

Title: **Secretary of Justice v. Hon. Ralph C. Lantion and Mark B. Jimenez: A Case on the Right to Due Process in the Extradition Process**

**Facts:**

The case arose from the extradition request by the United States for Mark B. Jimenez, who was wanted on various charges. The Philippine Secretary of Justice, acting upon the extradition request, did not furnish Jimenez copies of the request and its supporting documents, based on the evaluation process outlined in the RP-US Extradition Treaty and P.D. No. 1069. Jimenez sought relief from the Regional Trial Court (RTC) of Manila, which issued an order favoring him. The Secretary of Justice, disputing the RTC's decision, petitioned the Supreme Court to overturn it, leading to an intricate legal battle concerning the procedures in handling extradition requests and the rights of potential extraditees.

**Procedural Posture:**

The case took a complex route from the RTC to the Philippine Supreme Court, involving motions for reconsideration, urgent motions, and various legal maneuvers by both parties. The intricacies of the legal battle revolved around the entitlement of a potential extraditee to due process rights during the evaluation stage of the extradition process. Throughout, submissions from international actors such as the Embassy of Canada and the Security Bureau of the Hongkong SAR Government Secretariat played roles in shaping the Court's considerations.

**Issues:**

1. Whether or not a potential extraditee has the right to notice and hearing during the evaluation stage of the extradition process.

**Court's Decision:**

The Supreme Court, in reversing its earlier decision, held that a potential extraditee does not have the right to notice and hearing during the evaluation stage of the extradition process. This decision was grounded on several key considerations:

- The absence of express provisions in the RP-US Extradition Treaty and P.D. No. 1069 granting such rights.
- The recognition that extradition proceedings are distinct from criminal proceedings, with the aim of extradition being to determine the extraditability of the individual rather than guilt or innocence.
- The notion that providing notice and hearing at the evaluation stage could compromise the objectives of the extradition process, such as avoiding flight risks.

- Acknowledgment of international practices and interpretations of similar extradition treaties that do not necessitate notice and hearing during initial evaluations.

**\*\*Doctrine:\*\***

The resolution reiterates the principle that the rights to notice and hearing are not absolute and can be adjusted in extradition processes, emphasizing the sui generis nature of extradition proceedings.

**\*\*Class Notes:\*\***

1. Extradition procedures are distinct from criminal proceedings, focusing on the extraditability of individuals rather than their guilt or innocence.
2. The rights to notice and hearing, fundamental in criminal proceedings, do not directly apply to extradition processes, especially during the evaluation phase.
3. International treaties and the implementing laws (e.g., P.D. No. 1069) are interpreted in accordance with their objectives, which, in extradition cases, include the efficient and swift handling of requests to prevent flight risks.
4. The principle of separation of powers plays a critical role in extradition cases, acknowledging the Executive's prerogative in matters of foreign relations and treaty execution.

**\*\*Historical Background:\*\***

The case underscores the Philippines' involvement in the global effort to combat crime, particularly through international cooperation via extradition treaties. It highlights the balance between adhering to international obligations and protecting individual rights under the Constitution, reflecting on the country's legal adaptation to transnational crime prevention.