

PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 749

GRANTING IMMUNITY FROM PROSECUTION TO GIVERS OF BRIBES AND OTHER GIFTS AND TO THEIR ACCOMPLICES IN BRIBERY AND OTHER GRAFT CASES AGAINST PUBLIC OFFICERS

WHEREAS, public office is a public trust: public officers are but servants of the people, whom they must serve with utmost fidelity and integrity;

WHEREAS, it has heretofore been virtually impossible to secure the conviction and removal of dishonest public servants owing to the lack of witnesses: the bribe or gift-givers being always reluctant to testify against the corrupt public officials and employees concerned for fear of being indicted and convicted themselves of bribery and corruption;

WHEREAS, it is better by far and more socially desirable, as well as just, that the bribe or gift giver be granted immunity from prosecution so that he may freely testify as to the official corruption, than that the official who receives the bribe or gift should be allowed to go free, insolently remaining in public office, and continuing with his nefarious and corrupt practices, to the great detriment of the public service and the public interest.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers in me vested by the Constitution, do hereby decree and order that:

Section 1. Any person who voluntarily gives information about any violation of Articles 210, 211 and 212 of the Revised Penal Code, Republic Act Numbered Three Thousand Nineteen, as amended: Section 345 of the Internal Revenue Code and Section 3604 of the Tariff and Customs Code and other provisions of the said Codes penalizing abuse or dishonesty on the part of the public officials concerned; and other laws, rules and regulations punishing acts of graft, corruption and other forms of official abuse; and who willingly testifies against any public official or employee for such violation shall be exempt from prosecution or punishment for the offense with reference to which his information and testimony were given, and may plead or prove the giving of such information and testimony in bar of such prosecution: *Provided*, that this immunity may be enjoyed even in cases where the information and testimony are given against a person who is not a public official but who is a principal, or accomplice, or accessory in the commission of any of the above-mentioned violations: *Provided further*, that this immunity may be enjoyed by such informant or witness notwithstanding that he offered or gave the bribe or gift to the public official or is an accomplice for such gift or bribe-giving; and *Provided, finally*, that the following conditions concur:

1. The information must refer to consummated violations of any of the above-mentioned provisions of law, rules and regulations;

2. The information and testimony are necessary for the conviction of the accused public officer;
3. Such information and testimony are not yet in the possession of the State;
4. Such information and testimony can be corroborated on its material points; and
5. The informant or witness has not been previously convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude.

Section 2. The immunity granted hereunder shall not attach should it turn out subsequently that the information and/or testimony is false and malicious or made only for the purpose of harassing, molesting or in any way prejudicing the public officer denounced. In such a case, the public officer so denounced shall be entitled to any action, civil administrative or criminal, against said informant or witness: Provided, however, That such action may be commenced only after the dismissal of the case against the denounced public officer after preliminary investigation or after the latter's acquittal by a competent court.

The prescriptive periods for the various actions under the provisions of this section shall start to run from the time such actions may be commenced as herein provided. (*As amended by BP Blg. 242, approved Nov. 11, 1982.*)

Section 3. All preliminary investigations conducted by a prosecuting fiscal, judge or committee, and all proceedings undertaken in connection therewith, shall be strictly confidential or private in order to protect the reputation of the official under investigation in the event that the report proves to be unfounded or no *prima facie* case is established.

Section 4. All acts, decrees and rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Decree are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 5. This Decree shall take effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 18th day of July, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventy-five.