

OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR, PETITIONER, VS. JUDGE JOSE M. ESTACION, JR., RESPONDENT.*A.M. No. RTJ-87-104. August 23, 1995*Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/54eeb86a4ec0/>**PER CURIAM:**

In full agreement with the Report of then Court of Appeals Justice Manuel Herrera to whom this administrative matter was referred for investigation and recommendation, the Court in its January 11, 1990 Per Curiam Decision dismissed respondent Dumaguete City Regional Trial Court Judge Jose M. Estacion, Jr. from the service for gross misrepresentation. He concealed from the appointing authority, at the time he applied for the judicial post until his appointment, information regarding the criminal charges for homicide and attempted homicide filed against him. Such fact would have totally eluded the Court had it not been complained of by one Mrs. Ruth L. Vda. de Sison who, incidentally, is the mother of one of the victims. The Court has thrice denied respondent's motions for reconsideration of his dismissal. And now comes his "Motion To Request For Clemency, Compassion and Mercy With Leave" highlighting his active membership and involvement in certain religious and civic organizations/activities (such as being the Chairman of the Guihulngan United Community Church, and Worshipful Master of San Carlos City's Free and Accepted Masons) and at the same time invoking some chosen passages from the Scriptures — all in support of his insistent plea for reinstatement.

After taking another hard look at the records of the case, still, we are not inclined to accede to respondent's renewed plea. Respondent's purported good reputation in his community (as a local community church head and previous officer of a fraternal organization) hardly mitigates the gravity of the offense he committed. Respondent did not honestly divulge all that the appointing authority ought to know to correctly discern whether he is indeed fit for the judicial post. He continuously suppressed vital information on his personal circumstances under the false belief that he can mislead the Court and get away with it for good. What respondent did, or omitted to do, was a calculated deception committed not only against the Court but against the public as well, clearly indicative of his lack of moral rectitude to sit as magistrate, and sufficiently repulsive that it detracts from public confidence in the integrity of the judiciary. Dismissal indeed is the appropriate retribution for such kind of transgression.

Be it stressed that judges are held to higher standards of integrity and ethical conduct than attorneys or other persons not invested with the public trust (In re Piper, 534 P. 2d 159 [Or. 1975]; Hayes v. Alabama Ct. of the Judiciary, (In re Piper, 534 P. 2d 159 [Or. 1975]; Hayes v. Alabama Ct. of the Judiciary, 437 So. 2d 1276, 1278 [Ala. 1983]). They should inspire trust and confidence, and should bring honor to the judiciary. And because of their critical position in the judicial bureaucracy, this Court as overseer is duty-bound to insure that the integrity of the judicial system is preserved and maintained, by pursuing that ever-vigilant search for the virtues of competence, integrity, probity and independence mandated by no less than the Constitution itself (Article VIII, Section 7[3]).

WHEREFORE, respondent's "Motion For Clemency, Compassion and Mercy" is hereby DENIED.

SO ORDERED.

Padilla, Regalado, Davide, Jr., Romero, Bellosillo, Melo, Puno, Vitug, Kapunan, Mendoza, Francisco, and Hermosisima, Jr., JJ., concur.

Narvasa, C.J., and Feliciano, J., on leave.

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