

**2005 CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION
To Propose the Revision of the 1987 Constitution**

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SESSION No. 11
Thursday, November 24, 2005**

OPENING OF THE SESSION

At 5:30 p.m., the Chairman of the Commission, Jose V. Abueva, called the session to order.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.
The session is called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PRAYER

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.
We shall sing the national anthem to be followed by a prayer to be led by Commissioner Fernandez.

[The Body sang the National Anthem.]

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.

Most Holy God, we know that You will listen to our prayer. Teach us to wait in silence. At this moment, dear God, may we seek Your guidance, to see our clear way to our deliberations, discussions, and debates. Grant that we, as a recommendatory body, may be led into the way of the truth, in the bond of peace, and in the righteousness of life. Give us a clear conscience in discharging our functions and responsibilities as appointed members of the Consultative Commission. Inspire us all in all our doings so that in all our ways, all our works began, continued and ended with You we may glorify Your Name.

This is our humble prayer in Jesus' Mighty Name and all of God's people. Amen.

[At this juncture, Chairman Abueva relinquished the Chair to Commissioner Pedro P. Romualdo.]

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Mr. Floor Leader.

ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
I move that we suspend the calling of the roll.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

There is a motion to suspend the calling of the roll. Are there any objections?
It is duly seconded. There being none, the same is approved. Mr. Floor Leader?

DEFERMENT OF APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chairman, I move that we suspend the approval of the Minutes of November 17, 2005 Plenary Session.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

There is a motion duly seconded that the approval of the draft Minutes of November 17, 2005 Plenary Session be dispensed with. Are there any objections? There being none, the same is approved. Mr. Floor Leader?

BUSINESS OF THE DAY

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chairman, may we go to the business of the day? We go to 6.1, Observations and Recommendations on the ConCom Calendar and its Related/Assigned Activities by the Committee on Style. May I now request that we recognize the Chairman of the Committee, the Honorable Gilberto M. Duavit.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

The Chairman of the Committee on Style, Commissioner Gilberto M. Duavit, is recognized.

COMMISSIONER DUAVIT.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before the members of the Commission is presented the Observations and Recommendations on the ConCom Calendar dated November 17-December 15, and its Related/Assigned Activities. I hope that all members present have copies of this recommendation.

The following have been the recommendations on the calendar, Mr. Chairman.

1. It appears that there was no given deadline for the filing or submission of the proposals. In any case, should the recommendations of the Committee on Style be approved, I believe proposals not yet filed can be accommodated during the periods of amendments, Mr. Chairman.
2. There was no mention whatsoever of the preparation of the executive report.
3. The consultations in Luzon, those conducted already and those coming up, will end on December 2. This gives the various committees only four days, inclusive of the weekends December 3 and 4, to complete their respective reports. We cannot be optimistic that this is achievable.
4. Then, the Committees on Style and Sponsorship are left with only five days, inclusive of the weekends December 10 and 11, to produce a final and complete draft for the plenary consideration on December 13. We assume here that the plenary will approve the final draft on the same date. Mr. Chairman, there is no way for this to happen.

5. The final editing and production post plenary is also being given only one day as the submission of the report to the President is scheduled on the 15th of December.
6. Finally, the support staff later reported that, after determining the scope of the functions and responsibilities involved during this period, they do not have the capability to deliver because they lack the necessary logistical support.

Our recommendations are the following:

1. Considering that most functions of the Sponsorship and Style Committees are very similar, it is proposed that they be organized into only one or combined working group.
2. It will certainly help the working group if the Committees were required to include in their report a clean copy of the proposed Constitution, meaning articles referred to them, together with the matrix. I think this is very simple to do, Mr. Chairman.
3. Considering the very limited time, it would be very beneficial if all committees were to function as a Committee of the Whole to consider on 2nd reading and even for 3rd reading all the reports.
4. There is need to approve the above recommendations in the scheduled plenary on November 24, that is today.

The related matters are the following:

1. We are scheduling a workshop for the support group on December 3. We are expecting the entire Secretariat to be in attendance and working also as Secretariat of the Whole.
2. Undersigned and Co-Chair Bondoc have requested the House Speaker's assistance to augment our staff. He has committed full support. In fact, we have already received or met four lawyers this morning to assist us in this endeavor.

So I submit, Mr. Chairman, this information, for consideration and approval of the Commission. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Thank you very much, Commissioner Duavit. Any comments or suggestions from the members as regards the recommendations?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Yes, Mr. Floor Leader?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

May I just inform the Body that the membership of the Committee on Sponsorship are the Chairmen and Co-Chairmen and the Chairman of this Sponsorship Committee is the Chairman of the Commission himself. So with that, there are so many chairmen here and co-chairmen -- we can make the necessary report because the move is to combine the two committees, Sponsorship Committee and Committee on Style into one body.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

That's right, are there any other comments? If there is none, may we request that we adopt this recommendation of the Committee on Style to make our work easy and fast. There is a motion to approve the recommendation of the Chairman of the Committee on Style in its entirety. It is duly seconded. There being no objection, the same is approved.

COMMISSIONER DUAVIT.

Mr. Chairman, may I be allowed to thank the members of the Commission for this gracious approval? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

You're welcome. Mr. Floor Leader?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Report on the CALABARZON. May I move that we recognize Commissioner Nelia Gonzalez?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Gonzalez is recognized.

COMMISSIONER GONZALEZ.

Thank you, Mr. Floor Leader of this body. I would like to make the report on the CALABARZON consultations that we made on Tuesday, November 22. Mr. Chairman, I am very happy to report that on that particular date, 14 Commissioners joined the consultation. We started from INNOTECH at around 7.30 and arrived at Los Baños, PCCARD is the venue at Los Baños, at around 9.30 a.m. I am very happy that the organization was made possible with the full cooperation of PMS, NEDA, local government, PCCARD and UP-Los Baños. The PCCARD gave the venue free of charge with all the facilities that are there so that when we were meeting, the reports were coming very quickly, enabling the whole Commission to do a good job of reporting at about 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Chair, we are also happy that our Chairman was able to join us and we had about 500 participants in that consultation. These were basically composed of local government units, the local chief executives and representatives, officials and members of local leagues, local planners and other local departments. We had the representation from the national government, some heads and representatives of the regional line agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations and government financing institutions. We had state universities and colleges, private sector business groups, civil society organizations, and sectoral groups. We had enough basic sector representatives. We had informal sector, women, children, youth, farmers and fisher folk, and a good group of media people. I am very proud to report that the Los Baños Science Community composed of PCCARD, UP-LB, ASEAN Center for Bio-diversity, Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research and Development, SEARCA, PhilRice, Philippine High School for the Arts, the National Academy of Science and Technology, and the Laguna Water District were properly represented.

The program started with a message from our Chairman, and I was very happy that he could join us, Chairman Abueva. Two of our Commissioners came out with insights on

the Executive Order mandating us to come out with this consultation. I am happy that Commissioner Pablo Garcia and Commissioner Gonzalo Jurado gave this insight to the participants.

Immediately after our program where the UP-LB Chancellor and the head of the PCCARD gave their welcome remarks, yours truly gave an insight into this Executive Order and told that we were going to focus on three basic issues. The first issue is the form of government, second issue is the structure of government, and third issue is the national patrimony and economic reforms. The group sessions, in the words of Commissioner Garcia, were exciting, enlightening and very highly spirited, as he said. The session had a very good dialogue in all the three group sessions.

May I report also that I was able to get funding for the food. And also, we would like to acknowledge the contributions. Originally, we were going to have only about 400 participants and I was ready for only 400, however, it became 500, therefore we have to request Commissioner Rodriguez and Commissioner Laus to come to our succor for the 100 participants, and they did. Thank you for that, Commissioners. Commissioner Laus also provided the van for the Commissioners who went there. And of course, the other vehicles were given by our PMS. They provided that.

Now, the points that we have taken up in that particular consultation were the following.

On the shift from the presidential to parliamentary form, when we took a vote, 53% voted in favor, 28% were not in favor, and 19% abstained. This is the first time that they were informed about this, and therefore they were not ready to vote. But it is very enlightening also to find out that the shift from the presidential to parliamentary won in that particular forum.

On the Structure of Government, we took also a vote, 33 voted in favor and 27 did not vote because they were still undecided. However, I stand corrected, according to our Chair on that particular forum, there were 37 who voted in favor 27 were undecided. I am sorry, 37 who voted in favor, against 19 and 13 undecided.

On the National Patrimony and Economic Reforms, the following issues came about:

1. Majority disagreed on opening to foreign ownership the educational institutions saying that the ones who control the mind control the people. That was the basic issue.
2. Then there is a strong disagreement on opening media to foreign investment although they feel that they agree probably to a 60-40.
3. The third is that the farmers and scientists in that forum argued for regulating the ownership of land and are opposed to 100% foreign investment on land. They are very strong about this because that is where agriculture is very pronounced. Nandoon ang agricultural scientists natin, nandoon ang mga farmers, students. So they are against opening investment on land, especially agricultural land. There was a little consultation that I made on this land with a Supreme Court Justice and he said that probably, we can just leave this particular issue to legislation. Because we can have it for 25 years, and we can extend it for another 25 years. Baka pwede na raw nating iwanan yung ownership of agricultural land to legislation. This is an opinion.

4. The participants requested the Commissioners to give particular attention to increasing the fund support for science and technology by allocating more than 1% of the GNP, which is right now -- our expense for science and technology -- is 1% of the GNP. So the scientists feel that if we make it 1.5% of the GNP, this can improve the research and scientific studies in science and technology.

Mr. Chair, I have a more complete and detailed report which I will file with the Secretariat so that this is going to be fully documented. All of the little discussions have also been recorded through the courtesy of PCCARD. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Thank you so much, Madam. We do not know how to thank you. We are part of the team that went to Los Baños and it was really well done. Congratulations. Now before anybody else, may I recognize Commission Chairman Abueva for a short announcement.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.

Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Louie Lagdameo has taken his pledge and has attended committee meetings. But this is his first time to attend the plenary and we would like to welcome him to our plenary this afternoon. He is well known to you so I need no introduction for him.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And for and in behalf of the Commissioners, welcome Commissioner Lagdameo. Floor Leader.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, may I move that we recognize Commissioner Rey Magno Teves, Chairman of the Committee on the Structure of the Republic, to make his Committee report.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Mr. Floor Leader, before we do so, we will first tackle the Metro Manila consultations.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

It is not yet finished. We still have tomorrow and Saturday for Metro Manila.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

I think this has something to do with the consultations we had.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

You are trying to make a partial report?

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

Yes.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

No, we will make a complete report on Metro Manila. So what's the pleasure of the Floor Leader?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Why suspend the making of the report because there are still two areas where Commissioner Vice Chairman Pedrosa will sponsor? Tomorrow at Parañaque and the neighboring cities, and Saturday, Caloocan and neighboring municipalities and cities. So she is not yet ready. However, if she is ready, why not?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

I think, we should hold in abeyance your report until after all other areas in Metro Manila will be completed. But I don't think we have a plenary after that. So if Commissioner Pedrosa is ready to partially make a report, you are welcome, Ma'am.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

This is a very short one.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

We shall make a partial report for Manila and Quezon City, Pasig and Makati.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Pedrosa is recognized.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

I will only make a report on Manila City Hall consultation and one on Makati businessmen.

I think, when everything has been done, the consultations that took place in Manila will be a very high point of the work. Thanks to Mayor Atienza because he really had everything prepared, not just the physical infrastructure but also getting the presence of the people who can help us in our work for consultation. In that group for example, close to 650 people and they really filled the Bulwagan hall. Of those of us, we were about 15 present. There were 230 participants from the barangay. But then there were also members (from) youth and also religious and civic sectors.

When we first met, Mayor Atienza had said that Manila is one of the most difficult places because it tends to be opposition; people don't agree to things being told them; they like to speak their own minds. So I was a little bit hesitant about Manila. But in fact, Mayor Atienza gave a rousing speech, and his speech was, for me, centered on change. He did not dwell on whether we go parliamentary or we go federal, nothing of that sorts except change. I can see that the people... it sparked something; it registered.

And so, after his speech, we then divided into different workshops. Sorry. Before that, Chairman Abueva gave an overview of (EO) 453 where he explained our mandate as well as the different areas we should be tackling for proposals for constitutional amendments. It was Commissioner Villanueva who introduced the 15 Commissioners to the body—and it was also touching how he said even within the Commission, there had been different views. But these in fact came from a sense of patriotism.

After Mayor Atienza's speech, the commissioners and participants divided into the different workshops that cover the areas of our concern -- Structure of the Republic, Form of Government, and Economic Provisions. The plenary discussions began at 2:30 p.m. with the presentations of the following results of the workshops:

- Commissioner Apostol reported that in the workshop on the Form of Government, the proposal to have a parliamentary form of government received 39 votes, while the proposal to retain the present system received 5 votes.
- Mr. Santiago, the rapporteur on the workshop on the Structure of the Republic, reported that some 27 participants voted in favor of having a federal government, with one abstention.
The proposal to prolong terms of office from the present 3 to 5 years received 24 votes while the proposal to remove term limits received 19 votes. Eight (8) participants were not in favor of this proposal.
- Commissioner Bengzon reported that an overwhelming majority were in favor of the following proposals.
 - the liberalization of land ownership
 - the utilization of natural resources
 - the operation of public utilities and some industries like telecommunications, mass media, advertising and educational institutions
 She also reported participants that workshop participants wanted to retain the Filipino First policy in the Constitution, although the term “national patrimony” should be clearly defined. After the workshops, Commissioner Bengzon then also discussed the various proposals regarding the modes of transition of government from presidential bicameral to parliamentary unitary. It has to do with the transitory provisions that we are now going to tackle.

All being said, I think that it was really a surprise—how high the political awareness among the audience was. And I had to express it—that I never thought that they will be that politically aware. And a man stood up and said, “We take lessons in the barangays on the differences between presidential and parliamentary forms of government.” So that ended this kind of doubt that we have about talking to audiences on that sort of level. In fact, there were many things they said there that should be said among us but they said it themselves. So, we were very, very happy with what happened in Manila.

During the open forum, in fact, a number of participants voiced their agreement to this proposal for a shift to parliamentary form of government and unitary structure despite the fact that Mayor Atienza did not specify being in favor of anything.

A UP professor suggested that the consultations be widened to include persons from the politically underrepresented, socially marginalized, and culturally discriminated sectors. Other participants inquired about the process of ratifying the proposed revised Constitution, about judicial reforms, political dynasties, the definition and legitimate uses of people power, and the effectiveness of a parliamentary form of government given a state’s level of political maturity.

That sort sums up the way the voting went. And as I said, it will be a high point in our work because Manila has gone for us, and as Mayor Atienza himself said, the way Manila goes, that’s the way the country will go. And, well, that’s an opinion of course. But he just said that. And it’s true that had there been a complete difference between us and the audience we were talking to. You know, the media people were there in full force. As I told you, when he said that to me, I was really frightened about going to Manila. It’s really the lion’s den. Those are my expectations and suddenly you had this kind of result,

I think it is good to say it here, so that everybody can be encouraged with the work we are doing.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Thank you so much.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

Makati also?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Makati.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

How about Makati?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Anyway, I made the necessary report in the meantime for Quezon City. Quezon City and Marikina City consultations, 24 November 2005 at the Philippine Social Science Center, Diliman, Quezon City -- Consultations started at 9:30 a.m. with press conference at 8:40 a.m. It was attended by approximately 305 participants consisting of representatives from local government units, local leagues including barangay officials, state and local universities and colleges, private sectors, civil society and basic sectors, including media, NGOs, POs, informal sector, women and youth. Seventeen commissioners were present -- Chairman Abueva himself, Commissioners Amin, Apostol, Bello, Bengzon, Calisin, Bondoc, Fernandez, Gonzalez, Jurado, Marohombsar, Naval, Pedrosa, Peña, Tabanda, Tendero and Tirol.

Chairman Abueva introduced the Commissioners present, while DILG-NCR Director Rodolfo Ferrare introduced the local government and civil society participants. The participants were divided into three workshop groups -- Form of Government, Structure of the Republic, and National Patrimony and Economic Reforms.

The following results of the workshops were presented during plenary:

- Form of Government facilitators-presenters. Commissioners Apostol, Bello, Pedrosa, Naval and Peña. Hilda Socorro, Barangay Kagawad of Barangay Mariana of Quezon City informed the plenary that majority of the participants present was in favor of the presidential government. Most opined that the presidential system with modifications is better option than shifting to parliamentary system which does not guarantee good and effective governance. Most however believed that there is need for constitutional changes. The present Constitution does not address the current problems of the country. Discussions also revolved around devolution, dominant two-party system, functions of the President and the Prime Minister, extension of the terms of elected local officials and the different ways for constitutional reform.
- Structure of Government. Facilitator-presentors. Commissioners Abueva, Calisin, Marohombsar, Tabanda and Tirol. Chris Lacsamana, representative of urban poor in Quezon City, reported to the body that the following concerns were raised and responded to by the commissioners:

- addressing public and national corruption—how this will be addressed and minimized in the federal system, and
- the need for changing the whole constitution, or only legislating reforms specifically granting genuine autonomy to local government units.

With the vote of 39 in favor, 1 against, and 7 abstentions, the group voted for a shift from unitary to federal.

- National Patrimony and Economic Reforms. Presentor-facilitators. Commissioners Bengzon, Jurado, Paterno, Peña, Chua, Fernandez and Tendero. Commissioner Bengzon, as team leader of the group, started the discussions by giving an overview of the charter provisions on the economy. The other commissioners likewise stated reasons for changing the economic provisions of the Constitution which are restrictive and deter the entry of foreign investment.

Mr. Gladstone Cuarteros from the Institute of Popular Democracy reported to the plenary the result of the voting which were arrived at after lively and sometimes exhaustive discussions on the liberalization of public utilities, mass media and advertising, educational institutions, exploration, development and utilization of natural resources, private and public agricultural lands. Mr. Cuarteros informed the body that majority of the participants favored liberalizing public utilities and mass media and advertising—100% foreign ownership with the caveat that it should be regulated by the State. They also favored the liberalization of educational institutions, but it should be limited to tertiary level. Majority of the participants likewise voted in favor of the utilization of natural resources, provided that the protection of community rights, environment and ancestral domain are ensured. And after a certain period, ownership of mining companies is turned over to the Filipinos.

Liberalization of the private, residential and business, and public agricultural lands was not favored by the majority of the participants. But they are in favor of long-term lease of public agricultural lands.

In closing, Chairman Abueva informed the participants of the results of the concluded regional consultations in the Visayas and Mindanao, as well as those recently concluded here in the National Capital Region. In sum, he relayed to them that in almost all the above places, an overwhelming support to the shift to parliamentary-federal form of government reflected by the sentiments in said consultations. Consultation ended at 3.20 p.m. That will be all.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

I still have a short report on the consultations that took place with the businessmen in Makati. I will just briefly give a report as well.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Please do so. Briefly.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

First of all, we'd like to thank all the businessmen who are our co-commissioners for the wonderful work, of course, and the expense they went to in the organization. Commissioner Donald Dee is here, Mr. Chua, Mr. Sergio Ortiz-Luis. Well, they were there at 6 o'clock, and going around waiting for people to come. And they were very well organized as well.

The consultation began at 7:00 p.m. and was attended by some 200 participants from the business and labor sector. Twenty-seven commissioners were present. PCCI President and ConCom Commissioner Dee delivered the welcome remarks providing a background of the Commission's mandate to jumpstart the process and introduce a deeper awareness of the significance of amending the Constitution. He also highlighted the importance of the stakeholders' participation in the consultation process.

Chairman Abueva provided an overview of the Consultative Commission, again, which include making studies on the problems of the political system, consulting with concerned sectors, and framing proposals for revising the Constitution. He also reported that the Commission allotted three weeks for consultation in recognition of the importance of having dialogues with the various stakeholders.

Then the commissioners and the participants were divided into the three groups again on the three areas. And these were the results of the workshops:

- On National Patrimony and Economic Reforms, allow 100% foreign ownership of public utilities; allow 100% foreign ownership of educational institutions; allow 100% foreign ownership of advertising; allow 60%-40% foreign ownership of mass media; allow 100% foreign ownership for the development of large-scale natural resources with safeguards; lease term of public lands up to 50 years, extendible by another 50 years; allow 100% foreign ownership of commercial and industrial lands subject to area limitations according to law.

Now, I must make the comment that this is a very intelligent audience. You know, these are businessmen, there are also... many among them are entrepreneurs. There are two more items in the National Patrimony and Economic Reforms. Maintain the status quo of 60%-40% foreign ownership of residential lands, subject to area limitations; maintain the status quo of 60%-40% foreign ownership of private agricultural lands.

- Out of 24 participants in the workshop group on the Form of Government, 11 voted for a shift to parliamentary, and one for presidential. So, we won there as well. The major points of discussion were undefined term limits, proportional representation, checks and balances in a parliamentary government and non-familiarity with the parliamentary system. But still, all in all, they made their preference known, or the sense came out.
- In the workshop group on the Structure of the Republic, 8 voted for the shift to federalism, while 13 participants voted against. This is the sad or the low point in the consultations in Makati among the businessmen. Federalism was deemed to cause more disunity and division among already fragmented groups and people.

It was also pointed out that the problem also lies not in the form and structure of the government but rather on the implementation of the programs and allocation of resources.

The consultation ended at 10.30 p.m. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER BONDOC.
Just one question, Mr. Chairman...

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Yes, gentleman, Commissioner Bondoc?

COMMISSIONER BONDOC.
When Commissioner Pedrosa said, "We won," I wonder whom she was referring to?

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.
This is something that should be deleted in the coverage. But this is just my way of saying that, well, we got the sense of what we wanted—or I wanted.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Okay. Commissioner Bautista?

COMMISSIONER BAUTISTA.
Mr. Chairman, may I follow up on the point of Commissioner Bondoc, because Commissioner Pedrosa also mentioned that there was the low point of the consultation. What was that low point?

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.
Well, again, I said this is a personal point of view, because I've always seen myself as a parliamentary-federalist advocate. So for me, it's a low point, well, something that does not go my way. So, sorry I had to express myself, but if you consider it a high point... Well, really as a group, we have been going from city to city and there has always been almost a unanimous, very, very strong sentiment for parliamentary-federal.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Okay, thank you. Commissioner Calisin?

COMMISSIONER CALISIN.
Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman. I was about to raise that point also as Commissioner Bondoc raised. Now, may we just request everybody, especially those who are tasked to report on consultations that regarding the voting on which of the model of government presented and voted upon, let us not say "we won" or "they won" but rather "Parliamentary won," "Presidential won" or whatever.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.
I think I accept the correction and...

COMMISSIONER CALISIN.

... because there are those who are not also in the Commission not in favor of parliamentary, some are in favor of presidential, some are in favor of federalism, some are not. So when we say "we won," that is a statement unanimously for everybody.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

Mr. Chairman...

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Thank you very much Commissioner. I think everybody should take note of it. After all other consultations that may come, if ever there will be a report, everybody should win because we have finished our consultation.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.

I mean, I stand...

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Now, Commissioner Jurado, please... Ah, beautiful Commissioner Jimeno...

COMMISSIONER JIMENO.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am going to make the report on behalf of Commissioner Noel Cariño who is unfortunately absent today. This is about the consultation in Pasig, Taguig, Pateros, Makati and San Juan which was held in Pasig. The participants were around 300, at least 300. The mayors of Pasig, Taguig and Pateros themselves participated in all the workshops and the entire program.

The commissioners who attended were Commissioners Cariño, Rodriguez, Jurado, Sr. Luz, Commissioner Laus, Commissioner Tirol, Adamat, Naval, Gonzalez and this representation.

The program started with Mayor Eusebio making an opening speech. And then it was followed by Commissioner Cariño introducing the commissioners present. And Commissioner Rodriguez gave a background or an overview of the tasks of the Commission and the purpose of the consultation. After that, the group consisting of 300 was broken up; they were divided into three workshops on Form, Structure of Government, Patrimony and Economy.

- In the Form of Government, which was handled by Commissioners Rodriguez, Naval and myself, the voting was as follows: those in favor of parliament shifting from the presidential to parliamentary-unitary, 35 in favor, 7 against, and 7 undecided.
- In the Structure of Government, which was handled by Commissioners Adamat and Tirol, the voting was... oh, this was also in the Form of Government. We did two voting in the Form of Government workshop. And 49 voted in favor of parliamentary-federal system; 0 against; and 3 undecided.
- The workshop on Patrimony and Economy was handled by Commissioners Jurado, Noel Cariño, Commissioner Laus, and Sr. Luz, as well as Sr. (sic) Nelia Gonzalez. The voting was 80% in favor of lifting restrictions, while only 20% in favor of retaining the present provisions in the Constitution.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Okay, are you through, Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER JIMENO.
Not yet. I would like to turn over the microphone to Commissioner Jurado who would like to say additional points regarding the workshop on Patrimony and Economy.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner Jurado is recognized to continue the dissertation.

COMMISSIONER JURADO.
Mr. Chairman, I was only whispering to our beautiful colleague by my left hand side that we should add that in the discussions on the patrimony and the economy session, the session started initially with a preponderant majority against liberalization. In the course of the exchange of opinions—and they were rather splintered... when at last the vote was taken, the vote became overwhelmingly in favor of liberalizing. And we talked among ourselves, and we agreed that the people are capable of clarifying the issues themselves because we just occupy the kind of passive position there. But the people themselves exchange views and came to that conclusion. The majority was turned around and voted in favor of liberalizing.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Okay, Mr. Chair, I move that...

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Thank you so much. Now, we go to the...

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
Mr. Chairman...Parliamentary inquiry right here at your side.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
What is the parliamentary inquiry, Commissioner Villanueva?

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
I think I did not hear in the report which won?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
There is a query whether you initiated the voting among those who participated on the different issues?

COMMISSIONER VILLANUEVA.
No, I just want to know who won.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
The people won. Now, the next item in our agenda is very brief -- status review of various committee proposals. Now, Floor Leader, please...

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Mr. Chair, I move that we recognize Commissioner Rey Magno Teves, committee report—status—of the Structure of the Republic.

COMMISSIONER REY MAGNO TEVES.

Yes, good evening Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Teves is recognized.

COMMISSIONER TEVES.

Thank you. Good evening Mr. Chairman and fellow commissioners. The committee is not presenting any proposals or resolutions for action by the Commission this time. I'm just going to give a status report of the committee's activities, particularly that committee meeting last Monday which could make a bid for some awards for being the longest meeting—all of six hours, 3:30 to 9:30 without dinner, and I don't know if anybody noticed, not a single recess. All of six hours, not a single recess. So maybe in due time we can get some awards for that unless some other committees would like to top that.

But I'd like therefore to thank all members who attended particularly or especially those who survived the six hours up to 9:30, as I said, without dinner. The reason why it took that long is that there was a presentation of an updated and amended document about the proposed autonomous regional governments and local governments under Article 10. What happened was, we went section by section and further amendments were recommended by different members present on the various sections. So, it's been... it's a document that's been enriched further by two discussions already, and there is a documentation already of that paper but we are not yet in a position to present them tonight. And there is a sense, general feeling as well that we might just have to complete all the consultation schedules and do the consolidation afterwards before coming up with a final committee report to be submitted to the plenary.

So, that's how it went and we ended because the Floor Leader called for adjournment because he said, "*Mukhang hindi na hihinto ito.*" There was no time that it was going to stop at all—that committee meeting. So, we ended at 9:30 upon the motion of the Floor Leader. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Thank you. Ah, Commissioner Apostol...

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

I move, Mr. Chair, that we recognize Commissioner Emmanuel Y. Angeles, Chairman, Committee on the Form of Government.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Emmanuel Angeles is recognized.

COMMISSIONER ANGELES.

Magandang gabi po. Salamat, Commissioner Apostol.

Our committee met last Monday, also non-stop meeting, from 10.30—supposedly we were to start at 10.00 o'clock but we were able to start at 10.30—up to about 3.00 o'clock. We deliberated on the proposals presented by our Chairman, Dr. Abueva. And during that presentation, many of our fellow commissioners contributed to the different sections of Article 6 and 7. So, we are now in the process of consolidating all of these inputs from the different commissioners, and we hope to be able to submit this to a final

meeting of the Committee on Form of Government as soon as we find time—perhaps after our... we'll try to see the schedule for the next two weeks, and we'll try to find time to deliberate on the final recommendations of this committee in regard to the form of government that we would recommend to the plenary session.

So I would like to thank my fellow commissioners who stayed with me during that deliberation and we hope to be able to recommend to the plenary session our final draft of this form of government to the plenary session.
Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Thank you. Floor Leader...

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Mr. Chair, I move that we recognize Jose Bello Jr. to make the report on the Committee on General Provisions, Constitutional Commissions, Amendments and Transitory Provisions.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner Bello is recognized, please.

COMMISSIONER BELLO.
Thank you Mr. Chairman. Like the report of Commissioner Teves, we are not going to submit any proposal at this point in time. But our committee has been meeting on several occasions, and we would like to update you on the status of the various recommendations and proposals that we have been discussing.

First of all, on General Provisions. Last November 14, we met for the second time. We were able to approve at least one half of the items under the General Provisions. But I would like to inform the members of the committee that the Department of National Defense has accepted our invitation for them to appear here sometime on the 29th of November to submit their proposals and/or suggestions to the revisions, particularly as it affects the armed forces.

On the 21st of November, we were also able to meet with former COA Commissioner Ursal and there were five other commissioners with me there, and I would like to thank them for joining us—Commissioner Amin, Commissioner Matula, Lambino, Calisin and Commissioner Acevedo. The general trend of former COA Commissioner was to continue on with the existing provision particularly on the matter of post-audit. Although in that particular section it also suggests pre-audit on specific cases. And he recommends the retention of the provision on the matter of COA as a constitutional commission.

And then yesterday, we were also fortunate to hear personally from the Civil Service Commissioner herself, Commissioner Karina David, who spent a greater portion of her time—the whole morning of yesterday in spite of the hearings that they had in Congress for the budget, as well as she has to run up to the Senate for the hearing also of her budget in the afternoon. But essentially, what she reported was that she would recommend to the Commission the retention of the Civil Service Commission as an independent commission. Because they heard from the grapevine that there are suggestions in this Commission to either make the Civil Service Commission as under

the Office of the President or as a department. And she strongly suggested that we should retain the Civil Service Commission as an independent commission. She is concerned, and she emphasized that there is a need to insulate the Civil Service Commission from partisan politics, particularly on the matter of appointments of employees in the bureaucracy.

She also emphasized the importance of performance management as a basis for determining the efficiency of the different bureaus in government. And she promised us that she is going to submit next week the position officially of the Civil Service Commission as far as the amendments or recommendation to amend the Civil Service provision of the Constitution.

We also received on November 17 a copy of the suggested provisions to be amended in the Commission on Elections from Commissioner Borra. And this document was also furnished to the Chairman of the Committee on Suffrage Chaired by Commissioner Cecilio Seno and Commissioner Naval. And we have not discussed the details of this, but we will have to coordinate with the other committee in order that we will have to integrate our positions on these matters.

On the Civil Service Commission, as I have reported, I would like to acknowledge and express my appreciation to the following who bear it out with me yesterday—Commissioner Garcia, Commissioner Seno, Commissioner Bondoc, Commissioner Acevedo, Commissioner Matula, Commissioner Calisin, Commissioner Abueg, and Commissioner Democrito Mendoza.

We have also received in addition to the information that I got from the Department of National Defense that the Department of Interior and Local Government will be submitting its proposals next week. This is because last November 14, we wrote a letter to all of the various agencies that fall under our committee work and inviting them to submit their proposals. And these are now the reaction—results of our letter.

We also received a letter from Commissioner Vilar of the Committee on Civil Service and Accountability of Public Officers for our committee to look into the possibility of incorporating in our work the Office of the Ombudsman also as an independent commission. And we are looking into that. Together with that, we are also looking into the Commission on Human Rights, which is also considered as an independent commission.

So, I would like now to go into the next item, which will be the Transitory Provision. We have already started initial discussions—this is the most contentious issue as far as the amendment to the 1987 Constitution is concerned. And we have already made some drafts. And I'm glad that this morning, Commissioner Pedrosa mentioned some of the items that should be looked into by the public as a part of our consultation. But let me also refer the matters that have been taken up as far as the transitory provision is concerned to Commissioner Mela Bengzon.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner Bengzon is recognized.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the committee meeting last Monday, there was a matrix that was done on the various issues with regards to the transitory provision. This basically tackled the term of the President, the Vice President, the Members of the Congress—both the Senate and the House of Representatives, including that of the local government. We presented a matrix that had about six different schools of thought including the one... the proposal espoused by Commissioner Espina.

Succinctly, Mr. Chairman, we have summarized them into three talking points, although these proposals would admit and would welcome any other ideas or refinements but, as Commissioner Bello had mentioned, this was also stated as talking points in the Manila, Makati and Quezon City consultations. The three proposals are the following:

1. All incumbent elected officials should sacrifice the remainder of their terms to pave the way for new elections to be scheduled in either 2006 or 2007 once the public approves the proposals for charter change in a plebiscite to be held in March or April next year.
2. There will be no elections to allow all elected officials at the national and local levels until 2010. The incumbent President will remain in power in order to respect the tenure of her office. Once approved in a plebiscite, the shift from a presidential-bicameral system of government to a parliamentary-unicameral system will take place. All Members of Congress and 30% of the Cabinet shall become automatic members of the new parliament. This is basically what Gerry Espina has espoused.
3. All senators will become automatic members of the new parliament until 2010; the President will remain in her position, while a Prime Minister will be elected among the Members of Parliament. Representatives of Congress and local officials will have to face elections in 2007 under the new charter that will have to be approved in a plebiscite by next year.

With regard to the powers of the President, three schools of thought have also arisen:

- i. The President under a pure parliamentary system, as in the UK model, will be the ceremonial head on the transitory provision.
- ii. The President, under the French model, will be a strong president until 2010; and,
- iii. The President and the Prime Minister—the incumbent president continues in office with the power-sharing with the prime minister to be specifically defined.

So those are the talking points of the committee right now. And as we said, the committee is keeping an open mind on these proposals, and would welcome any other ideas or refinements that may come our way in the course of our regional consultations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Thank you very much. Commissioner Apostol?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, I move that we recognize Commissioner Ting Paterno to make the necessary report on the status of the Committee on National Patrimony and Economic Reforms.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Paterno is recognized.

COMMISSIONER PATERNO.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The plenary will recognize that the Committee on National Patrimony and Economic Reforms had already formulated a matrix which was presented as talking points. However, after the consultations, it seems that the matrix probably will hold with a few changes. One of those changes will be the question of ownership on agricultural lands. So there will just be a few changes which can be made after we have all the consultations come in. It will not be much worth, but Mr. Chairman, we still need a slot for a committee meeting, so that we can review, as a committee, those changes that need to be made. I do not see that in the calendar as yet. That concludes my report.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Thank you very much. Now I think that ends, Commissioner Apostol, our brief report of the different committees. Am I right?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Yes, Mr. Chair. But just a reminder before we'll have a recess -- on December 5, there will be a committee hearing of the Committee on Sponsorship and there should be a deadline. The reports of the different Chairmen should at least be completed on that day. Otherwise, we are giving the different Chairmen also up to the 6th. After that, the Committee on Style and the Committee on Sponsorship, which is now a joint committee, will begin working on all the reports.

Mr. Chair, I move that we go on a five-minute recess...

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Okay. Ah, before we go into a five-minute recess, please read carefully what we have approved earlier the recommendation of the Committee on Style, because on those dates, attached therewith, no single committee meeting, but the entire Commission shall be sitting as a Committee of the Whole, and at the same time plenary, so we can move fast. Kindly, carefully read what we have approved earlier.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Mr. Chair?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Yes? Commissioner Rodriguez...

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

There was one incident in the committee hearing where the issue of quorum was raised. And the determination of the quorum, the way I saw it, was 50 percent plus one. May we know exactly how we determine the presence of a quorum in a committee hearing based on our rules?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner Apostol, will you answer the query?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
At the opening, to have the committee hearing—all we need are three members to be present. But unfortunately, during the hearing, question of quorum was raised. We will have to go on 50 percent plus one.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
Yes. I also remember that three members present in a committee hearing will constitute a quorum for purposes of managing or continuing the hearing on this committee level. But when I was trying to look into the Rules as approved by all of us, that particular provision is not present. That is the problem. That is why I might, perhaps, in the assumption of the hearing today, I will formally move that that particular provision be included in our Rules so that committee hearings can be handled based on that particular provision on the issue of quorum.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Actually, there was a motion to amend. But it was not formally included. Mr. Chair, may I request that Commissioner Romela Bengzon be recognized?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner “Beauteous” Romela Bengzon is recognized.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.
I’ve gotten flak for this actually, but I think I capitalized on the ambiguity of the Rules. But anyway, I would just like to seek clarification on the proposal. The quorum of three—would that mean a start of the committee meetings to take up the business, and would it also include a quorum for voting purposes on any proposal that is on the agenda in a committee meeting?

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
Can I answer that, Mr. Chair?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
You have the floor. You are recognized.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
In our stint in Congress, when we say there is the presence of a quorum, we can go into the business and proceed with the business for the day. But in trying to make a decision as to whether or not a particular issue should be decided, we can start with the agreement that that particular issue can be tackled not in the plenary by the members of the committee not necessarily in a hearing proper. But they can bring up that particular issue to the respective members by a document for that purpose.

Halimbawa, we agreed to allow the retention of this particular provision, lima ang commissioners na present, *tatlo pumayag*. Now, that is not the decision of the majority or the members of the committee. So, ang *gagawin*, *ilalagay* ‘yan sa written form, *ipapasa* sa mga members—*isi-circulate*, kung *sino* ang *pumapayag*, kung sino ang hindi. That will determine the sense of the committee.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

So, therefore, as a clarification, it will not include any decision, but then it will be a permission to get the sense or the vote of the committee via documents—whether it's a unanimous consent or by majority rule?

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Yes, that's correct, so that the operation of the committee may not be paralyzed unnecessarily. Just for the purpose of doing business for that particular meeting. But to make a decision, definitely majority of the members of the committee must decide.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

In a document to be circulated? And the Secretariat will...

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Yes. If there is no majority—I mean 50% plus one—in that particular hearing, then they can do it.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

By routing of the papers.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Yes, by routing of the papers.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

Okay, I don't have any quarrel with that.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Okay. Now, in the Senate, even two can already start. The Chairman and a Member, they can start the committee rolling. And in the House, it's one-third of the total membership of the committee. But I understand we have adopted here three members can start the committee meeting or hearing...to start the business. However, until it is finished and there is an issue to be taken, you are right, Commissioner Rodriguez, that a paper should be passed around to get the consensus of the majority of the members of the committee.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

So, session is suspended to allow the distribution of some papers by the Secretariat.

It was 6.57 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF THE SESSION

At 7:00 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

May I recognize Commissioner Jarius Bondoc please to elucidate what we have approved earlier for better understanding by the Members of the Commission please? Commissioner Jarius Bondoc, you are recognized.

COMMISSIONER BONDOC.

Just to clarify the...

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

Hold on, hold on, Jarius. I think we are back in session. The Secretary-General is not here so I'm supposed to...

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Everybody is requested please...in your respective places because this is important especially to the different chairmen of the different committees. Commissioner Bondoc will explain what we have approved earlier as recommended by their committee, the Committee on Style. Commissioner Bondoc, please.

COMMISSIONER BONDOC.

Just to clarify. After our Luzon consultations there will be only four days for committees to wrap up their reports. So ang suggestion po ng Committee on Style itong four days po na ito, instead of committees holding their individual meetings, gagawin na pong Committee of the Whole. Kumbaga parang plenary na po ang gagawin natin. This session hall will be rearranged no longer in this manner na parang executive meeting ang set-up. It will be rearranged as a plenary hall, session hall-type with an elevated area for the Chairman, presiding officer and with an area for the Secretariat of the Whole also and with all the commissioners facing them. And then 'yun pong part of the proposal also that we got the plenary to approve earlier was that the Committee on Style would work closely with the Committee on Sponsorship. Kasi po ang Committee on Sponsorship will be composed of the Chairman, Chairman Abueva, and all the officers and all the committee chairmen. And most of them happen to be Members of the Committee on Style. So ang nangyayari po, next...that would be December 5. Ang nangyayari po 'no, so that all committees, like the Committee on Economic Provisions, Committee on Transitory Provisions, i-sponsor na po ng mga chairmen 'yung kanya-kanyang report plus proposed amendments to the reports or the existing matrix and then we will discuss it, debate on it and then tuluy-tuloy na po na pag-refine until ma-finalize na po, provision by provision.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

I hope that was understood. If I be allowed to amplify it.

COMMISSIONER BONDOC.

Yes, please sir.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

That you already prepared per committee your constitutional provisions more or less that has a consensus in your respective committees. All the matrix will be attached therewith so that in the committee as a whole, we will not go anymore to the matrix, although they are attached, but on the constitutional provisions already. I hope that is understood so we can go and move faster and with this system that we have approved, we know we

can finish it on or before the 13th so we will be on time for the December 15 submission. Now, any questions? Yes, Commissioner Bengzon.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

So therefore, Mr. Chairman, the rules on the committee meetings that were just approved a while ago would not really be relevant anymore come December 2, correct?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

You are very correct.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Any other clarificatory questions? If there is none, I would recognize the Floor Leader. Floor Leader...

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Mr. Chair, a little clarification on that, if I may.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Rodriguez is recognized.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

It means to say that there are no more committee hearings after December 2? It will be a Committee of the Whole?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

That's right.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Ah, okay. So before December 2, committee hearings will still be subjected to that issue.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Yes, we will all be going out by that time so that when we return, we will have at least so many days to prepare, to consolidate all your committee reports for the committee as a whole. Commissioner Bondoc, do you have anything to say?

COMMISSIONER BONDOC.

Dagdag na lang po, ano. Kasi our last day of Luzon consultation is December 2, that's a Friday. Now if there are committees that want to work on Saturday, Sunday - 3 and 4, nothing can stop them from doing so basta starting Monday, December 5, Committee of the Whole na po ang gagawin natin. So if some committees want to work on the 3rd and the 4th, please do so, and then isa-submit ang final product nyo po on December 5. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.

Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Yes, Commissioner Abueva.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.

Can we agree on the order or the sequence of committee reports that will be taken up in the Style so that the chairpersons of the various committees will be informed regarding the sequence of discussions on their reports.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

There is a suggestion from our chairman that I think the Committee on Style, once they will be able to collate the same, then perhaps, because they are merged with the Sponsorship Committee in which you are the Chairman also. Then you dictate which one to come first. I think that would be the solution.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.

Mr. Chairman, in particular, I think there is merit in taking up the Committee on the Form of Government's report and on the Committee on the Structure of the Republic because they are connected with other provisions.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

That's right. Then I think that would be, I believe, the Committees on Style and Sponsorship will discuss which particular issues will be prioritized. I think you can do that, Mr. Chairman. Floor Leader, please, next item.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

I move that we take up Item Number 8 - preparations for Luzon consultations and we recognize the Vice-Chair for Luzon, Commissioner Oscar Rodriguez.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Rodriguez is recognized.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Thank you. With respect to the Luzon consultations, I understand the Secretariat has already prepared a complete list of the consultations for Luzon, including the membership of the different teams that will handle the consultation. May I therefore refer the group to the acting Secretary-General for purposes of informing the Members of the Commission on the schedule for consultation in Luzon.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

In the absence of the Secretary-General, I would like to ask the Secretariat, please, to give us the schedule of the consultations for Luzon.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

I believe that was distributed.

MR. GACUTAN.

Yes, good evening, Commissioners. We distributed two sets of documents regarding consultations. One is the names and the teams of which you belong and the activity. I would like to request Ms. Annblyth Tia of the Office of Regional Concerns of the PMS who took care of the matrix of the activities to explain to you everything about it. Ann?

MS. TIA.

Good evening po sa inyo. May I present to you the detailed scenario for the Luzon consultation which covers seven areas from November 29 - December 2? Group A covers consultation for Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur. The venue is Vigan City at the University of Northern Philippines. The group will leave via PAL at 10 o'clock; assembly at the Mabuhay Lounge at the Centennial Airport is at 9 o'clock. This is the day before the consultation. This is on December 1. So the Team will have a presscon upon arrival in Vigan, sleep overnight at the Vigan Plaza Hotel and the following day will be the consultation proper on December 2 at the University of Northern Philippines auditorium. After the consultation at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the Team will leave for San Fernando City upon the invitation of Commissioner Ortega, so the Team will rest overnight in San Fernando City.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

Specify that. San Fernando City, La Union.

MS. TIA.

San Fernando City, La Union po.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.

There are two San Fernando cities.

MS. TIA.

Thank you po, sir. The one venue is at the Oasis Hotel. Commissioner Ortega has prepared an itinerary for the Vigan Team in San Fernando City, La Union for the rest of the day on December 3 and you will return to Manila after lunch.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

May I move that we recognize Commissioner Bello?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Bello is recognized.

COMMISSIONER BELLO.

Mr. Chairman, just an observation. The presenter did not cover the activities on Friday, December 2, the consultation with the officials of Ilocos Sur.

MS. TIA.

Two provinces po, sir. For the Vigan consultation, it's Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur. Region I will have two consultations. The next slide will be Group A Team 2 for Dagupan City which will cover consultation for the provinces of Pangasinan and La Union.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Yes, kindly confer with those in-charge if there are things omitted in what was handed out. Please confer with those that took charge of the scheduling and the activities so they can correct it. Is that okay?

COMMISSIONER BELLO.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Now we go back to the Item on our...the minutes.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.
Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Floor Leader.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Commissioner Fernandez would like to be recognized.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner Fernandez is recognized.

COMMISSIONER FERNANDEZ.
Yes, Mr. Chairman, as regards the consultations to be made at the province of Pangasinan, may we request that this Body make a new combination of Commissioners that shall be assigned to the said province for the very reason that Team A Group 2, only three have confirmed that they could attend out of the nine. So probably there could be a redistribution of Commissioners attending in the different areas of the consultation. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
That's well taken. Commissioner Rodriguez is recognized.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ.
In connection with the Luzon consultation, everyone has been given a copy of the membership for every team as well as the areas they will cover and these were predetermined. A movement at this stage of the membership in the different teams will be difficult to achieve. I suggest that we stick to the listing already distributed and determined by the Secretariat. There will be possibility that some teams will be decimated if we will allow the movement of membership in the different teams at this stage. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Thank you. We will kindly request the Team Leaders of the different committees to kindly approach every Member of your Team so that more or less the Secretariat and the leadership will know who will really be going to these places as already indicated in their respective Teams, okay? So thank you so much. Now may I call on the Floor Leader for...

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Mr. Chair, may we go back to Item Number 5. I move that we approve the draft of the minutes of 17 November 2005 of the Plenary Session.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

There is a motion duly seconded that we approve the minutes of the 17 November 2005 Plenary Session. Any objection? There being none, the same is approved.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, I move that we recognize Commissioner Betty Lourdes F. Tabanda.

NCRFW LETTER

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Lulu Tabanda is recognized.

COMMISSIONER TABANDA.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I think each Member of the Commission is in receipt of a letter from the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW). These are proposed amendments from the NCRFW particularly on provisions related to women and gender. May I move, Mr. Chair, that this letter be acknowledged and that it be referred to the proper committees.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

There is a request that the receipt of the letter from the women's group be kindly acknowledged. Duly noted.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

I move that it be referred to the proper committee.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

There is a motion to refer the same to the proper committee. Any objection? There being none, same is approved.

ADAMAT REPORT

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chair, I move that we recognize the indigenous commissioner, Commissioner Adamat.

COMMISSIONER ADAMAT.

Thank you, it's an honor.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Ronald L. Adamat is recognized.

COMMISSIONER ADAMAT.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and for recognizing this representation. I just would like to report Mr. Chairman that we just concluded the first part of our sectoral consultation. This was sponsored by the National Commission on the Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). And I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to the Commissioners who have attended as resource persons, resource speakers, particularly the Honorable Commissioner Rey Magno Teves who spoke on the Structure of Government and that I would like to...although we have not come up with a votation because they still process through a workshop their comprehensive and substantial recommendation, Mr.

Chairman and that tomorrow they will finally come up with their votation as to whether they will go federal or not. But the sense of the group is they are for federal because the participants of this sectoral forum are the provincial consultative body of the indigenous peoples nationwide. And for that matter I would like also to thank Commissioner Betty Lourdes Tabanda who spoke on the preamble, declaration of state policies, and general provisions as well as Commissioner Vicente Paterno who spoke on patrimony and economic reforms. And you will notice, Mr. Chairman that the indigenous peoples have a very strong recommendation that liberalization on land ownership can only be done outside of ancestral domain. And two more... may I also thank Commissioner Naval who spoke on party reform and electoral reform and as well as Commissioner Abueg who spoke on the form of government. And the form of government, the general sense also of the group is for its shift from presidential to parliamentary. The voting will come tomorrow and they will also submit in due time their comprehensive recommendation Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Floor Leader.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL
Mr. Chair. I just want to make it of record that I am objecting to the move of leasing lands which is not within the indigenous...why is it right to lease my land? According to you, you have no objection of leasing lands which is within the indigenous area. In other words you are trying to lease my own land. Anyway, Mr. Chair, I move that we recognize Commissioner Calisin.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner Calisin is recognized.

COMMISSIONER CALISIN.
Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. This is just a very minor comment but can have a grave effect to the Commission. Since I have started attending the committee proceedings and the plenary, I've been hearing the word being used in the deliberation - "votation." In all dictionaries in the world we cannot find lexical entry which is "votation." So instead, in the records in our both in the minutes and the journal, I suggest that if this is found in the minutes, it be supplanted or be replaced with the word "voting." There is no word "votation" in the dictionary. So it is a matter of concern because if we do not correct that, when we go to consultations in the provinces, who knows, there might be semanticians, grammarians, or lexicologists in the area. That will boomerang to us as Commissioners. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Thank you very much. But that is already accepted just like the word "empowerment", that is not also in the dictionary, it's already accepted. At any rate, the right word really is "voting."

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.
Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ABUEVA.
That's an example of how a language grows by usage. That's part of Filipino English. Our contribution to the world of English. I'd like to say that the report of Commissioner

Adamat on the consultations with the indigenous peoples' organization should be added to our list of consultations because this is a big group that you addressed. I would like also to suggest that we include in the list of consultations yung malawak po na konsultasyon na naganap doon sa Angeles City, in Angeles University Foundation through the auspices of Commissioner Angeles. Could you tell us just briefly about that because it's an important consultation.

COMMISSIONER ANGELES.

Mr. Chairman, we conducted a consultation among the student leaders. The presidents of universities and colleges of Central Luzon last Saturday and we were honored by the presence of no less than the Chairman. We invited a number of Commissioners but only Dr. Abueva was able to make it and Commissioner Jimeno as well as Commissioner Jurado. So the four of us conducted the consultation before the student leaders representing the 150 or 160 colleges and universities in Central Luzon for almost three hours. I would like to thank the Chairman and Commissioners Jurado and Jimeno for joining me in that consultation which we hosted last Saturday. Unfortunately, Commissioner Apostol was not able to join us and Commissioner Romualdo. There were other Commissioners. Commissioner Bautista, who was not also able to join us so that's just my brief report, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER MAROHOMBSAR.

Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

May I move that Commissioner Emily Marohombsar be recognized?

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Marohombsar is recognized.

COMMISSIONER MAROHOMBSAR.

Mr. Chair, I would like to suggest that the result also of the consultations in the ARMM be included in the records of the ConCom. I submitted a report on this to our Chairman, Chairman Abueva and to some Commissioners but I have... that's just partial because we have not yet completed the consultations. I reported the consultations in Cotabato only and in Marawi City but there will be others next week when I complete the report. When we finish all the consultations in the ARMM, I'll submit the report which I hope can be included also in the records of the ConCom.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Yes, it will be included in the report. Okay, Floor Leader.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.

Mr. Chairman, may I move that we recognize Commissioner Peña to tell this Body that he is a real Filipino.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.

Commissioner Peña, you are a real Filipino. You are recognized.

COMMISSIONER PEÑA.

Yes sir. And I'm informing the Floor Leader, as of 1521 I am also an indigenous, ever since 1521.

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.
Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
I ask that Commissioner Pedrosa be recognized.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner Pedrosa, you have something to say?

COMMISSIONER PEDROSA.
I'd just like to remind those who are going tomorrow in Parañaque to see to it that everyone has a map. They want to go through their own means or if they can't then they have to see the Secretariat who will provide transportation. So these are the maps - there is one for Parañaque and there is one for Calocan.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Thank you for the information. That will be for tomorrow. Floor Leader?

COMMISSIONER APOSTOL.
Mr. Chair, I move that we adjourn.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
There is a motion to adjourn. Any objection? There being none...

COMMISSIONER LAMBINO.
Mr. Chairman, before we adjourn. Point of information.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
Commissioner Lambino.

COMMISSIONER LAMBINO.
I was discussing this a while ago with the Floor Leader because I received a phone call from the Office of the Speaker and in fact there is an invitation already for some Members of the Commission if they are free and they would like to participate in the consultations that they are going to schedule in General Santos on December 5 and 6 and another one in Dumaguete - December 7 and 8; and another in Subic in December 19 -- that would be after we finish our report. They would like to inform the Body if there would be Commissioners who would be interested to become speakers in the consultations that will be conducted by the House of Representatives in General Santos and Dumaguete. So I just want to inform the Body about that schedule. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER ROMUALDO.
So everybody is informed about that schedule so if you want to go to other places, please contact Commissioner Lambino for that purpose. Yes, Commissioner Bengzon.

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.
Just a directive to the Secretariat. Please note what Commissioner Lambino said and probably give it as a notice to each and every Commissioner who is interested and then

get their names and then the Secretariat will now look into it, and who will be invited.
Thank you.

COMMISSIONER LAMBINO.

The first four to sign up because only four are invited. Only four slots will be available.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

COMMISSIONER BENGZON.

Secretariat, please just get the names of those who want to sign up and then the Secretary-General and the Chairman will rule on it. Thank you.

The session is adjourned.

It was 7:31 p.m.