

FOREWORD

There is a tender veneration that accompanies my foreword to Mr. Justice Artemio V. Panganiban's opus, *Judicial Renaissance*. His *ninth* depiction of the historical account of the Supreme Court where he now sits is a more vigorous projection of his venerable genius into the present, pointing out those fine moments when our national destiny bent and swayed to another bearing under the stewardship of the Supreme Court. His book avows that our national future is in safe hands because the fine memory of the past has been so bright.

The release of *Judicial Renaissance* coincides with my valedictory year as Chief Justice. By the stroke of midnight on December 19, the supremacy of our Constitution presses me to vacate this great office and marshal my faculties elsewhere in selfless sacrifice for others. Against the strife of civil life we learn that the joy of it all is only felt when we strain all our powers and imagination as far as they can go towards some great dedication. In the end, we come to know that in the midst of routine and our blind dedication to justice, there strums a sweet melodious timber that twirls our lonely strife into unbelievable romance. In this great symphony of national living we now pause a little to admire the fruit of a sustained intellectual effort – *Judicial Renaissance*. Justice Panganiban has tirelessly documented and analyzed the organic growth of the judicial process under the peculiar perplexities that shake our nation today.

The first part of the book dwells in depth on the *Action Program for Judicial Reform* (APJR). The APJR, adopted by the Court on 8 December 2000, breathes life into the vision-

mission of the Judiciary. We are to aspire for a judiciary that is independent, effective, efficient, and worthy of public trust and confidence; and a legal profession that provides quality, ethical, accessible, and cost-effective legal service to our people and whose members are willing and able to answer the call to public service. While the vision-mission has been at the outset articulated by me in the *Daivde Watch*, the credit is shared equally by all those who have espoused it as their guiding principle for judicial reform and modernization, especially my esteemed colleague Justice Panganiban.

Justice Panganiban's great gift is his passion for advocacy. Indeed, he has championed the APJR, including his chairing an International Conference and Showcase on Judicial Reforms which will be held on 28-30 November 2005, where the APJR will be presented as a model of judicial reform for the 21st century.

Justice Panganiban's dignified obedience to the law and the universal precepts of justice exemplifies the organic necessity to administer justice swiftly, fairly, equally, and effectively. As I have once said, our duty to administer justice today is an *organic necessity* because, to me, our living a national life is no longer a privilege or even a duty, but is now a necessity. In our country today it is not enough to be an instrument of justice. We must also be courageous and faithful disciples of the law and ministers of the temple of justice.

In the field of sober, wise, judicious, and principled decision-making, Justice Panganiban has stood out as an unrelenting public man. A clear proof is Part II of this book featuring the Court's recent controversial rulings of profound national significance. Exhibit "A" refers to the decision he penned upholding the constitutionality of the Mining Act of 1995

- the longest and most substantiated ruling in the Court's 104-year history. Justice Panganiban visibly typifies through his work a dedicated human spirit burning with the conviction of a true lover of the law. There is nothing strained or forced in his judicial writing. It flows immaculately as a stream of justice.

In this valedictory foreword, I thank and commend Justice Panganiban for everything that he has done and will do to make sure that the APJR come into full fruition.

HILARIO G. DAVIDE, JR.