

CA approves nomination of Ambassador to the USA

The Commission on Appointments (CA), yesterday, in its plenary session presided by President of the Senate/Chairman of the Commission Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III, gave its consent to the nomination of columnist Hon. Jose Manuel del Gallego Romualdez as ambassador to the United States of America (USA), with concurrent jurisdiction over the Commonwealth of Jamaica, Republic of Haiti, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, The federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and Grenadines and Saint Lucia, with the salary and emoluments of a Chief of Mission, Class I.

Romualdez, who goes by the byname “Babe”, is known to belong to notable political families - the Lopezes and Romualdezes of Leyte. Despite his affluent background, Romualdez rose from the ranks - starting his career as a newscaster in 1970 for RPN-9, and held various key positions in the news outfit. Prior to his nomination to the US ambassadorial post, Romualdez, a De La Salle University alumnus, served as the chairman and president of Stargate Media Corp., an affiliate of the Philippine Star and publishing company of People Asia Magazine Corp and was a regular columnist of the bi-weekly Spy Bits, Sunday’s Babe’s Eye View and This Week on Peopleasia.

In his sponsorship speech before the Commission body in the plenary, foreign affairs committee chair Sen. Panfilo M. Lacson stressed that “his (Romualdez) sartorial elegance and refined public relations make for an effective bilateral relations with the United States... his policy of mutually beneficial cooperation, anchored on mutual respect and equality as sovereign nations are crucial to maintaining the long standing relations between the Philippines and the United States.” Lacson recommended Romualdez’ confirmation to the plenary with no objections raised.

Senators Vicente Sotto III, Ralph Recto, Juan Miguel Zubiri and Loren Legarda seconded Lacson’s endorsement of Romualdez’ confirmation to the plenary. Zubiri noted that the country needs Romualdez’ “gift of gab, in these times where our relationship with our ally is sometimes strained... we need a person like him that could diffuse any tense situation with his eloquence and diplomatic skills...” For her part, Legarda, who was under the tutelage of Romualdez when she was still a neophyte journalist, extolled the best qualities of her former boss in her seconding speech. Recto, likewise, praised the confirmation of Romualdez’ nomination and emphasized that, “soon-to-be man in Washington, DC is no babe in the woods in US affairs.”

