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Issues in Politics, Governance and Electoral Reform. Edited by Julio P. Macuja II. Quezon City: Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs, 1992.

This collection compiles the presentations and discussions of "A Round Table Discussion Series on Long Term Electoral Reform" sponsored by the Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs (ACSPPA) in September of 1991. The first discussion held on 13 September was on "The Party-List System." Rep. Michael Mastura, author of HB 31856, which seeks to operationalize the party-list system called for under Art. VI, Sec. 5 of the 1987 Constitution, was the main speaker. He focused on the main features of the proposed legislation. Mr. Avelino Tendaro of the Department of History and Political Science of the Ateneo de Manila University, and Mr. Jose Ricardo Molina, Executive Director of the Center for Strategic Studies, were the main commentators. Mr. Tendaro presented an incisive critique of the bill, while Mr. Molina explored the need to adopt a system of proportional representation. NGOs and POs in general look forward to the implementation of the party-list system as a means of broadening popular representation and participation under a constitutional regime. The presentations and discussion give an excellent overview of the system, its main features, strengths, shortcomings and potential for the future.

The September 20 discussion on the "Parliamentary Versus Presidential Form of Government Debate" brought together Dr. Emmanuel Lallana of the University of the Philippines' Political Science Department who spoke on the advantages of the Parliamentary System from a theoretical vantage point (all other factors being equal). Rep. Francisco Sumulong, House Majority Floor Leader at the time and head of the House Parliamentarians Bloc was quite critical of the detractors of the Parliamentary System who were opposed to a system which had not yet been tried. Sen. Teofisto Guingona, then Senate Majority Floor Leader, defended the presidential form of government. The discussion helped to clarify some of the more salient issues at stake in a debate which is expected to continue as the decade goes on.

Decentralization through the Local Government Code of 1991 has become one of the more vital issues of the day. The 27 September session on "Decentralization and Federation" served as a forum for representatives of people's organizations—particularly for Mr. Vic Fabe of Pakisama and Mr. Roque Rocha of Paksa-Lupa, who shared initial thoughts on the implications of decentralization on the popular struggle. The discussion did not tackle in any depth the details of the legislation. This lack is filled in the present volume by the article of Mr. Joel Pagsanghan of PhilDHRRRA which gives an assessment of the 1991 Local Government Code and how it compares with the previous law. (The article will appear in the July issue of *Philippine Studies*.)