

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No. 75

EXONERATING PABLO L. TORRES, MAYOR OF LIPA, BATANGAS,
FROM CHARGES OF IRREGULARITY IN OFFICE

This is an administrative case filed by Nicolas Makuha, ex-lieutenant of the barrio of Bolbok, against Pablo L. Torres, Mayor of Lipa, Batangas, for alleged irregularities in the performance of his official duties.

The charges were originally filed with the Provincial Board of Batangas and the Secretary of the Interior, but before any action could be taken by either the Provincial Board or the Secretary of the Interior, the matter was brought to my attention by Assemblyman Maximo Kalaw of the Third District of Batangas, who informed me of the charges and stated that there was no hope of securing justice from the Provincial Board of Batangas as the Mayor of Lipa belongs to the same political faction in the province to which the members of said board belong. As the charges affect the honesty of the Mayor of Lipa, I immediately instructed Judge Luis P. Torres of my legal staff to proceed at once to the municipality of Lipa and make a preliminary investigation of the case.

Although Judge Torres, after the preliminary investigation conducted by him in the municipality of Lipa, reported to me that in his opinion there were no grounds for the charges, I ordered him nevertheless to proceed with a formal investigation and to suspend the Mayor of Lipa pending the investigation so that the latter might not, in any way, use the authority of his office to influence witnesses who may declare for or against him. This was a somewhat unusual procedure, for ordinarily when the preliminary investigation discloses that there is no sufficient evidence justifying a formal investigation the case is dismissed. But I took this step in view of the representations made to me by Assemblyman Kalaw that Mayor Torres was protected by the higher authorities for political reasons, and that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to secure evidence against Mayor Torres unless he was suspended.

Judge Torres is known to have been all his life dissociated from political parties or activities. He has never had anything to do with the politics of Batangas. He went to Lipa and there made a formal investigation of the charges against Mayor Torres, suspending him during the pendency of the investigation in accordance with my instructions. After a thorough investigation in which he heard and received the evidence of both sides, Judge Torres finds that the respondent Mayor Torres of Lipa is innocent of the charges presented against him and that he is the victim of political persecution. I have carefully gone over the report of Judge Torres and I accept his findings of fact as fully supported by the evidence of record.

In view of the foregoing, I, Manuel L. Quezon, President of the Philippines, do hereby declare Pablo L. Torres, Mayor of Lipa, innocent of the charges presented against him and exonerate him therefrom.

Done at the City of Manila, this 1st day of August, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and thirty-eight, and of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, the third.

(Sgd.) MANUEL L. QUEZON

President of the Philippines