

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE CLAIM OF

LOUIS F. MOELLER

Under the International Claims Settlement
Act of 1949, as amended

Claim No. CU-0912

Decision No. CU - 1708

PROPOSED DECISION

This claim against the Government of Cuba, filed under Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, was presented by LOUIS F. MOELLER and is based upon the asserted loss of interests in a bond issued by the Cuba Northern Railways Company and upon asserted ownership of a stock interest in Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A. 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.

On the basis of evidence of record, the Commission finds that claimant is, and since prior to October 13, 1960, has been the owner of one bond in the original face amount of \$1,000.00, issued by the Cuba Northern Railways Company and known as "First Mortgage Gold Bond, 4%, due June 30, 1970" (originally First Mortgage Gold Bond, 5-1/2%, due June 1, 1942), issued under an Indenture of July 1, 1927, with the First National City Bank of New York as Trustee. The bond in question is No. TRM21.

The Cuba Railroad Company, incorporated in the State of New Jersey, was wholly owned by Consolidated Railroads of Cuba (Ferrocarriles Consolidados de Cuba), a Cuban corporation. The Cuba Railroad Company thus would not qualify as a national of the United States under Section 502(1) of the Act which defines the term "national of the United States" as including "(B) a corporation or other legal entity which is organized under the laws of the United States, or of any State, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, if natural persons who are citizens of the United States own, directly or indirectly, 50 per centum or more of the outstanding capital stock or other beneficial interest of such corporation or entity."

Consolidated Railroads of Cuba also owned Cuba Northern Railways Company (Ferrocarriles Del Norte de Cuba), a Cuban corporation. The latter in turn owned the majority interest in Guantanamo and Western Railroad Company (Cia. Ferrocarrilera de Guantanamo y Occidente), incorporated in the State of Maine. Thus, none of these railroads qualify as a national of the United States under Section 502(1) of the Act.

The record in this claim discloses that, prior to 1951, claimant was the owner of a Cuba Northern Railways Company 5-1/2% Gold Bond due June 1, 1942.

The record reflects that on April 4, 1933, Cuba declared a moratorium on mortgage indebtedness, which was later extended to June 1942. On June 4, 1940 a new Cuban Constitution was adopted, having certain "Transitory Provisions" which extended the maturity date on mortgage indebtedness in excess of \$800,000.00 to June 30, 1970 and provided for interest at 1% and amortization by certain annual installments.

In 1952, pursuant to a "Plan for Readjustment of Bonded Debt of the Company", 5-1/2% Gold Bonds were surrendered in exchange for First Mortgage Gold Bonds, 4%, due June 30, 1970. The interest on these bonds was payable on June 1 and December 1 of each year. The last payment of interest on these bonds was made on December 1, 1958.

The record shows that Cuba Northern Railways Company was nationalized by Cuban Law 890, published in the Cuban Official Gazette on October 13, 1960. Claimant's bond, therefore, represented the debt of a nationalized enterprise as defined in Section 502(3) of the Act (supra).

The Commission concludes that as a result of the nationalization of the properties of the Cuba Northern Railways Company, claimant suffered a loss in connection with his bond, within the meaning of Title V of the Act. (See Claim of Kentucky Home Mutual Life Insurance Company, Claim No. CU-1339.)

Evidence of record establishes that the subject bond had an outstanding principal balance of \$635.00 on October 13, 1960, the date of loss.

The Commission therefore finds that the amount of the unpaid indebtedness on claimant's bond on October 13, 1960, the date of loss, was \$682.56, including the principal amount of \$635.00 and the interest due on the bond in the amount of \$47.56 for the period December 1, 1958 to October 13, 1960.

The record also contains stock certificate No. C06925 issued to the claimant on June 10, 1958 for 14 shares of capital stock in

Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A. On the basis of all the evidence of record, the Commission finds that the claimant is, and since prior to October 13, 1960, has been the owner of 14 shares of the capital stock issued by Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A.

Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A., was incorporated in Cuba and thus would not qualify as a national of the United States under Section 502(1)(B) of the Act (supra).

On October 13, 1960, the Government of Cuba published Law 890, in its Official Gazette, which listed as nationalized Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A. Accordingly, the Commission finds that Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A. was nationalized by the Government of Cuba on October 13, 1960.

The Commission concludes that as a result of the nationalization by the Government of Cuba of the Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A., claimant suffered a loss within the meaning of Title V of the Act.

The Act provides in Section 503(a) that in making determinations with respect to the validity and amount of claims and value of properties, rights, or interests taken, the Commission shall take into account the basis of valuation most appropriate to the property and equitable to the claimant, including but not limited to fair market value, book value, going concern value, or cost of replacement.

The question, in all cases, will be to determine the basis of valuation which, under the particular circumstances, is "most appropriate to the property and equitable to the claimant." The Commission has concluded that this phraseology does not differ from the international legal standard that would normally prevail in the evaluation of nationalized property and that it is designed to strengthen that standard by giving specific bases of valuation that the Commission shall consider; i.e., fair market value, book value, going concern value, or cost of replacement.

In determining the value of the interest owned by claimant in Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A., the Commission has considered claimant's assertions, a 1959 consolidated balance sheet for the company, as published in Moody's Industrial Manual for 1961 (p.2029), as well as other data pertaining to the sales price of the stock.

In the absence of other evidence, the Commission concludes that the book value is the most appropriate basis of valuation.

The Commission therefore finds that a net book value of \$8,612,828 was available for distribution, at the time of loss, among the 283,020 shares of capital stock issued by Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A., and concludes that the dollar loss sustained in connection with the ownership of a capital stock interest in Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A. was \$30.4318 per share of the capital stock issued and held at the time of loss. (See Claim of Huntley E. Cox, Claim No. CU-2944.)

Accordingly, in the instant claim, the Commission finds that claimant, LOUIS F. MOELLER, as holder of 14 shares of capital stock, suffered a loss in the amount of \$426.05 within the meaning of Title V of the Act, as a result of the nationalization of Central Violeta Sugar Company, S.A. by the Government of Cuba on October 13, 1960.

The Commission has decided that in certification of losses on claims determined pursuant to Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, interest should be included at the rate of 6% per annum from the date of loss to the date of settlement. (See Claim of Lisle Corporation, Claim No. CU-0644.)

The Commission therefore concludes that the amount of the loss sustained by claimant shall be increased by interest thereon at the rate of 6% per annum from October 13, 1960, the date on which the loss occurred, to the date on which provisions are made for the settlement thereof.

CERTIFICATION OF LOSS

The Commission certifies that LOUIS F. MOELLER sustained a loss, as a result of actions of the Government of Cuba, within the scope of Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, in the amount of One Thousand One Hundred Eight Dollars and Sixty-One Cents (\$1,108.61) with interest thereon at 6% per annum from October 13, 1960 to the date of settlement.

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

APR 24 1968

Leonard v. B. Sutton

Leonard v. B. Sutton, Cha'rman

Theodore Jaffe

Theodore Jaffe, Commissioner

NOTICE TO TREASURY DEPARTMENT: This claimant may be the subject of another certification of loss in CU-7746.

NOTICE TO TREASURY DEPARTMENT: The above listed securities and bonds may have been returned to claimant and no payment should be made until they are resubmitted.

The statute does not provide for the payment of claims against the Government of Cuba. Provision is only made for the determination by the Commission of the validity and amounts of such claims. Section 501 of the statute specifically precludes any authorization for appropriations for payment of these claims. The Commission is required to certify its findings to the Secretary of State for possible use in future negotiations with the Government of Cuba.

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).)