

[ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 184, March 09, 1956]

REQUIRING JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PABLO URREA OF RIZAL, LAGUNA, TO RESIGN.

This is an administrative case filed by Sabina Sumague against Justice of the Peace Pablo Urrea of Rizal, Laguna, for immorality. It is alleged (1) that respondent Justice of the Peace, after having lived with complainant for eighteen years (from April 1937 to January 1955) without benefit of marriage, left her for another woman; and (2) that after leaving complainant, respondent entered into a fictitious marriage with one Antonina Reyes of Sariaya, Quezon. The charges were investigated by the District Judge.

Complainant testified that from April 1937 to January 1955 she and respondent lived together as common-law husband and wife; that during all those years she worked as a laundrywoman in order to help respondent finish his law studies until he passed the bar examinations; and that when respondent became justice of the peace, he left her for another woman.

Respondent denied having lived with complainant, but admitted having courted the latter and having had sexual relations with her. He claimed that he separated from her early in 1945 and that she filed this complaint only in order to have him back and resume their illicit relationship which he did not want to do because it was immoral.

The District Judge, after considering the evidence adduced in the investigation, found that respondent had lived with complainant without benefit of marriage, and was guilty of immorality. He gave credence to the testimony of complainant that respondent left her in January 1955 and not in 1945 as alleged by respondent. The Judge reasoned out that if they had separated in 1945, and if the purpose of the filing of the complaint had been merely to force respondent to return to complainant, the latter would have filed her charges long before 1955, considering that respondent was appointed justice of the peace in 1950.

After a careful review of the evidence, I fully agree with the District Judge and the Secretary of Justice that respondent had publicly maintained illicit relations with complainant and was therefore guilty of immorality. He lived with complainant before and after his appointment as justice of the peace, although he could have married her. But he did not marry her because he considered it beneath the dignity of his office to be married to her. In fact, his only interest in her was, in his own words, to satisfy his "human want."

It is also evident from complainant's answer to respondent's cross-examination that he is now cohabiting with another woman to whom he is not married. Although he denies being married, yet in the statement of his personal circumstances at the