



TRUE HONOR AND EXCELLENCE
*A Call to Dismiss the Impeachment Complaint
Against Associate Justice Marvic M.V.F. Leonen*

“The line of fire is a place of honor.”
– Lean Alejandro

Supreme Court Associate Justice Marvic M.V.F. Leonen, our former Dean, is no stranger to the line of fire. He has stood in it for many years. He continues to do so now — honorably and excellently — in the face of an impeachment complaint that strains the limits of credulity and common sense. The complaint does not state any ground for impeachment — certainly, not the alleged sloth or alleged incompetence or even that he frequently dissents — yet he has been targeted because he dares to uphold the laws and procedures that try to safeguard our electoral processes against the whims and abuses of those seeking greater political power. He is under fire because he remains a steady, sanguine, and intelligent voice against the increasingly unreasonable demands of despots-in-waiting and their cohorts.

We may not agree with everything he has written while on the Court, but **we stand by his character, his integrity, and his principles**. As teachers of the law and formators of future lawyers, we value the freedom to think, and to form, hold, and express an opinion. We aspire for an independent, responsive, relevant, and principled judiciary that stands for, and serves, the people. We look for intelligent, well-written, and well-reasoned decisions of the Supreme Court which affirm “bright line” rules and balancing tests but also break new ground on the various nooks and crannies and nuances of the law.

These are the same values that underlie Justice Leonen’s work on the Court. He has expressed consistently, in his decisions and dissents, a commitment to academic rigor, principled discourse, creative expression, and courageous authenticity. In a Court of equals, Justice Leonen has emerged as a leading and respected voice for a more independent judiciary, a more responsive arbiter of rights, and a more relevant force for more meaningful freedoms. These are vital features of a working democracy in our country, which sadly has been subject to multiple assaults by the forces seeking to plunge it irretrievably into kakistocracy.

We must not allow this latest assault to send our nation further down the dark road, especially while a global pandemic still hangs over all our heads and threatens to bring our society into despair and destitution. Overcoming the pandemic demands the undivided attention of the Executive and Legislative Branches, and the spectacle of political circuses should not distract the government from this far more important task.

We call on the members of the House of Representatives to do right by the people — **dismiss the baseless impeachment complaint against Justice Leonen** — and focus on the more important work at hand.

Quezon City, December 10, 2020.



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