

JOURNAL NO. 73

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:

1. When we draft the Constitution.
Gentlemen of the Convention,
We must insert a provision
On Woman's emancipation.
2. This woman suffrage question
Affects half our population,
And it's up to this Convention
To make a wise decision.

3. Our women are qualified,
That much cannot be denied;
Though as yet they have not tried,
Upon they can be relied.
4. We cannot deny that right;
They will insist and they will fight.
Though oppose with all our might.
We will yield, to be polite.
5. The Legislature gave them suffrage;
That's a covenant and a pledge,
Which I think must be respected,
In the Constitution inserted.
6. That law was well considered,
By the Legislature studied,
And it cannot be said
That it was by mistake enacted.
7. Of course, the Legislature
Is just a body inferior;
It's acts this body can ignore,
Because in power we're superior.
8. But there is no valid reason
To justify this Convention,
In preventing the operation
Of that suffrage Legislation.
9. Women have not even enjoyed
The right, by law, them granted;
And now it is contemplated
To kill the law before it's tried;
10. There is nothing incompatible
With women's duties and the poll;
It will even be honorable
That women take a political role.
11. Talk you of their capacity?
Then women have that quality.
Ask you of their unity?
They answer you, town and city;
12. Tell me not it will be costly,
That the Government lacks money;
If money be spent then wisely.
That's the price of democracy.
13. Politics here is dirty,
Black with corruption so nasty;
Corrupt men elected through money,
Rich candidates by bribery.
14. When women vote, those cannot be;
They will sweep the frauds away;
For women will vote honestly
For conviction, not for money.
15. Arguments have been presented
That the homes will be neglected,
That family harmony destroyed,
And our women polluted.

16. These are all imaginary,
False alarm by the enemy.
Election is not every day,
Why are there prophets, anyway?
17. Let us have more faith, gentlemen,
In the goodness of our women;
They are not going to cause ruin
When their suffrage is given.
18. They say only women in Manila.
Are noisy in this **campaña**;
That not a single **provinciana**
Is really a **sufragista**.
19. I don't blame the city women
For their activities and campaign;
On the other hand, I praise them.
Leaders, pioneers, feminine!
20. Don't blame the indifference
... The woman in the province.
Interest is useless, gentlemen.
When suffrage is denied to them.
21. For what good is for women,
If officials be good or bad men?
When they cannot vote for those chosen—
So indifferent they remain.
22. 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.
23. 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.
24. If women's vote will duplicate,
We should not worry nor regret;
For more votes for a candidate
Means his popularity is great.
25. 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.
26. We are building a new nation,
With justice as foundation;
But the men are in division
And the women in oblivion.
27. This is a democracy
Of citizens equal and free;
But men have a monopoly,
And women have nothing to say.
28. This is a democracy.
Not a dictatorship nor a monarchy.
To insure the nation's safety,
There must be true equality.

29. In the affairs of the Government,
All have parts as all are meant;
There can be no side agreement
On this important point.
30. Why just give women the duty?
And deny them authority?
Is there justice, equality?
Gentlemen, please answer me!
31. All the problems of the nation,
The duties and obligations,
Are not borne by men alone
But by women in addition.
32. 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?
33. Suffrage is not a question of sex;
Capacity should be the index.
So in our national politics,
Men and women should freely mix.
34. Politics is not so hard
That the woman should be barred ;
Their duties it will not retard,
So why not give them this award?
35. Let us be fair and just, Gentlemen;
Decide this question as statesmen,
With justice, wisdom, vision keen,
That glory in our work be seen.
36. There's a plan to: compromise,
A plebiscite to be devised,
To determine the bulk and size,
Of the women pros and antis.
37. But, Gentlemen, it is not wise
To favor this compromise;
You know it is cowardice
To evade duty and deny justice.
38. Why fear responsibility
Of facing the question squarely?
If you are a pro or an anti,
Better be frank, that's more manly!
39. 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?
40. You who are all chivalrous,
Gallant comrades, compañeros!
Patriotic Delegados!
Help the women and be heroes!
41. 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?

42. Who among us would be selfish
And treat women with injustice?
Who among us don't realize
That woman suffrage is wise?
43. The women we love as wives,
Mothers, sweethearts, relatives,
In their bosoms the hope yet lives
That justice to them this Body gives.
44. 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.
45. I plead for justice and mercy,
For the women of our country;
I plead for true equality,
Because we are a democracy.
46. 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