

**2005 CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION
TO PROPOSE THE REVISION OF THE 1987 CONSTITUTION**

**Transcripts of the Proceedings of the
Meeting of the Committee on Form of Government
Tuesday, November 15, 2005**

OPENING OF THE MEETING

At 3:14 p.m., the Chairman of the Committee, Emmanuel Y. Angeles, called the meeting to order.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Good afternoon. I would like to call this meeting to order. We have only one speaker, my co-chair, Commissioner Rene Azurin. He's asking at least 20 minutes to present his views on the form of government. But before the presentation of Commissioner Azurin, may I turn over this microphone to our Chairman, Dr. Abueva.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.

Good afternoon, dear colleagues. If you recall, on October 10, we submitted the draft constitution for a Federal Republic of the Philippines with a parliamentary government. To all of you, we provided copies to all of you. And this is the draft of the Citizen's Movement for a Federal Philippines. Now, following the suggested matrix format for our deliberations at the committee level...I mean plenary, I am transforming the text of this into that matrix format. It should be ready in an hour and a half. It is being printed right now. So I just thought Mr. Chairman that I would say that before the end of the meeting I should be able to distribute the whole draft for a proposed shift from the presidential system to a parliamentary government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Before we proceed to the presentation by Commissioner Azurin, I'd like to call your attention on the minutes of the meeting held on October 19. I think you have been furnished a copy of this minutes and the table is now open for a motion to approve this minutes.

NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PRAYER

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, before we go to the motion I think it would help us if first we will sing our national anthem and pray.

(laughter)

male voice: Those are very important

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

I thought the singing of the National Anthem is only being held during the plenary session. But.. but I have no objection in singing the National Anthem...and the prayer after the National Anthem. We will ask Commissioner Jimeno to lead us in the prayer. Ah, you're not ready? We will ask Sister Emmanuel. The sister is always ready to pray

for us. The sister is always ready to pray for our sins. So let's.. Do you have the recording? Let's sing the National Anthem.

[Singing of the National Anthem]

COMMISSIONER SORIANO.

Let us all please remain standing and pause for a moment, ask the Holy Spirit to be with us during this session to guide us in all our deliberations. Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful and kindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. Let us pray. O God Who has struck the heart of Your faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the gift of the same Spirit we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolations, thru Christ, our Lord. Amen.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

I've been asked by the Floor Leader if we have any agenda for today. I specifically advised the Secretariat not to print anymore the agenda because we have only one speaker. So, I'm trying to sequence what we have to do here this afternoon. We are through with the National Anthem, the prayer, and now the next item in the agenda is to act on this minutes of the meeting of the Form of Government that was held on October 19. So the table is now open for comments or motions for the approval of the minutes.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, I move that we approve the minutes of October 19, 2005 of this Committee hearing.

COMMISSIONER DUAVIT.

I second the motion Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

It has been moved and duly seconded, is there any objection, observation? There being none, the minutes is hereby approved. Yes?

COMMISSIONER BAUTISTA.

Mr. Chairman, I note from the minutes of the meeting -- I was not there -- that there was a proposal to shift from a presidential to a parliamentary form of government. May I ask what kind of parliamentary form of government the members were the members envisioning when they voted to approve that motion?

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

I'll ask the Chairman to answer that.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.

In sponsoring the motion for the shift...first I enumerated very briefly the history of our presidential system and the weaknesses or deficiency of the presidential form of government. And then presented the expected advantages of a parliamentary government with a unicameral parliament. It's therefore a shift from a presidential government with a bicameral congress to a parliamentary government with a unicameral parliament. And I just recounted the general features, the general features, since we are all familiar with the fact that in a parliamentary government, the executive power and the legislative power are combined or fused in parliament, and that the head of parliament is

the prime minister elected by the parliament who represents the majority of the members of the parliament or specifically the majority party or majority coalition and it is expected that the leader of the majority party or the larger party in the coalition would be elected the prime minister by majority of the members of parliament. And also in a very general way, I described it as a parliament to be composed of elected members of parliament from the parliamentary districts, essentially the existing congressional districts transformed into or renamed as the parliamentary districts. Now, in addition to that, I also noted that, at least in one proposal, it was proposed that a hundred additional seats be created for members of parliament to be filled by the various political parties in proportion to the party votes that they earned or gained in the previous parliamentary election. And there was, briefly to note, that since we already have a party-list system in existence, that the party-list parties should be allowed to participate in the election of the parties for the proportional representation of the 100 extra seats. Provided, however, that following the practice in parliamentary systems around the world, regular parties would be the principal participants in the party-list for proportional representation to choose those who are to occupy the 100 seats.

And, just briefly also noted, that the president would be elected by parliament and the president would be the head of state, in contrast to the prime minister which is the head of government who would have the limited powers that are prescribed for the president. This is just in outline form was the kind of parliamentary government. Now it was also noted that parliament would have maximum period or term of 5 years, unless sooner dissolved. Those are just the main features, so no detailed provisions were taken up and discussed.

COMMISSIONER BAUTISTA.

So as the saying goes, the devil is in the details, Mr. Chairman. Would it be possible to see the actual provisions that is being proposed by the Committee.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

He will be presenting that in the format prescribed.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.

Mr. Chairman, it was a very kind and gentle request. Would we be shown.. It is obligatory on the proponent to submit the full text and details for the Committee. I'm just asking for about an hour or so because as I said, following the matrix format, we have to transform from the proposal and it should be ready before we end our meeting. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Commissioner Tabanda.

COMMISSIONER TABANDA.

Mr. Chairman, I just would like to point out that I was looking at the minutes of the last Committee meeting, I do not see the portion where I specifically asked if we were just voting in principle for the shift to parliamentary but that the details will come in later. So I join the call of Commissioner Bautista that probably the meetings of the Committee should now be on the details. Because very, very clearly I was told by the Chair, and even by our Commission Chair, that this was simply on the principle but details to follow, because we did not fully discuss the details. And there was no agreement on the details of what kind of parliamentary system we were going to adopt. So we join his call for...the

subsequent meetings of the Committee to now be on the details of a parliamentary form of government.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Ok, that's noted. And now.. In the next meeting perhaps of this...in the next meeting of the Committee, we'd be presenting a more detailed...in the prescribed form. So, the next part is the presentation of Commissioner Rene Azurin on a subject close to his heart.

COMMISSIONER ADAMAT.

Mr. Chairman, May I just.. I'm supposed to ask for a point of order but I would like to be kinder this time. May I just inquire the wisdom of coming out with a presentation of whom the presenter is obviously a strong supporter of a presidential form of government. As it was pointed out early on, the Committee has already voted on a shift from presidential to parliamentary. Ah, on the Commission, I stand corrected on that.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

I said it was a preliminary recommendation that is what the...the Commission has not yet...

COMMISSIONER ADAMAT.

So Mr. Chairman, the Committee has already made up its mind as far as the form of government is concerned. And may I ask the relevance of this presentation vis-à-vis the decision of the Committee on the shift from presidential to parliamentary which has already been a thing of the past.

COMMISSIONER ESPINA.

Mr. Chairman. I was made to understand that Professor Azurin have been earlier allowed to present his position on the issue this time. So I would suggest that we shorten our deliberation and allow Professor Azurin to proceed with his presentation.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Chairman Abueva would like to say something.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.

Yes. Following the observation of Commissioner Espina, we are open to ideas for possible modifications of the parliamentary form that we agreed in principle. So I think we should really be observant of our agreement that we should be open. Since we have not presented the parliamentary form in detail, we are still in that preliminary stage where I think we might consider variance of the parliamentary form which we have agreed only in general terms. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

PRESENTATION OF COMMISSIONER AZURIN

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

So Commissioner Azurin, please proceed.

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.

Thank you Mr. Chairman. We've been at this for about two months now, and one of the things that I have learned is that as I got to know everybody here better, I think everyone here is sincere about finding out which systems and which amendments are good for the country. So I am presenting this simply as something for you to consider because I have

thought about the objections to the presidential, to the objections to the parliament, and I am trying to find a way of addressing all the concerns and see whether this might be acceptable to anyone of you. In any case, you can always vote against it, Commissioner.

Let me start very briefly by pointing out my basic reasons why I am against a parliamentary system in its pure form. First of all, a parliamentary system institutionalizes pork barrel politics by fusing executive and legislative power. The parliament, the prime minister, decides what action to take, appropriates the funds and executes the programs. In effect it transforms the whole budget into a pork barrel, other than debt service of course, and salaries. So this is one of the things that we continue to get reactions to in our consultations was, "Basta tanggalin ninyo ang pork barrel." Well, in a parliamentary system, the whole budget is a pork barrel.

Second, it enshrines horse-trading as a way of governance. It is often cited that the virtue of a parliamentary system is that you can easily change the leader, and this is pointed out as an advantage. In fact, this is a very serious problem because the instability in the tenure of the prime minister in the government makes the so-called transactional decision-making a way of life in a parliamentary system. Recognizing that anytime that a group of members of parliament withdraws from the coalition, ruling coalition, then that the government will fall and therefore the prime minister cannot help but give in to all the demands of parliament, whether these are request for projects, request to give somebody a job, etcetera, etcetera. So this is, the transactional decision making is inherent and built in to the system of a parliamentary form.

Third, legislative gridlock is often cited as the thing that we want to overcome by shifting to a parliamentary system. Let me suggest that legislative gridlock may in fact be overcome in a parliamentary system. But let me emphasize that it is not the cause. Legislative gridlock is not the cause of the economic backwardness of our country. We did not have any legislative gridlock during the Marcos years, and yet this was the period during which the Philippines fell behind its neighbors. We hardly had any legislative gridlock during the Cory years, and the Philippines fell even farther behind. So, legislative gridlock is an imaginary problem. It is not the cause of the nation's economic backwardness.

Fourth, one of the things that we have recognized as a problem in the Philippine situation is that political and economic power is concentrated very much. In fact we say it is concentrated in less than 1 percent of the population. Now if that is a problem that we recognize, then the solution is to disperse and distribute power. Not concentrate it further. And this is essentially what you're doing when you shift to parliament. You are concentrating power even more than it already is. So I think it is the completely wrong or inappropriate approach.

Finally, it is not our form of government...it is often cited, "look at our neighbors, they are parliament and they are progressive." In fact, let me suggest that the correlation between form of government and economic progressiveness is spurious. There is no such correlation that you can support. For every Malaysia and Thailand, which is parliamentary that you can cite, you have a South Korea and Taiwan which is presidential, which are even economically stronger. There is no connection. It is not form of government that causes economic progress or not. It is the economic policies and a certain set of environmental conditions that cause economic progress or not. So it is not the form of government. So these are my basic objections.

So in proceeding from this, I have distributed among you a modified constitution. The sources are cited, annotated in the constitution but let me just quickly go through the main features of this constitution. It will still be a presidential form, meaning the legislative branch will still be separate from the executive branch. Okay. It will be a unicameral system -- the two chambers will be fused into one. Okay. But Congress, and also effectively fuses what is our existing senate and our existing congress. In the single chamber, we will have regional representatives to be elected by region, and district representatives elected by the current legislative districts -- one regional representative per region. District representatives, well, the same ratio, 1 is to 250,000.

Now here is the thing. In this system, the president and the vice president will be elected by Congress from among the regional members. Okay. But after they are elected, they will cease to become members of Congress. So this goes away from the need for a national election. So the members of congress will elect from the regional members of congress a president who upon his election will cease to become a member of congress and takes over or resumes power over the executive branch.

Now the terms of the president, the vice president and members of congress will be 3 years in this system. And they can be re-elected for a maximum of 3 terms. The provision on term limit is strengthened on the fact that relatives within the 4th civil degree will not be allowed to hold the same position. Okay, next. In this draft, the power of the president to appoint officers in the Armed Forces is limited to the Chief-of-Staff and the heads of the major service commands. The citizenship rule in this draft is now based on the *jus soli* principle not *jus sanguinis*. And the elective office, except that of the president and vice president will be open to all citizens, not just natural-born citizens. This is another key change.

Now in the judiciary, the present Supreme Court will be broken up in two -- a Constitutional Court of 7 members and a Supreme Court of 9 members. The Constitutional Court will have jurisdiction over constitutional issues, conflicts between government units like the local and the national, and impeachment cases against elected officials. In other words, impeachment cases against elected officials will now be decided by this constitutional court. The Supreme Court will remain the highest court for solving private legal issues. Both courts must always sit *en banc*.

Now, the next feature is the administrative supervision. This is an idea which Commissioner Lambino has long espoused. The administrative supervision of the lower courts will now be transferred from the Supreme Court to a Judicial Commission. In this draft, it's the Judicial and Bar Council which is reconstituted with additional powers as a Judicial Commission. So this will allow the Supreme Court to concentrate on its adjudication functions.

The Commission on Human Rights is reconstituted as a new constitutional commission as the Rights Enforcement Commission. The Office of the Ombudsman is reconstituted with additional powers as a new constitutional commission called the Corruption Commission. And additional restrictions are placed on appropriating and disbursing discretionary funds.

Now, we are also introducing an additional method of recall of elected officials. This is by recall...this is based on the constitution of California. Upon initiative, meaning, this essentially enshrines what we call now as people power. It allows a group of citizens,

12%, in the case of the president and vice president, 20% in the case of district and regional officials, to petition for the recall of any particular official. If 12%, in the case of the president and vice president, petitions for recall, then an election is held. And if the petition is voted upon in the majority, then the official is recalled. The only difference is that he is just recalled. There is no other penalty.

On the economic provisions, all the citizenship restrictions for the ownership of alienable land, for the operation of utilities, for the ownership of mass media, advertising companies, educational institutions and practice of professions are removed. Voluntary exchange, market competition and minimum regulations are enshrined as principles of national economic policy. In the rights section you will note that the fundamental rights of citizens has been strengthened. And finally the unitary structure of the Republic is maintained. By the way, there is another thing which I forgot to put here which is that...I introduced an additional qualification for the election of members of congress, and president and vice president which is that he must be a graduate of educational, tertiary educational degree. So basically those are the features so if there are any...I would like to encourage you to go to the draft. The annotations and the sources are in the draft constitution. And if you want to ask any questions, please do. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER DUAVIT.
Clarification, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
Go ahead, Commissioner Duavit.

COMMISSIONER DUAVIT.
Commissioner Azurin has given us his thinking on the entire constitution and not only on the form of government, Mr. Chairman. As we have agreed in the plenary of November 10, if I'm not mistaken on the date Mr. Chairman, on the guidelines vis-à-vis resolution of proposals, I think we should adhere to the matrix form as far as proposals. So if I may request the presenter today, Commissioner Azurin, to translate his paper as we have received it, into a matrix form, so we can better see and reconcile and collaborate on the proposals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.
I would certainly be willing to do it but I did not do it because all of you are going to vote for parliament anyway. So it may be a waste of my time; I've already invested a lot of time on this. So I will only do it if the Body will re-open the question.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
So that is the answer. So may we, is there any other further questions?

COMMISSIONER DUAVIT.
I think the position of the Chairman is quite clear as presented earlier Mr. Chairman, and I suppose that this is the reason why the presenter continued with his presentation as allowed by the Committee Chair today into the agenda. In fact it is the only agenda on record that we have Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
The agenda actually, as mentioned by the floor leader, is in my mind. So...

COMMISSIONER DUAVIT.
I'm saying this Mr. Chairman because...

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
...I have another speaker after Commissioner Azurin.

COMMISSIONER DUAVIT.
If the presenter doesn't want to waste his mind, the presenter should also think that he should not waste the time of the other Commissioners in the committee. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
Mr. Chairman...

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
Commissioner Rodriguez.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
The way I understand it, and if my memory serves me right, we really agreed to a certain degree that we adopt the form of parliamentary system. However, we agreed also this afternoon to allow Professor Azurin to make a presentation on the liability of a presidential system as proposed by him.

I just want to make one clarification or I will be asking one clarification. You are talking of a recall mechanism for the president, vice president and the members of the legislative body. But in your proposition, the president and vice president will be selected among the members of the legislature. Supposing we recall the president or the vice president and either of the two is recalled. How will they be elected? At large?

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.
Same...how will the new ones be elected?

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
A president is recalled, then a new election will be held in connection with that particular office.

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.
Yes...

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
How will you hold the election? At large?

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.
It will have to be at large.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
If it were at large then you are going above board because the president was only elected either by region or by district and you are now electing him at large by the regional congressmen. And now you will be holding an election at large just because he was recalled. Under what particular...do you think that is proper?

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.

Let me...I think it is a good point...let me think about that.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Okay. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Are there other questions for the speaker? There being none. Ah, okay, the Secretary General...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

You know, this is a very interesting paper. I was hoping I could have read it better before coming here because one of the things is intriguing here is the, your number 3 position, Mr. Commissioner that...the about legislative gridlock, that the element ... the elimination. The type of, the parliamentary form of government is not the type of government that will solve legislative gridlock.

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.

No, no, that's not what I said. I said legislative gridlock may not be overcome by the parliamentary system but it is not legislative gridlock that is the problem of the country.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

I see. Ok. Our problem now is that the...it has been doubted by Congress that... they have come up with 4000 bills sent to Senate. I'm sure this 4000 bills maybe 10% of that is quality bills, I don't know. Okay? They said 4000, in fact the number was 4023 something bills. I don't know the quality of these bills. Many are local bills, I'm sure. But many also should be qualitative there. But because of this so-called gridlock now...unless you deny that there is a gridlock, but I don't think he will deny that there is a gridlock. But because of this gridlock between the Senate and Congress then and the House, the Senate and the House, you have an impasse. How do you, you know, I'm very much interested in this paper is that, how do you work (in) this is?

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.

First, let me first .. first of all, let me emphasize that legislative gridlock is not the cause of the country's economic non-progressiveness. Okay? There was no legislative gridlock during the Marcos years. Those are the years we fell behind. There was hardly any legislative gridlock during the Cory years. We fell behind even further. So it is not...economic progress is not connected to legislative gridlock. Ok. Nonetheless, to try and resolve the issues of...about gridlock...this is the reason why I am proposing a unicameral system. In other words, since most of the gridlock happens between the Senate and the President, that is why I am proposing a unicameral system. But again I would like to emphasize – legislative gridlock is not the country's problem. We are not economically progressive because of our protectionist economic policies, because too much regulation, too much red tape, and a certain set of environmental conditions. It has nothing to do with legislative gridlock. I would like to point out that we should, we should come away from the mind set that it is the Government that will bring this country out of its economic misery. I am speaking...anyway. It is business that creates revenue, that creates products. Government is a cost. The less government we have, the better. In fact, as far as I am concerned, when you have legislative gridlock, it is sometimes good because it allows the government to do less harm.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

The less government, the better. No government, the best?

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.

Hindi naman. We need government...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

I'm just trying to carry your position towards the extreme...

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.

We need government for certain functions. Basically to maintain the system of justice, maintain peace and order. Basically those. But other than that it should stop meddling, it should stop... Expenditure on government is a cost. Government is a support function. It does not create products, it does not create revenue. It creates costs.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Any further questions for the speaker? Commissioner Bautista.

COMMISSIONER BAUTISTA.

I'm curious as to why Commissioner Azurin is championing the change from *jus sanguinis* mode of acquiring citizenship to *jus soli* which is now the, the minority view as far as other countries are concerned. And I was just sort of curious as to why you are advocating this change.

COMMISSIONER AZURIN.

Essentially I think that many people who might have lived in this country for many years, and given that, that...let me just say that I think it is fair, that citizenship is acquired, can be acquired by people who may have served the country well, and that, that they can be elected to... This is connected with the fact that I am also advocating that naturalized citizens can be made, can be elected to public office. For example, in the US, such people as the, yes, previous secretary of state, yung babae, the previous, the previous, was not a natural-born citizen. So, just for those reasons.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Any further...yes Commissioner...

COMMISSIONER TENDERO.

Well, follow-up question about the citizenship, by *jus soli*. I think countries that would allow for *jus soli* would be countries that would have large real estate that would cover and would be able to accommodate an additional citizens by virtue of birth, land of birth. But with our present situation now, and with our limited land area, then it might be a problem when foreigners would come here and we would have more citizens than we can have in this nation.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Ok. So any further question? Ok. We have a second speaker, Commissioner Eddie Villanueva. I think almost everyone has a copy of his paper. May we have the privilege of listening to Commissioner Villanueva.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, just an announcement.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
Ten minutes.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
There will be no plenary session tomorrow. Tomorrow, we were supposed to have a plenary session tomorrow, Wednesday.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
Thursday, Thursday.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
No, no. In our calendar that was distributed by the Secretary General, we are supposed to have a plenary session tomorrow. The, but we will have a plenary session on Thursday, none on Friday. Again, our plenary sessions are supposed to be Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays as per calendar distributed. We will only have a plenary session on Thursday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon...no Wednesday, no Friday.

And, for those who are very kind, please liquidate your tickets by returning the stub of your tickets to the PMS.

VOICES. What ticket? What ticket?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Those who attended the consultation in the Visayas and Mindanao were issued tickets, except Commissioner Bello because he was already there. The management will appreciate it very much if you will submit the stub of your ticket by liquidating it. If you do not, if you do not liquidate, that is not your problem. That is the problem of Lito Lorenzana. So, so much for the announcement...back to the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
May we now listen to the presentation of Commissioner Villanueva?

PRESENTATION OF COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA

COMMISSIONER JOSE D. VILLANUEVA.
Thank you Mr. Chairman. Before I start, I would like to let the Body know that I am aware of the fact that we have, though tentatively, voted in favor of the federal government, of adopting the federal system, of adopting the parliamentary system of government. I'm sorry. However, as I start, you will understand my position. I stand on the basic premise that this Consultative Commission must be open, not just to one proposal, such as the shift from presidential-unitary to parliamentary-federal system of government, but should consider other proposals or recommendations on the form and structure of government for submission to the President by December 15 or possibly to Congress at a later date.

This will allow the President and probably, members of Congress to study several options and benefits, and benefit from the wisdom of each of the proposal or recommendations. I honestly believe, Mr. President, we are not voting for specific amendments of the Constitution. We are supposed to be voting on recommendations. And if we give a number of proposals or submit a number of proposals to the President

and eventually to Congress, then we are opening the consideration of several options and not merely one option.

I likewise stand on the equally fundamental premise that the proposal for any form and structure of government must be considered in a packaged form. You cannot entirely isolate the consideration of the form of government to the other provisions that are being considered for reform in the Constitution because by doing so, we might be limiting the window of consideration of what is the best form and structure of government that we can offer to our people.

If for example, change we must, there should be strong reasons for such drastic directions for change. The rationale for change must be anchored on the futility of reasons and efforts to provide solutions to problems which obtain in our body politic. Meaning to say, we go to a drastic change only if we cannot anymore see solutions to the problems obtaining on the body politic. There must be incorrigible, and I emphasize, incorrigible disenchantment with a particular system which needs radical, surgical intervention, if only to replace such system with another, though untried and alien way of running the affairs of the government.

This is what I firmly believe in submitting my proposal for a modified presidential-unitary system, with one house or chamber, accompanied by other recommendations for reforms in the electoral system, the judiciary, the fiscal relations between the national government and the local government units, and other administrative and economic reforms.

For this afternoon, however, I shall try to confine myself to just touching on matters that has reference or relative to the form of government. It will be inevitable to touch on the structure because, as I said, you cannot completely isolate the consideration of the form of government without touching the other aspects of the constitutional aspects of government.

I am sure that the radical shift from the presidential-unitary to parliamentary-federal form and structure of government will only create more serious problems than those we seek to solve, spawned by the so-called gridlock in our present system of government.

The better side of reason and practicality would tell us that we are not wanting in providing cures to our problems, that we are better off looking at our present system and consider options and initiative, which other study commissions have done before instead of adopting an entirely new system of government with political infrastructures that are as alien to us as they are expensive to support.

The principal proposal, Mr. Chairman, is with respect and with due respect to the staunch advocates for a shift to parliamentary-federal system of government, I propose a modified presidential-unitary form of government with a unicameral body. The following are my explanations or reasons.

The Filipino people have a long history and experiences in the presidential system, and our culture is very much compatible with this system. What we need is to develop an indigenous system of government that partakes of the strengths of the presidential system, accompanied by reforms to address the problems that obtain under the system.

The parliamentary-federal system goes against the social, cultural, political grain of the Filipinos. Hence, we have a situation where the federal system is an imposition of the people, instead of the people deciding to federate or not to federate. The principle of “voluntariness” is grievously violated. Understandably, there will be problems in this regard, more serious from than the problems we seek to solve.

In the presidential system, the President is generally elected by the people in a national election. Considering our temperament as a people, our culture as a people, we want direct participation in electing the leader, which makes the President’s power more legitimate than that of a leader elected indirectly in a parliamentary system.

In the modified presidential-unicameral system, the Presidency and the unicameral legislative body are two parallel structures which allow each structure to check the other, and this prevents abuses.

In the modified presidential-unicameral system, the President under this presentation shall appoint the members of the Cabinet from those nominated by the unicameral body from among its members. This will allow for a more harmonious working relationship between the executive and the legislative body.

One of the most often cited strength of the parliamentary system is the merging and combination of both the executive and the legislative powers in one body. In my proposal, this is incorporated as a quality of governance in a unicameral-presidential unitary form of government.

In the modified presidential-unicameral system, a strong two-party system will transform our present personalistic political parties into political organizations representing party platforms and programs from which the people can choose intelligently. Patronage politics will be eliminated and each political party can institute party discipline among the members while in and outside of power. Gerrymandering and turncoatism will be prohibited.

The parliamentary-federal system is, to borrow the phrase of a fellow Commissioner, the parliamentary-federal system of government is, to borrow the phrase of a fellow Commissioner, a “fiscal nightmare”. I need not elaborate on the tremendous cost in implementing this particular system because you increase, broaden, the pace of the bureaucracy in which case there is no way you can possibly create a parliamentary-federal system of government without at least doubling the bureaucracy.

It is my considered opinion, and this is a considered opinion which I am willing to defend at some later time, that the shift to a parliamentary-federal system of government might advance the political ideology of its foreign sponsors, which in the long run will emerge as a new form of imperialism whose agenda will destroy our sovereignty as a nation and will inflict more harm on our patrimony as a people. There are many more things that we do not know, let alone our ordinary people, than what we know about parliamentarism and federalism. On the other hand, we know the things about the presidential system, its strengths and weaknesses, its advantages and disadvantages, and we know also how to deal with them, correct them, and provide solutions to our problems. Like under any political system, we honestly believe it is not the change of system but the change in people, both the leader and the governed, that is critically important.

There are other proposals here that touches other aspects of the Constitution, but I would not like to burden you with them considering that we should focus more on the form of government. And so, in conclusion, I would like to say that in presenting my submissions to this Consultative Commission, I grant the good intentions of everybody to offer the best options for good governance through charter change. In accepting our membership in this Commission, I know that all of us have the well-being of our country and our people in our hearts. To the best of our intentions and enlightenment, we offer our proposals and recommendations for change and reform.

Allow me, as I close, to reiterate what I said in the beginning, that is, this Commission, if it must be true to its mandate, must be open to other alternative options or proposals and submit all of them, submit all of them, for the study and consideration of the President and possibly the Members of the Congress. Nothing less of this can make us equal to the essence of our mandate as a study commission. I would like to emphasize that we are not voting here as a Commission. The purpose of this body is not to vote for or against amendments to the Constitution. We may vote for or against but only to show the sentiments of the members of the Commission.

Be that as it may, I honestly believe that all proposals, voted for or voted against, to be true to the purpose of this Commission, must be submitted so that those who will finally decide what to do with the Constitution may have the broadest option to consider in trying to do what is best for the country. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Thank you very much, Commissioner Villanueva.

COMMISSIONER ESPINA

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES

Now, the..

COMMISSIONER ESPINA

Just an inquiry.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES

.. the floor is open for interrogation...Commissioner Paterno?

COMMISSIONER PATERNO.

If the gentleman will yield, will answer questions...I should like to ask where he got the impression that we are a study commission because our title is Consultative Commission. So, my understanding is that we are supposed to bring forward certain matters or certain proposals at consultations with the public and then consider and act upon such comments and reactions from the public to our proposal. If each one of us is going to be tasked to develop his own proposal, then we might as well just scatter and, on December 15, submit our proposals to be submitted to Malacañang, if we are a study commission. But I understand Mr. Chairman that we are a Consultative Commission and it is very difficult for us to present fifty proposals for consultation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ESPINA
Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
Noted. The next question will be...

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
May I respond, Mr. Chairman?

Because I honestly think that the purpose of this Commission is not exclusive. Why don't we ask the Secretariat to read the executive order which created this Commission? It is not only consultative. One of the purposes is to consult and I am not denying that. I am not even denying...that is precisely, you will remember, on the record, I objected to voting the before consultations. The gentleman can refer to the records. I objected very strongly to voting on a resolution on what form of government will we adopt before consultations because it violates the very purpose of this Commission, and that is making a decision even before consultation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
Commissioner Lito Lorenzana...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
Just one question which is very intriguing...Because I'd like, I'd just like to pick your mind on this really, because this is very important. In your number 8 it is said, "it is my considered opinion that the shift to parliamentary-federal government might advance the political ideology of its foreign sponsors." You think we have foreign sponsors for those people here in the Commission?

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
No, but if we develop this kind of system...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
No, no, no, no...it is very clear here, "might advance the political ideology of its foreign sponsors".

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
Mr. Secretary General, did I indicate in my statement that there are?

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
"...which might advance the political ideology of its foreign sponsors." I cannot translate that otherwise..."which in the long run will emerge as a new imperialism, whose agenda will destroy our sovereignty as a nation and would inflict more harm on our patrimony as a people".

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
But I did not identify anybody in this Commission.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
Yes, are we saying therefore that...assuming you were not saying names here...we don't see names here...

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
There are interested...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
There are sponsors?

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
There are interested foreign sponsors.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
Oh, I see. I just want to...

COMMISSIONER ESPINA.
Mr. Chairman, I just want to comment on the point raised by Commissioner Paterno. I agree with him that somehow, somewhere, sometime, that this Commission should have some degree of unity in terms of the proposal as to the form of government. Because to take the position of Commissioner Villanueva would lead us to a situation where all of us who are proponents of some forms will have to face the President and individually discuss the merits of our proposal. So, although I know that we, the presidentialists, might lose and for me, perhaps the second time because in the past we have won in the committee and then later on, this was rebuked by some, using the words of Commissioner Villanueva, some "interested parties."

On that point, already two Commissioners of this Commission had mentioned possible interference or influence by groups outside of this convention. Is it not time, Mr. Chairman that the Commission look into this? I was told that some manuscripts were funded by foreign groups. I was also informed that a seminar was held on federalism and the money used was from, again, a foreign source. So, I would want, Mr. Chairman, that this Committee look into this very seriously. I have heard no comment from the leadership of this Commission on these fundamental issues raised, which, I would say, threatens the credibility and independence of this Commission if that is true. So, we should at least look into this. We should give it priority, as a matter of fact...

(female voice) Can I...

COMMISSIONER ESPINA
.. perhaps a denial.. (*unintelligible*) an investigation by this Commission to look into these aspects of our work.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.
Thank you, Commissioner Espina. Our Chairman would like to say something.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.
I wish we would consider our ideas here on their merits. I think it is a sign of weakness when any of us or some of us, especially when their pet ideas are not favored by the Commission as a whole, to insinuate foreign interests behind some of our ideas. The truth is, as a scholar for many, many years, too many years now, have learned from many different countries. And I have traveled and studied with the help of various sponsors. I have taught Comparative Politics at Yale University, the City University of New York. If you consider that foreign intervention in my learning in order to influence what I would do for my country, that is your point of view.

The fact is that we have friendly countries and friendly foundations that are interested in our learning about various forms of governance and have fortunately assisted in travel tours of many of our leaders, members of Congress, heads of NGOs, university professors, academics. With respect to parliamentary government and federal systems, I can mention very specifically the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, Canada, and the Forum on Federations, which is a global forum based in Canada. And I think those who have availed of these opportunities to learn have benefited from that.

Beyond that, of course, we have access to books, monographs and the internet in learning about other systems. And this is to our advantage. We are in a global village. We learn from all sources. This is an asset of the present age and we benefit from that. So, there is nothing secret about assistance being received by various individuals and organizations. We are, in fact, we openly acknowledge it. We state it in our publications without any fear of allegations such as those that are being made here. And I think that if we were to be more responsible, we should not use allegations and insinuations of this sort, which do not really give credit to us individually and as a Commission.

COMMISSIONER ESPINA.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy that finally, a word has been heard by the members of this Commission after two commissioners made allegations that there might be some interested groups who want to influence us. As a matter of fact, the first time that Commissioner Garcia mentioned about this, I was expecting a denial from the Chairman or a reaction from the Chairman. Pangalawa na po itong sinabi ni Commissioner Villanueva and that is why I had to come out and pave the way for a possible statement by the Chairman and the leadership of this Commission.

Second, it is not because the presidentialists are losing that I mentioned this. As a matter of fact, I committed to the ULAP that once this Commission and Congress finally adopt the parliamentary form of government, pending of course the details, I am pledged and committed to campaign for it during the plebiscite. So, it is not because my proposal to retain the presidential system that I am asking leadership to give some comments on allegation because this is bad for us if we are not heard at all in spite of serious pronouncement within and during our sessions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES

The Floor Leader.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

The charges are not very easy to look at, so let us have a five-minute recess.

SUSPENSION OF MEETING

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

The meeting is suspended.

It was 4.26 pm.

RESUMPTION OF MEETING

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

The meeting is resumed.

It was 4.42 pm.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Are there still some questions that.. Commissioner Pedrosa, please.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

I just want to react to the statement of Mr. Espina about why the question of foreign interest was not answered in previous occasions. As far as I am concerned, I find it a ridiculous question because federalism, parliamentary, are such worldwide ideas. If you are a reader of Time, Newsweek, you could see that it is, something that has been throwing around in the world of ideas. It does not necessarily mean that you are under the influence of any foreign power. The world, as our Chairman so aptly put it, we are living in a globalized world. But more than that, I cannot see why we should close our minds to such international currents. There was a time when our own heroes, exposed to the currents of democracy, worked for our freedom and independence. The same is happening now. The questions of federated states, parliamentary government, are all being thrown to the pot because they feel it is the solution to problems like ethnic conflicts as well as the incapacity of big government to really touch the life of individuals.

So that is the answer. I would not dignify a question like that among people whom I expected to have known better. But now that I know that they do not know better, I am very glad. It gave me the occasion to say it. Yeah. I attend many conferences. But again, as Chairman said, it is not the question of attending these conferences nor having been listening to ideas. You cast it against our own problems and then find that, yes, this may be the answer. That is all. We are not imposing anything on anyone. You know, these are ideas. You must know how to grapple with them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Thank you for that comment. Commissioner Tendaro.

COMMISSIONER TENDERO.

My question, Mr. Chairman, is more on procedure. By allowing all of the.. at least three presentations to be made here this afternoon, by implication, are we also thinking of reconsidering the vote that was already taken by the Committee and then the Plenary session in relation to the form of government?

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

No, the presentation that will be made in the next meeting is in a form of the prescribed matrix. So, we will be voting on each provision that are proposed to be amended to suit our general consensus here which is a shift from presidential to parliamentary.

COMMISSIONER TENDERO.

Yeah. That is why I said my question is a question of procedure because we already voted on it and this time we allowed for presentation of the arguments against what we have already voted upon.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

We have to accommodate our fellow commissioners to say their piece. It is worth listening. We have learned a lot from these two presenters. I think everybody is happy listening to these presentations. So what we will do in the next committee, in the next meeting is, we will be presenting, the Committee on the Form of Government will be presenting a matrix, a working draft, and then maybe the trend will be deciding, finally the adoption of an amendment for a particular provision.

COMMISSIONER SORIANO.

When we voted, I understood that it was just to get a sense of what the body really feels at this moment. It was not a final votation.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

When we voted, it was for the main purposes of advocacy so that we will have something to present to the public for consultation. It was not really final. After we have gathered the consent, get the consensus of those whom we consulted, that is the time we will finalize.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

We are still going to continue with our consultations in Luzon, but after having asked those who were involved in the consultations in the Visayas-Mindanao, I think the general consensus in Visayas-Mindanao is parliamentary-unicameral. And in most of the consultations in Mindanao, it is federal...and Visayas and Mindanao. Now, these are just the results of the initial consultations that we conducted in Visayas and Mindanao. Now, we are going to consult the different areas in Luzon. So we have the result of all of these consultations conducted in the different areas. So based on these consultations from different sectors of society, we are now going to prepare a final draft to be submitted to the Commission en banc during our plenary session, initially, first with the Committee on the Form of Government. And then once there is already a consensus or approval by this Committee, we are going to present that recommendation to the Commission en banc. So, that is the format we'll follow.

COMMISSIONER ABUEG

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES

So, in the next week's meeting..

COMMISSIONER ABUEG

Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ANGELES

Yes?

COMMISSIONER ABUEG.

In relation to your statement, relative to consultation, earlier it has been distributed, Resolution No. 6227 adopted by the Provincial Board of Palawan on October 14, 2005, the title of which is "A resolution expressing full support of the Province of Palawan to the Parliamentary-Federal form of government and urging the members of the Consultative Commission to adopt and propose to Congress the creation of a Federal

State of Palawan". May I make this of record that this resolution be taken cognizance of by this Committee and be included in the minutes of today's meeting?

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Yes...

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, the resolution will be included in the agenda of the plenary on Thursday. I think that is the only one.

COMMISSIONER ABUEG.

Mr. Chairman, there are twenty-three municipalities in the Province of Palawan and one city. And practically all of the municipalities in the Province of Palawan have adopted a similar resolution or a resolution supporting the creation of a parliamentary system of government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Yes, Mr. Chairman. That will be included in the agenda on Thursday for plenary.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Commissioner Abueg, are you presenting this for the approval of this Committee or are you asking this Committee to endorse this to the Plenary session on...

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

No, no, no. It will be on the agenda of the Plenary, then it will be endorsed to the Committee. It is how it is done.

Chairman, nasaan na yung matrix mo? Wala pa? So, we'll have a recess?

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

We will just take up that matrix in the next meeting. We will make it part of the materials that we will utilize in presenting a general matrix of this Committee on Form of Government. So, this resolution will be..

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL

In the agenda.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES

...will be included in the agenda next Thursday. Thursday, ano?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Thursday. So Mr. Chair, since we have no more business, I move to adjourn.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Mr. Chairman, before the motion will be acted, will there be consultations in Luzon?

(female voice) He is supposed to announce it.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO

That is why I am asking.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

There is already a schedule. I think we should announce this, Mr. Secretary General.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

Yeah. We announced it already last week. The consultation is actually, Governor, is actually two parts. The one on November 22 to 26 is a consultation in Metro Manila. That is why everybody should be there because this is a big thing...the whole of Metro Manila ito, with the sponsorship of our Commissioner Villanueva together with the group of Mayor Atienza. We will hold it at the, Commissioner Villanueva saan yun? Sa may Bulwagan at City Hall. There will be a thousand members of the, no, Metro, Manila lang ito.... the City of Manila. So suggest that all of us should attend that.

There are four teams I have formed for Luzon, pero all the teams, will be, like in Cebu, we were all there. Malaki ito eh. You see. Everyday ito hanggang Friday. So everyday ito eh. We will tell you from day to day. We are still finishing the schedule because our staff have been calling the mayors. We are still arranging for the site where we are going to have lunch and where are the meeting places. We will have this finalized by Thursday.

Second, by Thursday, I will also be able to finish, hopefully, the program on Luzon consultations. Right now, tentatively, from November 28 up to December 3, we formed four teams already that will go to Region 1, Region 2, Region 3, 4, and the Bicol region. So apat na teams yan. Metro Manila nga 'yang the whole week yan of 21st to.. So ang labas sa Luzon is we are finalizing. Now we have already advance team there. They are working out with different governors who have been inviting us. You know a lot of governors have been inviting us to have it in their place pero you know aayusin natin ito. Like, one should be in Tuguegarao, so we can get the Region 1 all over. The other one would be in Vigan. Some of our Commissioners would like to have it in Baguio. So, we are still working everything out because a lot of people, especially the governors, would like to host us. Anyway, Regions 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, tatamaan natin 'yan.

Now, the Bicol Region, dalawang, one team din 'yan, one in Camarines Sur, Albay and Legaspi. All I am asking is for all of us to keep our calendars free for Manila and Luzon. This will also mirror what we did in Luzon, err, in Visayas and Mindanao which were very very successful. And we will also have that. I will just finalize. I cannot give you the final decisions yet because..

(male voice) Sa plenary, sa plenary mo na.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Sa Plenary ko na dalahin 'yan.

(male voice)

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

I will give everything in the Plenary. Sa Thursday.

COMMISSIONER TENDERO.

Isang comment lang kay Lito...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

Batangas, including Romblon and Ormoc, tinatawagan ako nila.

COMMISSIONER ABUEG.

In Batangas, I heard from the Secretary General during the last session, a consultation will be made in Batangas City which should be participated by Romblon, Marinduque and the two Mindoros.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

Exactly.

COMMISSIONER ABUEG.

Well, the transportation connecting Romblon is via Manila. And the only transportation there besides Philippine Airlines is the shipping line of Governor Madrona and sails Manila, San Agustin, and back. And then, Marinduque, the transportation connecting Marinduque is through Lucena City in the Quezon Province.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

Anyway, sigeng lang, sigeng lang Commissioner because this is being arranged by the local Regional Development Councils. Sila ang nag-a-arrange niyan. Hindi naman tayo. Anyway, pupunta tayo sa Batangas eh, Batangas City.

COMMISSIONER ABUEG.

But if that will inconvenience my only one province. (unintelligible).

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

Sigeng lang, we will work everything out.

COMMISSIONER ABUEG

... Calapan.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Let them solve this problem. Let them solve this because this is not our problem but the problem of the people who are organizing right now. If they tell us that they'd rather have it in another place, then there is no problem with us. We can always go there diba? Anyway, land-locked naman tayo eh. Bishop?

COMMISSIONER TENDERO

Well, just comment. From our experience in the Visayas-Mindanao. One of the common objections that we have received from people is the choice of the venue. I don't know whether this was already brought up.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Okay. This has also been brought to my attention even by leaders of Congress. And I told them if they can beat the costs which was presented to us then go ahead. You know, they cannot beat.. You know how much, we saved almost 40%.

The reason for this is number one, like in Cebu, the hotel there gave us more than 40% discount in order to hold it in Waterfront. Number one. Number two, they can accommodate all of us. Number three, there was no problem with security. So these are all of the things which, which you leave to the people who understand. Kaya sabi ko sa members of Congress. There were some who were calling me on this. So right now

they're not talking anymore about how profligate we were. We will not profligate when they know that we were saving more than 40%, you see.

Second is, our lunch, our dinner, we were able to get sponsors. In Cebu, it was given by the Governor. And then after that it was given by the mayor in Iloilo. Some things like that. And I (unintelligible) to explain that to the members of Congress because they just want to say that you are spending profligately, you see. You have to be very careful about things like that.

(voices)

Like, for example, our Senor Serge Apostol, I had to hold him, to force him to, to give, extend his arms, to give lunch to our people. You see, libre 'yon. Sya lahat naggastos nyan. Will I go to Congress and say, "Alam mo sir (unintelligible) nagduda.. Besides, we do not report to Congress, we report to the President. And besides, we are not supposed to have our own.. PMS naman ang naggagastos nito, hindi naman tayo, eh.

In Palawan, for example, Don Amor was the one who took care of some of the costs there. He is not being reimbursed. In fact he has not asked us for reimbursement. We will not reimburse him anyway.

(laughter)

COMMISSIONER TENDERO.

One of the observations that we have is that at times, we are also being, we would say, outflanked by some of the media people in terms of how they project us.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Yes.

COMMISSIONER TENDERO

I think if the Secretariat can also think...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

No. We were able to explain. In fact, the attacks have stopped. Walang atake na. When I explained to them, "okay, show me some cost which is lower." Because there were some hotels.. nagbi-bid sila sa hotels eh., you see.

COMMISSIONER TENDERO.

Aside from the venue, would be, like in Cebu when we had that consultation, the following day, the papers are saying that the IBP in Cebu boycotted the consultation. I think we should do more aggressive counter... we would say, information...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

Exactly, that (unintelligible) true, because the President and the Vice-president and three of their officers were there and they consulted us. In fact, Commissioner Victor Ortega talked to them because they wanted to clarify some things there. Pero alam mo kung minsan, if the media will not pick this up, wala tayong magagawa niyan. And I cannot, I am not prepared to call the media a bad boy.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Mr. Chair.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ
Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL
Mr. Chair, the (unintelligible) are being distributed. To allow the members here to read, I move again for a five-minute recess.

(voices)

(laughter)

(male voice) Adjourn na. Adjourn.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ
Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES
There was a motion by the Floor Leader. A motion for adjournment.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

I was interrupted by Commissioner Romualdo.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.
Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, yes, just a point of information. On December 3 we shall be having a consultation in Dagupan City. And actually the group going to Dagupan City, which is actually, for Pangasinan, will be arriving in Dagupan on December 2 in the evening. And the City Government of Dagupan shall be hosting a dinner for our CONCOM Commissioners. And the following day, there shall be a consultation, after which dinner shall be at the residence of Governor Victor Ortega on the night of December 3.

My only concern now, Mr. Chair, is with regards to...I received a call from PMS and they are actually on the target for 150, 150 people who shall be invited. And I actually stated that, don't you think 150 is too little for the Province of Pangasinan. And they stated that this formula of NEDA. And it shall be NEDA who shall be formulating the ---

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
No, no, no. Commissioner, we can't overrule that. Because the reason for that being, is you know, I've been very concerned about the cost eh. Kung libre yan, I don't care. We can double that. Kung libre ha?

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.
Ang sabi ho kasi sa akin, from PMS, they're being very, very strict on stating that yung sa consultation it shall be the PMS who shall be handling it which shall be coming from a government company. Now, my concern is yung 150 po. Gaano po ba katagal kaya yung consultation? Probably, maiksi lang naman yan, or one meal or whatever, pwede po natin pagadagan with government ---

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
Normally, one meal plus two merienda.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.
Yun nga po. And yung concern po nila kanina as regards to venue -- yung venue pong napili kasi is supposed to be Leisure Coast, one of the nicest place in Dagupan City. But it's only for 150 katao po.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.
So what we can do, I'll be meeting with the staff in the next few days. Can you send somebody to sit down with us on that.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL
Sit down with him now. He is here eh. So that before he..

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA
Hindi. Bukas pa yung staff ko eh.

COMMISSIONER APORTOL
So that before he goes home to Dagupan..

(female voice) Tomorrow pa?

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA
Because, si Señora Pedrosa, I assigned Señora Pedrosa to sit down with them tomorrow. Diba tomorrow kayo?

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA
(unintelligible) kami.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA
Yeah. So why don't you bring that to Señora Pedrosa so we would solve that immediately.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA
Eh iba naman yung Luzon eh? Dagupan.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA
Kaya nga. Pero wala nga tayo bukas kasi sa Manila. Anyway, you'll be sitting there together with the staff.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA
Ah, yes. Yes. Yes.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA
So you might as well bring that problem to the staff tomorrow.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.
Yeah. Yeah. 10 o'clock.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.

Mr. Chairman, is it possible that instead of going through lines, if I could just simply talk directly to PMS? And make decisions on increasing it.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

Yeah. Yeah. No problem. Just tell us.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

You just tell me. I can say we work with PMS well.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ

Para mabilis.

(female voice) Para maigsi.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Ano gusto mo? Mga 300. Doblehin natin yan.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.

Hindi naman po, basta nakita lang po nila sa Pangasinan that there was a consultation that is satisfactory in the perception of everyone. Because we have already aired ads...

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Good. Good. Good. Very good.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ

... on all the stations about the charter change which will last for, up to December 15.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

Good. Very Good.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.

Eh baka ho, pagdating dun eh wala tayong imbitahan sabihin nila "charter change kayo ng charter change" ---

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

(unintelligible) the letters for tomorrow. We're sending letters tomorrow. Hindi nga. Yung lugar nga ni Nelia. Nelia, ilan kayo dun sa inyo?

COMMISSIONER GONZALEZ

Ha?

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Sa Laguna. Maliit lang yung Laguna but I think there are about 200 plus.

COMMISSIONER GONZALEZ

300.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Oh, 300 na eh. Sa Laguna lang mismo, 300 na yan sila eh. We can have Dagupan, it's maybe mga simply 400 ha?

COMMISSIONER GONZALEZ

But they're bringing in some from Cavite and Batangas.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA

Oh ayun, You see, okay yan, sa Dagupan. Because that's Pangasinan. That's very, that's huge. That's already 1/3 of the whole Pangasinan eh.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

But I think the worry, the reason why NEDA had that format, is because of the workshops. You see. You can have a plenary, any number, 1000 if you want. But when we then come down to the workshop, you need manageable groups. And we have to get the sentiment and the authorship of the charter change from them. You see, after the dialogue, we will then ask, "What do you think? Are we going in the right direction?" I'm just trying to read into the problem.

COMMISSIONER LORENZANA.

The team which is going to be fielded in your area is composed of only about 12 people, eh. 12-15 people lang yan eh. Kung pupunta na mga commissioners. Now, these 12 people we divide them further into three teams -- three or four workshops. So if Señor Duavit will be joining you here this time, the other time he was absent. By this time, we will have additional people we can get into the workshop. So stopping us is the workshop because I think a workshop is about 50-75. Seventy-five, malaki na yan. With 50, the people will have a chance to talk. Kagaya ng Cebu, they had a chance to really come up with a dialogue. But if they have about 200-300 people in one workshop, ano yan, baka wala ng exchange iyan. But we will consider that, noh? Chit, you work this out tomorrow when you meet with them.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA

Okay.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, if there are some members who have proposals, please submit your proposal to the secretariat so that it will be included in the agenda. Now, Mr. Chair..

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ

Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL

..may I now ask that we vote on my motion to adjourn.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES

Before we adjourn..

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.

There's a..

CHAIRMAN ANGELES

Just a minute.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

This matter of Commissioner Fernandez can be talked with between him and the Secretary-General. Because this is mainly an arrangement to be made.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

Yes. Anyway, there are some important announcements that I would like to make here. We have just received the copy of this presentation made by our Chairman regarding the proposal for the format, the matrix, for the proposed parliamentary form of government with a unicameral parliament. I would like to accept this with appreciation, for this work that has been done by our Chairman. We will try to review it and then in the next committee meeting, we will be presenting this for consideration of the (unintelligible) committee before we present it to the plenary session. We will schedule this discussion next week. We will announce the time and the date we will convene this Committee to discuss the details of this proposal.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, I move now that we vote with the motion to adjourn.

(laughter)

CHAIRMAN ANGELES.

There's no more need to voting. There's nobody objecting.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL

So adjourn na.

CHAIRMAN ANGELES

The motion for adjournment is hereby approved.

It was 5:10 p.m.