

LUY-A ALLIED WORKERS' ASSOCIATION, PETITIONER, VS. THE COURT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND PHILIPPINE LABOR FEDERATION, CEBU BRANCH, RESPONDENTS.

G. R. No. L-2844. April 27, 1951

Ponente: JUGO, J.

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JUGO, J.:

The essential facts of this case may be briefly stated as follows:

On April 21, 1948, the petitioner Luy-A Allied Workers' Association, representing 458 members who were working for the Bogo-Medellin Milling Co., Inc., entered into a collective bargaining and union shop agreement regarding the wages and other working conditions of the members of said association. The agreement contained a clause that the milling company was bound to acknowledge and recognize said association "to be the sole and exclusive collective bargaining agency for labor in the operation of its sugar mill covering all and every department and section therein including laborers who are running piece job or 'pakiao' system but excluding laborers who are operating the farm tractors that are being hired by the sugar planters as these laborers are indirectly paid by the planters themselves."

The members of the Philippine Labor Federation, Cebu Branch, which had 185 members who were working for the milling company before, during, and after said contract was entered into, were not represented by the Luy-A association.

On May 28, 1948, the said members of the Philippine Labor Federation presented a petition to the milling company asking for increase of wages and better working conditions. As no agreement was reached between the milling company and the said federation, the question was submitted to the Court of Industrial Relations. The Luy-A association intervened in the case and in effect moved that said court dismiss the petition of the Philippine Labor Federation on the ground that the milling company and the Luy-A association had already entered into a contract which excludes any other contract that may be entered into with any other entity or persons. The Court of Industrial Relations, in a well-reasoned order, overruled the opposition and objection of the intervenor Luy-A association and denied the petition for dismissal. The Luy-A association, by petition, brought the case to this Court.

The question at issue in this case is whether the members of the Philippine Labor Federation can be deprived of their rights by a contract between the milling company and the Luy-A Allied Workers' Association, especially when the members of the former had previously been working for a long time for the milling company.

The Luy-A Allied Workers' Association and the milling company, by excluding the members of the Philippine Labor Federation who were already working for the company, by said contract, illegally deprived the members of the Federation of their right to ask for higher wages and better working conditions, which deprivation may, in some cases, even amount to expelling them from the company's service without just cause, for if their demands are ignored and they have no recourse to the Court of Industrial Relations and the courts of justice, they may have

to sever their connection with the company. Our laws recognize and protect the rights of laborers to petition for better conditions, to resort to the courts, and even to strike in proper cases. It is a part of the right to petition. Labor laws have been enacted to protect the right of laborers to seek better working conditions, creating the Court of Industrial Relations to pass upon the petitions of laborers for that purpose. This fundamental human right cannot be nullified by contract, especially when the laborers concerned are not parties to it.

In view of the foregoing, the petition is denied, with costs against the petitioner. It is so ordered.

Paras, C. J., Feria, Pablo, Bengzon, Padilla, Tuason, Montemayor, Reyes and Bautista Angelo, JJ., concur.

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