

FOREIGN CLAIMS SETTLEMENT COMMISSION
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20579

IN THE MATTER OF THE CLAIM OF

ALFRED E. BISSELL, JR.

Claim No. CU-4948

Decision No. CU 1855

Under the International Claims Settlement
Act of 1949, as amended

PROPOSED DECISION

This claim against the Government of Cuba, under Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, was presented by ALFRED E. BISSELL, JR. in the amount of \$26,300.00 in connection with bonds known as 4 1/2 Bonds of the External Debt of the Republic of Cuba, 1937-1977. Claimant has been a national of the United States since his birth in the United States.

Under Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949 [78 Stat. 1110 (1964), 22 U.S.C. §§1643-1643k (1964), as amended, 79 Stat. 988 (1965)], the Commission is given jurisdiction over claims of nationals of the United States against the Government of Cuba. Section 503(a) of the Act provides that the Commission shall receive and determine in accordance with applicable substantive law, including international law, the amount and validity of claims by nationals of the United States against the Government of Cuba arising since January 1, 1959 for

losses resulting from the nationalization, expropriation, intervention or other taking of, or special measures directed against, property including any rights or interests therein owned wholly or partially, directly or indirectly at the time by nationals of the United States.

Section 502(3) of the Act provides:

The term 'property' means any property, right, or interest including any leasehold interest, and debts owed by the Government of Cuba or by enterprises which have been nationalized, expropriated, intervened, or taken by the Government of Cuba and debts which are a charge on property which has been nationalized, expropriated, intervened, or taken by the Government of Cuba.

Section 504 of the Act provides, as to ownership of claims, that

(a) A claim shall not be considered under section 503(a) of this title unless the property on which the claim was based was owned wholly or partially, directly or indirectly by a national of the United States on the date of the loss and if considered shall be considered only to the extent the claim has been held by one or more nationals of the United States continuously thereafter until the date of filing with the Commission.

Section 503(1) of the Act defines the term "national of the United States" to mean "(A) a natural person who is a citizen of the United States." The term does not include aliens.

Thus, in order for the Commission to favorably consider claims under Section 503(a) of Title V of the Act, it must be established

(1) that the subject property was owned in whole or in part by a national of the United States on the date of nationalization or other taking; and
(2) that the claim arising as a result of such nationalization or other taking has been continuously owned thereafter in whole or in part by a national or nationals of the United States to the date of filing with the Commission.

The Regulations of the Commission provide:

The claimant shall be the moving party and shall have the burden of proof on all issues involved in the determination of his claim. (FCSC Reg., 45 C.F.R §531.6(d) (Supp. 1967).)

Claimant asserts that he is the owner of 20 bonds, which he has submitted, of the issue known as 4-1/2% Bond of the External Debt of the Republic of Cuba, 1937-1977, in the principal amount of \$1,000.00 each, with 34 interest coupons attached, each in the amount of \$22.50, payable semiannually, the earliest maturing on December 31, 1960, and the latest on June 30, 1977.

A study of the history of events with respect to bond obligations of the Republic of Cuba reveals that the Cuban Government defaulted on the payment of interest on bonds of this issue on December 31, 1960 (See Foreign Bondholders Protective Council, Inc., Annual Report 1958-1961, p. 52), but other than continued failure to make payments under its obligation, has taken no positive action concerning the rights of bondholders. The question arises whether such nonpayment may be deemed a nationalization, expropriation, intervention, or other taking of, or special measures directed against the property of the bondholder within the meaning of Section 503(a) of the Act. This question has been affirmatively decided by the Commission. (See Claim of Clemens R. Maise, Claim No. CU-3191), which determined that the failure of the Government of Cuba to make the obligated payment on December 31, 1960, even without express repudiation of the bonds, occurring as it did for the first time after January 1, 1959, constituted a taking on that date of the property of the bondholder within the meaning of the Act; and gives rise to a valid claim for the amount of the unpaid indebtedness as of that date.

The record discloses that the subject bonds were purchased by claimant subsequent to December 31, 1960, the date of loss.

By Commission letter of December 7, 1967, claimant, through his father, was advised as to the type of additional evidence proper for submission to establish this claim under the Act. Claimant, through his father, advised the Commission, by letter of January 18, 1968, that he is unable or unwilling to furnish evidence to establish the identity of the bond owners from December 31, 1960 continuously to the respective dates of acquisition by the claimant, and to establish the United States nationality of said prior bond owners.

The Commission finds that claimant has not met the burden of proof in that he has failed to establish ownership of the bonds by a United States national or nationals on the date of loss and the claim continuously thereafter to the date of filing with the Commission. Thus, the Commission is constrained to deny this claim and it is hereby denied. The Commission deems it unnecessary to make determinations with respect to other elements of the claim.

Dated at Washington, D. C.,
and entered as the Proposed
Decision of the Commission

MAY 8 1968

Leonard v. B. Sutton

Leonard v. B. Sutton, Chairman

Theodore Jaffe

Theodore Jaffe, Commissioner

NOTICE: Pursuant to the Regulations of the Commission, if no objections are filed within 15 days after service or receipt of notice of this Proposed Decision, the decision will be entered as the Final Decision of the Commission upon the expiration of 30 days after such service or receipt of notice, unless the Commission otherwise orders. (FCSC Reg., 45 C.F.R. 531.5(e) and (g) as amended, 32 Fed. Reg. 412-13 (1967).)

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