

ELPIDIO MARCELO, PETITIONER, VS. REYNALDO MATIAS, PEDRO MANGAYAO, HONORIO GONZALES AND THE HON. JOSE M. SANTOS, PRESIDING JUDGE, COURT OF AGRARIAN RELATIONS, SECOND REGIONAL DIS...

G.R. No. L-22252. October 29, 1968

Ponente: MAKALINTAL, J.

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MAKALINTAL, J.:

In this appeal from a decision of the Court of Agrarian Relations, Second Regional District, Cabanatuan City, petitioner-landowner assails the constitutionality of section 14 of Republic Act No. 1199 which expressly grants a tenant the right "to change the tenancy contract from one of share tenancy to the leasehold tenancy and vice versa and from one crop-sharing arrangement to another of the share tenancy."

Respondents-tenants Pedro Mangayao, Reynaldo Matias and Honorio Gonzales, taking advantage of section 14, filed on May 22, 1962 a petition (CAR Case No. 3012-NE'62) before respondent court praying, among others, that the tenancy relationship between them and herein petitioner be changed from sharing system to leasehold and that the corresponding rentals be fixed by that court for the use of their vegetable-bearing landholdings. Instead of immediately filing his answer, petitioner-landowner first filed before the same court an action for ejectment against Reynaldo Matias (CAR Case No. 2988-NE'62) on the ground that the latter harvested three (3) bunches of bananas worth P5.00, more or less, without the knowledge and consent of the landowner or his overseer and that said tenant failed to deliver the landowner's share of the harvest.

Meanwhile, in resisting respondents-tenants' petition to adopt the leasehold system, petitioner-landowner also sought the ejectment of the two other tenants for their alleged failure to deliver to him (landowner) his share of some past harvests. On October 30, 1962 respondent court rendered a joint decision on the two related petitions filed before it, dismissing the ejectment case against Reynaldo Matias and - after upholding the constitutionality of section 14 of Republic Act No. 1199 - declaring the relationship between respondents-tenants and petitioner-landowner to be one of leasehold tenancy "effective with the first agricultural year for corn, string beans and eggplants in 1964 and with the month of December 1963 as to bananas." The respondent court likewise fixed the correspond-ing rentals to be paid by respondents-tenants on their landholding. From the aforesaid joint decision this petition for review was filed. No other issue except the constitutionality of section 14 of Republic Act No. 1199 is raised here.

The issue is not new. In similar previous cases[1] we have consistently upheld the validity of the questioned section. As observed lately by this court in *Del Rosario v. De los Santos*, L-20589-90, March 21, 1968:

"It thus appears indisputable that reinforced by the protection to labor and social justice provisions of the Constitution, the attribute of police power justifies the enactment of statutory provisions of this character. That public interest would be served by governmental measures intended to aid the economically under-privileged is apparent to all. Nor is the means relied upon to attain such a valid objective unreasonable or oppressive.

Considering that in the adjustment or reconciliation of the conflicting claims to property and state authority, it suffices that there be a rational basis for the legislative act, it is easily understandable why, from the enactment of the Constitution with its avowed concern for those who have less in life, the constitutionality of such legislation has been repeatedly upheld."

In the instant case no new argument has been advanced which would give us reason to override our previous decisions.

Wherefore, the decision of the Court of Agrarian Relations is affirmed. No costs in this instance.

Concepcion, C.J., Reyes, J.B.L., Dizon, Sanchez, Castro, Angeles, Fernando, and Capistrano, JJ., concur.
Zaldivar, J., on official leave.

[1] De Ramas v. CAR, L-19555, May 29, 1964; Macasaet v. CAR, L-19750, July 17, 1964; Uichangco v. Gutierrez, L-20275-79, May 31, 1965; Gamboa v. Pallarca, L-20407, March 31, 1966; Quizon v. Ortiz, L-20905, April 30, 1966; Ilusorio vs. CAR, L-20344, May 16, 1966; Reyes v. Santos, L-19961, September 14, 1966; Tinio v. Macapagal, L-21012, February 25, 1967; Diaz v. Molina, L-21550, April 27, 1967; De la Paz vs. CAR, L-21488, Oct. 14, 1968.

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