

**[ ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 483, May 28, 1984 ]**

**DISMISSING ATTY. CELESTINO B. BRUA FROM OFFICE AS  
REGISTER OF DEEDS OF TAGBILARAN CITY**

This refers to the administrative case against Atty. Celestino B. Brua, Register of Deeds of Tagbilaran City, for gross neglect of duty/negligence and grave misconduct. The case was formally investigated by Atty. Josefina Montañer of the Land Registration Commission (now National Land Titles and Deeds Administration).

The case stemmed from the report, dated December 15, 1981, of the Land Registration Commission Inventory team, which conducted an inventory of the land titles and other records of the Registry of Deeds of Tagbilaran City. The report disclosed 350 certificates of titles missing in the files of said registry, double or irregular issuances of land titles, and circumstances showing respondent's failure to adopt and implement necessary measures in the safekeeping of land titles and records under his custody.

On the basis thereof, respondent was formally charged by the Acting Land Registration Commissioner on December 18, 1981, with gross neglect of duty/negligence and grave misconduct. Respondent received a copy of the formal charge on March 3, 1982. He did not, however submit his answer thereto. The formal investigation/hearing of the case was thus set on March 21 and 23, 1982. The scheduled hearings were postponed at the instance of respondent. To forestall further delays, the Investigator proceeded to receive evidence ex parte on April 11 and 13, 1983.

The members of the LRC Inventory team composed of Reynaldo Vergara, Rolando Torres and Miguel Escarda were presented as witnesses. They testified that they conducted an inventory of the land records of the Registry of Deeds of Tagbilaran City and discovered 350 land titles missing in the files of said registry, 213 of which were transfer certificates and 137 original certificates of title. They likewise unearthed irregularities and/or duplications in the issuances of land titles, particularly involving TCT No. T-20814, TCT No. T-9460, TCT No. T-21778; TCT No. T-21779 and TCT No. T-9742. In the case of TCT No. T-9360, the name of the owner therein was cancelled without the benefit of a deed of transfer or alienation. The testimonies of the three witnesses concerning the double issuances of land titles were corroborated by Bienvenida Sarce, Register of Deeds of Bohol and concurrently Acting Register of Deeds of Tagbilaran City.

In her investigation report, dated July 1, 1983, submitted to the Acting Land Registration Commissioner, the Investigator found respondent guilty as charged and recommended that he be dismissed from the service, which was concurred in by the Acting Land Registration Commissioner.

The Minister of Justice likewise concurred in the aforesaid findings and