

JOURNAL NO. 73

VOL. IV, October 25, 1934

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/872d191024b3/>

APERTURA DE LA SESION

Se abre la sesion a las 5:10 p.m, ocupando el estrado el Presidente, Hon. Claro M. Recto.

EL PRESIDENTE: Se abre la sesion.

DISPENSACION DE LA LECTURA DE LA LISTA
Y DEL ACTA

MR. GRAFILO: Mr. President.

EL PRESIDENTE: Señor Delegado.

MR. GRAFILO: I move that roll call and reading of the minutes be dispensed with.

EL PRESIDENTE: Si no hay objecion, asi se acuerda. (No hubo objecion.)

MR. BOCAR: Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman from Samar.

MR. BOCAR: Mr. President, the last Delegate to speak last night was for the affirmative side. The leader of the negative side is absent this afternoon, but the arrangement I have had with him is that it would be my turn to open the debate today. I, therefore, ask the Chair to give me seven minutes.

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman from Samar may proceed.

DISCURSO DEL SR. BOCAR

MR. BOCAR: Mr. President, and Gentlemen of the Convention: Before proceeding, I would like to make some preliminary remarks.

It has been the practice here to advance our arguments in the form of a speech. I have found it convenient to deviate from the practice, so I am not going to make a speech. I have written a short poem, entitled "Rhymes for Woman Suffrage," which reads:

- When we draft the Constitution.
Gentlemen of the Convention,
We must insert a provision
On Woman's emancipation.

- This woman suffrage question
Affects half our population,
And it's up to this Convention
To make a wise decision.

- Our women are qualified,
That much cannot be denied;
Though as yet they have not tried,
Upon they can be relied.

- We cannot deny that right;
They will insist and they will fight.
Though oppose with all our might.
We will yield, to be polite.

- The Legislature gave them suffrage;
That's a covenant and a pledge,
Which I think must be respected,
In the Constitution inserted.

- That law was well considered,
By the Legislature studied,
And it cannot be said
That it was by mistake enacted.

- Of course, the Legislature
Is just a body inferior;
It's acts this body can ignore,
Because in power we're superior.

- But there is no valid reason
To justify this Convention,
In preventing the operation
Of that suffrage Legislation.

- Women have not even enjoyed
The right, by law, them granted;
And now it is contemplated
To kill the law before it's tried;

- There is nothing incompatible
With women's duties and the poll;
It will even be honorable
That women take a political role.

- Talk you of their capacity?
Then women have that quality.
Ask you of their unity?
They answer you, town and city;

- Tell me not it will be costly,
That the Government lacks money;
If money be spent then wisely.
That's the price of democracy.

- Politics here is dirty,
Black with corruption so nasty;
Corrupt men elected through money,
Rich candidates by bribery.

- When women vote, those cannot be;
They will sweep the frauds away;
For women will vote honestly
For conviction, not for money.

- Arguments have been presented
That the homes will be neglected,
That family harmony destroyed,
And our women polluted.

- These are all imaginary,
False alarm by the enemy.
Election is not every day,
Why are there prophets, anyway?

- Let us have more faith, gentlemen,
In the goodness of our women;
They are not going to cause ruin
When their suffrage is given.

- They say only women in Manila.
Are noisy in this campaña;
That not a single provinciana
Is really a sufragista.

- I don't blame the city women
For their activities and campaign;
On the other hand, I praise them.
Leaders, pioneers, feminine!

- Don't blame the indifference
... The woman in the province.
Interest is useless, gentlemen.
When suffrage is denied to them.

- For what good is for women,
If officials be good or bad men?
When they cannot vote for those chosen—
So indifferent they remain.

- But free the women and make them vote,
Give them suffrage and you'll note
The interest and the time they'll devote
To politics, government or both.

- They say women's vote not needed yet.
Because they'll tend to duplicate,
That t'will be hard on the candidates
To spend more money for cigarettes.

- If women's vote will duplicate,
We should not worry nor regret;
For more votes for a candidate
Means his popularity is great.

- The politicians need not fear
That the women will be a sucker.
It is of men they should despair;
They know this well and should beware.

- We are building a new nation,
With justice as foundation;
But the men are in division
And the women in oblivion.

- This is a democracy
Of citizens equal and free;
But men have a monopoly,
And women have nothing to say.

- This is a democracy.
Not a dictatorship nor a monarchy.
To insure the nation's safety,
There must be true equality.

- In the affairs of the Government,
All have parts as all are meant;
There can be no side agreement
On this important point.

- Why just give women the duty?
And deny them authority?
Is there justice, equality?
Gentlemen, please answer me!

- All the problems of the nation,
The duties and obligations,
Are not borne by men alone
But by women in addition.

- What the women ask is justice,
Not to get from men the office.
Don't you, Gentlemen, realize
That their demand is fair and wise?

- Suffrage is not a question of sex;
Capacity should be the index.
So in our national politics,
Men and women should freely mix.

- Politics is not so hard
That the woman should be barred ;
Their duties it will not retard,
So why not give them this award?

- Let us be fair and just, Gentlemen;
Decide this question as statesmen,
With justice, wisdom, vision keen,
That glory in our work be seen.

- There's a plan to: compromise,
A plebiscite to be devised,
To determine the bulk and size,
Of the women pros and antis.

- But, Gentlemen, it is not wise
To favor this compromise;
You know it is cowardice
To evade duty and deny justice.

- Why fear responsibility
Of facing the question squarely?
If you are a pro or an anti,
Better be frank, that's more manly!

- Delegates, comrades, countrymen,
Consider pity on the women!
What is their fault, what is their sin,
That we must be cruel and not help them?

- You who are all chivalrous,
Gallant comrades, compañeros!
Patriotic Delegados!
Help the women and be heroes!

- Don't you hear their voices pleading?
Don't you feel their hearts are throbbing?
Don't you know that they are trusting
That we grant them the right of voting?

- Who among us would be selfish
And treat women with injustice?
Who among us don't realize
That woman suffrage is wise?

- The women we love as wives,
Mothers, sweethearts, relatives,
In their bosoms the hope yet lives
That justice to them this Body gives.

- And from the Bible it is said,
More joy to give than to receive;
And Shakespeare to this has added
That mercy is virtue blessed.

- I plead for justice and mercy,
For the women of our country;
I plead for true equality,
Because we are a democracy.

- If not for justice, then for pity.
For their helplessness, let it be;
Begging mercy, pity, charity
Oh, men, listen, to you they pray!

MR. VINZONS: Mr. President, will the Gentleman yield for just one question?

THE PRESIDENT: The Delegate from Samar may answer if he so desires.

MR. BOCAR: With pleasure if I have the time

MR. VINZONS: Is it the Gentleman's conviction That the grant of this Convention Of equal rights decision To women of the nation Will free politics from abomination?

MR. BOCAR: In answer to the question of the Gentleman from Camarines Norte, I repeat two stanzas from the poem I have just read.

Politics here is dirty.

Black with corruptions so nasty,

Corrupt men elected through money,

Rich candidates by bribery.

Now where does women come in?

When women vote, those cannot be;

They will sweep the frauds away.

For Women will vote honestly

For conviction, not for money.

MR. VINZONS: If that is the Gentleman's opinion, I am of the same conviction.

SR. ALTAVAS: Señor Presidente.

EL PRESIDENTE: Señor Delegado.

SR. ALTAVAS: Del lado de los que favorecen la resolucion o sea de los que estan en contra de la concesion del sufragio femenino, presento al Delegado por Iloilo, Señor Delfin Gumban, y pido que se le conceda la palabra.

EL PRESIDENTE: Tiene la palabra el Delegado por Iloilo.

DISCURSO DEL SR. GUMBAN A FAVOR DEL PROYECTO DE RESOLUCION

SR. GUMBAN: Señor Presidente y Caballeros de esta Convencion: La cuestion de la franquicia politica de la mujer, que se ventila en esta augusta Asamblea, puede mirarse al traves de tres prismas diferentes, Los romanticos la consideran algo asi como una eclosion libertadora del mujerieo moderno que pugna por la conquista de una mayor eflorescencia politica, como culminacion cabal de la reivindicacion femenina del Cristianismo.

Los academicos, agarrandose a la filosofia de la igualdad espiritual entre la mujer y el hombre, manejan el metodo aprioristico, la relacion de efecto y causa; y asi ven esta cuestion como uno de los anexos postulados politicos del impuesto sin representacion, y de gobierno sin el consentimiento de los gobernados.

Y un tercer grupo, sin el calido romanticismo de la edad moza, porque las tragedias de la vida ahondaron su egoismo familiar, su concepcion puritana del honor conyugal, divorciado de toda hipotesis empirica porque ha palpado la realidad del hogar mismo, no quiere armarse de lanzas quijotesas para batir gigantes en este asunto practico de los molinos de viento.

No me levanto en esta tribuna para repetir las alabanzas que se merece la mujer filipina, ensalzando sus bellas virtudes, sus nobles cualidades ciudadanas; ni tampoco quiero recurrir a las regiones de la metafisica para elaborar una tesis academica en apoyo de mi actitud. Entiendo que esta es Asamblea del pueblo donde palpita sobre la eclosion del romanticismo politico y por encima del estadismo empirico y teorizante, el sentido comun de la

multitud—la experiencia del ciudadano que paga y sufre, la observacion reflexiva del padre de la familia que guarda en su corazon un sentimiento netamente filipino, severo, intransigente en sumo grado, cuando se trata del honor de la hermana, de la esposa, de la hija o de la nieta.

Señor Presidente, como Delegado del pueblo y como padre de familia, levanto mi voz para defender la santidad del hogar filipino; me uno al coro de los acerrimos paladines del verdadero feminismo; porque entiendo que el feminismo verdadero, puro y sincero, no transige con el llamado sufragio femenino que puede engolfar a la mujer en el lodo de la politica barata; lo cual, en ultimo analisis, no seria mas que la masculinizacion politica de la mujer como un abierto y flagrante atentado a su dulce espiritualidad y la estabilidad de la institucion familiar.

Es que hay dos grandes instituciones tutelares en que se asientan la familia y la nacion.

El hogar, asilo de la santidad familiar, reconoce, sobre todo en nuestro pais, el patronato tutelar de la mujer. Ella es la reina soberana, la diosa, arbitra de los destinos de la prole.

¿Pretendeis todavia arrancar a esa diosa de los altares de los suyos, vistiendola con harapos de calle, en medio de la apoteosis mitinesca de la turba electorera?

Porque la politica, digan lo que quieran, puede ser buena en sus efectos; pero, en verdad, es como un templo, pues no es siempre buena en sus procedimientos. El que quiera medrar en la politica no puede escoger a gusto las consecuencias.

Muy experimentados politicos, familiarizados con los juegos de cubilete, con habilidad para cambiar de posturas de saltimbanqui, no tienen la paciencia de Job y pierden los estribos oyendo la sarta de embustes que les endilga un orador callejero. Porque no es un secreto para nadie que aqui, como en cualquiera otra parte del mundo, se puede hacer de la politica, como de su capa un sayo apelando a las tacticas de pasquin, al libelo y a la calumnia para producir un golpe electoral.

Y vais a permitir que ese lodo que ha manchado vuestra frente en el triste curso de vuestra vida politica, entre por los umbrales santos de vuestro hogar y mancille la paz risueña y limpida de los seres mas caros para vosotros?

¿Podeis, permitir que ese incendio que ha devorado prestigios, honores y haciendas en las calles, con el combustible que fabrican las tribunas populacheras de esquina, proyecte su exhalacion destructora a la ultima herencia intacta que os queda en casa, poniendo una mecha a vuestro lado, que pueda volar en un momenta hasta vuestros intimos secretos de alcoba?

¿Podeis, acaso, sacrificar vuestro hondo prejuicio moral, arraigado en vuestro modo de ser, celosos por excelencia, coutemplando con tolerancia de politico avezado en lides de esta clase, la frescura iconoclasta del enemigo, descuartizando los defectos de la esposa o de la hija?

El enemigo prefiere atacar al punto debil del contrincante. Sabeis bien donde esta el punto debil de la mujer. Esta en el amor, ese sentimiento que se explaya y se magnifica bajo el velo del secreto.

¿Y quereis que vuestra vida intima, el relicario de vuestros santos afectos, avente el viento de la publicidad barata y sea el libro abierto a las masas despreocupadas?

He aqui, caballeros de esta Convencion, las interrogaciones de plomo que gravitan sobre nuestra conciencia de padre, de esposo y de hermano.

Si la mujer, dulce companera del hombre, quiere, por amor, participar de los servicios del Estado bienvenida sea. Pero que se mantenga en su plenitud el misterio de su feminidad.

Puede ir al estrado porque tiene corazon para sentir los dolores de la injusticia y del crimen; al profesorado porque

ha nacido para amamantar a los hombres del porvenir; a los hospitales, a las instituciones del dolor, porque, angel de caridad, comprende mejor las tragedias humanas.

Pero que no franquee los portales del circo, donde gladiadores musculosos suelen exhibir sus desnudeces morales, ensañarse los instintos vengativos del hombre de la selva, en lo mas calido de la lucha electoral. Que no pase el portico de la avenida tumultuaria que conduce al escenario con el crudo realismo iconoclasta; poniendo en el fontispicio constitucional las siguientes rotundas y expresivas palabras: PARA CABALLEROS, SOLAMENTE.

Señor Presidente, alguien ha dicho que la politica es un juego de equilibrio, y muchas veces, como en la diplomacia, requiere hasta duplicidad. Para ganar una eleccion, por ejemplo, se pone en juego cierta estrategia, Y claro esta, las estrategias no se dan al enemigo, se conservan como secretos de Estado algo asi como tacticas de cancilleria, en que se dice una cosa y se fragua lo contrario.

Ahora bien. ¿Vais a permitir que nuestras mujeres, curtidas en la fragua de la mas severa disciplina familiar, tengan para sus esposos o padres, ciertas reservas mentales, por lealtad al partido en que militan?

Nuestra institucion familiar es de las mas solidas y consagra, como razon de su estabilidad moral, la supremacia del jefe de familia. Si la esposa o la hija guarda respeto a la opinion del marido o padre, su intervencion en los comicios es superflua, no rendiria el provecho que se espera con el otorgamiento del sufragio femenino. Si estan en desacuerdo, se pone en peligro la estabilidad de la familia y la integridad del hogar filipino.

Es que no puedo comprender, Señor Presidente, que mientras por un lado, estamos estudiando la viabilidad del voto obligatorio porque muchos electores varones no acuden a los comicios generales por falta de interes en los asuntos publicos; por otro, haya un sector de la opinion, muy respetable por cierto, que este rompiendo lanzas por el sufragio femenino, cuando las mismas mujeres no demuestran interes por conquistar dicho derecho politico.

Es que hay que decir, una vez mas, que el movimiento por el sufragio femenino en Filipinas, no tiene caracter general.

Es un movimiento esporadico, localizado en algunas capitales de provincias y en Manila solamente.

Y aqui mismo en Manila, ¿cuantas sufragistas tenemos?

Hasta se pueden contar con los dedos.

Y tres golondrinas no hacen verano...

Por tanto, Señor Presidente, registro mi voto a favor de la proposicion, porque aprecio el feminismo verdad, en contraposicion de la masculinizacion politica de la mujer filipina.

MR. ABELLA: Mr. President, the next speaker is Delegate Vinzons.

(EN ESTE MOMENTO EL PRESIDENTE CEDE LA PRESIDENCIA AL VICEPRESIDENTE.)

DISCURSO DEL SEÑOR VINZONS A
FAVOR DEL SUFRAGIO FEMENINO

MR. VINZONS: Mr, President and Gentleman of the Convention: The question now before us is one which calls for arguments which are time-worn and hackneyed. It is an age-old subject dating as far back as the time of Pluto and debated upon for generation after genera-tion until no one can claim a novelty of reasoning or a new principle of logic. It was the dream of the Greek philosopher when in his Republic he gave to women rights with men. It was in the mind of the modern German philosopher Nietzsohe when he wrote with keen sarcasm: "Progress writ large on all woman's banners and bannerettes; but one can actually see her going back." In Athens, in Rome, they gathered in the forum, much to the consternation of the Consuls as a protest against injustice to their sex. The

twentieth century woman with her enlarged world of action is a far cry from her Greek or Roman sister. She has triumphed in unequal combat for sex equality, and in this age I say with great truth that the grant of suffrage to women is the rule and its withdrawal has become the exception.

In this country where the woman suffrage movement has been gaining force since its initiation in 1901, it is a surprise that the question of woman suffrage is not yet a settled one. Since the World War most civilized countries have granted suffrage to women. There are about forty-two of them now. In the United States, Wyoming was the first to grant woman suffrage in 1869, followed by Colorado, Idaho, and Utah. Washington, California, Arizona, Kansas, Oregon, Montana and Nevada adopted the same innovation from 1900 to 1914. The movement in the United States gained such impetus that Congress adopted the Nineteenth Amendment in 1919 which was ratified by three-fourth of the States in 1920. In Great Britain the woman suffrage movement was conducted with parades, riots and violent demonstrations on the part of the women. The Reform Bill of 1916 enfranchised women under thirty years of age, though men voted at twenty-one. The Equal Franchise Act of 1928 was the final emancipation of the English women. The other countries of the world where woman suffrage is in force are: Denmark. 1912; Norway, 1913; Sweden. 1919. Estonia. 1921; Czechoslovakia. 1920; Free City of Danzig, 1920; Spain. 1931; and Siam. Municipal suffrage has been granted in Mexico. India, Belgium, South Africa. Rumania and Italy. The British dependencies have woman suffrage. After a survey of the world's situation, is there any reason why the Philippines should withhold suffrage from the women? Are the women of this country of a lower state of mentality than the women of other countries, or is it because we have not overcome all the prejudices that are supposed to have disappeared with the coming of the machine?

I am of the sincere belief that the women of this country should be granted suffrage. I would want to show before the members of this Assembly:

First, that considerable progress in the evolution of woman has qualified her to assume the right to vote:

Second, that the grant of woman suffrage is a matter of political justice and is in accord with the principles of democracy;

Third, that woman suffrage is a force for good government, because it will train the women in the workings of democracy, and because women will ennoble and purify politics;

Fourth, that the women have shown the desire for suffrage as evidenced by their unceasing fight for it; and

Fifth, because the Constitution that we are now framing will have to be submitted to a plebiscite that will include women voters, and the denial of suffrage to them may arouse a hostile vote against the Constitution and, consequently, delay independence.

Politics has long been considered as a man's sole prerogative. His dominance in the home, the church, and the State has been a recognized fact throughout the ages. But with the advance of civilization, the woman's position in, the home and society has been greatly altered. She is no longer the fragile flower that wither at the touch. Though she is an object of inspiration that must be enshrined, yet that shrine is not a golden cage but the more free air of the world that knows no bar. She has become a dominant influence in the home over the children; she engages in commerce, in mental labor and in the learned professions. She is at the vortex of a changing world, where the concept of a woman as a chattel that may be disposed of has been changed to one where she is considered a helpmate, a councillor of the home, a business partner, and a citizen of the State. Even in the long years that saw the limitation of her rights, she nevertheless showed her capacity in government, in literature, in science, and in almost all human endeavors. Do we need to cite Maria Teresa, who laid the foundation of the Austrian empire; Catherine the great, who made Russia a world power; Madame Roland, who was the soul of the

French Revolution; Queen Elizabeth, whose reign was the golden age of English literature and of naval achievement; Queen Isabela of Castile, who financed Co-lumbus in his discovery of the New World and effected the conquest of Granada; Queen Victoria, the greatest of English sovereigns; Queen Christina of Sweden, whose reign was noted for her patronage of learning and science? Do we need here to mention the immortal Madame Curie, discoverer of radium and radioactivity, or Maria Cunitz, Silesian astronomer? Do we need to mention here the achievements of Rosa Bonheur in art, of Harriet Martinau on the stage, or of Elizabeth Browning in poetry? Here in our own country, is the mention of great women personages, like Princesa Urduja of ancient Pangasinan, considered by Friar Odoric as one of the best rulers, and Queen Sima of Mindanao, who sacrificed her life for her country, or Tandang Sora of the revolutionary days, not asufficient to sway the anti-suffragists to give women the vote?

Women have become lawyers, physicians, dispensers of law, governors. Why do we still deny political rights to them?

In support of our second contention that equal suffrage will promote democracy, we wish to quote President Taft: "The best government, in the sense of the one most certain to provide for and protect the rights and governmental needs of every class, is that one in which every class has a voice. In recognition of this, the tendency from the earliest time has been the enlargement of the electorate to include as many as possible of those governed."

Democracy has been the history of the struggle by the people against the tyranny of those in power whose interests or caprices might lead to their oppression. The growth of modern democracy is responsible for the development of the idea of "one citizen, one vote." Women are citizens, equal with men. How should political achievements be measured if not by terms of human well-being? What is government for, except to promote the security and education and happiness of the units that compose it? The American Revolution was fought with the war cry, "Down with taxation without representation!" Why should the women not fight for the vote when they are owners of property subject to taxes? In our civil law, women are classified among idiots and criminals why should they not insist that liberty, fraternity, and equality, must mean a vote for every man and woman, and every man and woman an equal vote, in order that such odious discrimination against the sex can be corrected? If we believe in the principles of democracy—and we are sure that opponents of woman suffrage do—how can they oppose the grant of the right to vote to women when such grant will enlarge the frontier of democracy? It may be argued that suffrage is not a right but a burden, that only a small portion of the inhabitants of the nation enjoys this privilege. I am going to answer this argument by saying that it is the aim of democracy to give equal rights to men and women, and although it is impossible as yet to extend enfranchisement to all the inhabitants of this land, it is an ideal worth striving for. The expense is a necessary incident in the increase of the electorate, but such expense is more than compensated by the benefits that will accrue to the country at large.

We contend in the third place that woman suffrage will be a force for good government. Our argument in this will be based not on mere theories but on the actual working of woman suffrage in the United States. Human nature is the same everywhere and what has been the experience of the United States in this matter will be the experience in the Philippines. I want to quote first from a statement of Governor Hoyt of Wyoming, the State that first adopted woman suffrage in the United States: "Under woman suffrage we have better laws, better officers, better institutions, better morals and higher social condition in general that could otherwise exist. Not one of the predicted evils, such as loss of native delicacy and disturbance of human relations, has followed its trend."

"In the election of 1894," according to Joyn Shatfroth of Columbia, "a greater percentage of women voted than men, and instead of their being contaminated by any influence of bad nature at the polls, the effect has been that there are no loafers, there are no persons of questionable character standing around the polls. The practical effects

of our woman suffrage will be to inject in to politics an element that is independent and does not have to keep a consistent record with the party."

It was suffrage that gave many thousands of American women their first practical understanding of the meaning of democracy, according to Helen Robinson. "Their struggle for the vote was far more than a struggle for the vote. It was a struggle for the soul of democracy. The equal suffrage movement is the most democratic that has ever swept America, surpassing the labor movement because it knows no class boundaries."

In the words of another writer, "it may be taken as a foregone conclusion that modification of our Constitution, due to the participation of women in civil and political affairs, will be in the direction of social morality and world peace. Women play a very important part in politics in America. With her instinctive moral sense, woman is certain to be a decisive factor in the solution of strictly moral issues."

As a proof of the practical working of woman suffrage, we desire to mention the municipal election of Chicago in 1915. According to the National Municipal Review of July, 1915, "The two leading candidates for the Republican nomination were Wm. Hal Thompson, since elected mayor, and Chief Justice Harry Olson, of the Chicago Municipal Court, the diffusion candidates endorsed by the progressive leader, Prof. A. Merriam, who has been for many years the leader of the good government force in Chicago, and by the element in the Republican party. As to which was the better candidate, there could be no possible question. Women gave a decisive plurality of more than 7,700 to the better candidate, while the men gave a still larger plurality to the less desirable candidate. Fifty-five per cent of the women voted for Judge Olson, but the men plurality for Thompson was large enough to outweigh the women's vote. If the men had stayed away from the polls on the date of the primary and left to the women the business of choosing a candidate, the vote of Chicago would have been different."

To cite concrete achievements in legislation of woman suffrage in the United States, we desire to mention the Sheppard Towner Maternity Act of 1921; the independent citizenship for Harried Woach Act of 1922; the approval of the proposed amendment prohibiting child labor, and the repeal of the Prohibition Law. From the experience in the United States, we can make the following conclusions :

- (1) Woman suffrage improves the tone of politics;
- (2) Woman suffrage provides an independent voting element;
- (3) Woman suffrage strengthens the cause of temperance and promotes social purity.

Our fourth contention is that the women of the Philippines have sufficiently demonstrated their desire for suffrage. The history of the feminist movement began in the year 1900 when Constancia Poblete moved for the pacification of the Islands and the emancipation of women. The Asociacion Feminista, headed by Miss Concepcion Valdez de Calderon, advocated social emancipation, and Mendoza Guazon and Teodoro Kalaw were principally for suffrage. A publication issued as early as 1901 sponsored the feminist movement. At present we have national organizations of women, like the Federation of Women's Clubs, the Association of University Women, the High Femina, and the Women's Clubs are in favor of woman suffrage, their representatives appearing before the Committee. To contend that the women are not desirous of suffrage is an unchivalrous travesty.

Our last and final contention concerns this Constitution that we are now framing. The Tydings-McDuffie Law provides that, upon approval by the President of the United States, the Constitution will be submitted to a plebiscite, to the qualified voters of the Philippines. An Act of the Ninth Philippine Legislature granted to the woman the right of suffrage from January 1, 1935. Therefore, unless the present Legislature repeals the law before its adjournment, the women will participate in the plebiscite on the Constitution. Without in anyway expressing the fear that the women will lack in patriotism by voting against the Constitution because suffrage is denied them

in that instrument, we desire to call the attention of the Convention to the fact that, after this Constitution is rejected by the people according to the Tydings-McDuffie Law, such rejection will be taken as a vote against independence. In the hands of the women of the Philippines is a thing of danger to which they may resort in desperation. If we review the history of the woman suffrage movement in other countries which were marked by demonstrations of violence and sex hatred, we shall think of these first before taking the established purpose in the resolution now pending for your consideration.

Gentlemen of the Convention: It is the experience in all civilized nations that the grant of suffrage to women is inevitable. The current of all events is surging with great force towards advance and progress in the democratic principles. Is it the sense of this Convention that we should go against the tide and retrogress half a century or a century behind this advancing world? Your answer, I hope, will be a vindication of the capacity of the Filipino men to accept the dictates of progress.

SR. CONEJERO: Señor Presidente, para unas preguntas al orador.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: El orador puede contestar, si le place.

SR. VINZONS: Si, señor.

SR. CONEJERO: Su Señoría, al final de su discurso, hablo de riots, etcetera. Debemos entender esas palabras de Su Señoría como una amenaza a nosotros, si no aprobamos el sufragio femenino en la Constitución ?

MR. VINZONS: Not as a threat, Mr. President, but as a possibility; if not as a remote possibility, I say that it might happen.

SR. CONEJERO: Vamos a otro punto. ¿Podemos saber de Su Señoría en cuantas campañas políticas ha tomado parte?

MR. VINZONS: I have not taken part in any political campaign because the campaign for the delegates was not a case of dirty politics, as it is understood, but of clean national politics.

SR. CONEJERO: De modo que Su Señoría solamente puede hablar de la campaña para delegado y no de ninguna otra campaña política, porque no las ha realizado?

MR. VINZONS: No, because, Mr. President, I have not been a candidate in previous elections, I have not seen politics in the raw. But, on the other hand, I have known politics since I was a toddling tot, and I can say with the guarantee of my personal conviction that I have recently observed politics in the communities of this country.

SR. CONEJERO: ¿No es verdad que durante los días de campaña política, precisamente en provincias, Su Señoría estaba estudiando? (Risas.)

MR. VINZONS: No, Mr. President, political campaigns occur during vacation time, and I have had sufficient opportunity to observe the workings of practical politics.

SR. CONEJERO: ¿Por qué se necesita el sufragio femenino ?

MR. VINZONS: There is an urgent necessity for woman suffrage, Mr. President. We are at present embarking on a new experiment in our national life. We are supposed to establish here a government republican in form, democratic in principle, and therefore representative of all classes and interests. If, according to President Taft, the aim of democracy is to give representation to every class and to every interest and the ideal of democracy is to enlarge the electorate, then there is an urgent necessity of woman suffrage.

SR. CONEJERO: Ahora que Su Señoría ha hablado de la democracia, y que el sufragio femenino es una de las

partes que debe tener esa democracia, ¿podría explicarme que relación tiene esa democracia con Catalina de Rusia, con Isabel de España, citadas por Su Señoría?

MR. VINZONS: I mentioned those instances. Mr. President, not to connect them with democracy, but to lay my foundation from democracy because women must exercise the vote intelligently; and I want to prove by those illustrations that they are entitled to the right to vote.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: La hora del Delegado por Camarines Norte ha expirado ya.

MOCION ROMERO

SR. ROMERO: Señor Presidente.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: Señor Delegado.

SR. ROMERO: Habiendo hablado ya tres oradores por cada lado, el Comité de Reglamentos pide que el debate sobre la cuestión principal se limite hasta el lunes.

MR. ABORDO: Mr. President, I move that the debate be closed.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: La moción del Delegado por Negros Oriental es preferente.

SR. PERFECTO: Señor Presidente, para una enmienda a la moción.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: Puede el Delegado por Manila formular su enmienda.

SR PERFECTO: Pido que en lugar del lunes, sea el martes.

SR. ROMERO: Acepto la enmienda, señor Presidente.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: ¿Hay objeción por parte de la Asamblea? (Silencio.) La Mesa no oye ninguna. Queda aprobada.

LEVANTAMIENTO DE LA SESION

SR. ROMERO: Señor Presidente, pido que se levante la sesión hasta mañana a las cuatro de la tarde.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: ¿Hay alguna objeción a la moción? (Silencio.) La Mesa no oye ninguna. Queda aprobada.

Se levanta la sesión hasta mañana por la tarde.

Eran las 6:16 p.m.

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.