

EDITOR'S NOTE

As the country appears headed for uncertain times because of a looming fiscal crisis, the ability of government to get its act together and weather this storm is in question. Opposing movements between the executive and legislative branches trigger once again debates on political reforms. One such debate is between advocates of a parliamentary form of government and proponents of the presidential system. In a recent public forum, parliamentarists claimed they had a more receptive audience. But the arguments for a parliamentary form of government, while very cogent and practical at the same time, need to be re-examined. The paper of Torres assesses the empirical evidence used to support claims of superiority of the parliament over the presidential form of government.

The threat of a fiscal crisis has led to some soul-searching in the area of public sector management. As public clamor intensifies, public managers are coming under increasing scrutiny and pressure. Hence, Poblador's examination of bureaucratic efficiency and rational choice in public sector management could not have come at a better time. The paper affords the reader a lens with which to examine the performance of bureaucrats and bureaucracies and an explanation for inefficiencies endemic in public institutions, e.g., government-owned and controlled corporations.

The performance and economic efficiency of devolved hospitals are examined by Sison and Autajay in one of the two health sector-related articles in this issue. Examining such proxy indicators as bed occupancy rate and average cost per patient per day, the authors studied seven devolved hospitals in the province of Antique and drew some policy implications specifically hospital reforms related to hospital finance and governance. The article also offers a glimpse of the effects of devolution on hospitals.

In the last article of this volume, Simbulan draws some interesting lessons from the Philippine experience in combating the spread of HIV/AIDS. Deviating from the narrow view of HIV/AIDS as a medical problem, Simbulan's article connects the disease to a host of other issues linked to national development. Thus, the paper provides an approach to prevention that transcends the medical frontier.



