

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

SANDS CHINA LTD.,  
Petitioner,

vs.

THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA,  
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF  
CLARK; AND THE HONORABLE  
ELIZABETH GOFF GONZALEZ,  
DISTRICT JUDGE,

Respondents,

and

STEVEN C. JACOBS,  
Real Party in Interest.

No. 58294

**FILED**

**AUG 26 2011**

TRACIE K. LINDEMAN  
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT  
BY S. Young  
DEPUTY CLERK

ORDER GRANTING PETITION FOR WRIT OF MANDAMUS

This original petition for a writ of mandamus or prohibition challenges a district court order denying petitioner's motion to dismiss for lack of personal jurisdiction.

Petitioner asserts that the district court improperly based its exercise of personal jurisdiction on petitioner's status as a subsidiary of a Nevada corporation with common officers and directors. Real party in interest contends that the district court properly determined that he had established a prima facie basis for personal jurisdiction based on the acts taken in Nevada to manage petitioner's operations in Macau.

The district court's order, however, does not state that it has reviewed the matter on a limited basis to determine whether prima facie grounds for personal jurisdiction exist; it simply denies petitioner's motion to dismiss, with no mention of a later determination after consideration of evidence, whether at a hearing before trial or at trial. While the order refers to the district court's comments at oral argument on the motion, the

transcript reflects only that the district court concluded there were “pervasive contacts” between petitioner and Nevada, without specifying any of those contacts. We have therefore found it impossible to determine the basis for the district court’s order or whether the district court intended its order to be its final decision regarding jurisdiction or if it intended to consider the matter further after the admission of evidence at trial (or an evidentiary hearing before trial).

In MGM Grand, Inc. v. District Court, 107 Nev. 65, 807 P.2d 201 (1991), we held that jurisdiction over a nonresident corporation could not be premised upon that corporation’s status as parent to a Nevada corporation. Similarly, the United States Supreme Court in Goodyear Dunlop Tires Operations, S.A. v. Brown, 131 S. Ct. 2846 (2011), considered whether jurisdiction over foreign subsidiaries of a U.S. parent corporation was proper by looking only to the subsidiaries’ conduct; the Court suggested that including the parent’s contacts with the forum would be, in effect, the same as piercing the corporate veil. Based on the record before us, it is impossible to determine if the district court in fact relied on the Nevada parent corporation’s contacts in this state in exercising jurisdiction over the foreign subsidiary.


Accordingly, having reviewed the petition, answer, reply, and other documents before this court,<sup>1</sup> we conclude that, based on the summary nature of the district court’s order and the holdings of the cases

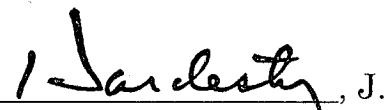
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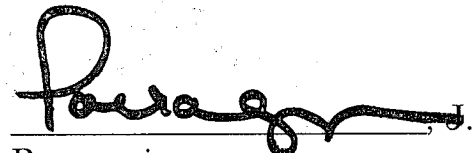
<sup>1</sup>Petitioner’s motion for leave to file a reply in support of its stay motion is granted, and we direct the clerk of this court to detach and file the reply attached to the August 10, 2011, motion. We note that NRAP 27(a)(4) was amended in 2009 to permit a reply in support of a motion without specific leave of this court; thus, no such motion was necessary.

cited above, the petition should be granted, in part. We therefore direct the district court to revisit the issue of personal jurisdiction over petitioner by holding an evidentiary hearing and issuing findings regarding general jurisdiction. If the district court determines that general jurisdiction is lacking, it shall consider whether the doctrine of transient jurisdiction, as set forth in Cariaga v. District Court, 104 Nev. 544, 762 P.2d 886 (1988), permits the exercise of personal jurisdiction over a corporate defendant when a corporate officer is served within the state. We further direct that the district court shall stay the underlying action, except for matters relating to a determination of personal jurisdiction, until a decision on that issue has been entered. We therefore

ORDER the petition GRANTED AND DIRECT THE CLERK OF THIS COURT TO ISSUE A WRIT OF MANDAMUS instructing the district court to hold an evidentiary hearing on personal jurisdiction, to issue findings of fact and conclusions of law stating the basis for its decision following that hearing, and to stay the action as set forth in this order until after entry of the district court's personal jurisdiction decision.<sup>2</sup>

  
Saitta, J.  
Saitta

  
Hardesty, J.  
Hardesty

  
Parraguirre, J.  
Parraguirre

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<sup>2</sup>Petitioner's motion for a stay is denied as moot in light of this order.

cc: Hon. Elizabeth Goff Gonzalez, District Judge  
Glaser, Weil, Fink, Jacobs, Howard & Shapiro, LLC  
Campbell & Williams  
Eighth District Court Clerk