

Tejeros Convention

Source: Santiago V. Alvarez, general for the Katipunan

The assembly at Tejeros was finally convened on 25 March 1897. The invitations to the meeting were signed by Secretary Jacinto Lumbreras of the Magdiwang Council, and he presided over the assembly. Seated with Lumbreras at the long presidential table were the Supremo Andres Bonifacio, Messrs. Mariano M. Alvarez, Pascual Alvarez, Ariston Villanueva, Mariano C. Trias, Diego Mojica, Emiliano R. de Dios, Santiago V. Alvarez, Artemio Ricarte, Santos Nocon, Luciano San Miguel, Pablo Mojica, Severino de las Alas, and Santiago Rillo, all of them of the Magdiwang. Among the Magdalo seated at the head table were Messrs. Baldomero Aguinaldo, Daniel Tirona, and Cayetano Topacio.

It must be mentioned that, before the assembly was convened, Secretary of War Ariston Villanueva of the Magdiwang Council received the confidential information that Mr. Daniel Tirona of the Magdalo faction was set to undermine the proceedings of the assembly and that he had already succeeded in enjoining many among the Magdiwang leaders to ally with him. Secretary Villanueva kept silent, but nevertheless alerted Captain General Apoy, who had troops in readiness for any sudden eventuality.

The leaders were seated at the presidential table, as previously described, and all the others were standing in groups on both sides of those seated. After Chairman Jacinto Lumbreras had declared the assembly open, he announced the main topic of discussion, which was how to bolster the defenses in the areas still under Magdiwang control. Presently, Mr. Severino de las Alas rose to speak, and when he was recognized he said, "Before we discuss minor details, let us first tackle the major issue such as what kind of government we should have and how we should go about establishing it. Once we make a decision about these questions, the problem of organization and strengthening of defenses will be resolved."

"As initiator of the Revolution," Chairman Lumbreras replied, "the Katipunan now holds authority over the islands. It has a government of law and a definite program. It is obeyed and respected by all because it stands for freedom, brotherly love, and a well-organized and well-run government. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the best measures to take to strengthen the Magdiwang government vis-a-vis the enemy. We should avoid surrendering the headquarters of the Katipunan army should the Magdalo eventually lose out."

The chair next recognized the Supremo. He concurred with what Chairman Lumbreras had just said and explained that the "K" in the middle of the sun in the Katipunan flag used in the Revolution stood for Kalayaan (Freedom).

Mr. Severino de las Alas spoke again. He countered that the letter "K" and the sun on the flag did not indicate whether the revolutionary government was democratic or not.

The Supremo replied that from the rank and file to the highest levels, the Katipunan was united in its respect for universal brotherhood and equality of men. It was risking bloodshed and life itself for the presidency, he should be proclaimed vice-president of the government of the Philippine Republic. When nobody signified approval or disapproval of the proposal, the presiding officer, the Supremo Bonifacio, ruled that the election be continued. For vice-president, Mr. Mariano Trias won over Mr. Mariano Alvarez and the Supremo Bonifacio. General Vibora was elected captain over General Apoy. General Vibora demurred, saying that he had neither the ability nor the right to assume the new position. But General Apoy cut short his objections by saying that he personally vouched for General Vibora's competence and right to occupy the position to which he was elected. General Apoy's endorsement was greeted with shouts of "Long live the newly elected captain general!"

Mr. Baldomero Aguinaldo wanted the elections to be finished before it got too dark. To facilitate the counting of votes, he suggested that for all other positions to be voted upon, voters should stand on one side of the hall if in favor and on the other side if against. The suggestion was adopted for the rest of the election. For the position of secretary of war, Mr. Emiliano R. de Dios was elected overwhelmingly over Messrs. Santiago V. Alvarez, Ariston Villanueva, and Daniel Tirona. After the voters had given the proper honors to the new secretary of war, they proceeded to elect the secretary of the interior. Mr. Andres

Bonifacio, the Supremo, won over Mr. Mariano Alvarez. The crowd broke into shouts of "Mabuhay!" Mr. Daniel Tirona requested for a restoration of order and then spoke aloud:

"My brethren, the office of secretary of the interior is of so great a scope and of such sensitivity that we should not entrust it to one who is not a lawyer. One among us here is a lawyer. He is Mr. Jose del Rosario. Let us reconsider the choice for the last position, for he has no credentials to show attesting to any educational attainment."

Then in as loud a voice as he could muster, Tirona shouted, "Let us elect Mr. Jose del Rosario, the lawyer!"

Greatly embarrassed, the Supremo Bonifacio quickly stood up and said, "We agreed to abide by the majority vote and accept its choice no matter what the station in life of the person elected. And because of this, I demand from you, Mr. Daniel Tirona, an apology. You must restore to the voters and the one they elected the honor you have only now besmirched."

Then he pulled out his revolver and took aim.

Instead of replying, Mr. Tirona ignored the Supremo's remarks and, perhaps because of fear, he slid away and got lost in the crowd. Disorder ensued as the convention secretary tried to disarm the Supremo, who was intent on shooting Mr. Tirona. The people began to disperse and the Supremo adjourned the meeting with these words:

"In my capacity as chairman of this convention and as President-Supremo of the Most Venerable Katipunan acknowledged of the Sons of the People which association is known and in by all, I hereby declare null and void all and matters approved in this meeting."

Then he left quickly and was followed by his aides and some others present.

Mr. Baldomero Aguinaldo, the Magdalo president, did not leave San Francisco de Malabon that night, in order to convince the Magdiwang leaders to reconvene the disrupted meeting the following day. They agreed to his proposal. That same night, rumor had it that Messrs. Mariano Trias, Daniel Tirona, Emiliano R. de Dios, Santiago Rillo, and others were in the parish house of the Catholic church at Tanza (Santa Cruz de Malabon), and that they were conferring with the priest, Fr. Cenon Villafranca. Many attested to seeing them, but no one knew what they talked about.

On the request of Magdalo Pres. Baldomero Aguinaldo, a meeting was called at the same friar estate house in Tejeros. Called on the day after the tumultuous convention, its purpose was to continue and revalidate the proceedings of the election meeting, to revive their former alliances, and to restore cordiality and fraternal love in their relations. Aside from the Supremo Andres Bonifacio, among the Magdiwang leaders who attended were Messrs. Mariano Alvarez, Diego Mojica, Ariston Villanueva, Pascual Alvarez, Jacinto Lumbreras, Santiago Alvarez, Artemio Ricarte, Nicolas Portilla. Santos Nocon, and Fr. Manuel Trias, the parish priest of San Francisco de Malabon. They waited until five that afternoon, but none of the Magdalo members came, not even their president who had initiated what would have been a reconciliation meeting.

That same night it was rumored that the Magdalo leaders were currently holding their own meeting at the parish house in Tanza. Though it had reason to be apprehensive because the Magdalo were meeting in territory under its jurisdiction, the Magdiwang leadership looked the other way because the Magdalo were hard-pressed for meeting places since its territories had all been taken by the Spanish enemy.

The next morning, 27 March 1897, eyewitnesses who had spied on the proceedings revealed that, indeed, a meeting had taken place at the Tanza parish house and that the Supremo's decisions regarding the election at the friar estate house were not respected. These revelations surfaced despite denials from many sectors.

At the gathering in the Tanza parish house, those elected at the Tejeros convention knelt before a crucifix and in the name of the Holy Father, the highest pontiff of the Roman Catholic church, invoked the martyred saints and solemnly took their office. Fr. Cenon Villafranca officiated. With Messrs. Severino de las Alas and Daniel Tirona as witnesses, the following took their oaths of office: Messrs. Emilio Aguinaldo, Mariano C. Trias, and Artemio Ricarte. Conspicuously absent was the Supremo Andres Bonifacio, who was not invited although he was one of those elected to office. It will be recalled that as chairman of the Tejeros convention, he declared null and void all matters approved by the assembly because of a grave violation of a principle agreed upon before the election.

It should be noted here that, unknown to the Magdiwang Council, the Magdalo posted troops to guard the Tanza parish house for their oath-taking ceremonies. The troops were under strict orders not to admit any of the unwanted Magdiwang partisans. If the news about the secret ceremony had leaked out earlier, and the underdogs in the power struggle had attempted to break into it, they would have been annihilated then and there.

Seeds of Discontent

Source: Teodoro A. Agoncillo, Filipino historian

In the first flush of rebel victory climaxing the simultaneous attacks upon the Spanish garrisons and convents, followed by the dismal failure of Governor-General Blanco to smash the insurgent power, the Katipunan of Cavite, divided into two factions, the Magdiwang and the Magdalo, immediately proceeded to reorganize the province along partisan lines. Each faction exercised sovereign power over a number of towns, including those in Batangas bordering Cavite. Thus, Talisay, a town in Batangas, was under the Magdalo government, while Nasugbu, Tuwi and, Look, in the same province, belonged to the Magdiwang. As independent entities, the leaders of the two provincial councils never got together to elect one supreme council that would hold sway over the entire province. The Magdiwang, proceeding with its election independently of the Magdalo, chose the following men to administer its government: Mariano Alvarez, President; Pascual Alvarez, Executive Secretary; Emiliano Riego de Dios, Minister of the Interior (*Pagpapaulad*); Mariano Trias, Minister of Grace and Justice; Ariston Villanueva, Minister of War; Santiago Alvarez, Commander-in-Chief; Diego Moxica, Minister of Finance; Artemio Ricarte and Mariano Riego de Dios, Military Commanders with the rank of Brigadier General. On the other hand, the Magdalo elected the following to take the reins of its government: Baldomero Aguinaldo, President; Candido Tirona; Minister of War; Cayetano Topacio; Minister of Finance; Emilio Aguinaldo, Commander-in-Chief; Edilberto Evangelista, Lieutenant General; Vito Belarmino and Crispulo Aguinaldo, Military Commanders with the rank of Brigadier General. Since the organization of the Magdiwang, its capital had been Noveleta, but in the early part of November, when General Blanco began his offensive, the capital was moved to San Francisco de Malabon and later to Naik. The Magdalo, for its part, had its capital in Kawit and when it fell, Imus, San Francisco de Malabon, Naik and Maragondon successively became its seat.

An attempt was made by both factions to make their respective armies wear the same uniform. It was agreed to adopt the following insignia: for the President's cap, a sun with golden rays on a white background, a K (Katipunan), and the letters A.N.B. (Anak ng Bayan) in the middle. The same insignia was used for the sleeves. The Minister had the same insignia as the President's except that the letters A.N.B. were not included. The bands on the sleeves of a Minister, including the K, were of different colors according to the Ministry to which each belonged. The Minister of War had a red K on a white background, a sun on the cap, a sun on the left breast but none on the sleeves. The plan, however, did not go beyond the paper stage, as the rebels did not have the means to buy the uniform.

When Cavite, led by its rival factions, successfully rose in revolt, the leaders fell into disputes arising from the desire of one group to lord it over the other. Since both groups were responsible for the rebel victories, neither would bow to the other, or allow itself to be placed under its rival's command. There was no serious open breach, but the silent conflict, more ominous than it appeared on the surface, threatened to wreck the unity that in the beginning had done much to prevent the foe from overrunning the whole province and annihilating the revolution at its very inception, it was this conflict, more than anything else, that led to the rebel's defeat at the hands of Polavieja. The Magdiwang faction, believing that as the initiator of the revolution in Cavite it had the priority right to rule over the insurgents of the province, looked with

disdain at the way the Magdalo men refused to cooperate with it. The Magdalo followers, believing that most of the victories in the whole territory were won by their leaders wanted to appear the stronger and, therefore, the better fitted to rule.

The situation, though not so serious on the surface, led the Magdiwang men to invite Andres Bonifacio to visit Cavite and see for himself all that had been accomplished by the revolutionists in that area and to intervene, in the conflict. A delegate was sent to look for the Supremo in the mountains of Montalban and Mariquina to apprise him of the urgent necessity of mediating on the widening rift between the two popular councils. Bonifacio, informed of the situation, refused to heed the request of the Magdiwang leaders on the ground that in order to succeed in the revolution against Spain the leaders must not be concentrated in a single place. This preliminary contact with the Supremo resulted in the periodic exchanges of communications between him and the Magdiwang chieftains. On the third invitation, written by Artemio Ricarte upon the instruction of Mariano Alvarez, Bonifacio acceded to the request. With his wife and two brothers, Ciriaco and Procopio Bonifacio left for Cavite about the middle of December 1896. Emilio Aguinaldo, Candido Tirona and Edilberto Evangelista were on hand to meet the Supremo and his entourage at Zapote. It was at this preliminary meeting that a misunderstanding arose between the Magdalo leaders and Bonifacio, for the former, rightly or wrongly, saw from Bonifacio's gestures and behavior that he regarded himself superior and "acted as if he were a king". Even so, the hard feelings that Bonifacio's unconscious and unintentional actions engendered remained submerged and flared up only in the Imus Assembly.

Bonifacio was brought by the rebel leaders to the house of Juan Castañeda in Imus, where he was visited by Bladomero Aguinaldo, Daniel Tirona, Vicente Fernandez, and others. The Supremo, upon seeing Fernandez, ordered his arrest. For Bonifacio, remembering that Fernandez was the same man who has promised, before the battle of San Juan, to attack the Spaniards in Laguna and Morong simultaneously with Bonifacio's offensive in San Juan del Monte but whose promise was never carried out, now saw his chance to punish the offender. Bonifacio blamed him for the defeat in San Juan and was determined that he should not go unpunished. As Supreme Head of the Katipunan, Bonifacio took it for granted that he would be obeyed by all. To his surprise and dismay, the Magdalo chieftains, to whom Fernandez had run for shelter, refused to give up their man. The Supremo by then had realized that he had very little, if any, influence in the Magdalo area. With doubts crisscrossing his mind and misgivings assailing his heart, Bonifacio, on January 2, 1897, wrote from San Francisco de Malabon to his uncle-in-law, Mariano Alvarez:

"President *Mainam*,

Don't fail to come this very moment for I want to talk to you privately about what happened to me in Magdalo and so that you might explain their organization to me."

Meanwhile, Esteban San Juan invited Bonifacio to attend the demonstration of the Magdiwang rebels in Noveleta. Accompanied by San Juan himself, Baldomero Aguinaldo and Tirona, Bonifacio arrived at Noveleta amidst the enthusiastic acclamation of the people. At three in the afternoon, a parade took place in which Bonifacio, riding in a carriage and flanked on both sides by the Magdiwang soldiers in red uniform, was the object of the demonstration. As the parade wound its way toward San Francisco de Malabon, the people shouted, "Long live the ruler of the Philippines!" to which Bonifacio answered, "Long live Philippine liberty!"

Upon arriving at Malabon, he was quartered in the house of Santos Nocon and, later, in the house of Mrs. Estefania Potente, where he stayed 'til the Spaniards captured the town in April 1897.

The misunderstanding that existed between the followers of the Magdiwang and the Magdalo, so destructive of the Katipunan plans, deepened into mutual suspicion and jealousies that resulted in military reverses in several sectors. Polavieja's counter-offensives led to the fall of several towns hitherto held by the rebels, and the attitude of non-cooperation exhibited by one faction when the other was harassed by the enemy led, as it must, to disaster in the field. The situation, both camps believed, could only be remedied by coming together and threshing out differences in opinion and solving, ultimately, the question of

leadership in the province. For this purpose, the leaders of of the Magdiwang and the Magdalo decided to call a convention or assembly at Imus.

In the assembly hall, the two factions met (on December 31, 1896) and exchanged the usual greetings. Bonifacio entered, proceeded to the head of the table and unceremoniously occupied the chair. He beckoned to the Magdiwang Ministers to sit at his right side. This obvious partiality to the Magdiwang was resented by the Magdalo, for as Supreme Head between of the the two Katipunan factions, who was called upon to mediate, Bonifacio was expected to show impartiality. But his actions in the case were motivated by his regard for his wife's uncle, Mariano Alvarez, the President of the Magdiwang – a fact that aggravated the situation. Even so, the Magdalo men did not show their resentment but kept silent in order to prevent further misunderstanding between the followers of both camps.

Seeing that Bonifacio had called his Ministers, Baldomero Aguinaldo, President of the Magdalo, without being invited, sat to the left of Bonifacio. General Emilio Aguinaldo, seeing his position as a purely military one, was content to be a mere observer. He had, however, a plan of his own. Since it was the intention of his faction to propose the establishment of a revolutionary government, he had decided beforehand that in the coming election for the presidency he would nominate and support Edilberto Evangelista, since among them all, "Evangelista was the best educated."

Bonifacio knew of Aguinaldo's active electioneering in favor of Evangelista and was deeply hurt, for as founder and Supreme Head of the Katipunan he felt that the presidency should be given to him as a reward.

The assembly opened with Bonifacio as Chairman. It was evident, when Baldomero Aguinaldo made the proposal to establish a revolutionary government, that the two factions would never come to an understanding. The Magdalo men contended that the continuance of the Katipunan government was no longer necessary, for since the start of the Revolution the Society had ceased to remain a secret society and must therefore be supplanted by one that would better fit the situation. The Magdalo people further contended that being small, Cavite must not be divided between the two factions. On the other hand, the Magdiwang followers argued that the Katipunan already had a constitution and by-laws duly approved and enforced in the Islands and that, by virtue of this, provincial and municipal governments in and around Manila had already been established. There was, therefore, no necessity of establishing a new government. Even so, the Magdiwang Minister of War, Ariston Villanueva, stood up and said that if a new government was to be established, Andres Bonifacio, who had organized and planned the entire revolutionary movement, must of right occupy the presidency without any election. Further, he pointed out that as Chairman and Supremo, Bonifacio should be given blanket authority to appoint the Ministers. The Magdalo group strenuously objected and insisted on an election. The discussion became heated and did not accomplish any tangible result. The assembly was adjourned and each faction left without any definite understanding.

Suspicious and jealousies continued to plague the ranks of the rebels, and even among the members of the same faction petty quarrels continued to come up. The Magdalo followers suspected the Magdiwang of courting the favor of the Spaniards, while the same suspicion was aroused in the Magdiwang as regards the Magdalo. In a situation where the Magdalo needed the help of the Magdiwang, the latter, to which Bonifacio belonged, refused to come to the aid of the former. Moreover, the Magdiwang followers were themselves occupied, now and then with petty jealousies and quarrels that tended to demoralize the soldiers. Thus, when the town fiesta of San Francisco de Malabon was held in January 1897, the rebels, then enjoying the afternoon games, were disturbed by a series of rifle shots that sent them scampering away to places of safety. Thinking that the enemy was approaching, Ariston Villanueva and Santiago Alvarez gathered their men and prepared to meet an attack. They later found out that the rifle shots came from the men of Captain Mariano San Gabriel, also a Magdiwang man, who, trigger-happy, had fired several shots in the air. Alvarez's men tried to disarm the offending soldiers, but instead were themselves disarmed. Alvarez was furious and demanded that San Gabriel disarm his men. The latter refused and left for Noveleta. It was only through Ricarte's intervention that the two men, Alvarez and San Gabriel, were brought together again as comrades.

The situation had not eased up a bit when the leaders of the Magdiwang planned to hold another convention, this time in the estate-house of Tejeros, a Magdiwang territory situated about two kilometers from San Francisco de Malabon and about half a kilometer from the town proper of Salinas. The government under the Magdalo, comprising the towns of Kawit, Bakood and Imus, was at the time seriously threatened by the Spanish army which occupied the estate-house of Salitran and which had dug in as a preparatory step to the battle that was about to commence. General Emilio Aguinaldo, leading the Magdalo soldiers, faced the Spaniards in Salitran, a barrio between the towns of Imus and Dasmariñas. It was March 22, 1897, Aguinaldo's birthday, when simultaneously the battle raged and the assembly convened at Tejeros.

The delegates, mostly belonging to the Magdiwang, lazily moped that sultry afternoon to the spacious estate-house of Tejeros. Some of the men were barefoot; others wore *burí* hats or were dressed in barong Tagalog. They came from all directions: from Kawit, Noveleta and Imus to the north; from Tanza to the west; and from San Francisco de Malabon to the northeast. The estate-house, surrounded by stone walls and built in the middle of the six-hectare farm owned by the friars and now in rebel hands, had a 60-meter frontage. The entrance was through an arched gate connected to the rear arched gate by a long and wide corridor. To the right, a few meters from the front gate, were the stairs. Directly opposite the stairs was a storage room, and next to it, to the rear, was the chapel. Directly opposite this and next to the stairs was another storage room. Up the stairs was the big hall, with the doors of thirty-four rooms opening to it. In the rear of a room to the right were the dining room and the *azotea* that commanded a beautiful view of the fields around and the murky *Ilog Kawayan* on whose banks thick clumps of bamboo protected the house from the glare of the sun. The estate-house stood alone in that wide expanse of riceland. Directly opposite the house and across the road was more riceland (*tubigan*). The long road that commenced from the town of Salinas led directly to San Francisco de Malabon, and half a kilometer from the estate-house it branched off to the right, where a bridge connected the latter town to the town of Tanza or Santa Cruz de Malabon.

It was this place, the former summer resort of the friars, that witnessed the first important election held under the auspices of the Katipunan government. An invitation was sent by the Magdiwang chieftains to the Magdalo followers to attend the meeting, but because of the battle then raging around the locality not all the Magdalo leaders were able to attend. The Magdiwang was represented by Andres Bonifacio, Mariano Alvarez, Pascual Alvarez, Santiago Alvarez, Luciano San Miguel, Mariano Trias, Severino de las Alas, Santos Nocon and others, while the Magdalo was represented by Baldomero Aguinaldo, Daniel Tirona, Cayetano Topacio, Antonio Montenegro and others. The estate-house buzzed with life as more rebels, some of them uninvited, came to the convention. It was past two in the afternoon when the meeting was formally opened.

Jacinto Lumbreras, acting president of the Magdiwang, took the chair and opened the convention with introductory remarks summing up the purpose of the meeting. To his right sat Teodoro Gonzales, also a Magdiwang, who acted as secretary. Severino de las Alas, a Magdiwang, immediately took the floor and explained that before discussing ways and means of defending such a small area as Cavite, the convention assembled should first of all agree upon the kind of government that should be set up to administer the whole country under the prevailing circumstances.

"From this government," he said, "anything that is necessary in the defense of the country can emanate."

The presiding officer, however, reminded the speaker that a government had already been established upon the founding of the Katipunan, its Supreme Council, its Provincial Councils and its Popular Councils, and that the meeting was called to adopt defensive measures. At this juncture, Bonifacio spoke and supplemented Lumbreras' explanation, calling the attention of those assembled to the Katipunan flag with a K in the middle, which embodied the ideals of the revolutionists, namely liberty. De las Alas, not contented with the Supremo's explanation, countered that the K in the flag of the Katipunan did not in any way identify the kind of government that they had, whether such government was monarchical or republican. Bonifacio remarked that all Katipuneros, from the Supreme Head to the lowest member, recognized the principle of Unity, Fraternity, and Equality.

"It can be seen," he said, "that the Government of the Association of the Sons of the People is republican in form."

The discussion was going nowhere and tempers ran high as the men insisted on their own points of view. So far, the discussion was between the men of the same faction. In an unfortunate moment, a Magdalo man, Antonio Montenegro, stood up and, shouting at the top of his voice, took issue with Bonifacio.

"If we do not act upon the suggestion of Mr. de las Alas," he said, "we, the rebels, will be likened unto a mere pack of highway robbers, or worse, like animals without reason."

The words, uttered in good faith and in the belief that something must be done to have a new government organized, touched off a sensitive spot in the hearts of the Magdiwang listeners. Santiago Alvarez, a Magdiwang, pricked to anger, took the floor and, throwing a malicious side-glance at Montenegro, retorted, "We, the rebels of Cavite, especially those under the Magdiwang, recognize the Government organized by the Association of the Sons of the People. And if you want to set up another form of government, you can go back to your own province and wrest the authority from the Spaniards, as we have already done. As such, you can do whatever you want to and nobody would interfere with you. We of Cavite," he added with a meaning full of bitterness, "we of Cavite do not need and will never need any adviser of your own standing only."

Pandemonium reigned as the voice of Santiago Alvarez boomed inside the spacious sala. His bodyguards, planted near the stairs, moved ominously – all to set fire at those inside the hall. Lumbreras, sensing the explosive situation, tactfully called a recess to give sufficient time for the angry men to cool off. At the end of an hour, the meeting was resumed. Jacinto Lumbreras, seeing that it would be useless for him to continue to preside in such an atmosphere, refused to take the chair, saying, "As the question under discussion is completely outside of what is mentioned in the agenda of the meeting and is concerned instead with the establishment of an overall government of the revolution, I should not continue to preside over this session."

Then he took his seat among the members, and Andres Bonifacio, who was acclaimed by all to succeed him, took the chair as the presiding officer by virtue of his being the President of the Supreme Council of the Katipunan. He then called the meeting to order and said, "As you desire to set up a supreme government to direct the revolution, abolishing what was organized by the Katipunan and repudiating the resolution approved in the Assembly of Imus, as President of the Supreme Council of the Katipunan, I accede to your just petition, but first of all I want to ask you to recognize a principle as a basis of agreement in this or in other meetings, which is: that we respect and obey the will of the majority."

Those present saw the justice and wisdom of his proposition and assented unanimously. The Republic of the Philippines was then and there proclaimed amidst enthusiastic hurrahs. With a new form of government determined to take the place of the Katipunan, the election of officers was then prepared. Nine officers were to be elected by popular vote, namely, President, Vice-President, Captain-General, Director of War, Director of Interior, Director of State, Director of Finance, Director of *Fomento* and Director of Justice. Before proceeding with the election, Bonifacio, probably assailed by doubts and aware of his limitations, called the attention of all the electors representing the different regions of the Philippines to the principle that whoever would be elected should be recognized and respected regardless of his social condition and education. The proposal, made in the form of a mere statement and reminder, was approved, for in that convention very few, if any, were men of high intellectual attainments. The ballots were prepared and distributed. The balloting was made successively, that is, the office of the President was first voted upon, after which the other offices were filled in singly. After an hour, the ballots were cast for the presidency, and Emilio Aguinaldo won *in absentia* over Andres Bonifacio and Mariano Trias. The President-elect was proclaimed with loud shouts and applause.

Before the ballots were cast for the Vice-Presidency, Severino de las Alas stood up and suggested that in as much as Bonifacio had received the second largest number of votes he should automatically be allowed to occupy the Vice-Presidency. The men assembled appeared lukewarm to the suggestion, there being no one who approved or disapproved it. Consequently, Bonifacio decided to continue with the election

of the Vice-President. Mariano Trias was elected to the position over Andres Bonifacio, Severino de las Alas and Mariano Alvarez. The election of the Captain-General came next and Ricarte, the acting Secretary of the convention, came out over Santiago Alvarez. With a modesty that sprang from the realization of the responsibility attached to the position, Ricarte stood up and declared, "None better than I know my own limitations and fitness: the position with which this assembly honors me is beyond my scant ability and strength; to me it is a very honorable position but its horizon is too wide for me: so I request the assembly not to resent my refusal to accept it."

Ricarte's modesty, genuine or assumed, proved effective. Cries of disapproval followed his request to be relieved, and the disturbance created by the enthusiastic followers of the General forced Bonifacio to call the meeting to order.

Then, "It is getting dark," he said, "so we have to proceed to the election to other positions."

Somebody suggested that in order to expedite the election to the remaining positions, the electors should step to one side when their candidates were called, a proposal that was immediately approved. In this manner, the following were elected: Director of War, Emiliano Riego de Dios, who won over Ariston Villanueva, Daniel Tirona and Santiago Alvarez; Director of Interior, Andres Bonifacio, who won over Mariano Alvarez and Pascual Alvarez.

The election of Bonifacio gave rise to an incident that nearly ended in a bloody affair. Amidst the acclamations that followed the announcement of his election, Daniel Tirona, a Magdalo man, stood up and said, "The position of Director of the Interior is an exalted one and it is not meet that a person without a lawyer's diploma should occupy it. We have in our province a lawyer, Jose del Rosario; therefore, we should protest against the elected and acclaimed."

And, shouting at the top of his voice, he added, "Let us vote for Jose del Rosario!"

No one, however, took up the suggestion which was shouted four times. Nevertheless, Bonifacio felt insulted and he turned crimson with anger. Controlling himself, he demanded that Daniel Tirona retract what he had said. "Did we not agree," he added, "that we have to abide by the decision of the majority whatever may be the social standing of the elected?"

He insisted that Tirona give satisfaction to the assembly for his defamatory words. But Tirona ignored Bonifacio and tried to lose himself in the crowd. In the flush of his anger, Bonifacio whipped out his pistol to fire at Tirona but Ricarte grabbed his hand and thus prevented what might have been a tragic affair. The people then began to leave the hall, and Bonifacio, frustrated and deeply wounded in feeling, cried aloud: "I, as chairman of this assembly, and as President of the Supreme Council of the Katipunan, as all of you do not deny, declare this assembly dissolved, and I annul all that has been approved and resolved."

With this parting statement, he left the hall, followed by his men. The seed of discontent, resulting from his failure to get the presidency, and which was watered by the unfortunate attitude of Daniel Tirona, who, by another sad coincidence, belonged to the opposite faction, found fertile ground in Bonifacio's heart and mind. Aside from the fact that as founder of the Katipunan and the initiator of the Revolution he believed he should have been given the presidency, he contended that irregularities were committed by the Magdalo men and that he would have been elected had it not been for the premeditated frauds of the rival faction. Writing to his uncle-in-law, Mariano Alvarez, he said:

"My dear General *Mainam*,

Our recently ended election at Mapagtiis [San Francisco de Malabon] has left a large poisonous thorn in my heart. I reiterate to you my nullification of all that had been agreed upon there. Ay, General, I never expected that my complacency and faithfulness would be rewarded with avarice and insult upon my person by your fellow townsmen who are false patriots. I shall make them realize when I set foot on Morong soil that it was not I whom they insulted but the whole country.

Send me food at once and faithful soldiers of the Mother Country here at Limbon as a fulfillment of your promised help when I left in disquietude.

Your Supremo,
And. Bonifacio, *Maypagasa*.”

Giving verit to his resentment over the procedure and results of the elections, Bonifacio, in a letter to his friend, Emilio Jacinto, then in Laguna explained his side and gave the background of the event:

“The majority of those in the convention determined to organize a government; but I gave them to understand that this could not be done on account of the absence of the representatives of other districts, aside from an agree-ment having already been made at the convention at Imus; that all this annulled the majority, because in view of the present critical situation of these pueblos there was no time to wait for the representatives from other places, and the Imus Convention lacked validity on account of the alleged absence of the minutes. Nevertheless, I assured those present that in the case the manifest will of the people governed in the election of officers, I would respect it.

Moreover, before the election began, I discovered the underhand work of some of the Imus crowd who had quietly spread the statement that it was not advisable that they be governed by men from other pueblos, and that they should for this reason strive to elect Captain Emilio as President. As soon as I heard of this, I said that this meeting was dirty work, because this was what they were after and they were deceiving the people, adding that if they wished me to point out, one by one, those who were conducting themselves in this matter, I would do so. The majority said that this was no longer necessary. I also said that if a manifest will of the people was not complied with, I would not recognize the chiefs elected, and if I did not recognize them, they would not be recognized by our people there, either. Don Artemio Ricarte, the General-elect, also said at the meeting that this election was due to bad practices.”

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