

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 255 ✓

CONSIDERING MR. ALFREDO CHUATICO RESIGNED FROM OFFICE AS CITY  
TREASURER OF BAGO CITY.

This is an administrative case against Mr. Alfredo Chuatico, City Treasurer of Bago City, for grave misconduct in office and dishonesty involving shortage in his cash accountability filed motu proprio by the Department of Finance. The case was formally investigated by City Treasurer Tirso T. Santillan of San Carlos City.

Respondent was preventively suspended from office on September 16, 1969, upon recommendation of the Department of Finance.

The records show that on September 3, 1968, when the Bago City Auditor examined the cash account of the respondent, the latter presented as part thereof BPI check bearing Serial No. C-297525 dated July 13, 1965, in the amount of ₱129,906.62 purportedly issued by the Ma-ao Sugar Central in payment of internal revenue taxes. The City Auditor disallowed the check and declared respondent short in the amount of ₱129,906.62 after verification conducted revealed that the check in question was not issued by the Ma-ao Sugar Central.

It further appears that respondent's shortage in his cash account existed since 1962 in the original amount of ₱132,000 during his incumbency as municipal treasurer of the former municipality of Bago, Negros Occidental. The aforesaid amount was ostensibly lost while he was on his way to deposit the same with the Philippine National Bank (PNB) branch in Bacolod City. He did not, however, report the loss to the proper authorities and instead kept his silence until after the shortage was discovered by the City Auditor on September 3, 1968. On September 27, 1968, respondent restered the whole amount of ₱129,906.62 under Official Receipt No. 376925L.

In the preliminary fact-finding investigation of the instant case, respondent readily admitted the shortage in his cash account. Recounting how the shortage was incurred, he alleged that on July 22, 1962, he wrapped the amount of ₱132,000, all in bills of fifty, twenty, ten and five-peso denominations, in a piece of manila paper with the intention of depositing it with the PNB branch in Bacolod City. The following day (July 23) the money was placed with several other packages at the back of the driver's

seat of the government jeep which he drove personally. On his way to Bacolod City and somewhere in the vicinity of Barrio Talec he had a flat tire. He left the jeep along the road and went to the house of Councilor Florencio Rosquillo, some 200 meters away, to borrow a jack. After replacing the flat tire, he proceeded to Bacolod City and parked the jeep in front of the PNB branch office. He then discovered that the package containing the money was no longer in the jeep. Councilor Rosquillo corroborated respondent's oral testimony relative to the borrowed jack.

I agree with the Secretary of Finance that respondent's testimony is replete with inconsistencies. In the transcript of the proceedings he declared that he stayed in the house of Councilor Rosquillo for about fifteen minutes before returning to the jeep. This was belied by the testimony of the councilor who stated that after giving the jack to the respondent no conversation transpired between them. Perforce, respondent could not have stayed that long in the house of Councilor Rosquillo. Still, in answer to a question as to whether or not Councilor Rosquillo was a friend, respondent testified that the former was no more than a casual acquaintance. Yet, the records disclose that respondent, at one time, consented to act as co-maker of a loan application of Councilor Rosquillo with the Philippine National Cooperative Bank. Finally, respondent testified that he was alone when he counted and wrapped the money to be deposited with the PNB, which was inconsistent with the statement of witness Manolito Enriquez, a janitor in respondent's office, to the effect that he assisted the respondent in counting the money up to 8:30 in the evening of July 22, 1962.

These glaring inconsistencies all the more make respondent's oral testimony incredible, if not self-serving, to say the least. At this juncture, attention is invited to respondent's long and continuous service in the local treasury since 1932 or for more than thirty-eight (38) years. The wealth of experience behind him surely would have dictated that a most sensitive task involving the custody for deposit of a substantial amount of money should have been accomplished with the greatest caution to ensure its safety at all times. In this respondent has miserably failed. He has thrown all caution to the winds, unmindful of the dire consequences in the event of its loss. Undoubtedly, respondent is no longer a safe risk in the treasury service.

In view of the foregoing, I find respondent guilty of grave misconduct for concealing the loss of the money in question to the proper authorities and dishonesty for presenting a spurious check to cover up his shortage.

Wherefore, and as recommended by the Secretary of Finance, Mr. Alfredo Chuatico is hereby considered resigned from office as City Treasurer of Bago City, effective on the day following his last day of service with pay.

Done in the City of Manila, this 13th day of December , in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventy.

By the President:

PONCIANO G. MATHAY  
Acting Assistant Executive Secretary