEL NORTE (with the City of Butuan)

First District

LEOVIGILDO B. BANAAG
Second District

EDELMIRO A. AMANTE

AGUSAN DEL SUR

Lone District

RODOLFO RODRIGO G. PLAZA

SURIGAO DEL NORTE (with the City of Surigao)

First District
GLENDA B. ECLEO

Second District

ACE S. BARBERS

SURIGAO DEL SUR (with the City of Bislig)

First District

PROSPERO A. PICHAY JR.

Second District

JESNAR R. FALCON

With 199 Members present, the Presiding Officer declared the presence of a quorum.

REMARKS OF REP. SUPLICO

Upon recognition, Rep. Suplico requested the Presiding Officer to reiterate for the record the answer to his previous query.

-
- * Appeared after the Roll Call
 - ** Official mission abroad
 - *** Officially notified the House, through the Secretariat, of his absence

In reply, the Presiding Officer said that pursuant to established practices and precedents, until the election of the Speaker, the Secretary General presides over the session. Moreover, he said that it is the duty of the Presiding Officer to maintain order and decorum in the House. He pointed out that during the 1946, 1954 and 1958 Congresses and the immediately preceding Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Congresses, the Secretary General presided over the initial session of Congress.

Rep. Suplico recalled that the same question had been raised during the time of former Speaker Manuel B. Villar Jr.. He noted that the question had been vaguely answered because of a hiatus contained in the Constitution.

After a careful perusal of the Rules of the House, Rep. Suplico noted that there is no provision therein that carries the effectivity of the Rules of the Eleventh Congress to the Twelfth Congress. He then said that it was precisely for this reason that he is asking by what express provision in the Rules was Secretary General Nazareno allowed to preside over the opening of the Twelfth Congress.

In reply, the Presiding Officer stated that as he had earlier explained, the Secretary General presides over the opening of the session based on established practices and precedents. He pointed out that there is no such rule or law which specifies or provides that the Secretary General should not preside over the session since he is not a Member of Congress.

Whereupon, Rep. Suplico said that he had no further questions for the meantime. However, he said that he still does not understand the reason why the Secretary General was presiding over the Body.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
OF REP. CHIPECO

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Joaquin M. Chipeco Jr. asked whether any bill has been filed governing 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 requested Rep. Chipeco to repeat his question.

Considering the hiatus between the period of June 30 up to the fourth Monday of July, Rep. Chipeco inquired whether any law has been passed to correct this perennial problem which is constantly raised during the opening of Congress.

The Presiding Officer replied that as far as he can remember, no such bill has ever been filed. He pointed out that the reason perhaps is that a bill filed in the House has to be approved by the Senate and signed by the President. He added that such action will in effect be an encroachment over the two legislative departments and the sole prerogative of the House.

Rep. Chipeco surmised from the Presiding Officer's reply that to do so would be unconstitutional. He then expressed hope that the matter which has always been raised would be remedied for the benefit of future Congresses.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. BATERINA

Whereupon, Rep. Salacnib F. Bateria sought the recognition of the Chair on a parliamentary inquiry.

The Chair however recognized Rep. Ronaldo B. Zamora.

REMARKS OF REP. ZAMORA (R.)

Rep. Zamora suggested that in the interest of orderly procedure, the Presiding Officer must inform the Members of the appointed representative of the Majority who could take care of all these questions. Inasmuch as the Presiding Officer is not a Member of the House of Representatives, he said that the former is not in authority to position facts. He reiterated his suggestion that the Presiding Officer should point to the representative of the Majority who would take care of all these questions.

POINT OF ORDER OF REP. BATERINA

At this juncture, Rep. Bateria sought the recognition of the Presiding Officer.

DESIGNATION OF REP. GONZALES AS ACTING FLOOR LEADER

Before recognizing any Member of the House, the Presiding Officer announced that in the interest of ensuring an orderly proceeding, he is designating Rep. Neptali M. Gonzales II as Acting Floor Leader.

REMARKS OF REP. JARAULA

Whereupon, Rep. Constantino G. Jaraula noted that there are at present two acts that are questionable. First, he said, was the question raised by Rep. Suplico regarding the authority of the Secretary General to preside over the session. However, he said that before such action could be disposed of, another problem has cropped up which is the authority of the Secretary General to appoint an Acting Floor Leader. He pointed out that the role of a Presiding

Officer is vital. He noted from the Secretary General's answer that the issue has remained unresolved since Liberation time. He then expressed hope that this will not continue until kingdom come. He further noted that Rep. Chipeco had suggested that the problem be tackled once and for all. He added that the suggestion was the passage of a legislation that will elect a Presiding Officer for the interim until the election of the Speaker on the fourth Monday of July, unless otherwise provided by law. He observed that the Secretary General's answer was that no legislation should be made because it will transgress the independence of the House considering that any legislation will have to go through the approval of the Senate and approval by the President. He stressed the fact that all bills filed by the House will have to be approved or concurred in by the Senate and approved by the President. He said that the Body has never questioned that process as transgressing the independence of the House. It may be argued, he said, that the election is something different because it relates to an office within the House.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
OF REP. GONZALES

At this point, Rep. Gonzales raised a parliamentary inquiry to know the reason why Rep. Jaraula stood up on the floor. He then asked whether the latter was delivering a speech or objecting to a motion.

He pointed out that no Member can simply stand on the floor without any purpose.

REMARKS OF REP. JARAULA

Rep. Jaraula said that it does not matter whether Rep. Gonzales considers his taking the floor a parliamentary inquiry or a point of order. He pointed out that he was laying the premise for such motion before he was graciously interrupted by Rep. Gonzales. He asked whether it would be too much for the Members' sensibilities if the Body passes a legislation providing for such interim and save the House of the important time devoted to debate.

He then asked whether the new leadership of the House will assume the responsibility of settling the issue through legislation.

The Presiding Officer replied that the Members of the House may take up the matter when Rep. Jaraula shall have filed a bill in this regard.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
OF REP. BATERINA

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Baterina inquired whether he could file a motion at that time because he would move that upon the declaration of the presence of a quorum in the House, it shall be in order for the most senior Member of the House to take the podium and act as Presiding Officer.

With the permission of the Presiding Officer, Rep. Gonzales noted that the matter had been the usual subject of conflict during the opening of each Congress, and that it had been raised during the Tenth and Eleventh Congresses. He pointed out that to prevent a

hiatus, the House has consistently recognized the power of the Secretary General to temporarily preside over the opening of the session of the House until a Speaker shall have been elected. He further pointed out that it was the first day of the term of the Twelfth Congress and as mandated by the Constitution, the House had been convened on the fourth Monday of July to perform its highest constitutional duty to organize itself by electing a Speaker.

MOTION OF REP. GONZALES

Pursuant to the constitutional duty of the House, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, Body opened the floor for nomination of the Speaker of the Twelfth Congress of the Philippines.

REMARKS OF REP. LOBREGAT

Thereupon, Rep. Celso L. Lobregat pointed out that he had manifested his intent to rise and that the Presiding Officer had signaled him to wait for his time.

REMARKS OF REP. GONZALES

Rep. Gonzales underscored that the motion to open the floor for nomination had been subjected to a vote and approved unanimously. In this connection, he moved for the recognition of Rep. Rolando G. Andaya Jr. for his nomination speech.

At this juncture, Rep. Gonzales stated that inasmuch as the highest constitutional duty of the House that day was to organize itself by electing the Speaker, any motion, statement or manifestation that has nothing to do with or may derail the election of the Speaker shall be ruled out of order.

Rep. Jaraula affirmed this point.

REMARKS OF REP. JARAULA

Upon recognition by the Presiding Officer, Rep. Jaraula stated that his query pertains to the composition of the House and the manner of election. He then quoted Article VI, Section 5 of the Constitution on the composition of the House and asked whether there are Party-List Members in the House at present.

The Chair replied that no Party-List Member has yet been proclaimed, hence as of the moment, there are no Members in the House representing various party-list groups.

MOTION OF REP. JARAULA

Stating that the Party-List Members constitute 20% of the entire membership of the House, Rep. Jaraula then moved for the postponement of the election of the Speaker of the House until all the Party-List Representatives shall have taken their seats in the House.

POINT OF ORDER OF REP. GONZALES

Rep. Gonzales raised a point of order.

OBJECTION OF REP. PARAS

Rep. Jacinto V. Paras objected to Rep. Jaraula's motion.

POINT OF ORDER OF REP. GONZALES

Upon recognition by the Presiding Officer, Rep. Gonzales underscored that the motion of Rep. Jaraula was, in effect, a motion for reconsideration considering that the previous motion had been voted upon and approved unanimously. He further stressed that the highest constitutional mandate of the House at that point in time was to elect a Speaker and for purposes of expediency, he inquired on the number of Members who are eligible to vote.

The Presiding Officer responded that a total of 206 Members have been duly proclaimed.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
OF REP. ZAMORA

Upon recognition by the Presiding Officer, Rep. Ronaldo B. Zamora inquired whether the Members who will vie for the position of Speaker of the House will come from both the Majority and Minority coalitions in the House.

With the permission of the Presiding Officer, Rep. Gonzales explained that traditionally, the Member who wins the speakership race shall become the Speaker and the head of the Majority Coalition; while the Member who is defeated in the same race shall become the Minority Leader.

Rep. Zamora further inquired whether the Minority in the House is the same as the Opposition and whether it is possible that both the winner and the loser in the speakership race will be from the Majority Coalition.

With the permission of the Presiding Officer, Rep. Gonzales reiterated that according to tradition, the losing candidate for speakership becomes the Minority Leader. He added, however, that the question of whether the Minority will play an active role as critical Opposition or as friendly Opposition is left to the Minority to decide.

On further query, Rep. Gonzales acknowledged anew the possibility that the Speaker and the Minority Leader may come from the same Majority Coalition and pointed out that the Constitution itself recognizes the multi-party system and as such, there may be party differences even among members of the same political party.

Stating that he wishes to be guided in the way he will vote, Rep. Zamora inquired what his status will be in the event that he chooses not to vote for any of the candidates for Speaker or abstains from voting.

With the permission of the Presiding Officer, Rep. Gonzales responded that Rep. Zamora will then be considered an independent unless in his subsequent actions, he continuously aligns himself either with the Majority or the Minority.

POINT OF ORDER OF REP. PARAS

Upon recognition by the Presiding Officer, Rep. Paras noted that the parliamentary inquiry of Rep. Zamora was speculative because answers will have to be provided therefor even if the Body still does not know who the candidates for the speakership will be. He inquired on the possibility of waiting for the proper time that said questions may be raised. He further maintained that there is no prohibition against any Member of the House, regardless of party affiliation, from running for the speakership, hence this is a matter of choice for each Member of the House.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 10:51 a.m., the Presiding Officer motu proprio suspended the session.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

WITHDRAWAL OF REP. PARAS' POINT OF ORDER

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Paras withdrew his point of order so as not to delay the proceedings of the House.

REMARKS OF REP. AQUINO (A.)

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Agapito A. Aquino adverted to the previous question regarding the status of Members who abstain or fail to vote and pointed out that in the past, the practice has been that said Members are considered as belonging to the Minority.

He stated that he does not agree with this long-standing tradition because he believes that if one Member had, for instance failed to vote because he was abroad at the time of voting, he can simply tell the Speaker that he prefers to be with the Majority. This, as he asked why a Member should be lumped with the Minority if he refuses to belong to it.

Rep. Aquino then maintained that a clarification on the matter should be made by the Committee on Rules. He opined that Members do not permanently belong to either the Majority or the Minority because they can change parties or join a new alliance anytime. In either case, he said that the Members should be free to choose their affiliation and manifest their intent for record purposes.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF REP. LOBREGAT

Rep. Celso L. Lobregat inquired whether the election for Speaker had been finished considering that the Presiding Officer had appointed Rep. Gonzales as Majority Leader. He asked how the House can have a Majority Leader when it has not yet elected a Speaker, and whether the Presiding Officer already knows the results of the election.

The Presiding Officer replied that the designation of Rep. Gonzales was only as Acting Floor Leader and not as Majority Leader.

Rep. Lobregat stated that Rep. Zamora had earlier suggested that in the interest of orderly proceedings, the Presiding Officer should designate somebody from the Majority, which suggestion he had heard clearly. Upon this suggestion, he added that the Presiding Officer then appointed Rep. Gonzales as Majority Leader. He then asked that the transcript of plenary proceedings be checked.

Thereupon, the Chair replied that he was definitely sure that he had designated Rep. Gonzales only as an Acting Floor Leader solely in the interest of ensuring orderly proceedings in the Chamber.

Rep. Lobregat reiterated his request that the transcript of plenary proceedings be checked.

REMARKS OF REP. GONZALES

Upon recognition by the Presiding Officer, Rep. Gonzales recalled that he had been designated as Acting Floor Leader for the purpose of maintaining orderly procedure in the House for that day only. He assured Rep. Lobregat that the Presiding Officer can never designate the Majority Leader because the latter is elected by a contingent of Members from the Committee on Rules who have not yet been elected at the time.

Rep. Lobregat reiterated his request that the transcript of plenary proceedings be checked.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. BIAZON

Thereupon, Rep. Rozzano Rufino B. Biazon sought recognition from the Chair to raise a parliamentary inquiry.

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Rolando G. Andaya Jr. to deliver his nomination speech for Rep. Jose De Venecia Jr.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. ANDAYA

Rep. Andaya stated that he takes the floor to nominate a man whose talents, skills, expertise, discipline, work ethic, quality of leadership and audacity of vision should make him the unanimous choice for Speaker of the House for the Twelfth Congress. He maintained that the man he was referring to was a man cut for the job considering the temper of the times. This, as recalled that in the 1990s, the country had lived in an extraordinary decade of change and the nation had been in need of a man who could move the House and advance the national agenda.

Rep. Andaya pointed out that the man he is adverting to had been lavishly praised by Asian and world leaders and lionized by leading opinion writers.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. BIAZON

Before Rep. Andaya could finish his speech, Rep. Biazon sought recognition from the Chair.

REMARKS OF REP. AQUINO (A.)

Subsequently, Rep. Aquino pointed out that the Chair had recognized Rep. Biazon earlier, to which the Chair replied that Rep. Biazon had not been recognized.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. ANDAYA
(Continuation)

Rep. Andaya maintained that it would be hard to imagine a House of Representatives without the candidate he was nominating who had carried the institution's glory and burden. He added that Rep. De Venecia was the House' apogee and perigee - the heroic leader when the House did its job well and the punching bag for criticisms when it did otherwise.

Whereupon, Rep. Andaya said that Rep. De Venecia was the best reason why the House had functioned effectively as a bastion of social and economic reforms during the Ramos Administration from 1992 to 1998 and represented traditional politics at its shining best--politics that delivered results, built consensus and coalitions to efficiently move vital legislation in Congress, and performed and achieved highly. Thereafter, he recalled that five decades ago, John F. Kennedy had praised the politician who built consensus and who was not inflexible as a man of courage. He said that Kennedy's statement was that "politics and legislation are not matters for inflexible principles or unattainable ideas but that under a democratic way of life, legislation requires compromise between the desires of each individual and group and those around them." It may as well have been Rep. De Venecia speaking, he added.

Rep. Andaya underscored that Rep. De Venecia is the master of the fine art of conciliating and balancing interests. He added that only a few can rival Rep. De Venecia in the practice of this essential art of keeping the nation united and enabling the government to function. Today as perhaps in the early 1990s, he said that the Filipino nation needs to see a functioning government that is in control of the national agenda and can pinpoint the rich possibilities for recovery and growth in the future. Such a situation, he opined, is perfect for the gentleman's perfectly honed political skills, for the country is at present going through a stormy passage.

Rep. Andaya pointed out that the South is still on fire with its Muslim insurgency problem; the communist threat has not been tamed; crime syndicates have struck with alarming regularity in Metro Manila; the country's economy is short on investor confidence due to labor unrest; and millions of desperate Filipino poor cry out for redemption from poverty. He then stressed that Rep. De Venecia's track record in performance politics and innovative reforms makes him a standout in the race for Speaker as he knows how to skillfully steer the House -- having already served two terms as Speaker, thus making him 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.

Moreover, he stated that Rep. De Venecia has an Economic Action Plan tagged "Plan 747" which aims for a 7% growth over seven years

beginning in the year 2003. He expounded that by the seventh year of said program, millions of poor Filipinos would move into the threshold of the middle class. He then pointed out that Rep. De Venecia is the father of many economic measures that had made a difference in the national life of Filipinos, e.g., the successful dollar-remittance program which has brought into the country over \$60 billion since its inception and has propped up the country's economy in times of crisis and the B-O-T Law that has built the country's primary infrastructures without cost to the government.

Rep. Andaya stated that further that Rep. De Venecia is a peacemaker, having played heroic roles in the peace process with various insurgent groups. He added that Rep. De Venecia had 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. He added that when no one could do it, Rep. De Venecia provided the breakthroughs that led to peace amongst the brave with the RAM-YOU in 1992, and the Moro National Liberation Front in 1996. Moreover, he said that Rep. De Venecia was close to bringing the National Democratic Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to similar peace agreements; however, everything came undone with his defeat in the 1998 presidential elections.

Thereupon, Rep. Andaya stressed that clearly, the nation needs a leader like Rep. De Venecia and the House needs his leadership more than ever before.

In ending his nomination speech, Rep. Andaya said that he was privileged to nominate Rep. De Venecia for Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gonzales the Chair recognized Rep. Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr. to deliver his seconding nomination speech.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. TEODORO

Rep. Teodoro initially stated that at present, the Philippines is facing another test of economic survival that demands political and economic statesmanship from all of its leaders. He added that the economy remains sluggish for several complex reasons, among which are the lingering effects of the 1997 currency crisis, terrorism and criminality and the political upheaval that had left gaping wounds from which the nation continues to bleed.

Rep. Teodoro stated that healing and unity are needed for the nation to survive through the Members' use of their best skills in moving the nation forward, and not by blaming each other for the pains being suffered at present. He said that this is a time that calls for sacrifice, sharing of burdens, and collective solutions and synergy between and within government agencies. He expressed belief that a House divided in the Twelfth Congress will only aggravate the country's national situation, and a House divided against itself is its own worst enemy. He then stressed the need for a leader in the House who could unify the political parties and factions and who could put everything together in the proper mix.

Rep. Teodoro thereafter stated that it is therefore the position of

the entire House contingent of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) to support Rep. De Venecia and nominate him for the position of Speaker because they believe that the times call for the Members to unite in the House in a principled coalition and help turn the country's economy around. He added that at this time, Rep. De Venecia is the one who could bring together the House under his able leadership as he is a coalition maker and consensus builder of the first order and had been instrumental in forming the Rainbow Coalition in 1992 and the Sunshine Coalition in 2001. He then claimed that Rep. De Venecia famously did his work in 1992 and 1995 as Speaker of the House which had helped produce the modest economic miracle that had enabled the country to be one of the best performing economies in Southeast Asia. For this reason, he said that the NPC still believe that Rep. De Venecia could do the same again as he had done his best as an excellent economic visionary, coalition-builder and consensus maker.

In ending his speech, Rep. Teodoro stated that in behalf of the Nationalist People's Coalition, he was nominating Rep. Jose De Venecia Jr. as Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Twelfth Congress.

Subsequently, the Chair recognized Rep. Prospero A. Pichay Jr. for his seconding nomination speech.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. PICHAY

On behalf of his party, LAKAS-NUCD, Rep. Pichay said that it was his distinct honor to be a part of history that was unfolding that day. He continued that the man he was privileged to nominate is someone who, for many reasons, had been written off as a "political has been" following his defeat in the 1998 presidential elections. However, he stressed that the man he was speaking of is one who is not easily written off or even forgotten as in his public and private life, he has resurrected himself time and again because of his enormous talents as a business leader, political leader and visionary and because he has always risen from the ashes, so to speak, like the proverbial phoenix. In bouncing back, he said, this man has bucked overwhelming odds.

Rep. Pichay pointed out that in 1992, with only 37 LAKAS-NUCD Members, this man had won overwhelmingly as Speaker of the House through the Rainbow Coalition that he had built from scratch and by seeing with his political acumen that at the heart of democracy is coalition building. He added that the Rainbow Coalition had given former President Ramos a solid backing in the legislature although the former Defense Chief had won as a minority President with only 23% of the votes cast in 1992. Even the way this man had built LAKAS in partnership with President Ramos is the stuff of political legend as 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, he stressed. He added that the man's humility, creativity and unbending will to serve the Filipinos are, among others, the qualities that a Speaker of the House must have.

Whereupon, Rep. Pichay said that it was his distinct honor and privilege to nominate for Speaker of the Twelfth Congress, " the man for all seasons," Rep. Jose De Venecia Jr.

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Rodolfo C. Bacani for his seconding nomination speech.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH
OF REP. BACANI

At the outset, Rep. Bacani stated that the heart of governance is consensus and coalition-building which makes Congress work and is the reason why the country has not been torn apart by divergent ideologies. Today, as the country's democratic way turns a new leaf, he said that the Members 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.

At this point, Rep. Bacani stated that he wished to nominate for Speaker of the House, a man who can best lead the Chamber, a consensus-builder par excellence and whose performance as Speaker had enabled both the Ninth and Tenth Congresses to achieve much more for the country, particularly in the area of economic growth and development. This miracle worker, he added, has shown time and again his great talent at persuasion as 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 standards of public office, whose primordial goal is service for the common good.

Rep. Bacani underscored that the Members must unite the House and heal the nation, and that they need a new political consensus to advance the national agenda. In these perilous times, the House needs the distinguished gentleman's wisdom, experience, devotion and expertise and therefore, is the best man for the position of Speaker.

Thereafter, Rep. Bacani nominated Rep. Jose De Venecia Jr. as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Subsequently, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Faysah Maniri-Racman Dumarpa to deliver her seconding nomination speech.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH
OF REP. DUMARPA

Rep. Dumarpa initially stated that she will second the nomination for Speaker of an honorable colleague, a Christian and a devoted Catholic who feels and bleeds for Muslim Mindanao as though he were their own brother by blood and by religion. She added that as Speaker of the Ninth and Tenth Congresses during the Ramos Administration, he did much for the Muslims, Mindanao women and the Lumads and in visiting the Muslim's havens, his conscience had been struck and had been moved into taking action to address the incredible poverty of his Muslim brothers, the underdevelopment of the region and the lack of opportunities for education and employment.

Thereupon, Rep. Dumarpa stated that while Manila, as the seat of central government, may have forgotten Mindanao in talks about economic development, this man had taken a lead role in forging peace with the MNLF in 1992, and another giant step in seeking peace with the MILF in 1998, only to be stopped by his defeat in the 1998 presidential elections. She then recalled that this man was the first Christian political leader from imperial Manila to set foot at Camp Abubakar in the mountain stronghold of Central Mindanao only to bring his peace initiatives and parallel economic programs both to Muslim leaders and Muslim lands, especially regarding irrigation systems. This man's vision for Muslim Mindanao, she said, was peace with the rebels and a mini-Marshall plan type of economic development, however, while this vision is far from being realized, the people of Mindanao are hoping that by electing him as Speaker of the House, they could start again the development phases towards realizing this vision.

In closing, Rep. Dumarpa said that she was honored and privileged to second the nomination of Rep. De Venecia as Speaker of the House.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Augusto "Boboy" Syjuco to second the nomination of Rep. De Venecia.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. SYJUCO

At the outset, Rep. Syjuco noted how every Filipino has been suffering from a series of wild punches being thrown at him from all directions: kidnappings, inflation, the dwindling economy, a restive labor sector and a fetid bureaucracy. As a result thereof, he further observed that traditional alliances have broken up as new and broader formations are coalescing. He stressed that the Filipino people who have been thrust into the maelstrom, inured by demands of everyday survival and challenged by oppressions, were now sinking into the quicksand of time.

All is not lost, however, Rep. Syjuco emphasized. Expressing hope that the country will rise from the maladies of the past and triumph over the afflictions of the present, he stressed that the Members of the House will now close ranks and embrace the person who will lead them out of the quagmire. He said that on this day, the Members would choose the best and most experienced among them, the "first among equals." More than nine out of 10 congressmen know and agree that the man is Rep. De Venecia, he underscored. He said that the Members will share one vision and mission of sustaining and advancing the supreme virtue of freedom for the people.

As the Members lock arms together, gather inner strengths, lift spirits and summon conviction to embark on their noble mission to make the Twelfth Congress the most productive, united and socially-responsive House of Representatives in history, he said that he was honored and privileged to second the nomination of Rep. De Venecia to lead the House to the fullness of the country's destiny.

Emerging from the Rainbow Coalition that he had forged and successfully steered in the Ninth and Tenth Congresses, Rep. Syjuco said that Rep. De Venecia now represents the radiant and healing rays of the new Sunshine Coalition that he has fashioned for the Twelfth

Congress. He stressed that Rep. De Venecia will break the people free from the chains of poverty, lack of education and development opportunities and injustices of society.

Rep. Syjuco thereupon emphasized that the Members' newfound unity and cohesion in the House under the leadership of Rep. De Venecia will propel the country out of its political and economic woes to the extent of transcending political affiliations just to get things done. He added that they will share one vision and mission to sustain and advance the supreme virtue of the people's freedom.

He thereafter called on his colleagues to lock their arms together, gather inner strengths, lift spirits, summon convictions and embark on their noble mission to make the House of the Twelfth Congress the most productive, united and socially-responsive House of Representatives in history.

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Presiding Officer recognized Rep. Agapito A. Aquino to deliver his nomination speech.

REMARKS OF REP. AQUINO (A.)

Rep. Aquino stated that it had been agreed upon that Rep. Gilbert C. Remulla would deliver his nomination speech first.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. REMULLA

Rep. Remulla took the floor to nominate a man whom he believes can bring a new image, politics and leadership into the House of Representatives. He said this man has had vast experience in both local and national politics, and who through his legislations, has shown that his priorities are right and that he will stand his ground and by his word.

As a neophyte Member of the House and a young one at that, he stressed that he has searched for a new and improved image for the House, and has yearned for new politics concerned with national interests like economy, education, employment, environment and public trust, and not personal prosperity.

Expressing his desire for a leader who can build consensus as good as any other, who can build a new image, politics and leadership, Rep. Remulla said that he was privileged to nominate Rep. Carlos M. Padilla for the speakership of the House.

Rep. Gonzales subsequently moved for the recognition of Rep. Abraham Kahlil B. Mitra to deliver his nomination speech.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. MITRA

At the outset, Rep. Mitra stated that this is a time of great challenge for the nation -- a time to look forward and start the foundation of trust, ability and performance between the government and the people it serves. Adding that this is a time to build upon the trust of their countrymen through hard work, no nonsense politics, quality planning and sincerity in public service, he stressed that the times call for new politics. He stressed that new politics should be free from the bounds of traditional practices and should prioritize trust over personal prosperity, and one that filled

with honesty, decency, dedication and high quality legislation.

As a former town mayor of Nueva Viscaya, Rep. Mitra recalled how Rep. Padilla had 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 his province has never seen from a public official before.

He emphasized that as a political detainee, Rep. Padilla had epitomized the essence of new politics by standing by what he believes should be said and done. This he had done by sacrificing his personal security for the sake of defending public trust with government, he recalled.

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

Finally, Rep. Mitra said that on behalf of the Filipino people who are in dire need of "real" politicians," and his colleagues in the House who believe in as well as practise new politics, it was his honor and privilege to nominate Rep. Padilla as Speaker of the House.

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Gabrielle V. Calizo to second the nomination of Rep. Padilla.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. CALIZO

Rep. Calizo initially reminded her colleagues that they have received a fresh mandate from the people only six months after the EDSA II and 15 days after EDSA III. Both events in EDSA had shown that people have been clamoring for service- and resolution-oriented public officials who will help improve their lives, she observed. She likewise noted that people have been asking for new politics that shun the traditional politics of concession, compromise and promises.

As a neophyte Member, Rep. Calizo said that she is looking forward to working with a leader who shall advance a different kind of politics. Expressing belief that all aspirants for the position have committed to serve the people and adhere to politics of service, she emphasized that two of them had given up their bid for the sake of party unity or for personal reasons.

After thinking thoroughly about whom to vote for, Rep. Calizo opined that Rep. Padilla possesses the quality of a leader who she can look up to and who shall stand his ground and remain true to his commitments. She said that she was honored to nominate Rep. Padilla as Speaker of the House.

Rep. Calizo recalled that in her brief encounters with Rep. Padilla during the LDP Party meetings, he had inspired her to stay with the Opposition despite the temptations being offered by the perceived Majority. She said that Rep. Padilla had been given an attractive option to join the many others, but had opted to stay with the party and instead had risen above his personal interests, as he had decided to pursue the less traveled road if only to preserve the system of

checks and balances.

At this point, Rep. Calizo observed that the country has been beleaguered by insurmountable difficulties that have resulted in a feeling of hopelessness and despair. As the people have become uncertain of what lies ahead, she stressed that this has become a challenge to the country's leaders. Emphasizing that the government needs someone who can inspire and motivate people and has a track record of being selfless and possessing an untainted reputation, she asked her colleagues to support Rep. Padilla.

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Suplico to second the nomination of Rep. Padilla.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. SUPLICO

Once again, Rep. Suplico said that the House has been given the sacred opportunity to be another beacon of hope in this unhappy land. As the House begins the process of selecting the new "captain of the ship," he stressed that this right could not have come at a more crucial time. The Filipinos have been living in extraordinary times, he observed, as a world economic meltdown looms in the horizon, putting the economy in crisis. While the peso is murdered daily, stabilization plots are being unleashed, kidnappings are occurring frequently and parts of the country are being held in a state of siege, he emphasized that the election of a new Speaker could not have come at a more vital time.

The House is the repository of a representative democracy and is the last refuge of every Filipino, Rep. Suplico underscored. He said that a person who has been seeking justice, economic reforms and peace and order should go to the House to enjoy the vast and soothing powers that it can offer. This is the role of the Members, and they cannot evade it without violating their oaths, he emphasized. Thus, he reiterated that selecting the next Speaker could not have come at a more crucial time.

The new Speaker should hold real promise and not be a promising consummate salesman, Rep. Suplico stressed. He added that he should not be an expert of patronage politics known for excessive grandiloquence as matched by his expertise in the business of political addition and expediency, a "trapo" tainted by scams and scandals and a person who shall compromise the independence of the House.

Rep. Suplico subsequently asked by what strict standards should the Members elect the new Speaker. He quoted President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's inaugural speech when she stated that to achieve true reforms, the country should outgrow the traditional brand of politics based on patronage and personality as it is a structural part of the problem, because the country needs to promote a new politics of true party programs and platforms as a structural part of the solution.

The Members should do exactly as the President has proposed, Rep. Suplico opined. Asking his colleagues to heed the call for "new politics," he emphasized the need for a Speaker who shall understand the dynamics of traditional politics yet bold enough to defy it.

With one voice and regardless of political parties, Rep. Suplico said that the Members have called for such a man who shall lead the House towards new politics - Rep. Padilla who was a martial law political detainee, a municipal mayor from 1971 to 1978, a Member of the 1978 Interim Batasang Pambansa, a Member of the Eighth, Tenth and Eleventh Congresses, the author of Republic Act No. 6655 or the Free High School Law, and most of all, a good man. He stressed that he was honored to nominate Rep. Padilla, who had served as Deputy Speaker for Luzon during the Eleventh Congress, as Speaker of the House.

The Presiding Officer thereafter recognized Rep. Harlin Cast. Abayon for his parliamentary inquiry.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF REP. ABAYON

Rep. Abayon recalled how earlier, Rep. Suplico had questioned the authority of the Presiding Officer to preside over the session. Since Rep. Suplico had nominated Rep. Padilla for the speakership of the House, he asked whether the former was now waiving his objection to the authority of the Presiding Officer.

REMARKS OF REP. GONZALES (N.)

With the permission of the Presiding Officer, Rep. Gonzales said that the query was not directed at him. However, he asked that the Body proceed with its business by recognizing Rep. Constantino G. Jaraula to second the nomination of Rep. Padilla as Speaker of the House.

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Presiding Officer recognized Rep. Constantino G. Jaraula.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. JARAULA

Rep. Jaraula pointed out that as the Body goes through the ritual of electing a Speaker, thousands of people are demonstrating, the Philippine peso is facing its worst crisis in the history of the Republic, shooting is still going on in many parts of Mindanao, and thousands upon thousands more are wondering whether there is hope at the end of the tunnel. He then seconded the nomination of a man who he said, exemplifies honesty which is very much lacking in the political landscape; personifies humility which is the missing link between the leadership of the country and the suffering Filipino masses; possesses sincerity and not grandiosity; and is committed to being transparent and to cleaning the unpleasant image of a House which passes bills without a quorum, starting with a periodic publication of the documents and papers of the Committee on Accounts. He said that he is seconding the nomination of man who would exact from every Member the minimum fulfillment of a duty which is to be present every session day. Such a man, he said, is Rep. Padilla of Nueva Vizcaya.

Subsequently, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Agapito A. Aquino

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH

OF REP. AQUINO (A.)

Rep. Aquino (A.) initially stated that he will no longer mention Rep. Padilla's legislative achievements except his having been a Deputy Speaker of the Eleventh Congress, a three-term Representative of Nueva Vizcaya, and a member of the Batasang Pambansa. He said that he wants to stress, instead, Rep. Padilla's rise from laborer to a clerk at the Bureau of Reforestation of the Philippine Tobacco Redrying Company to lecturer, instructor and board member of the University of the Philippines and other state universities. He added that Rep. Padilla was also an activist, having stayed in prison for seven months during Martial Law, which reminds him of a brother who stayed in prison for seven years.

Rep. Aquino then pointed out that this man espouses the new kind of politics whose cornerstones are found in the acronym TRADE: Transparency, Result-orientedness, Accountability, Discipline and Environmental Concerns. It is his great honor, he stressed, to second the nomination of Rep. Padilla.

TERMINATION OF THE
PERIOD FOR NOMINATIONS

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Presiding Officer closed the period of nominations.

NOMINAL VOTING ON THE NOMINEES
FOR SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Presiding Officer directed the Deputy Secretary General to call the Roll for nominal voting for the Speaker of the House and requested each Member to clearly state the name of the candidate he or she will vote for.

Rep. Ronaldo B. Zamora stated that he was abstaining from voting and thereafter sought the permission of the Presiding Officer to allow him to explain his vote.

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Presiding Officer however informed Rep. Zamora that in the voting for the speakership, a Member can only cast his/her vote without the need for any explanation. He however stated that Rep. Zamora's explanation for his abstention may be inserted into the Record of the House.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

For Rep. De Venecia:

Abad
Arbison
Abaya (A.)
Bacani
Abaya (P.)
Baculio
Abayon

Badelles
Ablan
Banaag
Acosta
Barbers
Albano
Barinaga
Alfelor
Baterina
Almario
Bautista
Alvarez
Beratio
Amante
Bersamin
Amatong
Bondoc
Ancheta
Bueser
Andaya
Bulut
Angping
Cabilao
Antonino-Custodio
Cagas
Apostol
Cajes
Aquino (B.)
Calalay
Cari
Ipong
Carloto
Jaafar
Castro
Jala
Cayetano
Javier
Celeste
Joaquin
Chatto
Joson
Chiongbian
Kintanar
Chungalao
Lacson
Clarete
Lagman-Luistro
Cojuangco (M.)
Lanot
Crespo
Lapus
Cruz-Ducut
Ledesma
Cua
Leviste
Cuenco
Libanan
Dadivas

Locsin (T.)
Dangwa
Locsin (M.V.)
Daza
Lopez (J.)
De Guzman
Lopez (R.)
Defensor (A.)
Lozada
Defensor (M.)
Macarambon
Del Mar
Macias
Dimaporo
Malanyaon
Domogan
Mamba
Duavit
Marañon
Dumarpa
Marcos
Dumpit
Martinez
Durano
Matalam
Dy (C.)
Mathay
Dy (F.)
Monfort
Ecleo
Montilla
Enrile
Moreno
Ermita-Buhain
Nachura
Escudero
Nantes
Espina
Nepomuceno
Espino
Nicolas
Espinosa (Edgar T.)
Nieva
Espinosa (Emilio R.)
Nograles
Espinosa (V.)
Olaño
Estrella
Ortega
Failon
Padilla
Falcon
Paras
Floirendo
Perez
Fua
Pichay
Fuentebella

Pilando
Garcia (V.)
Pingoy
Garin
Plaza
Gatchalian
Puentevella
Gonzales (N.)
Punzalan
Gonzalez (R.)
Ramirez-Zato
Gordon
Ramiro
Gozos
Real
Gullas
Reyes (E.)
Gunigundo
Reyes (V.)
Hizon
Roco
Imperial
Rodriguez (I.)
Rodriguez (O.)
Teves
Roman
Torres
Romualdo
Tulagan
Salapuddin
Umali (Alfonso V.)
Salceda
Umali (Aurelio M.)
Saludo
Unico
San Juan
Uy (E.)
Sandoval (F.)
Uy (R.)
Sandoval (V.)
Velooso
Santiago
Vicencio
Silverio
Villarama
Singson
Villareal
Solis
Violago
Soon-Ruiz
Wacnang
Suarez
Yapha
Sumulong
Ylagan
Sy-Alvarado
Zamora (M.)
Syjuco

Zialcita
Taganas-Layus
Zubiri
Teodoro

For Rep. Padilla:

Amin
Lobregat
Angara-Castillo
Mitra
Aquino (A.)
Remulla
Biazon
San Luis
Calizo
Suplico
Chipeco
Taliño-Santos
De Venecia
Villar
Garcia (E.)
Yumul
Jaraula

Abstention:

Zamora (R.)

With 185 Members voting for Rep. De Venecia, 17 voting for Rep. Padilla and one abstaining, the Presiding Officer declared Rep. De Venecia of the Fourth District of Pangasinan as the duly-elected Speaker of the House.

MOTION OF REP. GONZALES

Upon recognition by the Presiding Officer, Rep. Gonzales moved that the Body constitute a committee composed of the following Members to notify Rep. De Venecia of his election as Speaker of the House of Representatives and to escort the Speaker-elect to the rostrum for his oath-taking: Reps. Cielo Krisel Lagman-Luistro, Trinidad G. Apostol and Soraya C. Jaafar.

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDING OFFICER

There being no objection to the motion, the Presiding Officer requested the Members so named to inform the Speaker-elect of his election and to escort him to the rostrum.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At this juncture, the Presiding Officer suspended the session.

It was 12:34 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

Upon resumption of session, the Presiding Officer stated that upon the express wish of the Speaker-elect, the Honorable Jose De Venecia Jr., Rep. Felix William P. Fuentebella will administer the oath of office.

Thereafter, the Presiding Officer requested the family of the Speaker De Venecia to ascend the rostrum to witness the oath-taking.

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

Subsequently, the Presiding Officer requested the Members to rise for the oath-taking.

OATH-TAKING OF REP. DE VENECIA
AS SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

At this juncture, Rep. Fuentebella administered the oath of office to the Honorable Jose De Venecia Jr. as Speaker of the House of Representatives in the presence of the members of his family and the Members of the House.

Whereupon, the Presiding Officer relinquished the Chair to Speaker De Venecia.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH OF
SPEAKER DE VENECIA

Initially, Speaker De Venecia thanked his colleagues for the confidence and faith they have shown in his ability to lead the House of Representatives in perilous times. He stressed at the outset that the task of the House is to help President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo get the nation moving again. He said that the nation's recent history which was marked by a People Power uprising that succeeded and another that failed, has inexorably thrust the Members into a courageous role.

The above task, Speaker De Venecia continued, demands the best of the Members' talents, skills, energies, experience, creativity and 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 the country's businessmen and many of the Filipino people. He pointed out that many times in the past, the Philippines had endured rough and tough passages only to emerge into a period of peace and prosperity. He observed that the country is in the midst of one such passage once again.

He also commented that in the first years of the 21st century, the national problems beg Congress to confront them decisively and urgently. He emphasized, though, that the only way to do this is to transform the House into an activist, reformist, achievement- and performance-oriented House, a bastion of good politics which the Members must strive to attain as its enduring standard. He remarked that the Almighty has given the Members a good start by enabling them to unite the House. This, as he believed that a house divided cannot stand, and in uniting the House, the Members have begun to unite and heal the nation.

Speaker De Venecia thereafter expressed his gratitude to the leaders of all political parties and factions which make up the historic Sunshine Coalition, notably Reps. Gilbert C. Teodoro Jr., Florencio B. Abad, Carlos M. Padilla and Vicente A. Sandoval. He stressed that today, the Members have set aside the dark passions of partisan politics and have primed themselves to make a difference in the lives of the people and get the Filipino nation moving again.

At this point, Speaker De Venecia pointed out that the single biggest task of the House under the Constitution is to enact a national budget that will have the greatest impact on economic growth and poverty alleviation. He however cited the huge budget deficits which the government expects to incur in the next three years and which he said must be addressed if they are to defeat poverty and sustain economic growth. He urged his colleagues to aim for a balanced budget and a surplus by the time they end their term, as their best gift to the nation. He recalled that during his speakership twice from 1992 to 1998, by mobilizing the House Committees on Appropriations, and Ways and Means and the Departments of Budget and Management, and Finance under former President Fidel V. Ramos, the government was able to balance the budget and achieve modest surpluses from 1994 to 1997 until the Asian financial crisis struck in July and, complicated by corruption and inefficient tax collection, caused huge budget deficits to reach P120 billion in the year 2000.

As to how the government can finance the needs of the country to enable the people to be uplifted from poverty, and for the nation to move forward, Speaker De Venecia proposed a combination of an outward-inward strategy, with equal if not more focus on the mobilization of the nation's internal assets, while awaiting forward movements in the economies of the United States, Japan and Europe and for Argentina and similarly-situated nations to sort out their problems. He also disclosed that the Philippines had committed access to as \$10 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA) from Japan and Europe largely in concessional 30-year funds, with 1/3 of one percent interest and 10-year grace periods on capital. This huge pool of funds, he said, is untapped and unutilized because the President and Congress have failed all these years to provide the 25-percent counterpart fund of \$2.5 billion or P125 billion. He stated that within two to three years, under a multi-year plan, Congress should provide the counterpart fund so it can capture the \$10 billion ODA funds and thus provide the new government with a total fund of \$12.5 billion or P625 billion.

Speaker De Venecia emphasized that the money would be enough to build 250,000 houses a year, together with its major job-creating multiplier effects on the economy. He added that the amount can also 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 Cagayan Valley, preserve the ecological balance and enable the people to stop importing foreign wood.

In addition, Speaker De Venecia emphasized that the ODA funds would allow the government to train hundreds of thousands of the workforce in computer engineering, science and information technology to

develop a new generation of skilled technicians and high-earning overseas contract workers in the first years of the 21st century. He further said that the amount will enable the government to use its 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. He expressed hope that access to the ODA funds would enable the government 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 create a new generation of Filipino farmer-entrepreneurs and to bring irrigation to all congressional districts.

To source the counterpart fund of \$2.5 billion, Speaker De Venecia proposed the following:

1. Honest and stronger tax collection without imposing new taxes;
1. 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 productive in a few weeks;
2. A final resolution of the coconut levy fund 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
3. A final resolution of the Marcos wealth 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.

Speaker De Venecia maintained that to ease the pressure on Congress to provide capital funds through the budget, he requested the Members, governors and mayors to use the successful Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Law and all its variations to build in their communities projects like public and private markets, electricity and water systems, reclamation, reforestation and irrigation projects, railroads and disposal systems at no cost to the local government units, and clustering several townships if necessary to achieve viability. He also requested the local governments to campaign for investments for their communities, including the mobilization of the capital of hundreds of thousands of affluent Filipinos in the U.S., Australia, Europe and Canada to build BOT projects which may cost from \$500,000 to one million dollars per project in their respective districts.

To successfully compete in the global market for investments, Speaker De Venecia cited the need for honest and competent governance that can provide fair and clear rules for all players. To fulfill the people's expectations, he presented to the Body the Economic Action Plan 747 that aims to achieve 7% growth over seven years beginning in 2003 and to free the people from poverty and move millions of Filipinos to cross into the threshold of the middle class by the end of its seventh year. He then expressed pride in the fact that NEDA Director General Dante Canlas had formally endorsed Plan 747. This, as he stressed that the entire House agenda and advocacy should

center on helping President Macapagal-Arroyo achieve high growth targets. He also asked the legislators to ensure the integrity of state policies that will serve the common good and not some powerful interest groups.

Moreover, Speaker De Venecia suggested the adoption of a political and electoral campaign reform measure that will make government provide campaign funds to political parties. He expressed belief that this will reduce corruption in high office and in LGUs and will stop drug and gambling lords from influencing the political parties and public policy by financing electoral campaigns. He said that other Asian political leaders have agreed to support this initiative to reduce political corruption in the Philippines and in the region.

In the interest of full informational transparency, Speaker De Venecia revealed that the House committee and plenary proceedings will soon be posted in a website accessible to the public. He also underscored that the House will seriously exercise its congressional powers of oversight to ensure that the people's money is spent wisely. He pointed out that it is high time for the government to be an asset instead of a liability to the country.

Speaker De Venecia also proposed that the House initiate the 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. He expressed belief that an Asian Community created by political and economic integration should be considered a vehicle to contain big-power nationalism and turn it into a force for prosperity in Asia. He cited the importance for the House to take the first steps to arrive someday at such Asian ideal.

Whereupon, Speaker De Venecia expressed hope that the creation of an autonomous Bangsa Moro homeland would isolate the terrorist Abu Sayyaf and force it to surrender in a final settlement. He noted that President Macapagal-Arroyo must be credited for restoring the peace talks with the communist New People's Army-National Democratic Front (NPA-NDF) in the next few weeks and for the initial breakthrough agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Tripoli in recent days. He then urged his Muslim colleagues to join the movement for a Global Christian-Muslim Coalition as their 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 the first decade of the 21st century.

At this point, Speaker De Venecia emphasized that he ran for public office not to become rich and powerful because as he returns to public life after his defeat in the 1998 presidential elections, all he wishes for is to serve the people faithfully and well. He believed that by working for the common good and the national interest, the Members will become servants of God and servants of the people. Citing the Holy Bible, he asked what would it profit a man if he gains the whole world but suffers the loss of his immortal soul.

Thereupon, Speaker De Venecia recalled that when he bade the House an emotional farewell three years ago, he said that he still held a youthful hope for the country's future. Today, he said, he is

animated both by the wisdom of his senior colleagues and by the youthful idealism of the more than 100 first-term lawmakers. He said that it takes courage to stand for one's principles and also to be flexible and accept the necessity of conciliation for the common good. He stressed that conciliation and mutual respect make up the glue that binds the House and the Filipino nation.

Whereupon, Speaker De Venecia urged the Members with God's help, to stand courageously by the nation and by the people, to do what is right and necessary rather than what is popular, to sacrifice their selfish and narrow interests for the common good, and to be guided always by the politics of performance and by the politics of reform. In closing, he asked his colleagues to get moving for they have many things to do and a future to win. He said that the Members cannot fail.

OATH-TAKING OF MEMBERS

At this juncture, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Members proceeded with their oath-taking, with Speaker De Venecia officiating.

ADOPTION OF THE HOUSE RULES

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body adopted the Rules of the House of Representatives of the Eleventh Congress, copies of which had been distributed to the Members, without prejudice to any amendments that may be submitted later.

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 36

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body considered House Resolution No. 36.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title and text of the Resolution, to wit:

"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.

ADOPTION OF HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 36

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body adopted House Resolution No. 36.

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 37

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body considered House Resolution No. 37.
Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title and text of the Resolution, to wit:

"RESOLUTION INFORMING HER EXCELLENCY, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, PRESIDENT 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.

ADOPTION OF HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 37

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body adopted House Resolution No. 37.

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body considered House Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title and text of the Concurrent Resolution, to wit:

"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 23, 2001 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.

ADOPTION OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body adopted House Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

In order to communicate said message to the Senate, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the session was suspended.

It was 1:06 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

REMARKS OF REP. GONZALES

Rep. Gonzales informed the Body that the Secretariat is in receipt of Messages from the Senate and asked the Secretary General to read the same.

MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the following Messages from the Senate which the Chair thereafter consigned to the Archives or referred to the Calendar of Business for the Day.

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 SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body considered Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Concurrent Resolution, to wit:

"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."

ADOPTION OF SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1.

DESIGNATION OF MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE ON NOTIFICATION

In view of the adoption of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Chair appointed the following Members to notify the President that Congress is now convened and ready to hear her message: Reps. Juan Miguel F. Zubiri, Ace S. Barbers, Felix William P. Fuentebella, Abraham Kahlil B. Mitra, Nerissa Corazon Soon-Ruiz, Herminia M. Ramiro, Clavel A. Martinez, Nanette C. Daza and Narciso D. Monfort.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

In order 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 accomplishments to the House, on motion of Rep. Gonzales the session was suspended.

It was 1:09 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

MOTION FOR THE ELECTION
OF THE DEPUTY SPEAKERS FOR
LUZON, VISAYAS, AND MINDANAO

Whereupon, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body proceeded with the election of the Deputy Speakers for Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

Likewise, on Rep. Gonzales' motion, the Chair recognized Rep. Manuel C. Ortega for his speech nominating Rep. Emilio R. Espinosa Jr. as Deputy Speaker for Luzon.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. ORTEGA

In his speech, Rep. Ortega underscored Rep. Espinosa's vast legislative experience spanning the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Congresses, the Interim Batasang Pambansa, and the Eleventh and Twelfth Congresses. He likewise cited Rep. Espinosa's endearing qualities such as being a true gentleman and statesman, and an amiable colleague. For these reasons, he nominated Rep. Espinosa as Deputy Speaker for Luzon.

Likewise, on Rep. Gonzales' motion, the Chair recognized Rep. Jacinto V. Paras for his speech nominating Rep. Raul M. Gonzalez as Deputy Speaker for the Visayas.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. PARAS

Rep. Paras, at the outset, cited that Rep. Gonzalez held the position of Deputy Speaker for the Visayas during the third change of leadership in the Eleventh Congress, serving the position with humility and distinction.

He maintained that Rep. Gonzalez is an erudite spokesman for the rule of law, a veteran and distinguished parliamentarian, and a loyal friend and statesman. He added that Rep. Gonzalez is the epitome of a leader who renders public service in a way God wants him to do so.

Rep. Paras cited the social justice programs of Rep. Gonzalez which alleviated the deteriorating social conditions in his legislative district. For this, he said that Rep. Gonzalez was reelected to an unprecedented third term, with a resounding 92,000 votes over his closest opponent in the last elections.

Rep. Paras likewise cited the solid legal foundation of Rep. Gonzalez, particularly on matters pertaining to the Constitution and the law. He pointed out that Rep. Gonzalez had served as Tanodbayan and was fearless in his advocacy for justice, and uncompromising in his principles. Rep. Gonzalez, he added, left the Office of the Tanodbayan with no breath of scandal or corruption.

Rep. Paras thereafter underscored that Rep. Gonzalez has the necessary competence and experience to help Speaker De Venecia steer Congress amidst the challenges and obstacles facing it. He then nominated Rep. Gonzalez for Deputy Speaker for the Visayas.

SECONDING NOMINATION
SPEECH OF REP. ESPINA

Whereupon, Rep. Gerardo S. Espina, in his seconding nomination speech, related to the Body that although Rep. Gonzalez is his compadre, this is not the reason why he was seconding his nomination as one of the three Deputy Speakers of the House. He maintained that the primary reason was because he had known Rep. Gonzalez to be a mild-mannered man, and most importantly, knowledgeable in all aspects of the law. He said that he had known Rep. Gonzalez to be a very respectful person and as one who has great integrity and good working habits. Not only does he know him to be an experienced public servant but most of all, he said, he knows Rep. Gonzalez to be a just and fair human being. As one of the Deputy Speakers, he said that Rep. Gonzalez will perhaps one day become Speaker because the Rules of the House provides that in the event of a vacancy, the three Deputy Speakers will choose from among themselves who will perform the function of Speaker.

Rep. Espina maintained that Rep. Gonzalez' enduring traits of justness and fairness qualifies him to become one of the Deputy Speakers. It is an honor, he said, to second the nomination of Rep. Gonzalez as Deputy Speaker for the Visayas.

Likewise, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Suplico for his seconding nomination.

SECONDING NOMINATION
SPEECH OF REP. SUPLICO

Whereupon, Rep. Suplico stated that he was proud to second the nomination of one of the greatest Ilonggo legislators, Rep. Gonzalez, as Deputy Speaker for the Visayas.

Subsequently, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Edelmiro A. Amante for his speech nominating Rep. Gerry A. Salapuddin as Deputy Speaker for Mindanao.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. AMANTE

In his speech, Rep. Amante underscored that Rep. Salapuddin comes from the troubled and beleaguered island of Basilan, was a warrior and knows the pains of suffering and war. Rep. Salapuddin, he said, had a long time ago opted for peace so that his countrymen will be spared from the cruelty of war.

Rep. Amante explained that Rep. Salapuddin brings with him the experience of having served his province as governor for three consecutive terms.

He added that being a Muslim, his nominee is a part of the aspirations of the Speaker, who once had formed a Rainbow Coalition

which promised a new tomorrow. This coalition, he said, is now like the sunshine rising from the darkness of dawn which will break into the day whose rays shall give the people light that will enable them to walk their paths clearly and find their destiny of peace, unity and harmony.

Rep. Amante then expressed his pride in being a Mindanaoan and stressed that the voice of Mindanao should be heard because it has wounds that no other persons feels as much as his own. This, as he stated that his nominee is actively involved in the healing process and is working hard so that the people of Mindanao will become one and whole and will participate in the oneness of all Filipinos.

Thereupon, Rep. Amante nominated Rep. Gerry A. Salapuddin for the position of Deputy Speaker for Mindanao and expressed hope that the people of Luzon and the Visayas share his sentiment.

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair recognized Rep. Benasing O. Macarambon Jr. to second the nomination of Rep. Salapuddin.

SECONDING NOMINATION SPEECH OF REP. MACARAMBON

Rep. Macarambon initially stated that the problem in Southern Mindanao had disturbed the administrations of former Presidents Marcos, Aquino, Ramos and Estrada, as well as the present Administration. He added that the problem of Abu Sayyaf abductions of both foreigners and local citizens has affected the socio-economic and political structure of the country. In view thereof, he stressed that the nation is in need of a man who deeply understands the conflict in Southern Philippines.

He then expressed confidence that Rep. Salapuddin is the man of the hour who can steer and lead his colleagues from Mindanao towards more beneficial legislation to improve and develop Mindanao into a land of peace and progress. He added that Rep. Salapuddin had distinguished himself in war and peace and as a member of the MNLF, he had distinguished himself as one of the most respected commanders in the field, particularly in Western Mindanao. As a politician, he further said, Rep. Salapuddin had distinguished himself in the field of politics as undefeated Governor of the Island Province of Basilan and currently as reelected Representative of the Lone District of Basilan.

Rep. Macarambon expressed his honor and privilege in seconding the nomination of Rep. Salapuddin for the position of Deputy Speaker for Mindanao.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD FOR NOMINATIONS

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Chair closed the period for nominations for the position of Deputy Speaker.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKERS

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body elected Reps. Espinosa, Gonzalez and Salapuddin as Deputy Speakers

for Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, respectively.

At this juncture, the Chair requested the family of the Deputy Speakers to ascend the rostrum to witness their oath-taking.

OATH-TAKING OF REP. ESPINOSA,
GONZALEZ AND SALAPUDDIN AS
DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Thereupon, Speaker De Venecia administered the oaths of office to Reps. Espinosa as Deputy Speaker for Luzon, Rep. Gonzalez as Deputy Speaker for the Visayas and Rep. Salapuddin as Deputy Speaker for Mindanao in the presence of their families and the Members of the House.

DESIGNATION OF ADDITIONAL MEMBERS
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NOTIFICATION

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body designated Reps. Abdullah D. Dimaporo and Augusto "Boboy" Syjuco as additional members of the Committee on Notification.

ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body elected Hon. Roberto P. Nazareno as Secretary General of the House of Representatives.

ELECTION OF THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body elected Gen. Bayani C. Fabic as Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Representatives.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE
COMMITTEE ON RULES

Rep. Gonzales initially stated that the Majority will submit for election by the Body a partial list of their nominees for membership in the Committee on Rules while the Minority will submit their nominees in the following session. On his motion, there being no objection, the Body elected the following members of the Committee on Rules, on the part of the Majority:

1. Rep. Neptali M. Gonzales
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 P. Fuentebella
9. Rep. Francisco S. Perez II
10. Rep. Del R. De Guzman

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Subsequently, the Chair requested Messrs. Roberto P. Nazareno and

Fabic to ascend the rostrum for their oath-taking.

OATH-TAKING OF SECRETARY GENERAL NAZARENO AND SERGEANT-AT-ARMS
FABIC

Thereupon, Speaker De Venecia administered the oaths of office to Hon. Roberto P. Nazareno as Secretary General and Gen. Bayani C. Fabic as Sergeant-at-Arms of the House.

REMARKS OF REP. GONZALES

At this juncture, Rep. Gonzales informed the Body that he had just received a communication from the Joint Committee on Notification stating that President Macapagal-Arroyo had been informed that Congress will convene in a Joint Session at four o'clock in the afternoon to hear her State of the Nation Address. He then reminded the Members to be present in the House an hour before the start of the Joint Session.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

To give way to the Joint Session in the afternoon, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until four o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, July 24, 2001.

It was 1:35 p.m.

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I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

ROBERTO P. NAZARENO
Secretary General

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Journal Service, Plenary Affairs Bureau
Philippine House of Representatives