
COMMISSIONER OF INCOME TAX, BOMBAY Vs C. MACDONALD and CO.

Civil Reference No. 6 of 1934

Court: Bombay High Court

Date of Decision: Sept. 11, 1934

Acts Referred:

Income Tax Act, 1922 " Section 66(2)

Citation: AIR 1935 Bom 197 : (1935) 3 ITR 459

Hon'ble Judges: Beaumont, C.J; Rangnekar, J

Bench: Full Bench

Judgement

BEAUMONT, C. J. - This is a reference by the commissioner on Income Tax made u/s 66(2), Income Tax Act, 1922, raising the questions, (1)

whether in the circumstances of the case and in view of the provisions of Sections 4(1) and 10 of the Act the assesseees have been correctly

assessed on the total amount of Rs. 97,882 received by them as profits and gains of business carried on by them as managing agents of a certain

company; and (2) whether under the provisions of Section 10 of the Act, or under any other provision of law, the assesseees are entitled to have a

deduction from their liable to tax of the amount of Rs. 19,576 paid by them out of their earnings to certain parties as per the declaration, Exhibit G.

The questions arise in this way. The assesseees are the agents of the Katni Cement and Industrial Company Limited; and in respect of the year of

assessment they received as such agents the sum of Rs. 97,000 odd referred to in the question. But it appears that from that sum they have paid

away to third parties the sum of Rs. 19,000 odd referred to in the second question. Those sums were paid under the agreement, which is Exhibit

F, and the question is whether the assesseees are liable to be assessed in respect of their income so paid away to third parties. It has not been

argued that the sums paid to third parties come within any of the various deductions allowed by the Indian Income Tax Act. But the argument has

been that the sums paid to third parties never were the income, profits or gains of the assessee within the meaning of Section 4 of the Act. The

Income Tax Commissioner relies on a decision of the Privy Council, *Pondicherry Railway Co. v. Commissioner of Income Tax, Bombay* in

support of his view that assessee is liable to be assessed in respect of the whole sum of Rs. 97,000 odd received by them. In that case the

Pondicherry Railway Company were liable to be assessed for tax under the Indian Income Tax Act in respect of the whole of their net profits, and

could not deduct from their income the proportion paid away to the French Government. It seems to me that the principle of that decision covers

the present case.

The only distinction suggested by Mr. Colman is that in that case the amount to be paid away was a proportion of the net profits whereas, here it

is a proportion of the income. But whether the obligation to pay is based on the gross income or on the net profits cannot in my view affect the

question. I think therefore that the case is really covered by that decision. But Mr. Colman, in support of his contention that the sum paid to third

parties is not part of the income of the assessee, has relied on a decision of the Privy Council, *Raja Bejoy Singh Dudhuria v. Commissioner of*

Income Tax. In that case the assessee was in receipt of income from immovable property, and that property and the income therefrom were

subject to charge for maintenance in favour of the assessee's step-mother, and it was held by the Privy Council that the sums paid to the step-

mother in respect of this charge never constituted part of the income, or what the Privy Council call, the real income, of the Raja liable to

assessment under Act. I am not sure that I follow very clearly the distinction which the Privy Council found between the two cases, the

Pondicherry case and *Raja's* case, but the facts of the present case are clearly much closer to the facts in the *Pondicherry* case than to those in the

Raja's case, because in the *Raja's* case there was a charge on the property, whereas in the present case as in the *Pondicherry* case, there is no

charge, there is only a convenient to pay. It seems to me therefore that it is the *Pondicherry* case which governs the case before us, and we must

follow that case. The questions therefore will be answered, No. 1 in the affirmative and No. 2 in the negative. Costs to be paid by the assessee on

the original side scale to be taxed by the Taxing Master.

RANGNEKAR, J. - I agree and have nothing to add.