

GERRY B. SANTIAGO, PETITIONER, VS. NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS COMMISSION (SECOND DIVISION), ASSOCIATED BROADCASTING CORPORATION/ TV5/MANNY PANGILINAN, RESPONDENTS.

Ponente: SALAZAR-FERNANDO, J.

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On March 13, 2014, this Court granted the petition and reversed the Resolution[1] dated March 27, 2013 of public respondent National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC), declaring the dismissal of petitioner illegal.[2] On April 8, 2014, private respondents filed a Motion for Reconsideration,[3] claiming that this Court should accord respect to the unanimous findings of the labor tribunals and confine its decision on the issue of jurisdiction and grave abuse of discretion as sanctioned under Rule 65 of the Rules of Court. Succinctly, they maintained that the labor tribunals were consistent in their findings that petitioner was under a fixed-term contract, thus they could not be cited for illegal dismissal if the term expired without renewal of petitioner's employment. They also implored this Court not to turn a blind eye on the irregularities apparent in the petition. In his Comment[4] on the motion, petitioner argued that this Court's power to review the findings of fact of labor tribunals was justified, considering that it was in conjunction with its evaluation of whether grave abuse of discretion was attendant in making such findings. Furthermore, he contended that private respondents failed to specify and substantiate the alleged errors committed by this Court, thus implying that their motion is merely a pro forma motion.

Generally, the findings of facts of labor tribunals, which are supported by substantial evidence, are accorded with great respect, and are rendered conclusive upon this Court.[5] Nonetheless, this rule finds no application in cases where the conclusions of the labor tribunals are either not supported by substantial evidence or are arrived at arbitrarily or in disregard of the evidence.[6] Pitted against this standard, the findings made by the labor tribunals in the present case were remiss and must be corrected by this Court. This point had already been discussed and passed upon in this Court's assailed decision. Thus, in the absence of any new matter to consider, the reconsideration prayed for cannot be granted.

WHEREFORE, premises considered, the Motion for Reconsideration filed by the private respondents is hereby DENIED for lack of merit.

SO ORDERED.

Bueser[*] and Peralta, Jr.,[**] JJ., concur.

[*]Acting Senior Member vice J. Samuel H. Gaerlan per Office Order No. 100-14-RSF dated March 12, 2014, who was designated Acting Sr. Member vice J. Bruselas, Jr. as per Office Order No. 99-14-RSF but is also on leave.

[**] Acting Junior Member per Office Order Nos. 99-14-RSF and 100-14-RSF both dated March 12, 2014

[1] Rollo, pp. 62-68

[2] Rollo, pp. 429-442

[3] Rollo, pp. 449-465

[4] Rollo, pp. 467-475

[5] Prince Transport Inc. and Renato Claros vs. Diosdado Garcia, et al. (G. R. No. 167291, January 12, 2011)

[6] Id.

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