

MAURICIO REGASPI AND ELIAS REYES, COMPLAINANTS, VS. JUDGE EDILBERTO CASTILLO, MUNICIPAL COURT OF TAGUIG, RIZAL, RESPONDENT.

Adm. No. 104-MJ. January 30, 1976

Ponente: CONCEPCION, JR., J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/400a1d6d6814/>

CONCEPCION, JR., J.:

Judge Edilberto T. Castillo of the Municipal Court of Taguig, Rizal, was charged by Mauricio Regaspi and Elias Reyes with "dishonesty, grave misconduct in office, gross negligence and ignorance of the law" in their complaints to the Secretary of Justice, dated October 2, 1972 and October 9, 1972, respectively.[1]

The complainants were the complaining witnesses in Criminal Cases Nos. 1443, 1444, and 1445, entitled: "People of the Philippines vs. Dulo Cruz, et al.;" all for serious physical injuries, and the accused in Criminal Cases Nos. 1446 and 1447, entitled: "People of the Philippines vs. Mauricio Regaspi, et al.," for less serious physical injuries, all of the Municipal Court of Taguig, Rizal, presided by the respondent Judge Edilberto T. Castillo.

These cases were initially set for a joint hearing on March 11, 1972. But, upon agreement of the parties, the hearing was reset to April 6, 1972. On April 6, 1972, the accused were arraigned, after which the trial was postponed to May 10, 1972, as agreed upon by the parties. During the arraignment, the herein complainants were represented by Atty. Jaime Nuevas, while the other accused were represented by Atty. Carbon Cruz.[2] On May 10, 1972, no trial was held as the hearing was postponed to June 5, 1972. The hearing on June 5, 1972 was cancelled upon agreement of the parties and was reset to June 26, 1972.[3] Again, no trial was conducted on the said date as the parties agreed to reset the hearing to July 26, 1972.[4] At the scheduled hearing of July 26, 1972, the accused appeared without their respective counsel.[5] Accordingly, the respondent Judge in open court, advised the parties, more particularly the herein complainants, to engage the services of another lawyer to help prosecute and defend them in said cases, their counsel, Atty. Jaime Nuevas, having died in the meantime.[6] The trial was reset to August 24, 1972. Still, no lawyer appeared for both parties during the scheduled hearing on that day, so that the respondent Judge again warned the parties that in case their lawyers dismissed for failure to prosecute.[7] The trial was reset to September 26, 1972. Again, no lawyer appeared for the herein complainants on the said date. Upon motion of atty. Carbon Cruz, counsel for the accused Dulo Cruz, et al., Criminal Cases Nos. 1443, 1444, and 1445 were dismissed by the respondent Judge for failure to prosecute.[8] At the same time, the respondent Judge appointed one Atty. Irineo Bunyi to act as counsel de oficio for the herein complainants, the accused in Criminal Cases Nos. 1446 and 1447,[9] and reset the trial to October 24, 1972.[10] On October 24, 1972, Atty. Bunyi appeared for the herein complainants and moved for the dismissal of Criminal Cases Nos. 1446 and 1447, for failure to prosecute, in view of the non-appearance of the fiscal and the private prosecutor therein, which motion the respondent Judge granted.[11] [12] The charges against respondent are all based on his dismissal of Criminal Cases Nos. 1443, 1444, and 1445.

There is no merit to the complaint. Respondent's dismissal of the criminal cases is but a legitimate exercise of his

powers and duties as judge presiding over a court and made in the interest of the speedy administration of justice. Neither did respondent act arbitrarily. The charges and counter-charges filed by the parties thereto were equally dismissed for failure to prosecute. But, before he dismissed the said cases, he afforded the parties every opportunity to prosecute the same with due regard to the rights of the accused to a speedy trial. He reset or postponed the scheduled hearings of the cases several times in view of the non-appearance of their respective attorneys. He further advised the parties to engage the services of another lawyer to help prosecute said cases. He also repeatedly warned them that in the event of the non-appearance of their counsel during the next succeeding hearings, the Court would take action prejudicial to the prosecution of said cases, and even appointed a counsel de oficio for the herein complainants to defend them in Criminal Cases Nos. 1446 and 1447.

In view of all the foregoing, respondent is exonerated of all the charges filed against him. So ordered.

Fernando, (Chairman), Barredo, Antonio, and Aquino, JJ., concur.

[1] pp. 17, 29, Rollo.

[2] pp 56-57, Rollo.

[3] p. 58, Rollo.

[4] p. 59, Rollo.

[5] pp. 39, 59, 100, Rollo.

[6] pp. 39, 60, 92, Rollo.

[7] Exhs. 2, 2-A, p. 39, Rollo.

[8] pp. 13, 40, Rollo.

[9] pp. 40, 45, Rollo.

[10] p. 40, Rollo.

[11] p. 14, Rollo.

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.