RE: NON-DISCLOSURE BEFORE THE JUDICIAL AND BAR COUNCIL OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE CASE FILED AGAINST JUDGE JAIME V. QUITAIN, IN HIS CAPACITY AS THE THEN ASST. REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF TH...

JBC No. 013. August 22, 2007

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PER CURIAM:

Judge Jaime Vega Quitain was appointed Presiding Judge of the Regional Trial Court (RTC), Branch 10, Davao City on May 17, 2003.[1] Subsequent thereto, the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) received confidential information that administrative and criminal charges were filed against Judge Quitain in his capacity as then Assistant Regional Director, National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM), Regional Office 11, Davao City, as a result of which he was dismissed from the service per Administrative Order (A.O.) No. 183 dated April 10, 1995.

In the Personal Data Sheet (PDS)[2] submitted to the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) on November 26, 2001, Judge Quitain declared that there were five criminal cases (Criminal Cases Nos. 18438, 18439, 22812, 22813, and 22814) filed against him before the Sandiganbayan, which were all dismissed. No administrative case was disclosed by Judge Qutain in his PDS.

To confirm the veracity of the information, then Deputy Court Administrator (DCA) Christopher O. Lock (now Court Administrator) requested from the Sandiganbayan certified copies of the Order(s) dismissing the criminal cases.[3] On even date, letters[4] were sent to the NAPOLCOM requesting for certified true copies of documents relative to the administrative complaints filed against Judge Quitain, particularly A.O. No. 183 dated April 10, 1995 dismissing him from the service. Likewise, DCA Lock required Judge Quitain to explain the alleged misrepresentation and deception he committed before the JBC.[5]

In a letter[6] dated November 28, 2003, the NAPOLCOM furnished the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) a copy of A.O. No. 183 showing that respondent Judge was indeed dismissed from the service for Grave Misconduct for falsifying or altering the amounts reflected in disbursement vouchers in support of his claim for reimbursement of expenses. A.O. 183 partly reads:

> **THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 183**
>
> DISMISSING FROM THE SERVICE ASSISTANT REGIONAL DIRECTOR JAIME VEGA QUITAIN, NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION, REGIONAL OFFICE NO. 11
>
> This refers to the administrative complaint against Jaime Vega Quitain, Assistant Regional Director, National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM), Regional Office No. 11, Davao City, for Grave Misconduct (Violation of Art. 48, in relation to Arts. 171 and 217 of the Revised Penal Code and Art. IX of the Civil Service Law) filed by the NAPOLCOM.
>
> x x x x

> After circumspect study, I am in complete accord with the above findings and recommendation of the NAPOLCOM.
>
> It was established that the falsification could not have been consummated without respondent's direct participation, as it was upon his direction and approval that disbursement vouchers were prepared showing the falsified amount. The subsequent endorsement and encashment of the check by respondent only shows his complete disregard for the truth which per se constitutes misconduct and dishonesty of the highest order. By any standard, respondent had manifestly shown that he is unfit to discharge the functions of his office. Needless to stress, a public office is a position of trust and public service demands of every government official or employee, no matter how lowly his position may be, the highest degree of responsibility and integrity and he must remain accountable to the people. Moreover, his failure to adduce evidence in support of his defense is a tacit admission of his guilt. Let this be a final reminder to him that the government is serious enough to [weed out] misfits in the government service, and it will not be irresolute to impose the severest sanction regardless of personalities involved. Accordingly, respondent's continuance in office becomes untenable.
>
> WHEREFORE, and as recommended by the NAPOLCOM, Assistant Regional Director Jaime Vega Quitain is hereby DISMISSED from the service, with forfeiture of pay and benefits, effective upon receipt of a copy hereof.
>
> Done in the City of Manila, this 10[th] day of April in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and ninety-five.
>
> (Sgd. by President Fidel V. Ramos)
>
> By the President:
>
> (Sgd.)
>
> TEOFISTO T. GUINGONA, JR.
> Executive Secretary[7]

In a letter[8] dated October 22, 2003 addressed to DCA Lock, Judge Quitain denied having committed any misrepresentation before the JBC. He alleged that during his interview, the members thereof only inquired about the status of the criminal cases filed by the NAPOLCOM before the Sandiganbayan, and not about the administrative case simultaneously filed against him. He also alleged that he never received from the Office of the President an official copy of A.O. No. 183 dismissing him from the service.

Thereafter, DCA Lock directed Judge Quitain to explain within ten (10) days from notice why he did not include in his PDS, which was sworn to before a notary public on November 22, 2001, the administrative case filed against him, and the fact of his dismissal from the service.[9]

In his letters[10] dated March 13, 2004 and June 17, 2004, respondent explained that during the investigation of his administrative case by the NAPOLCOM Ad Hoc Committee, one of its members suggested to him that if he resigns from the government service, he will no longer be prosecuted; that following such suggestion, he tendered his irrevocable resignation from NAPOLCOM on June 1, 1993[11] which was immediately accepted by the Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Governments; that he did not disclose the case in his PDS because he was of the "honest belief" that he had no more pending administrative case by reason of his resignation; that his resignation "amounted to an automatic dismissal" of his administrative case considering that "the issues raised therein became moot and academic"; and that had he known that he would be dismissed from the service, he should not have applied for the position of a judge since he knew he would never be appointed.

Finding reasonable ground to hold him administratively liable, then Court Administrator Presbitero J. Velasco, Jr.

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(now a member of this Court) and then DCA Lock submitted a Memorandum[12] dated September 3, 2004 to then Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr., which states:

> In order that this Office may thoroughly and properly evaluate the matter, we deemed it necessary to go over the records of the subject administrative case against Judge Jaime V. Quitain, particularly the matter that pertains to Administrative Order No. 183 dated 10 April 1995. On 15 May 2004, we examined the records of said administrative case on file with the NAPOLCOM, Legal Affairs Service, and secured certified [true] copies of pertinent documents.
>
> After careful perusal of the documents and records available, including the letters- explanations of Judge Jaime V. Quitain, this Office finds that there are reasonable grounds to hold him administratively liable.
>
> An examination of the Personal Data Sheet submitted by Judge Quitain with the Judicial and Bar Council, which was subscribed and sworn to before Notary Public Bibiano M. Bustamante of Davao City on 22 November 2001, reveals that he concealed material facts and even committed perjury in having answered "yes" to Question No. 24, but without disclosing the fact that he was dismissed from the government service. Question No. 24 and his answer thereto are hereunder quoted as follows:
> 24. Have you ever been charged with or convicted of or otherwise imposed a sanction for the violation of any law, decree, ordinance or regulation by any court, tribunal or any other government office, agency or instrumentality in the Philippines or in any foreign country or found guilty of an administrative offense or imposed any administrative sanction? [/] Yes [ ] No. If your answer is "Yes" to any of the questions, give particulars.
>
> But all dismissed (acquitted) Sandiganbayan Criminal Cases Nos. 18438, 18439 Date of [Dismissal] - August 2, 1995 Sandiganbayan Criminal Cases Nos. 22812, 22813, 22814 Date of [Dismissal] - July 17, 2000

As borne out by the records, Judge Quitain deliberately did not disclose the fact that he was dismissed from the government service. At the time he filled up and submitted his Personal Data Sheet with the Judicial and Bar Council, he had full knowledge of the subject administrative case, as well as Administrative Order No. 183 dismissing him from the government service. Based on the certified documents secured from the Office of the NAPOLCOM, the following data were gathered:

- In compliance with the "Summons" dated 19 March 1993, signed by Commissioner Alexis C. Canonizado, Chairman, Ad Hoc Committee of the NAPOLCOM, Judge Jaime V. Quitain, through Atty. Pedro S. Castillo, filed his Answer (dated 29 March 1993) to the administrative complaint lodged against him by the Napolcom;

- On 30 March 1993, Judge Quitain received a copy of the "Notice of Hearing" of even date, signed by Mr. Canonizado, in connection with the formal hearing of the subject administrative case scheduled on 30 April 1993;

- Administrative Order No. 183, dismissing Judge Quitain from the service, was dated 10 April 1995. On 18 April 1995, newspaper items relative to the dismissal of Judge Quitain were separately published in the Mindanao Daily Mirror and in the Mindanao Times, the contents of which read as follows:

> Mindanao Times:
>
> Dismissed NAPOLCOM chief airs appeal
>
> Former National Police Commission (Napolcom) acting regional director Jaime Quitain yesterday appealed for understanding to those allegedly behind his ouster from his post two years ago. Quitain, who was one of the guests in yesterday's Kapehan sa Dabaw, wept unabashedly as he read his prepared statement on his dismissal from government service.
>
> Quitain claimed that after Secretary Luis Santos resigned from the Department of Interior and Local

> Governments in 1991, a series of administrative charges were hurled against him by some regional employees.
>
> "I was dismissed from the Napolcom Office without due process," Quitain said.
>
> He also said he had no idea as to who the people (sic) are behind the alleged smear campaign leveled against him.
>
> "Whoever is behind all this, I have long forgiven you. My only appeal to you, give me my day in court, give me the chance to clear my name, the only legacy that I can leave to my children," Quitain said in his statement.
>
> "It is my constitutional right to be present in all proceedings of the administrative case," he also said.
>
> Quitain was appointed Assistant Regional Director of Napolcom in 1991 by then President Corazon Aquino upon the recommendation of Secretary Santos. He was later designated Napolcom acting regional director for Region XI.
>
> Mindanao Daily Mirror:
>
> Quitain vows to clear name
>
> Former assistant regional director Jaime Quitain of the National Police Commission (Napolcom) vowed yesterday to clear his name in court from charges of tampering with an official receipt.
>
> Quitain[,] who is running for a council seat, expressed confidence that he would soon be vindicated in court against the group that plotted his ouster from office: He said his only appeal was for Interior and Local Government Secretary Rafael Alunan to grant him his day in court to answer the charges.
>
> "Whoever was behind all of these things, I have long forgiven them," Quitain said.
>
> "Just give me the chance to clear my name because this is the only legacy that I can give my children," Quitain said.

While the records of the subject administrative case on file with the NAPOLCOM Office does not bear proof of receipt of Administrative Order No. 183 by Judge Quitain, the same does not necessarily mean that he is totally unaware of said Administrative Order. As shown by the above-quoted newspaper clippings, Judge Quitain even aired his appeal and protest to said Administrative Order.

x x x x

Judge Quitain asseverated that he should not have applied with the JBC had he known that he was administratively charged and was consequently dismissed from the service since he will not be considered. But this may be the reason why he deliberately concealed said fact. His claim that he did not declare the administrative case in his Personal Data Sheet because of his honest belief that there is no administrative or criminal case that would be filed against him by reason of his resignation and the assurance made by the NAPOLCOM that no administrative case will be filed, does not hold water. It is rather absurd for him to state that his resignation from the NAPOLCOM amounts to an automatic dismissal of whatever administrative case filed against him because when he resigned and relinquished his position, the issues raised therein became moot and academic. He claims that he did not bother to follow up the formal dismissal of the administrative case because of said belief. All these are but futile attempts to exonerate himself from administrative culpability in concealing facts relevant and material to his application in the Judiciary. As a member of the Bar, he should know that his resignation from the NAPOLCOM would not obliterate any administrative liability he may have incurred[,] much less, would it result to the automatic dismissal of the administrative case filed against him. The acceptance of his resignation is definitely without prejudice to the continuation of the administrative case filed against him. If such would be the case, anyone charged administratively could easily escape from administrative sanctions by the

simple expedient of resigning from the service. Had it been true that Judge Quitain honestly believes that his resignation amounts to the automatic dismissal of his administrative case, the least he could have done was to personally verify the status thereof. He should not have relied on the alleged assurance made by the NAPOLCOM.

On the strength of his misrepresentation, Judge Quitain misled the Judicial and Bar Council by making it appear that he had a clean record and was qualified to join the Judiciary. His prior dismissal from the government service is a blot on his record, which has gone [worse] and has spread even more because of his concealment of it. Had he not concealed said vital fact, it could have been taken into consideration when the Council acted on his application. His act of dishonesty renders him unfit to join the Judiciary, much less remain sitting as a judge. It even appears that he was dismissed by the NAPOLCOM for misconduct and dishonesty.

Thus, the OCA recommended that: (1) the instant administrative case against respondent be docketed as an administrative matter; and (2) that he be dismissed from the service with prejudice to his reappointment to any position in the government, including government-owned or controlled corporations, and with forfeiture of all retirement benefits except accrued leave credits.

Respondent was required to Comment.[13]

In compliance with the Court's Resolution respondent filed his Comment[14] contending that before he filed his application for RTC Judge with the JBC, he had no knowledge that he was administratively dismissed from the NAPOLCOM service as the case was "secretly heard and decided." He averred that:

- Being a religious lay head and eventually the Pastoral Head of the Redemptorist Eucharistic Lay Ministry in Davao City and the surrounding provinces, he was recruited as one of the political followers of then Mayor Luis T. Santos of Davao City, who later became the Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and was instrumental in his appointment as Assistant Regional Director of the National Police Commission, Region XI;

- After Secretary Luis T. Santos was replaced as DILG Secretary, the political followers of his successor, who were the same followers involved in the chain of corruption prevalent in their department, began quietly pressing for his (Quitain) resignation as Assistant Regional Director;

- Finding difficulty in attacking his honesty and personal integrity, his detractors went to the extent of filing criminal charges against him;

- Before these criminal charges were scheduled for trial, he was being convinced to resign in exchange for the dismissal of said criminal charges, but when he refused to do so, he was unjustifiably detailed or "exiled" at the DILG central office in Manila;

- Upon his "exile" in Manila for several months, he realized that even his immediate superiors cooperated with his detractors in instigating for his removal. Hence, upon advice of his relatives, friends and the heads of their pastoral congregation, he resigned from his position in NAPOLCOM on condition that all pending cases filed against him, consisting of criminal cases only, shall be dismissed, as in fact they were dismissed;

- From then on he was never formally aware of any administrative case filed against him. Hence, when he submitted his Personal Data Sheet before the Judicial and Bar Council in support of his application as RTC judge, he made the following answer in Question No. 23:

> 23. Is there any pending civil, criminal, or administrative (including disbarment) case or complaint filed against you pending before any court, prosecution office, any other office, agency or instrumentality of the

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government, or the Integrated Bar of the Philippines?

He could only give a negative answer since there was no pending administrative case filed against him that he knows;

- Had he known that there was an administrative case filed against him he would have desisted from applying as a judge and would have given his full attention to the said administrative case, if only to avoid ensuing embarrassment; and

- The filing of the administrative case against him as well as the proceedings had thereon and the decision rendered therein, without his knowledge, could have probably occurred during his "exile period" when he was detailed indefinitely in Manila. The proceedings had in the said administrative case are null and void since he was denied due process.

Respondent's Comment was submitted to the OCA for evaluation, report and recommendation.[15]

OCA submitted its Memorandum[16] dated August 11, 2005 stating therein that it was adopting its earlier findings contained in its Memorandum dated September 3, 2004. Based on the documents presented, it can not be denied that at the time Judge Quitain applied as an RTC judge, he had full knowledge of A.O. No. 183 dismissing him from government service. Considering that Judge Quitain's explanations in his Comment are but mere reiterations of his allegations in the previous letters to the OCA, the OCA maintained its recommendation that Judge Quitain be dismissed from the service with prejudice to his reappointment to any position in the government, including government-owned or controlled corporations, and with forfeiture of all retirement benefits except accrued leave credits.

The Court fully agrees with the disquisition and the recommendation of the OCA.

It behooves every prospective appointee to the Judiciary to apprise the appointing authority of every matter bearing on his fitness for judicial office, including such circumstances as may reflect on his integrity and probity. These are qualifications specifically required of appointees to the Judiciary by Sec. 7(3), Article VIII of the Constitution.[17]

In this case, Judge Quitain failed to disclose that he was administratively charged and dismissed from the service for grave misconduct per A.O. No. 183 dated April 10, 1995 by no less than the former President of the Philippines. He insists that on November 26, 2001 or before he filed with the JBC his verified PDS in support of his application for RTC Judge, he had no knowledge of A.O. No. 183; and that he was denied due process. He further argues that since all the criminal cases filed against him were dismissed on August 2, 1995 and July 17, 2000, and considering the fact that he resigned from office, his administrative case had become moot and academic.

Respondent's contentions utterly lack merit.

No amount of explanation or justification can erase the fact that Judge Quitain was dismissed from the service and that he deliberately withheld this information. His insistence that he had no knowledge of A.O. No. 183 is belied by the newspaper items published relative to his dismissal. It bears emphasis that in the Mindanao Times dated April 18, 1995,[18] Judge Quitain stated in one of his interviews that "I was dismissed from the (Napolcom) office without due process." It also reads: "Quitain, who was one of the guests in yesterday's Kapehan sa Dabaw, wept unabashedly as he read his prepared statement on his dismissal from the government service." Neither can we give credence to the contention that he was denied due process. The documents submitted by the NAPOLCOM to the OCA reveal that Commissioner Alexis C. Canonizado, Chairman Ad Hoc Committee, sent him summons on March 19, 1993 informing him that an administrative complaint had been filed against him and

required him to file an answer.[19] Then on March 29, 1993, respondent, through his counsel, Atty. Pedro Castillo, filed an Answer.[20] In administrative proceedings, the essence of due process is simply an opportunity to be heard, or an opportunity to explain one's side or opportunity to seek a reconsideration of the action or ruling complained of. Where opportunity to be heard either through oral arguments or through pleadings is accorded, there is no denial of due process.[21] Furthermore, as we have earlier mentioned and which Judge Quitain ought to know, cessation from office by his resignation does not warrant the dismissal of the administrative complaint filed against him while he was still in the service nor does it render said administrative case moot and academic.[22] Judge Quitain was removed from office after investigation and was found guilty of grave misconduct. His dismissal from the service is a clear proof of his lack of the required qualifications to be a member of the Bench.

More importantly, it is clear that Judge Quitain deliberately misled the JBC in his bid to gain an exalted position in the Judiciary. In Office of the Court Administrator v. Estacion, Jr.,[23] this Court stressed:

> x x x The important consideration is that he had a duty to inform the appointing authority and this Court of the pending criminal charges against him to enable them to determine on the basis of his record, eligibility for the position he was seeking. He did not discharge that duty. His record did not contain the important information in question because he deliberately withheld and thus effectively hid it. His lack of candor is as obvious as his reason for the suppression of such a vital fact, which he knew would have been taken into account against him if it had been disclosed."

Thus, we find respondent guilty of dishonesty. "Dishonesty" means "disposition to lie, cheat or defraud; unworthiness; lack of integrity."[24]

Section 8(2), Rule 140[25] of the Rules of Court classifies dishonesty as a serious charge. Section 11, same Rules, provides the following sanctions:

> SEC. 11. Sanctions. - A. If the respondent is guilty of a serious charge, any of the following sanctions may be imposed:
>
> - Dismissal from the service, forfeiture of all or part of the benefits as the Court may determine, and disqualification from reinstatement or appointment to any public office, including government-owned or controlled corporations. Provided, however, That the forfeiture of benefits shall in no case include accrued leave credits;
>
> - Suspension from office without salary and other benefits for more than three (3) but not exceeding six (6) months; or
>
> - A fine of not less than P20,000.00 but not exceeding P40,000.00.

In Re: Inquiry on the Appointment of Judge Enrique A. Cube,[26] we held:

> By his concealment of his previous dismissal from the public service, which the Judicial and Bar Council would have taken into consideration in acting on his application, Judge Cube committed an act of dishonesty that rendered him unfit to be appointed to, and to remain now in, the Judiciary he has tarnished with his falsehood.
>
> WHEREFORE, Judge Enrique A. Cube of the Metropolitan Trial Court of Manila is DISMISSED with prejudice to his reappointment to any position in the government, including government-owned or controlled corporations, and with forfeiture of all retirement benefits. This decision is immediately executory.

We cannot overemphasize the need for honesty and integrity on the part of all those who are in the service of the Judiciary.[27]We have often stressed that the conduct required of court personnel, from the presiding judge to the

lowliest clerk of court, must always be beyond reproach and circumscribed with the heavy burden of responsibility as to let them be free from any suspicion that may taint the Judiciary. We condemn, and will never countenance any conduct, act or omission on the part of all those involved in the administration of justice, which would violate the norm of public accountability and diminish or even just tend to diminish the faith of the people in the Judiciary.[28]

Considering the foregoing, Judge Quitain is hereby found guilty of grave misconduct. He deserves the supreme penalty of dismissal.

However, on August 9, 2007, the Court received a letter from Judge Quitain addressed to the Chief Justice stating that he is tendering his irrevocable resignation effective immediately as Presiding Judge of the Regional Trial Court, Branch 10, Davao City. Acting on said letter, "the Court Resolved to accept the irrevocable resignation of Judge Jaime V. Quitain effective August 15, 2007, without prejudice to the decision of the administrative case."[29]

Verily, the resignation of Judge Quitain which was accepted by the Court without prejudice does not render moot and academic the instant administrative case. The jurisdiction that the Court had at the time of the filing of the administrative complaint is not lost by the mere fact that the respondent judge by his resignation and its consequent acceptance - without prejudice - by this Court, has ceased to be in office during the pendency of this case. The Court retains its authority to pronounce the respondent official innocent or guilty of the charges against him. A contrary rule would be fraught with injustice and pregnant with dreadful and dangerous implications.[30] Indeed, if innocent, the respondent official merits vindication of his name and integrity as he leaves the government which he has served well and faithfully; if guilty, he deserves to receive the corresponding censure and a penalty proper and imposable under the situation.[31]

WHEREFORE, in view of our finding that JUDGE JAIME V. QUITAIN is guilty of grave misconduct which would have warranted his dismissal from the service had he not resigned during the pendency of this case, he is hereby meted the penalty of a fine of P40,000.00. It appearing that he has yet to apply for his retirement benefits and other privileges, if any, the Court likewise ORDERS the FORFEITURE of all benefits, except earned leave credits which Judge Quitain may be entitled to, and he is PERPETUALLY DISQUALIFIED from reinstatement and appointment to any branch, instrumentality or agency of the government, including government-owned and/or controlled corporations.

This Decision is immediately executory.

Let a copy of this Decision be attached to Judge Jaime V. Quitain's 201 File.

SO ORDERED.

Puno, C.J., (Chairperson), Ynares-Santiago, Sandoval-Gutierrez, Carpio, Austria-Martinez, Corona, Carpio-Morales, Azcuna, Tinga, Chico-Nazario, Garcia, Velasco, Jr., Nachura, and Reyes, JJ., concur.
Quisumbing, J., no part.

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[1] In Administrative Order No. 136-2005 dated September 5, 2005, respondent was designated as Acting Presiding Judge of RTC, Branch 23, General Santos City, in addition to his regular duties; rollo, p. 145.

[2] Rollo, p. 26

[3] Letter dated October 21, 2003; id. at 53.

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[4] Letter addressed to the Regional Director, National Police Commission, Regional Officer No. 11, Davao City, id. at 52; and letter addressed to then Chairman Jose Lina, Jr. of the NAPOLCOM, id. at 54.

[5] See Letter of Judge Quitain dated October 22, 2003 addressed to DCA Lock; id. at 10.

[6] Rollo, p. 40.

[7] Id. at 41-48.

[8] Id.at 10-11.

[9] Letter dated March 2, 2004, id at 25.

[10] Rollo, pp. 13-14, 161-162.

[11] Id. at 35.

[12] Id. at 2-9.

[13] Resolution dated 21 September 2004; id. at 120.

[14] Rollo, pp. 122-125.

[15] Resolution dated June 28, 2005; id. at 130.

[16] Rollo, pp. 132-138.

[17] Section 7. x x x

(3) A Member of the Judiciary must be a person of proven competence, integrity, probity, and independence.

(Gutierrez v. Jusge Belan, 355 Phil. 428, 443 (1998).

[18] Rollo, p. 37.

[19] Id at 30.

[20] Id. at 31-32.

[21] Espidol v. Commission on Elections, G.R. No. 164922, October 11, 2005, citing Quiambao v. Court of Appeals, 454 SCRA 17 (2005).

[22] Baquerfo v. Sanchez, A.M. No. P-05-1974, April 6, 2005, 455 SCRA 13, 19.

[23] A.M. No. RTJ-87-104, January 11, 1990, 181 SCRA 33, 37. (emphasis ours)

[24] Black's Law Dictionary, Fifth Ed., p. 421.

[25] As amended by A.M. No. 01-8-10-SC, effective October 1, 2001.

[26] A.M. No. 93-7-428-MeTC, October 13, 1993, 227 SCRA 193, 198.

[27] Baquerfo v. Sanchez, supra note 22, at 15, citing Re: Jovelita Olivas and Antonio Cuyco, 431 Phil. 379, 391 (2002).

[28] Id., citing Pamintuan v. Ente- Alcantar, 447 SCRA 277 (2004).

[29] Resolution dated August 14, 2007.

[30] Victory Liner, Inc. v. Bellosillo, A.M. No. MTJ-00-1321. March 10, 2004.

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[31] Zarate v. Ronualdez, A.M. No. RTJ-94-1140, March 23, 1995.

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