

Case digest aglipay vs ruiz



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Facts: In May 1936, the Director of Posts announced in the dailies of Manila that he would order the issuance of postage stamps commemorating the celebration in the City of Manila of the 33rd International Eucharistic Congress, organized by the Roman Catholic Church. The petitioner, Mons. Gregorio Aglipay, Supreme Head of the Philippine Independent Church, in the fulfillment of what he considers to be a civic duty, requested Vicente Sotto, Esq. member of the Philippine Bar, to denounce the matter to the President of the Philippines. In spite of the protest of the petitioner's attorney, the Director of Posts publicly announced having sent to the United States the designs of the postage for printing. The said stamps were actually issued and sold though the greater part thereof remained unsold. The further sale of the stamps was sought to be prevented by the petitioner.

Issue: Whether the issuance of the postage stamps was in violation of the Constitution. Held: Religious freedom as a constitutional mandate is not inhibition of profound reverence for religion and is not a denial of its influence in human affairs. Religion as a profession of faith to an active power that binds and elevates man to his Creator is recognized. And, in so far as it instills into the minds the purest principles of morality, its influence is deeply felt and highly appreciated.

When the Filipino people, in the preamble of their Constitution, implored "the aid of Divine Providence, in order to establish a government that shall embody their ideals, conserve and develop the patrimony of the nation, promote the general welfare, and secure to themselves and their posterity the blessings of independence under a regime of justice, liberty and democracy," they thereby manifested their intense religious nature and

placed unfaltering reliance upon Him who guides the destinies of men and nations.

The elevating influence of religion in human society is recognized here as elsewhere. Act 4052 contemplates no religious purpose in view. What it gives the Director of Posts is the discretionary power to determine when the issuance of special postage stamps would be "advantageous to the Government." Of course, the phrase "advantageous to the Government" does not authorize the violation of the Constitution; i. e. o appropriate, use or apply of public money or property for the use, benefit or support of a particular sect or church. In the case at bar, the issuance of the postage stamps was not inspired by any sectarian feeling to favor a particular church or religious denominations. The stamps were not issued and sold for the benefit of the Roman Catholic Church, nor were money derived from the sale of the stamps given to that church.

The purpose of the issuing of the stamps was to take advantage of an event considered of international importance to give publicity to the Philippines and its people and attract more tourists to the country. Thus, instead of showing a Catholic chalice, the stamp contained a map of the Philippines, the location of the City of Manila, and an inscription that reads "Seat XXXIII International Eucharistic Congress, Feb. 3-7, 1937." The Supreme Court denied the petition for a writ of prohibition, without pronouncement as to costs.