

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

17th Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3702



Introduced by: HON. JOSE ANTONIO R. SY-ALVARADO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare August 30 of every year as the “Marcelo H. Del Pilar National Responsible Press Freedom Day”.

The most famous journalist in our history and considered as the father of Philippine Journalism is Marcelo H. Del Pilar who uses the pen name Plaridel. He is a national hero worthy of emulation for his patriotism, bravery and intelligence as exemplified by his works as a lawyer, as a revolutionary and as a propagandist.

As a journalist in the Philippines, Del Pilar founded the *Diariong Tagalog* which he used to expose the atrocities and excesses committed by the Spanish friars against the Filipinos who were called *Indios* at that time. Awakened by the fiery articles of Del Pilar, the ordinary folks started entertaining the idea of disobeying the powerful friars. This reached the knowledge of the friars who then pressured the government to do something otherwise a revolution would be imminent. Del Pilar was able to escape arrest and fled to Spain to join the Filipino Propaganda Movement.

Soon, Del Pilar became one of the leaders of the Philippine Propaganda Movement. He also became the editor-in-chief of *La Solidaridad*, the newspaper of the Filipino propagandists who initially wanted the Philippines to become a province of Spain and the citizens to be treated equally as those in the mainland. Later on, the plan to revolt and gain freedom from Spain was born. The “Great Propagandist” and “Mastermind of the Filipino Revolution” died in Barcelona, Spain but the seeds he planted eventually led to Philippine independence from Spanish rule.

Declaring August 30, of every year, which is the date of birth of Del Pilar, as the “Marcelo H. Del Pilar National Responsible Press Freedom Day” will show to the rest of the world that our country recognizes and respects Freedom of the Press as enshrined in Section 4, Article III (Bill of Rights) our Constitution. This right not only includes the right to speak and write but also the right to be protected from threats, intimidation and violence.

If favorably passed into law, it will remind us of the patriotic deeds of Marcelo H. Del Pilar and inspire people to emulate his example of selfless service, exceptional courage and leadership that gave hope to our Motherland during a critical time in our country’s history. The “Marcelo H. Del Pilar National Responsible Press Freedom Day” will also heighten awareness about press freedom so that the people of the press will not be afraid to report matters of public interest no matter whom or what interest gets hurt in the process.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

JOSE ANTONIO R. SY-ALVARADO

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AN ACT DECLARING AUGUST 30 OF EVERY YEAR AS “MARCELO H. DEL PILAR NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE PRESS FREEDOM DAY”

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. In recognition of the vital role of the press in nation building as well as to increase awareness of the public about press freedom so that journalists will be encouraged not be afraid to report matters of public interest, August 30 of every year is hereby declared as “Marcelo H. Del Pilar National Responsible Press Freedom Day”.

SECTION 2. To ensure meaningful observance of the holiday as herein declared, all heads of government agencies and instrumentalities, including government-owned and controlled corporations as well as local government units, and employers in the private sector, shall encourage and afford sufficient time and opportunity for their employees to engage and participate in any activity conducted within the premises of their respective offices or establishments to celebrate the “Marcelo H. Del Pilar National Responsible Press Freedom Day”.

SECTION 3. The Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, in coordination with the Presidential Communications Operations Office, other government media organizations, with the cooperation and support of private media organizations, shall lead public and private school communities, at all levels, in organizing consciousness-raising activities on the importance of the press responsibility, the freedom of the press and ways to protect the press people from threats, intimidation and violence. The same activities shall also be made available to other interested public and private organizations.

SECTION 4. If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act is held to be unconstitutional or invalid, the validity of the other sections or provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved, 