

MALACAÑANG
MANILA

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 257

CONSIDERING MISS LUMEN FOLICARPIO RESIGNED FROM OFFICE AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE UNESCO, PHILIPPINES.

This is an administrative case against Miss Lumen Folcarpio, executive secretary of the UNESCO, Philippines, who has been charged by Miss Herminia O. Reyes, a former employee of said office, with the following:

- (a) Malversation of public property through the use of stencil and equipment belonging to the UNESCO for her private purposes;
- (b) Conduct unbefitting a lady and a public official;
- (c) Incompetence;
- (d) Mental dishonesty;
- (e) Malversation of public funds through misrepresentation of facts; and
- (f) Malversation of public funds through falsification of public document.

The case was investigated by a special investigator of this Office who received formal evidence from both the complainant and the respondent as to charges (a) and (f). The other charges wherein the parties agreed to submit proofs by memoranda may be deemed unsubstantiated and therefore considered dropped.

CHARGE (a)

It appears that the respondent ordered the typing and stenciling during office hours of French lessons for her private needs by personnel of the office, using for the purpose office stencil and mimeograph machine. The stencil used cost around 12.

Respondent explained that the stencil used belonged to her, having been supplied by the Alliance Francaise; that the employees volunteered their services when they saw her chauffeur doing the work; and that part of the work done was for the League of Women Voters, which must be considered official in nature because that organization is an affiliate and instrumentality of the UNESCO.

From the foregoing, I agree with the Investigator that the respondent is guilty of using office equipment and laborers during office hours for her private benefit.

CHARGE (f)

The record shows that on August 19, 1955, respondent went to Baler, Quezon, to represent the then President Magsaysay on the occasion of the celebration of the birthday of the late President Quezon. In going to, and coming back, from Baler she used a Philippine Air Force plane. While in Baler she and her party were guests of the townspeople who served them food. Nevertheless she submitted a voucher and collected reimbursement for gasoline expenses for her car for the Baler trip and for meals and subsistence.

The above facts are admitted by the respondent. She explained, however, that although she used a plane, she nevertheless ordered her car to go to Baler because she feared that she would be benighted there and she wanted to visit a UNESCO project in Nampicuan, Nueva Ecija. She also claimed that she would not swindle the Government of the insignificant amount involved as she had been spending her own money for official purposes.

I am not impressed by respondent's explanation. The project alluded to by her was non-existent, there having been no personnel or site yet. Before leaving for Baler she was apprised of the bad conditions of the road and that the trip would take at least five hours one way. There was no need for her car to make the trip because the plane which brought her to Baler was at her disposal. No reason was offered why she abandoned her alleged projected trip to Nampicuan, which would have taken her farther out of her way. Moreover, there is ample evidence to show that her car was at the Manila airport at six in the evening of the same day when she arrived from Baler.

The amount involved here was around ₱62. To justify her right to collect it, she presented a letter from the then Auditor General Manuel Agregado. However, the circumstances surrounding the issuance of said letter cannot but lead one to believe that it was issued much later than its date in order to accommodate respondent. When complainant prayed for an analysis by the National Bureau of Investigation to determine its true date, respondent promised to present Mr. Agregado on the witness stand but she failed to do so, thus giving rise to the presumption that his testimony would have been adverse.

As to her claim that she would not swindle the Government of such insignificant sum because she had been spending from her own pocket for official and extraofficial purposes of the UNESCO, the fact is in most cases she has been reimbursed for such expenses, except when she went to Montevideo as alternate delegate and secretary of the Philippine delegation to the UNESCO meet there, because the understanding was that she was to bear her own expenses.

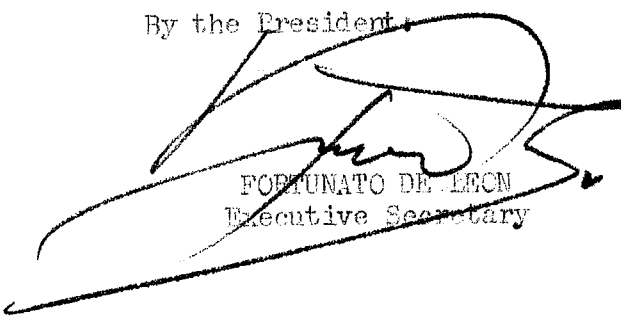
From the evidence adduced I am inclined to agree with the Investigator that the voucher wherein she collected reimbursement for expenses in going to Baler was falsified.

In view of the foregoing, Miss Lumen Policarpio is hereby considered resigned from office as executive secretary of the UNESCO, Philippines, effective as of the date of her preventive suspension:

Done in the City of Manila, this *20th* day of *Dec.*, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and fifty-seven, and of the Independence of the Philippines, the twelfth.

Needy H. Garcia

By the President:


FORTUNATO DE LEON
Executive Secretary