

hierro que allí donde está la gangrena, allí donde está la parte purulenta y podrida del cuerpo del servicio público, allí mismo debe hundir el bisturí sin ninguna contemplación, sin oír las reclamaciones jeremiacas de los jefes de burós, para que de esa forma, para que por ese procedimiento, tengamos una Ley de Presupuestos más concorde con la situación precaria de nuestro pueblo, más en armonía con las necesidades y demandas de nuestras masas, y con los altos ideales de un gobierno propio, un gobierno democrático, un gobierno libre, un gobierno soberano de su propio destino, como el que aspiramos tener.

Señor Presidente, he terminado.

DISCURSO EN CONTRA

DEL

Hon. TOMAS CONFESOR

EN LA CÁMARA DE REPRESENTANTES

Jueves, 7 de octubre de 1926

Mr. CONFESOR. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the Committee: Last year, the same subject, the Bill of Appropriations, invited many eloquent speeches on the floor of this chamber, and one of the Representatives from Cebu, Representative Briones, pronounced one of the most eloquent speeches that he has ever made on the floor of this House. It was a speech full of promise; it was a speech pregnant with his discontent in the present system of appropriating public funds for the maintenance of this Government and in executing the aims and purposes for which those funds had been voted. Occupying an important position and commanding an influence in this House on account of his eloquence, we should have every reason to expect that this year the country would be favored with a bill prepared with a view to introducing efficiency and more economy in the expenses and activities of the Government for the year 1927.

Mr. Chairman, I regret to state on this floor that this bill is a greater disappointment than the bill of last year. Taking into account what has been said in favor of a more economical financial program of the Government for the year 1927, when we were discussing the bill for the year 1926, and the measure now before us, I say that all that we declared on economy and efficiency was all hot air. In other words, it was all speeches; it was all talk. As a proof, there was no action taken consonant with those sentiments as expressed on the floor of this House last year.

Mr. DACANAY. Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Willingly.

Mr. DACANAY. I should like to know from the gentleman from Iloilo if he has a budget plan to be submitted to the House which is better than the plan submitted by the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. CONFESOR. I am ready to submit one if the House would instruct me to do so.

Mr. DACANAY. But as a member of the Committee on Appropriations, is it not your duty to submit a budget plan which would improve the Budget as submitted to the Committee?

Mr. CONFESOR. It is my duty and also yours and in fact everybody's and more so of the Committee, but the Committee has not done it. And if the Committee has not done it the House should expect less from me, gentleman from La Unión.

Mr. DACANAY. Will the gentleman from Iloilo have any inconvenience in submitting a separate budget plan which, in his opinion, may be better than the Budget already submitted?

Mr. CONFESOR. No, if the House would want me to do so. I am ready to assume the responsibility.

Sr. CUENCO. Señor Presidente, para algunas preguntas al orador.

El PRESIDENTE. El orador puede contestar, si le place.

Sr. CONFESOR. Sí, señor.

Sr. CUENCO. ¿Qué proposiciones concretas ha sometido Su Señoría al Comité al objeto de que se pueda someter un presupuesto ideal, como Su Señoría desea?

Sr. CONFESOR. He sometido la proposición ante el Comité, de que el mismo debía someter un *Budget* a la Cámara standardizando los sueldos de los empleados del Gobierno, y el Comité rechazó aquella proposición con su tradicional contestación de que no hay tiempo para realizar el traba a ese efecto.

Sr. CUENCO. ¿No es verdad que la proposición de Su Señoría se refería solamente al Buró de Obras Públicas, aumentando los sueldos de los empleados de dicha Oficina?

Sr. CONFESOR. No, señor, aquella proposición era del Subcomité al cual yo pertenecía, y aquella proposición contenía un plan de standardización. Precisamente, yo quisiera hacer constar que no estoy opuesto a conceder aumento de sueldos a los empleados del Gobierno; pero por lo que siempre he abogado y abogo dentro del Comité es por que tracemos un plan sistemático y científico para conceder esos aumentos y no escoger una persona aquí y otra persona allá para concederles aumento. ¿Qué razón tenemos con escoger, por ejemplo, un clerk que lleva el No. 350, aumentándole el sueldo de ₱200 a ₱240, y un jefe de división de ₱4,000 a ₱4,500, sin aumentar el sueldo a los demás empleados?

Sr. CUENCO. Si la proposición de Su Señoría hubiera sido aprobada, ¿no es verdad que el resultado inmediato sería el aumento en varios miles de pesos, pues al menos en cuanto a la Oficina de Obras Públicas, implicaba un aumento de ₱70,000 en el presupuesto de dicha Oficina?

Sr. CONFESOR. Prefiero dar ₱10,000 a una persona que puede hacer el trabajo de diez personas que cada una de ellas recibiría ₱100; prefiero un trabajo bueno, eficiente, que un trabajo barato, que resulte después un fracaso.

Sr. CUENCO. En resumidas cuentas, todo lo que propuso Su Señoría era aumentar los sueldos de los funcionarios de Obras Públicas, aumento que implicaba ₱70,000 nada menos.

Sr. CONFESOR. Voy a llegar a ese punto. Voy a explicar eso.

(Continuing.) Mr. Chairman, last year we passed a measure creating a budget office. The purpose of that was to institute in our financial administration in the Government more economy and more efficiency. Consequently, if we were really in earnest and sincere about the purpose for which that bill was passed, we should have reported to this House a bill in consonance and in harmony with that Budget measure.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Willingly.

Mr. FRANCISCO (F. A.). Is the gentleman from Iloilo aware of the fact that the Committee to which he belongs has approved in last session that Budget bill that was vetoed by the Governor-General?

Mr. CONFESOR. Precisely, I say now that the Committee is guilty of inconsistency. It advocated economy and efficiency in one bill, but in another bill it presented a Budget not only increasing the expenses of the Government, not only increasing the salaries of a selected few, but also created new activities without proper investigation.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Is not the gentleman from Iloilo aware of the fact, as a member of the Committee that the reason why the majority of that Committee has increased some salaries was because efficiency needed it?

Mr. CONFESOR. I will answer that question in the course of my speech.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). I want an answer right now.

Mr. CONFESOR. I will answer that later.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Is not the gentleman from Iloilo aware of the fact that efficiency was the very reason why the Committee approved such increases in salaries?

Mr. CONFESOR. That is why I said that the Committee has not reported a good Budget, because I am not of the opinion. I do not agree with the Committee as to its methods of promoting efficiency.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). The gentleman from Iloilo should also remember and should not forget that the bill or the proposition to standardize the salaries of the engineers of the Bureau of Public Works was submitted by the gentleman now speaking against the bill. In that bill he proposed to increase the salaries of engineers on the sole ground that efficiency needed it, but the majority of the members of the Committee disapproved it on the ground that it would not improve efficiency.

Mr. CONFESOR. It is a question of opinion, gentleman from Albay.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Willingly.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). Could you tell us what is the Government's income for the coming year?

Mr. CONFESOR. The estimate is ₱73,000,000.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). What is supposed to be the expenditure for the coming year?

Mr. CONFESOR. In round numbers, about ₱70,000,000.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). So we have an excess of about ₱3,000,000.

Mr. CONFESOR. Yes, sir.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). Are you a member of that Committee, gentleman from Iloilo?

Mr. CONFESOR. Yes, sir.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). Did we not approve a bill not very long ago appropriating ₱3,000,000 for provincial and municipal bonds?

Mr. CONFESOR. Yes, sir, but that amount was not included in the Budget.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). But where are we going to get that sum?

Mr. CONFESOR. That is the very reason why I am fighting this appropriation bill.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). Does not the Committee know that we have bigger problems to solve especially the question of Mindanao for whose development we need to have some money?

Mr. CONFESOR. I believe that the question should be propounded to the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). Inasmuch as your honor is attacking the Committee, I should like to ask you some questions.

Mr. CONFESOR. The facts that you are trying to bring out simply go to show that this Budget carries more than what it should carry for salaries, traveling expenses, furnitures and fixtures, and other alleged necessities of the Government.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). I understand that you are attacking the bill as a whole.

Mr. CONFESOR. Yes, sir.

Mr. VILLANUEVA (G. Z.). On what ground, may I ask?

Mr. CONFESOR. You will be informed about that in the course of my speech.

Mr. DE LA CRUZ. Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Yes, sir.

Mr. DE LA CRUZ. Is the gentleman from Iloilo aware of the fact that there are now more than one million pesos superavit from last year's income?

Mr. CONFESOR. For that very reason, Mr. Chairman, we would economize more to increase that surplus, so that we should be able to redeem our indebtedness to the United States. It is for that very reason that I am speaking against the bill, because I want to defend that surplus. I want to see that that surplus is kept intact and not reduced.

Mr. DE LA CRUZ. Is not the gentleman from Iloilo aware of the fact that the increase in the Budget is due to the increase in the insular aid to public primary schools. We increased that aid, from seven to eight and a half million pesos, is not that true?

Mr. CONFESOR. That has been answered already by the gentleman from Cebu.

Mr. DE LA CRUZ. Is the gentleman from Iloilo opposed . . .

Mr. CONFESOR. But let me tell the gentleman from Pangasinan that we should get that additional one

million pesos for the Bureau of Education from the economies that we should effect in the items in the Budget, and not take that amount from the surplus.

Mr. DE LA CRUZ. Is the gentleman from Iloilo opposed to increasing the insular aid for the maintenance of public primary schools in the Islands?

Mr. CONFESOR. I am not opposed to any reasonable aid, but I am opposed to insular aid to the extent that would create a feeling among our people that they should always look upon the Insular Government for aid in maintaining their schools.

Mr. DE LA CRUZ. Then you are opposed to the insular aid to the municipalities for the maintenance of public primary schools?

Mr. CONFESOR. No, sir.

Mr. DE LA CRUZ. And what is your opposition then to the increase in the Budget for next year when that increase goes to aid the primary public schools?

Mr. CONFESOR. If the gentleman from Pangasinan will have the patience to listen to my speech, I will come to that point.

Mr. BITENG. Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Willingly.

Mr. BITENG. Has the gentleman from Iloilo always attended the meetings of the Committee on Appropriations?

Mr. CONFESOR. The gentleman from Ilocos Sur is asking me a question which might lead to certain declarations on my part, declarations which might not sound very agreeable to the ears of the members of the Committee on Appropriations. I would, therefore, prefer not to answer the question. Otherwise it might bring about serious complications in our discussion of the Appropriation Bill.

Mr. BITENG. Has the gentleman from Iloilo presented any plan of standardization of salaries to the Committee on Appropriations?

Mr. CONFESOR. The gentleman from Ilocos Sur is aware of the fact that the Committee on Appropriations is divided into subcommittees, and each subcommittee has its corresponding department of the Government whose Budget it has to study. Insofar as my subcommittee, which is in charge of the bureaus and offices under the Department of Commerce and Communications is concerned, it has submitted a plan of standardization with respect to the technical employees of the Bureau of Public Works.

Mr. BITENG. Is it not true that the gentleman from Iloilo has submitted a plan of standardization of salaries with respect to the employees of the Bureau of Public Works only because he has friends in that bureau whereas he has no friends in others?

Mr. CONFESOR. Mr. Chairman, I regret very much that the gentleman from Ilocos Sur is asking me a question which I must answer without affecting other members of the Committee. I have friends, Mr. Chairman, in the Bureau of Public Works just as the gentleman from Ilocos Sur has friends in other bureaus. Nobody, however, could say that I

proposed increases of salaries for any particular employee of the Bureau of Public Works because he was my friend. I challenge the gentleman from Ilocos Sur to point out any proposition of mine in the Committee on Appropriations asking for increases of salaries for certain individuals. I submitted a plan of standardization giving proportionate increases for every technical men in the bureau ninety-nine per cent of whom I do not know. Perhaps the gentleman from Ilocos Sur might be referring to a good friend of mine in the Bureau of Public Works, Mr. Quisumbing, who was acting chief of the Irrigation Division. But I would like to inform this Committee that Mr. Quisumbing's resignation was going to take effect irrevocably three days after I presented that plan of standardization for the Bureau of Public Works. So that it is clear enough that I was not requesting any raise of salary for him. I do not wish, Mr. Chairman, to accuse anybody here for having obtained increases of salaries for their friends in certain bureaus, but I want to say this: that many of the increases now in the Budget were made on the basis of personal friendship. I know also of members of the Committee who opposed increases for certain individuals because those individuals were *persona non grata* to them.

Mr. GUINTO. Señor Presidente, para una cuestión de orden. Yo creo que no es procedente que un miembro del Comité, como es el orador, hable de los secretos del Comité. ¿Dónde pondríamos el decoro de un Comité?

Mr. CONFESOR. Me alegro de todo corazón de que se haya presentado la cuestión de orden suscitada por el Caballero por Tayabas, porque yo le veía muy contento cuando el Representante por Ilocos Sur me dirigía la pregunta de si yo no había propuesto aumentos para mis amigos creyendo que esa pregunta me ponía en un aprieto. Ahora que estoy diciendo las verdades me quiere tapar la boca.

Mr. GUINTO. Para una información. Precisamente quise interrumpir al Caballero por Ilocos Sur, al formular la pregunta, porque lo consideraba asunto personal.

El PRESIDENTE. La Mesa no ha reconocido al Caballero por Tayabas.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Iloilo may yield if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Yes, sir, willingly.

Mr. REYES. I understand from your statements that you submitted to the Committee on Appropriations a plan to standardize certain salaries. Will the gentleman from Iloilo be kind enough to inform the Committee of the Whole House whether that plan covered the entire government service?

Mr. CONFESOR. As I said, it was only for the Bureau of Public Works which was assigned to me for study and I prepare its appropriation.

Mr. REYES. Has not the gentleman offered a general plan, a general scientific plan, for the entire government service?

Mr. CONFESOR. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from La Union asked me the same question. As I

said, I am ready to submit a scientific, equitable plan if the Committee would duly instruct and authorize me to do so.

Mr. REYES. May I know the reason why the gentleman from Iloilo did not deem it proper to submit his plan to the Committee on Appropriations so that said Committee could have studied his plan?

Mr. CONFESOR. To start with, the Committee declared that it had no time to undertake the study of such a plan. Moreover, I did not deem it wise to encroach upon the jurisdiction of the other subcommittees.

Mr. REYES. Why would the gentleman submit his plan to the Committee of the Whole House rather than to the Committee on Appropriations, which could have very well acted on the same?

Mr. CONFESOR. I submitted a plan for the Bureau of Public Works, and it was a scientific plan.

Mr. REYES. But the Bureau of Public Works is not the whole Philippine Government.

Mr. CONFESOR. But at least if the Committee welcomes the idea of the standardization of salaries, it should have adopted a plan of standardization of salaries that I have submitted for the Bureau of Public Works.

Mr. REYES. The Committee did not adopt your proposition because it is merely a part of the problem.

Mr. CONFESOR. It is better to solve a part of the problem than not to solve the whole problem at all.

Mr. REYES. As the plan for the Bureau of Public Works would give certain benefits to its personnel, which benefit could not be enjoyed by other technical men of other bureaus, does not the gentleman think that for that very reason there is discrimination in favor of this bureau of the Government?

Mr. CONFESOR. From the commencement the sessions of the Committee on Appropriations, I proposed that the Committee should work out a standardization plan of salaries for the Civil Service personnel in the Government.

Mr. REYES. You suggested but you did not offer your plan.

Mr. CONFESOR. I submitted that plan. We had a motion presented to the Committee to that effect, but the Committee turned it down. The Committee said it had no time. That is the traditional attitude of the Committee when fundamental reforms are proposed.

Mr. REYES. It was because the gentleman from Iloilo had no time to present his fundamental reforms, I believe.

Mr. CONFESOR. I hope that the gentleman from Sorsogon would not want me to bear the whole burden of responsibility that the Committee should assume. If that is the case, however, I would like to ask the members of the Committee on Appropriations if they agree with the gentleman from Sorsogon that I should assume the burden of responsibility inasmuch as the Committee fears to adopt a scientific plan of promotion for men in the government service.

Mr. REYES. I am not putting the blame on you as far as your plan to submit an estimate was concerned . . .

Mr. CONFESOR. I am ready to submit a plan before the House, the same that the Committee did not accept.

Mr. REYES. But it was not offered.

Mr. CONFESOR. It was offered several times.

(Continuing.) Mr. Chairman, I am glad to see the members of this Committee taking even just apparent interest on the question of standardization of salaries. I am glad to see them manifest publicly that they also want to standardize the salaries of employees in the Government service, but what is lacking is only a plan. And if the Committee on Appropriations has not for two years evolved, or formulated a plan of standardization, it should plead guilty before the bar of public opinion for having failed to accomplish its duty.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to take up more in detail the question of increases in salaries for certain selected few in the Government service in the course of my speech. Before closing that, however, I would like to take up one topic which is of great interest to the Legislature. The Legislature is well aware of the fact that under the present circumstances, and under the present methods and practice of this Legislature, we are rendered at the mercy of the administrative department of the Government. They have us in the hollow of their hands. They could make us to anything that they want. This Legislature is, therefore, a mere tool of the executive department of this Government. This Legislature does not have the means and the instrumentalities whereby it could delve into detail in the preparation of the Budget, and also in its execution. We are absolutely ignorant of the facts involved in its process of preparation and execution. I am sure that we could count with the fingers of our hands the number of members of this House who could tell us what had been done with certain appropriations for this or that bureau last year.

Mr. ALMEIDA. Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Willingly.

Mr. ALMEIDA. From what I have heard from the speech of the gentleman from Iloilo, he seems to be at hand on all items of the Budget Bill. Yet, I presume that the gentleman from Iloilo was not present in all the meetings of the Committee, is that so?

Mr. CONFESOR. I would hate to state my reasons here why I decided after a number of attendance in the Committee meetings, to discontinue my attendance.

Mr. ALMEIDA. So, do I understand from the gentleman from Iloilo that, having been thus disgusted, he abandoned the battlefield?

Mr. CONFESOR. Not exactly that. I had other Committee sessions to attend. I regarded, however, that any effort was futile to convince the Committee on Appropriations to adopt a standardization schedule of salaries, taking into account the state of mind of the majority of the members of the Committee.

Mr. ALMEIDA. What I would like to know now is: Is the gentleman from Iloilo informed of the

fact that the Committee on Appropriations approved, as it so appears in the proposed Budget, about one hundred twenty new items or new posts?

Mr. CONFESOR. Yes, sir.

Mr. ALMEIDA. What attitude has the gentleman from Iloilo taken on this matter?

Mr. CONFESOR. I opposed them the minute I abandoned the meetings of the Committee, that was tantamount to saying that I opposed everything from that time on, as I am doing now.

Mr. ALMEIDA. Is the gentleman from Iloilo also aware of the fact that other items (around twenty or thirty items) concerning provincial agencies of the Bureau of Labor had been suppressed? And may I know from the gentleman from Iloilo what stand he took on this matter?

Mr. CONFESOR. As a matter of fact, I felt indignant when I learned about the action of the Committee to that effect. Not because I was opposed to the suppression, nor was I in favor, but on account of the manner those items were eliminated.

Mr. ALMEIDA. What was the manner, if you please?

Mr. CONFESOR. I do not want to reveal anything that the Committee did, because it is contrary to rules.

Mr. ALMEIDA. But as a member of the Committee of the Whole, and not being a member of the Committee on Appropriations, I would like to be informed as to what procedure the Committee had.

Mr. CONFESOR. The procedure was more or less this: a certain member moved for the suppression and everybody asked: Who is the director of that bureau? The name was given. Almost everybody agreed to the motion. And the motion was carried. In other words, there was no conscientious and honest investigation made before the suppression was approved.

Mr. ALMEIDA. Does the gentleman from Iloilo imply or signify that he would be willing to reestablish those posts?

Mr. CONFESOR. I do not want to herald my views on the question.

Mr. ALMEIDA. Will the gentleman from Iloilo please inform me as to whether or not the Committee took into consideration the fact that these suppressed posts are a direct help to the lower class of people?

Mr. CONFESOR. The Committee did not discuss that question. The subcommittee which covered the bureau did not recommend the suppression. It was another member of the Committee on Appropriations who presented the motion.

Mr. ALMEIDA. I suppose that there is no secret in that. May I know the man who made the motion?

Mr. CONFESOR. I do not want to say anything further on that point. The minutes of the Committee will show who the man was.

Mr. ALMEIDA. I would like to have that information if the gentleman from Iloilo believes that it is not a secret.

Mr. CONFESOR. I am not in a position to give out the name. Mr. Chairman, I would like to proceed.

Mr. BITENG. Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Willingly.

Mr. BITENG. Is it not true that the suppression of the provincial agencies of the Bureau of Labor was made by a subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations which made a special study of the matter?

Mr. CONFESOR. Not the subcommittee to which I belong.

Mr. BITENG. But, the gentleman from Iloilo made a statement to the effect that the suppression was made without any conscientious study of the matter. I wish to state before the House that the suppression was made by a subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations which made a special study of the matter and recommended the suspension of the agencies.

Mr. CONFESOR. At least I am not aware of that Committee created to study that specific item of the Bureau of Labor.

(Continuing.) Mr. Chairman, as I was saying, the Legislature by the way it handles the Appropriation Bill renders itself at the mercy of the executive department of the Government. The members of this Committee are aware of the fact that only very few bureaus of the Government have furnished the members of this Legislature with copies of their annual reports. No member of this House nor of this Committee has any information, for example, as to what the Bureau of Forestry has done or has accomplished during the year 1925. No member of this House has been furnished with the necessary information regarding the work done in the University of the Philippines nor in the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes and in many other bureaus. Yet this Legislature appropriates money year after year for those offices of the Government without the necessary adequate information. Only very few bureaus furnish the members of the Legislature with the reports of their respective offices every year.

Another reason why we should not approve this Appropriation Bill is that it has been prepared by an office which has no power or authority to examine into the activities of each bureau and office of the Government. What power has the Secretary of Finance to investigate into the activities and accomplishments of a certain bureau before he allows that bureau a certain amount of money for next year?

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield if he so wishes.

Mr. CONFESOR. Willingly.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). You are blaming the Secretary of Finance for making or preparing the Budget?

Mr. CONFESOR. No, I am not blaming the Secretary of Finance. I say that he has no power nor authority to go into every item of the appropriation of each bureau or department office with a view to determining their necessity.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Is not the gentleman aware of the fact that the Secretary of Finance always obtained a complete report of the workings of every bureau and department of the Government, and that all reports, the kind of work, the kind of efficiency and saving that is produced or made by this bureau or office are reported to the Secretary of Finance, and that the Secretary of Finance always make his report and prepare his Budget in accordance with the reports of the different chiefs and directors of the different offices?

Mr. CONFESOR. Mr. Chairman, to convince the gentleman from Albay that the Secretary of Finance has neither the power nor the authority to investigate the operation of each bureau or office, I would like to mention the fact that he has no power nor authority to suppress any activities or offices which duplicate one another. Mr. Chairman, I will mention a specific case. There is a duplication of work in checking the surveys made by the Bureau of Lands. There is a set of surveyors in the Bureau of Lands checking surveys made by its field surveyors. The Office of Land Registration has a division doing practically the same work as done by the Bureau of Lands over these surveys. The Bureau of Commerce and Industry has a statistical division and the Bureau of Customs has another. If the gentleman from Albay, Mr. Chairman, had taken the pains to look into the statistics and into the work done by its statistical divisions of these two bureaus, he will find in them duplication of work. Has the Secretary of Finance any authority or power to suppress any one of those divisions or to recommend the suppression of one of said divisions? No. Because one division is not under his department.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Is not the gentleman aware of the fact that the Budget for 1926 or any Budget before that has always been the result of the working together of the different offices and bureaus of the Government of the Philippine Islands?

Mr. CONFESOR. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman from Albay would take the pains to examine the manner the Secretary of Finance prepares the Budget, he would find that that office has been converted only into an addition and subtraction office. That is all. The chief of a bureau submits his appropriation. The Secretary of Finance looks over and says: "This bureau is asking too much money. The government does not have enough money. Your Budget must be reduced." That is all what he does. The Secretary of Finance has no right to tell the chief of a bureau or the secretary of a department that he does not need so much money because he will have more personnel than what is needed. No, he merely tells him that there is not enough money for that. Because he does not have the power nor authority to tell any department secretary or bureau chief not under his jurisdiction that that activity should not be provided for in the Budget of the Bureau, any item goes through.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). That does not answer my question. My question is: Is not the gentleman aware of the fact that the preparation of the Budget is the result of the working together of the different bureaus and offices of the Government?

Mr. CONFESOR. It is the result of the work of adding and subtracting, that is all.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). That it is the result of the work and the working together of the different bureaus and offices and as such does not the gentleman think that we should have confidence in those men?

Mr. CONFESOR. Mr. Chairman, my contention is this: that this Appropriation Bill is based on a budget submitted by the Governor-General and prepared by men who are not responsible to the Legislature.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Does the gentleman from Iloilo want us to understand that he has lost faith in the directors and chiefs of bureaus who prepared the Budget that we have here?

Mr. CONFESOR. To say that we have confidence in the bureau chiefs and to say that those men are not responsible to the Legislature are altogether different. One is an entirely different thing from the other.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Who are the men not responsible to the Legislature?

Mr. CONFESOR. The acting secretaries of the departments now.

(Continuing.) Mr. Chairman, our budgetary system and with it the power of the Legislature to pass upon the annual appropriations should have been utilized as an instrument of reënforcing the autonomy that is provided for in the Jones Law. The powers of this Legislature to pass upon the annual appropriations of this Government has not been properly used to that effect. Just now the Government could function even if we did not pass any Appropriation Law. I believe that our Legislature has abdicated one of its fundamental powers of controlling the functions of this Government through its power to vote money for that Government. We could have rendered our autonomous powers more secure, more invulnerable, if we had not abdicated certain powers of this Legislature.

Mr. Chairman, I should like to call the attention of this House regarding the creation of the Manila Harbor Board. This Legislature is not aware of the fact that the Manila Harbor Board is almost exclusively in the hands of non-Filipinos; that the Manila Harbor Board has complete control over its revenues without the intervention of the Legislature. That is one example of the abdication of this Legislature of its power.

Another, last year we created the abaca grading board placing it almost exclusively in the hands of men not Filipinos. We placed in the hands of those men all the revenues coming from the grading of abaca, and this Legislature does not have any intervention in the way that money is being spent. The members of that board and its personnel are now getting salaries higher than the salaries received by those formerly occupying those positions, when it was yet a division in the Bureau of Agriculture.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. I will answer your questions, but I would like Mr. Chairman to request the House to extend my time.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). The Fiber Standardization Board is composed of seven members. Is the gentleman from Iloilo aware of that fact?

Mr. CONFESOR. Yes, sir.

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). Is not the gentleman from Iloilo aware of the fact that only the chairman of the Fiber Standardization Board is receiving salary and the rest do not, not even per diems for their meetings, and for their trip back and forth as members of the Standardization Board?

Mr. CONFESOR. But does not the gentleman from Albay know also that the chairman of that Board now receives twice as much salary as the chief of the former fiber division of the Bureau of Agriculture before?

Mr. PERFECTO. (F. A.). Yes, sir, he does.

Mr. CONFESOR. And is it not also true that the office of the Standardization Board is more luxuriously furnished than the office of the fiber division of the Bureau of Agriculture? Is it not true that they appoint anybody there whomever they want without the intervention of any Government officials?

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). That is not true, I want to give that information to the gentleman from Iloilo, that the Fiber Standardization Board is not as luxuriously furnished as he asserts. Second, not that anybody can be appointed as employee in the Fiber Standardization Board, because only those who have had good experience in the fiber examination or inspection are made members or employees of the standardization board.

Mr. CONFESOR. Is the gentleman from Albay through with his speech?

Mr. PERFECTO (F. A.). I was not making a speech. I was only answering the gentleman from Iloilo, and in fact he grabbed the question that I was going to make to him.

Mr. CONFESOR. (*Continuing.*) Mr. Chairman, irrespective of the information of the gentleman from Albay, my information is to the effect that the Fiber Standardization Board now spends more money, pays higher salaries to its personnel than the salaries formerly received by the employees of the fiber division of the Bureau of Agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to belong to this House and to this Legislature. It is a privilege, Mr. Chairman, to be a member of this House where you could hobnob with the greatest orators of the country. Here we have more or less men of privileged intelligence. We have here eloquent orators, bright minds, legal torches, and brilliant writers. For this reason, Mr. Chairman, I say that I am proud to belong to this House. Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, I am disappointed in my experience with men who are supposed to be the political and intellectual leaders of the nation. I say I am disappointed, Mr. Chairman, because for five years as a member of this Legislature, I failed to see a demonstration of our capacity and courage and determination to solve practical problems of public finance, of

economy and efficiency in the Government. Many of us here, Mr. Chairman, could make and had made brilliant speeches on abstract political questions; but we have failed, as I said Mr. Chairman, to show our capacity to tackle practical problems of government, especially in finance, in economy, and in efficiency. Our country has been in the grip of a serious financial depression for several years, but what measure have we passed, Mr. Chairman, showing our capacity to solve the financial problem of the nation? What have we done? We simply passed bills authorizing our Government to issue bonds. We increased the sales tax by one-half of 1 per cent, and reduced the minimum limit of income subject to the income tax, while other countries reduced their taxes. Let me ask, therefore, Mr. Chairman, what financial measure of constructive value has this Legislature passed to meet its financial responsibilities, reducing its expenditures without approving additional tax measures?

Sr. GUINTO. Señor Presidente, para algunas preguntas al orador.

El PRESIDENTE. El orador puede contestar, si le place.

Sr. CONFESOR. Sí, señor.

Sr. GUINTO. Parece que he comprendido de Su Señoría que la Legislatura no ha aprobado ninguna medida que implique buena economía. ¿No es verdad que gracias a su inteligencia económica acabamos de aprobar un proyecto de ley apropiando la suma de ₱35,000 para ser invertida en la fabricación de sacos de yute?

Sr. CONFESOR. Si Su Señoría quiere agarrarse a esos ₱35,000 para salvarse de una situación bien embarazosa, yo no voy a seguir a Su Señoría agarrándome a esa cantidad, porque yo creo que los ₱35,000 no son una suma respetable para una nación que quiere presentarse ante el mundo como capaz de manejar un gobierno independiente.

Sr. GUINTO. ¿No es verdad que Su Señoría ha presentado también un proyecto de ley apropiando la suma de ₱5,000,000 para ser invertida en empresas agrícolas en Mindanao, y ese proyecto está ahora en el seno del Comité?

Sr. CONFESOR. Esa pregunta de Su Señoría confirma lo que yo acabo de alegar de que nuestras cabezas están siempre llenas de proposiciones, pero cuando llega el momento de llevar a cabo nuestras ideas, por lo menos hasta ahora, hemos estado no solamente indecisos, sino que hemos mostrado ser impotentes algunas veces, para llevar a la práctica ideas tendentes al desarrollo del comercio y de los recursos naturales del país.

Sr. GUINTO. ¿Quiere decir Su Señoría que el proyecto presentado por Su Señoría no debe considerarse, porque es una de tantas proposiciones que Su Señoría acaba de mencionar?

Sr. CONFESOR. Ese es un error de Su Señoría que precisamente posee cualidades de estadista.

(*Continuing.*) When I criticized the Legislature, I do not want to be understood that we should bear all the burdens of responsibility. Many people claim and say that Governor-General Wood has placed the country on a stable, financial basis. Mr. Chairman,

that is not true. Governor-General Wood, alone, cannot appropriate for himself the glory of that accomplishment. What has Governor-General Wood done to that effect? He merely used the proceeds from the sales of the bonds, thereby reestablishing the gold standard reserve and other reserve funds of the Government which were used up by the Philippine National Bank.

Sr. KAPUNAN. Señor Presidente, para algunas preguntas al orador.

El PRESIDENTE. El orador puede contestar, si le place.

Sr. CONFESOR. Sí, señor.

Sr. KAPUNAN. Al hablar Su Señoría de indecisiones e impotencias por parte de la Legislatura o por parte de los miembros de ella, ¿podría decirnos Su Señoría bondadosamente a qué causas obedecen estos defectos y cuáles serían las medidas que Su Señoría creería convenientes para suprimir estos defectos y para que todos y cada uno de nosotros seamos *potentes*, como Su Señoría desea?

Sr. CONFESOR. La pregunta de Su Señoría envuelve una contestación bastante larga, y yo rogaría que me formule esa pregunta en otra ocasión más propicia en que se pueda discutir el punto que Su Señoría suscita.

Sr. KAPUNAN. Voy a rogar sin embargo a Su Señoría, que tenga la bondad de emitir su opinión respecto a este punto que yo considero capital, concerniente a la cuestión que se discute ahora. ¿Cuál es la opinión de Su Señoría respecto al sistema financiero implantado en nuestro país? No cree Su Señoría que este sistema es la fuente de esos defectos, de esas indecisiones o de esa falta de potencia por parte de los miembros de la Cámara?

Sr. CONFESOR. Precisamente me parece que Su Señoría no estaba presente cuando yo dije que bajo el presente sistema somos, si no esclavos, meros instrumentos del ramo ejecutivo del Gobierno. No tenemos los medios necesarios para llegar a conocer la manera cómo se gasta y cómo se llevan a cabo las actividades del Gobierno para cuyo funcionamiento estamos votando cada año millones y millones de pesos.

Sr. KAPUNAN. Entonces Su Señoría estaría conforme con que se enmendara la Ley Orgánica, o sea, la Ley Jones, en el sentido de que se le quite al Ejecutivo esa facultad consagrada en dicha Ley, de someter el plan presupuestal a las Cámaras?

Sr. CONFESOR. No voy a aconsejar que se enmiende solamente la Ley Jones, sino que lo que debemos hacer es pedir y conseguir nuestra independencia. También he dicho de que la manera cómo hasta ahora estamos procediendo en la confección del Bill de Presupuestos, nos hace perder terreno cada vez más en la cuestión de nuestra autonomía, porque este año aumentamos el presupuesto, y el año que viene, el Gobernador General, aunque no aprobemos otro presupuesto, tendría el presupuesto aumentado del año anterior. Sí, cada vez que aumentamos nuestro presupuesto estamos dando al Gobernador General más poderes. Por esa razón he dicho que nuestra manera actual de proceder, nos conducirá a una derrota completa si no cambiamos de procedimiento.

Sr. KAPUNAN. ¿Pero cómo podríamos cambiar de procedimiento, porque según Su Señoría acaba de manifestar, los defectos que Su Señoría nota o de que se queja Su Señoría proceden del sistema?

Sr. CONFESOR. Sí, del sistema que hemos establecido.

Sr. KAPUNAN. De manera que a juzgar por lo que Su Señoría manifiesta, nosotros no tenemos más que estos dos extremos del dilema: o acudir al bolo o resignarnos.

Sr. CONFESOR. No estoy en favor de resignarnos, pero tampoco estoy en condiciones ahora de decir a Su Señoría que yo estoy por el bolo.

Sr. KAPUNAN. Entonces ¿cuál sería el medio?

Sr. CONFESOR. Esa es una pregunta a que yo no quisiera contestar, porque Su Señoría sabe muy bien lo que yo tengo encerrado en la cabeza.

Sr. KAPUNAN. Si ambos extremos son malos, desearía que Su Señoría nos dijese cuál es el medio para amoldar nuestra conducta a ese medio, y para poner en buen lugar a la Cámara y a los miembros de la misma.

Sr. CONFESOR. Para otra ocasión.

(*Prosiguiendo.*) Señor Presidente, he dicho que el Gobernador General no era un factor importante para reponer los fondos de reserva de nuestro Gobierno. El Gobernador General desde que comenzó a ocupar su puesto, no ha propuesto ninguna medida financiera, más que la de aumentar el impuesto sobre las ventas y la de reducir el tipo para el *income tax*. Para demostrar, señor Presidente, que el Gobernador General por su programa financiero no ha conseguido restablecer nuestras reservas, tengo aquí cifras que demuestran que cada año se aumenta el total de lo que se puede apropiarse para el pago de los intereses de nuestros bonos y la creación de los fondos de redención para esos bonos. Tampoco el Gobernador General ha conseguido reducir los gastos del Gobierno, como lo demuestran las estadísticas y las cifras.

Señor Presidente, voy a terminar, pero voy a terminar diciendo algunas cosas poco agradables. Primero: el Bill de Presupuestos que tenemos delante es un bill injusto, es un bill no equitativo, ¿por qué? Porque aquí, en este bill, solamente los favoritos de los políticos, solamente las personas que tienen protectores dentro del Comité de Presupuestos, son las que han merecido la generosidad de ese Comité. Hay excepciones, señor Presidente, pero esas excepciones son muy pocas; yo creo que en dos, tres o cuatro casos estaría yo conforme con esos aumentos; pero en general, la manera como se han concedido esos aumentos produce un espíritu de desmoralización entre los empleados del Servicio Civil. Con nuestro procedimiento de conceder aumentos a algunos escogidos, estamos alentando a los empleados del Gobierno para meterse en la política.

Verdaderamente, señor Presidente, es muy triste que un empleado con un sueldo de cuatro o cinco mil pesos tenga un protector dentro del Comité de Presupuestos, y el empleado que gana 50, 60 ó 70 pesos, los empleados pequeños, sean los que no han merecido la gracia del Comité de Presupuestos. ¿No cree el Comité que eso es una irrisión al sen-



tido de justicia de esta Cámara? Señor Presidente, tengo amigos en las oficinas del Gobierno, pero, señor Presidente, no debemos favorecer a nuestros amigos y al mismo tiempo cometer injusticias contra los que no son nuestros amigos o conocidos. Por la manera como estamos ahora preparando el Bill de Presupuestos, hemos convertido ese Bill de Presupuestos en una especie de jamón político de la Legislatura. Cada miembro de Comité que tiene uno o dos protegidos, corta una parte de ese jamón y la ofrece a su amigo, y los otros empleados que desgraciadamente no saben desempeñar el papel de un político no pueden tocar, no pueden participar de ese jamón político de nuestra Legislatura.

Sr. VALDÉS LIONGSON. Señor Presidente, para algunas preguntas al orador.

El PRESIDENTE. El orador puede contestar, si le place.

Sr. CONFESOR. Sí, señor.

Sr. VALDÉS LIONGSON. Yo desearía saber del Caballero por Iloilo desde cuándo se ha enterado de lo que últimamente ha manifestado al hablar acerca de las injusticias en que ha incurrido el Comité de Presupuestos.

Sr. CONFESOR. Desde que Su Señoría y su servidor han pertenecido al Comité de Presupuestos.

Sr. VALDÉS LIONGSON. ¿Querría decirme el Caballero por Iloilo si antes de esta ocasión, esto es, desde 1922 en que el Caballero por Iloilo y yo hemos pertenecido al Comité de Presupuestos, ha hecho algo para remediar esta anómala situación, que según su criterio existe en el seno del Comité de Presupuestos?

Sr. CONFESOR. Si no lo he hecho antes, por lo menos lo estoy haciendo ahora, cumpliendo con lo que ha dicho Rizal: exponiendo al enfermo en las gradas del templo.

Sr. VALDÉS LIONGSON. ¿Sería tan amable el Caballero por Iloilo en decirnos por qué se ha acordado tan tarde, de exponer al enfermo en las gradas del templo?

Sr. CONFESOR. Más vale tarde que nunca.

Mr. BITENG. Will the gentleman yield for some questions?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may yield if he so desires.

Mr. CONFESOR. Willingly.

Mr. BITENG. Is the gentleman from Iloilo aware of the fact that the Committee on Appropriations has approved as a basis of action and discussion the proposition that if any increase would be given to any individual it would constitute an act of justice?

Mr. CONFESOR. An act of justice insofar as the Representative recommending the increase is concerned, but it is not an act of justice if you take into account the other unknown employees of the Government who do not enjoy the friendship or the protection of a member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. BITENG. Is it not true, gentleman from Iloilo, that most of the increases which the Committee

made were given to employees receiving small salaries?

Mr. CONFESOR. Do you want to tell me that the Chief Clerk of the Supreme Court receives a small salary of ₱6,000 a year, and on account of it he should be given ₱7,200?

Mr. BITENG. That was an act of justice, gentleman from Iloilo. But the gentleman from Iloilo did not answer the question whether it is not true that most of the increases given were given to employees receiving small salaries.

Mr. CONFESOR. How many?

Mr. BITENG. I think 98 per cent of all the increases given were given to employees with small salaries.

Mr. CONFESOR. And what about the other smaller employees? Why did you not also increase their salaries?

Mr. BITENG. They could not be given an increase because some of them were new in the service; some of them did not work long enough to deserve an increase, whereas the increases given were given to employees most of whom have worked for ten and some of them for more than twenty years.

Mr. CONFESOR. I believe that all you say about justice could also be said in favor of the employees not given any increase in salary. Mr. Chairman, when it comes to a question of justice, why did the Committee select only a few, about 5 per cent, and not even 5 per cent of the employees of the Government? Why? If they call that justice, then I do not know what justice means. If justice means to secure promotion for a favorite employee all right; the promotions are justified. But if justice means equal opportunity to all, I do not believe that the Committee could allege *justice* in giving promotions to a number of employees only.

Mr. Chairman, before closing, I recognize the merits of a number of people who had been given promotions. The Directors of Prisons, the Directors of Printing, all are honest, efficient, and patriotic Filipinos. But I want to plead not only for them. I am pleading for all the members of the Civil Service who deserve justice just as much as the friends or some of the members of the Committee on Appropriations deserve.

Mr. Chairman, it is with a great deal of regret that I have to stand tonight before this House, the House to which I said I am proud to belong. But I would not be performing my duty, and be true to my sense of responsibility, if I do not fight the present system whereby day by day we become mere tools of a bureaucracy; when day by day we are abdicating our powers as a lawmaking body; when day by day we are succumbing to the numbing influence of the executive department of this Government. What I am trying to say is this: that the Legislature should reassert itself and make its influence felt in all the sphere of governmental activities.