

**[ ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 119, June 16, 1955 ]**

**EXONERATING HONORABLE SERAPIO J. DATOC, PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR.**

This is an administrative case against Honorable Serapio J. Datoc, Provincial Governor of Zamboanga del Sur, who is charged with oppression, misconduct in office, dishonesty and abuse of authority.

On the charge of oppression, the complainants, Luis Bantas, Dioscoro Alagenio, Gregorio Apug and Domingo Villanueva, individually alleged that they were driven from their land-holdings by the respondent with the use of threats, force and intimidation. From the evidence of record, it appears that the land in question which is located in sitio Komatang, Balongating, municipality of Pagadian, Zamboanga del Sur, having an area of about sixty (60) hectares, is the property of the respondent declared in his name under Tax Declaration Nos. 12675 and 1948, and that he has been paying the land taxes thereon since 1945.

The complainants were squatters in the premises. Gregorio Apug, one of the complainants, retracted his previous complaint declaring that the respondent never forced or intimidated him into leaving the land in question; that he and the other complainants, Bantas and Villanueva conspired to execute affidavits against the respondent to the effect that the latter, by force and intimidation, had driven them out of their lands with the sole purpose of dividing among themselves the sixty (60) hectares of land belonging to the respondent.

As regards to the charge of misconduct in office for having caused certain detention prisoners confined in the provincial jail to register and vote during the national elections in 1953, the evidence of record discloses that during the last registration day and election day, several detention prisoners registered and voted in precinct No. 4 in the poblacion of Pagadian. No evidence was presented to prove that the prisoners registered and voted on instructions of the respondent. On the contrary, provincial warden Geronimo Irong assumed responsibility for permitting the prisoners, upon previous consultation with the provincial fiscal, to leave the provincial jail under proper escort, for the purpose of registering and voting. Furthermore, detention prisoners are not included among the persons disqualified to vote if otherwise eligible.

With respect to the charge of dishonesty filed by Mr. Alfonso Donaire against the respondent for having allegedly collected sums of money from several residents of barrio Liargao, in consideration of the promise of the respondent to work for the conversion of Liargao into a municipality and the appointments of the contributors to choice positions in the prospective municipality, it appears from the record that there was a movement initiated by several civic-spirited residents of Liargao, prominent among whom were Messrs. Sumicad, Quimbo, Lubguban and Donaire, for the conversion of their barrio into a municipality.