

****Title:**** Plus Builders, Inc. and Edgardo C. Garcia vs. Atty. Anastacio E. Revilla, Jr.

****Facts:****

This administrative case for disbarment against Atty. Anastacio E. Revilla, Jr. originated from a Verified Petition filed by Plus Builders Inc. and Edgardo C. Garcia before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP). The complaints included willful and intentional falsehood before the court, misuse of court procedures to delay judgment execution, and collaboration with non-lawyers in the illegal practice of law. The disputes involved land ownership and tenancy issues, with the Regional Adjudicator of Cavite initially ruling in favor of Plus Builders. This decision was appealed and upheld by higher courts, including the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court. Despite these rulings, Revilla pursued various legal remedies to delay execution and filed cases that contradicted earlier admissions regarding his clients' roles as tenants, not owners. These actions led to his clients securing temporary restraining orders and further complicating the legal process.

****Issues:****

1. Did Atty. Anastacio E. Revilla, Jr. commit willful and intentional falsehood before the court and misuse judicial processes?
2. Was Revilla engaged in the unauthorized practice of law by collaborating with non-lawyers?
3. Was the solicitation of clients through a Retainership Contract with non-lawyers against legal ethics?
4. Did his actions constitute gross misconduct deserving of sanctions?

****Court's Decision:****

The Supreme Court agreed with the IBP Board of Governors and found Atty. Anastacio E. Revilla, Jr. guilty of gross misconduct. The Court ruled that Revilla's actions significantly deviated from expected standards of honesty, candor, and good faith in the legal profession. It was determined that Revilla used legal proceedings to unjustly delay the execution of a valid court decision and misled the courts through contradictory statements and actions. Moreover, his involvement with non-lawyers in the practice of law was implicitly admitted through his failure to refute allegations. Therefore, the Supreme Court suspended Revilla from the practice of law for two years.

****Doctrine:****

The case reiterates the principle that lawyers, as officers of the court, must uphold truth and justice, avoiding any deceitful conduct. The Code of Professional Responsibility

explicitly prohibits lawyers from engaging in dishonest behavior, abusing court processes, and collaborating with non-lawyers in the practice of law.

****Class Notes:****

- ****Duty of Candor and Honesty:**** Lawyers must not engage in any form of deceit or allow the court to be misled by their actions.
- ****Prohibition against Misuse of Legal Procedures:**** Legal processes should not be used to unjustly delay or obstruct the execution of judgments.
- ****Unauthorized Practice of Law:**** Collaborating with non-lawyers in the provision of legal services is against professional ethics.
- ****Sanctions for Gross Misconduct:**** Violations of professional standards and ethics can lead to suspension or disbarment.

****Relevant Legal Provisions:****

- ****Code of Professional Responsibility:**** Canons 1.03, 10.03, 12.04; Rule 9.01.

****Historical Background:****

This case underscores the significance of integrity and ethical conduct in the legal profession. It serves as a reminder that the primary duty of lawyers is to the court and the pursuit of justice, a principle that upholds the profession's honor and contributes to the effective administration of justice. The case illustrates the disciplinary measures taken when these principles are compromised, reinforcing the standards expected from legal practitioners in the Philippines.