

THE UNITED STATES, PLAINTIFF AND APPELLEE, VS. JUANA DE LOS SANTOS, DEFENDANT AND APPELLANT.

G.R. No. 10550. December 03, 1915

Ponente: CARSON, J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/g-r-no-10550/>

CARSON, J.:

Juana de los Santos, the appellant in this case, was convicted in the court below of the crime of perjury, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment and to pay a fine of P100.

It was proven at the trial that this poor woman filed a complaint in the court of a justice of the peace, which she was required to make under oath, charging her husband with assault and battery and criminal threats, in that he had maltreated her, kicked her violently, and threatened her with a knife; but that when the case came on for trial a week later she attempted to withdraw her complaint and declared under oath that she had never been maltreated by her husband, and that it was not true that he had threatened her with a knife.

The guilt of the accused of the crime of perjury with which she is charged in the information is conclusively established; but we do not think that this is a case calling for exemplary punishment.

It appears that this wretched, ignorant woman had given birth to a child not long before the date of the filing of her complaint in the court of the justice of the peace; that she had in fact been maltreated by her husband; and that while the offense was still fresh in her mind she complained to the local authorities; but that later, at the trial, and when she had time to think of the consequences, she denied the truth of her charges in an effort to shield her husband from the consequences of his misconduct, and forgave him for what he had done, rather than have him sentenced to imprisonment upon her testimony.

The penalty prescribed for the crime of perjury is imprisonment for not more than five years and a fine of not more than P2,000.

The wide range of discretion thus allowed the courts in this regard clearly discloses the legislative intent that the courts should take into consideration all the attendant circumstances in each case in imposing the penalty; and we are of opinion that the attendant circumstances in the case at bar demand and justify the imposition of a penalty not much in excess of the minimum prescribed by law.

We must not be understood as condoning the commission of the crime of perjury in any case, but it will not be doubted that the false testimony of this woman, given in the hope of saving her husband from punishment because of his ill-treatment of herself, calls for a far different penalty from that which should be imposed upon one who falsely swears away the life or the liberty of another, or upon one who gives false testimony in a court of law in the hope of securing a judgment favorable to himself upon some disputed question of civil rights.

We think that the ends of justice will be subserved by substituting a penalty of five days' imprisonment and a fine of P5 for so much of the sentence of the court below as imposes a penalty of three months' imprisonment and a fine of P100, and that thus modified the judgment convicting and sentencing the appellant should be affirmed,

with the costs of this instance de oficio. So ordered.

Arellano, C.J., Torres, Johnson, and Araullo, JJ., concur.

Judgment modified.

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.