

Title: Vicente J. Campa, Jr. and Perfecto M. Pascua vs. Hon. Eugene C. Paras and the People of the Philippines

Facts:

- On September 12, 2007, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) filed a complaint against the officers of BankWise, Inc., including Vicente J. Campa, Jr., Perfecto M. Pascua, and others, for violations related to the Monetary Board Resolution No. 1460 in conjunction with Section 3, Republic Act No. 7653. The allegations centered on unfunded manager's checks and lack of documentation for certain bank disbursements.
- The Department of Justice (DOJ), after proceedings, marked the case resolved on August 29, 2008. However, it took more than ten years for the DOJ, specifically on February 8, 2019, to find probable cause against the petitioners, subsequently leading to the filing of multiple charges in the Regional Trial Court (RTC) of Makati City, Branch 58.
- Campa and Pascua moved for the dismissal of the case against them, citing inordinate delay that violated their constitutional right to a speedy disposition of cases. The RTC, through several orders dated August 13, 2019, October 1, 2019, and October 7, 2019, denied their motions, prompting the petitioners to bring the case to the Supreme Court (SC) under a Petition for Certiorari.

Issues:

1. ****Violation of the Right to Speedy Disposition of Cases:**** Did the delay in the preliminary investigation by the DOJ violate the petitioners' constitutional right to a speedy disposition of their cases?
2. ****Grave Abuse of Discretion by the Trial Court:**** Did the trial court commit grave abuse of discretion in denying the motion to dismiss/quash filed by the petitioners?

Court's Decision:

The Supreme Court granted the petition, highlighting the following:

- ****Proper Remedy and Hierarchy of Courts:**** The Court clarified the appropriateness of Certiorari and the petitioners' direct recourse to the Supreme Court under specific exceptions.
- ****Inordinate Delay:**** The Court concluded that the DOJ's delay (approximately ten years and five months), from the filing of the complaint to the issuance of the resolution, was indeed inordinate and unjustified, violating the petitioners' right to a speedy disposition.
- ****Application of Tests:**** Through the balancing test and refinement in *Cagang v. Sandiganbayan*, the Court assessed the length of delay, reasons for delay, assertion of the right by petitioners, and prejudice caused by such delay, concluding that the petitioners'

constitutional right was violated.

- Consequently, the Supreme Court nullified the trial court's orders and dismissed the charges against Campa and Pascua due to inordinate delay.

Doctrine:

This case reiterates the constitutional right to a speedy disposition of cases, emphasizing the guidelines in resolving whether there has been an inordinate delay. It highlights the balancing test involving the assessment of the length of delay, reason for delay, assertion of the right, and prejudice to the defense.

Class Notes:

- **Right to Speedy Disposition of Cases:** A constitutional guarantee that applies to all judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative bodies.
- **Certiorari under Rule 65:** An appropriate remedy against interlocutory orders issued with grave abuse of discretion.
- **Balancing Test (As Refined):** A method of determining inordinate delay considering criteria such as the length of delay, reasons for delay, the defendant's assertion or non-assertion of the right, and prejudice caused by the delay.
- **Doctrine of Hierarchy of Courts:** Directly filing a petition with the Supreme Court is generally discouraged unless under exceptional circumstances.

Historical Background:

The case illustrates the consequences of procedural delays in the justice system, shedding light on the judiciary's approach in ensuring the right to a speedy trial or disposition isn't compromised by systemic inefficiencies or complexities.