

Title: ****Thomas Toye Patterson vs. W. Morgan Shuster, Collector of Customs of the Philippine Archipelago (In the Matter of the Application of Thomas Toye Patterson for a Writ of Habeas Corpus)****

Facts:

Thomas Toye Patterson, a British subject and a justice of the peace under the Australian Government, arrived in Manila from Hongkong aboard the steamer Yuensang. Upon landing, he was arrested by W. Morgan Shuster, the Collector of Customs of the Philippine Archipelago. The arrest was based on Act 265 of the Legislative Commission of the Philippines, which aims to prevent persons aiding insurrection from entering the country. Patterson was required to take an oath but refused due to objections to certain portions of it. After being denied landing rights, Patterson proceeded to Manila and was subsequently detained by Shuster for deportation. Patterson then filed a writ of habeas corpus, challenging the Collector of Customs' decision and questioning the lawfulness of his detention and pending deportation.

Issues:

- Whether the Legislative Commission of the Philippines has the authority to pass Act 265.
- Whether Act 265 is constitutional and does not infringe on international treaties or personal liberties.
- Whether the Collector of Customs has a discretionary power that is immune from judicial review when deciding on the detention and deportation of a foreigner suspected of participating in or instigating insurrection against the United States or its government in the Philippines.
- Whether a landed foreigner can be detained by the Collector of Customs for deportation after landing and passing immigration inspection.

Court's Decision:

The Supreme Court, in its decision, upheld the legality and constitutionality of Act 265, emphasizing the state's fundamental right to preserve its sovereignty and public safety, particularly during times of social unrest and insurrection. The Court ruled that the law is not an immigration law but a political measure to prevent any person from entering the country who is reasonably suspected of aiding insurrection. The Court stated that the Collector of Customs has discretionary power not subject to judicial review when acting within reasonable grounds provided by the law. The Court concluded that Patterson's landing did not nullify the Collector's right to detain and deport him, because the power to restrict entry for public safety was deemed legitimate, even if enforced post-landing. Hence,

Patterson's petition was denied, and he was remanded to the custody of Shuster for deportation.

Doctrine:

The Supreme Court in this decision reaffirmed the principle that the state has the right to exclude, deport, or prevent the landing of foreigners for reasons of public policy and security. This right is not restricted by international treaties guaranteeing commerce and intercourse, nor by personal liberty principles, when it conflicts with the fundamental right of self-preservation. Executive officers with discretionary power conferred by the legislature possess the final determination on matters of entry when acting within the bounds of such power.

Historical Background:

The case of Thomas Toye Patterson comes within the historical context of American colonial authority in the Philippines, wherein the United States, having acquired sovereignty over the islands after the Spanish-American War, faced a period of insurrection led by Filipino revolutionaries seeking independence. Act 265 was one of the legislative measures adopted by the American legislative body in the Philippines to combat insurrection and maintain order during the American colonial period.