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APERTURA DE LA SESION

Se abre la sesion a las 10:18 a.m. bajo la presidencia del Hon. Claro M. Recto

EL PRESIDENTE: Lease la lista de Delegados.

SR. GRAFILO: Señor Presidente, pido que se dispense la lectura de la lista, :

EL PRESIDENTE: ¿Hay alguna objecion. (Silencio.) La Mesa no oye ninguna. Se dispense la lectura de la lista.

APROBACION DEL ACTA

SR. GRAFILO: Señor Presidente, pido igualmente que se dispense la lectura del acta, y que la misma se de por aprobada.

EL PRESIDENTE: ¿Hay alguna objecion? **(Silencio.)** La Mesa no oye ninguna. Aprobada.

APROBACION DE UNA REGLA ESPECIAL

EL PRESIDENTE: De conformidad con lo acordado en la sesion del miercoles, 31 de octubre de 1934, se declara en orden la discusion de la regla especial para la consideracion del proyecto de Constitucion. ¿Hay algunos turnos en contra?

MR. ABORDO: Mr. President, if I remember correctly, yesterday should have been the time for the presentation of amendments to the resolution under consideration. Inasmuch as no action was taken yesterday, I propose that the amendments be considered now,

THE PRESIDENT: We are considering the Special Rule. ¿Hay alguna objecion a esta regla especial? (Silencio.) La Mesa no oye ninguna. Aprobada.

Esta en orden ahora la continuacion de la discusion sobre el sufragio femenino.

SR. ABELLA: Señor Presidente, pido que se ponga ahora a discusion la enmienda presentada por el Delegado por Camarines Norte, Sr. Vinzons.

EL PRESIDENTE: El Secretario manifiesta a la Mesa que la primera enmienda que se ha presentado es la de los Delegados Lopez y otros.

MR. PEREZ (J.): Mr. President, for a question of information. Is it necessary that all amendments be in writing?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Any amendment can be made orally.

CONSIDERACION DE LA ENMIENDA LOPEZ (E.)

MR. LOPEZ (E.): Mr. President, the amendment which I have presented speaks for itself. The idea involved in that amendment is not original. The provision of the draft of the Constitution, which we are soon to discuss, inspired me to present this amending resolution. In support of the resolution, I should like to inform the Convention of the following facts: In the general elections of 1934, 1,508,113 electors registered . . .

SR. ESCAREAL: Señor Presidente, yo pido que haya mas orden.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): **(Continuing.)** In the general elections of 1934, there were in the whole Philippine Islands, registered as voters, 1,503,113. Of that number, 1,310,197 voted. In the election of delegates, 865,476 voted. It is to be presumed that if a plebiscite is held, 1,500,000 women can qualify to decide the question.

SR. PAREDES: Para un turno en contra.

SR. GULLAS: Para otro turno en contra.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): The amending resolution requires the vote of only 300,000 women to carry woman suffrage. In other words, only one-fifth of the total number of women, who can qualify, is needed to decide the measure. I believe that number is just. I think the provision is democratic enough. No woman in the Philippine Islands can accuse men of injustice because women themselves will settle the question.

MR. GRAFILO: May I ask some questions of the father of the amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): Yes; I am ready to answer any question.

MR. GRAFILO: Do we have in mind any fixed date for the plebiscite?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): According to the amending resolution, the Legislature shall provide for a plebiscite.

MR. GRAFILO: So, without a fixed date?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): There is no fixed date, but to my mind the Legislature will have to consider it its duty to provide for a plebiscite.

MR. GRAFILO: The equity is based on the present number of registered electors which, as you have estimated, is only one-fifth of the estimated female electors?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): No sir; there are 1,503,113 registered male voters in the Philippine Islands.

MR. GRAFILO: So, taking into consideration that the same number will be women, the equity is based on one-fifth of the supposed female electors.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): One fifth of the estimated number of women who will be able to

qualify.

MR. GRAFILO: Today?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): Yes, sir.

MR. GRAFILO: Suppose the Legislature will pass a law twenty years from the establishment of the Philippine Commonwealth, calling for that plebiscite, and there will be about 3,000,000 female electors, will the same equity of 300,000 female electors hold good?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): The same equity will hold good. MR. GRAFILO: It is only one-tenth.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): The idea behind the amendment is this: Those who are in favor of woman suffrage argue that the women in the Philippines are interested in this question and that they are anxious to vote. Those who are against woman suffrage argue that the women in the Philippines are not interested in suffrage, and that they do not want to vote. If 300,000 women vote in favor of woman suffrage, the number is sufficiently large to extend to the women the right of suffrage.

MR. GRAFILO: Will it not be convenient if we insert, instead of the number, say, we put—should a number of women equal to one-fifth of the registered male electors so that the number of women voting affirmatively should be equal to one-fifth of the number of electors?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): That will not be acceptable.

MR. PEREZ (J.): I move that the amendment of the Special Rules be considered.

MR. GRAFILO: Mr. President, for a parliamentary question. Did the Gentleman who presented the motion vote in favor of the motion when it was carried or not?

MR. NEPOMUCENO: I rise for a question of order. We are not discussing the rules now.

EL PRESIDENTE: Esta fuera de orden. No se puede reconsiderar porque la votacion no ha sido nominal y no se sabe quienes han votado en pro y quienes en contra.

SR. ROXAS: No nos hemos enterado, ni se ha leído siquiera . . .

EL PRESIDENTE: Eso no es correcto. Se ha leído por el Secretario. Si algunos han estado desatentos, la Mesa no tiene la culpa. La Mesa pregunto si había objeción a la regla especial, y nadie se opuso.

SR. LOPEZ (V.): Que más da que se conceda la reconsideración, si vamos a aclarar esta cuestión?

EL PRESIDENTE: La moción de reconsideración tiene que presentarse de acuerdo con el Reglamento.

MR. PEREZ (J.): I appeal to the decision of the Chair.

SR. MILLAR: Estamos considerando aun la enmienda sobre el sufragio femenino.

MR. BOCAR; Mr. President, will the Gentlemen yield?

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): Willingly.

MR. BOCAR: What is the special motive for fixing 300,000 as the number that should favor woman suffrage? Why 300,000? Why not 150,000 or 100,000?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): The idea is this: If 300,000 women vote in favor of woman suffrage, that number is sufficiently large to justify the extension of the right to women. If we fix a small equity, say, 100,000, such a measure may be interpreted as undemocratic, because there are more than 1,500,000 women who can qualify in such a plebiscite ...

MR. BOCAR: But does not the Gentleman think it is unfair to set 300,000 for women when this is the first time they will exercise the privilege to vote, when even among men those who are qualified are not interested in going to the polls?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): It is not unfair.

MR. VILLAREAL: Mr. President, I move to adjourn.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): Mr. President, I have the floor.

MR. VILLAREAL: For a privileged question. Apelo a la Mesa.

MR. PAREDES: Mr. President, for a point of order. Someone has the floor, and no one can present a motion for adjournment.

EL PRESIDENTE: Esta fuera de orden la mocion porque el Delegado por Batangas esta en el uso de la palabra.

SR. KAPUNAN: Para un turno en contra de la enmienda.

MR. BOCAR: Does not the Gentleman think it is unfair to fix that figure of 300,000?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): As I said, it is not unfair. If those who are for woman suffrage believe that the women of the Philippines are really interested in getting the vote in favor of the right. Three hundred thousand, as I have stated, will constitute only one-fifth of the total number of women qualified as electors in the Philippines.

MR. BOCAR: Under the plan, if 280,000 women vote, or 20,000 short of the required number, will women not be granted the right of suffrage?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): No.

MR. BOCAR: In the event a plebiscite is held, and less than 300,000 woman vote affirmatively, is there another chance for women to revive the question of suffrage

through another plebiscite?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): According to the resolution, there is no prohibition as to another plebiscite, only that other plebiscite will have to depend on the discretion of the Legislature.

MR. BOCAR: Does not the Gentleman think that it will be fairer if, instead of fixing the number of 300,000, he provides in his amendment for a majority of the women taking part in the plebiscite as in favor of suffrage?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): That will not be democratic to my mind.

MR. BOCAR: Why not?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): Because, suppose only 10,000 women vote in favor of woman suffrage—that will not represent, to my mind, the opinion or the voice of 1,500,000 women who can vote on the subject.

MR. BOCAR: But there are those who are of the opinion that women really do not want to vote. The plebiscite will be a chance for the women who are not really in favor of suffrage to work and go to the polls to register their opposition, so that there is no danger that only a minority will vote.

MR. BOCAR: I call the attention of the Gentleman to the argument that women themselves are indifferent to the question of suffrage or that they do not want it. Now, if they do not want it, they will be interested enough to go to the polls and register their opposition.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): If those women are not interested, I see no reason why this Convention should extend the right of suffrage to them.

MR. LAPAK: Mr. President, will the Gentleman yield?

THE PRESIDENT. The Gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): Willingly.

MR. LAPAK: Suppose 700,000 women take part in the plebiscite, 400,000 voting in the negative and 300,000 in the affirmative, what will that mean? It will mean that the majority of the women do not want suffrage. But, under the resolution, the 300,000 will win over the 400,000.

MR. LOPEZ (E.): You are right.

MR. LAPAK: In that case what will happen, according to the resolution?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): The woman will get the vote if 300,000 vote in favor.

MR. LAPAK: Do you mean to say that the 400,000 will be defeated by the 300,000?

MR. LOPEZ (E.): Yes, under the pending resolution.