

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE CLAIM OF

H. A. ASTLETT & COMPANY, INC.

Under the International Claims Settlement  
Act of 1949, as amended

Claim No. CU - 2136  
CU - 2182

Decision No. CU -585

Counsel for claimant:

Hyman Kowal, Esq.

PROPOSED DECISION

These claims against the Government of Cuba, under Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, were presented by H. A. ASTLETT & COMPANY, INC. in the total amount of \$2,234.17 based upon the asserted loss of payment for merchandise shipped to Cuba.

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 502(1) of the Act defines the term "national of the United States" as "(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 interests of such corporation or entity."

An officer of the claimant corporation has certified that the claimant was organized in New York and that all times between July 18, 1959 and presentation of these claims on April 27, 1967, more than 50% of the outstanding capital stock of the claimant has been owned by United States nationals. The Commission holds that claimant is a national of the United States within the meaning of Section 502(1)(B) of the Act.

Claimant states that all of its 23 stockholders are and were nationals of the United States.

The record contains copy of claimant's invoice No. 324 of October 16, 1959 reflecting the sale to Agusti Hno y Cia. of Havana, Cuba, of goods totalling \$372.64, as to which freight, shipping and other attendant fees increased the total to \$491.88; and a copy of claimant's invoice No. 141 of July 8, 1959 reflecting the sale to Higinio Martinez Hernandez of Havana, Cuba, of goods totalling \$3,042.90, as to which freight, shipping and other attendant fees increased the total to \$3,484.57; of which \$1,742.29 is the unpaid balance.

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Additionally, the record includes a letter of April 24, 1961 from the Irving Trust Company to the Banco Pujol of Havana, Cuba in which it is stated that the collection of \$1,742.29 has been paid in local currency as of March 17, 1961, at which time inquiry was made as to what progress had been made toward effecting final settlement in dollars. Claimant states that it has not received the funds.

The Government of Cuba, on September 29, 1959, published its Law 568, concerning foreign exchange. Thereafter the Cuban Government effectively precluded not only transfers of funds to creditors abroad, but also payment to creditors within Cuba, by numerous, unreasonable and costly demands upon the consignees, who were thus deterred from complying with the demands of the Cuban Government. The Commission holds that Cuban Law 568 and the Cuban Government's implementation thereof, with respect to the rights of the claimant herein, was not in reality a legitimate exercise of sovereign authority to regulate foreign exchange, but constituted an intervention by the Government of Cuba into the contractual rights of the claimant, which resulted in the taking of American-owned property within the meaning of Section 503(a) of the Act. (See the Claim of The Schwarzenbach Huber Company, FCSC Claim No. CU-0019; and the Claim of Etna Pozzolana Corporation, FCSC Claim No. CU-0049).

Accordingly, in the instant claim the Commission finds that claimant's property was lost as a result of intervention by the Government of Cuba and that, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the loss occurred on November 17, 1959 as to \$491.88, the date the payment became due and on March 18, 1961 as to \$1,742.29, the day after collection was acknowledged by the Irving Trust Company.

The Commission has decided that in the 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 the Claim of Lisle Corporation, FCSC Claim No. CU-0644).

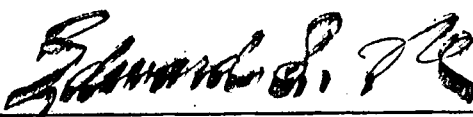
Accordingly, the Commission concludes that the amount of the loss sustained by claimant shall be increased by interest thereon at the rate of 6% per annum from the date on which the loss occurred, to the date on which provisions are made for the settlement thereof.

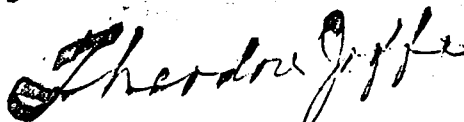
CERTIFICATION OF LOSS

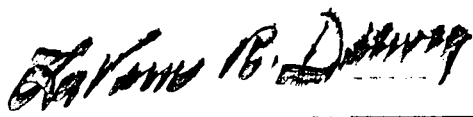
The Commission certifies that H. A. ASTLETT & COMPANY, INC. suffered a loss, as a result of actions of the Government of Cuba, within the scope of Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, in the amount of Two Thousand Two Hundred Thirty-Four Dollars and Seventeen Cents (\$2,234.17) with interest thereon at 6% per annum from the respective dates of loss to the date of settlement.

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

15 NOV 1967

  
Edward D. Re, Chairman

  
Theodore Jaffe, Commissioner

  
LaVern R. Dilweg, Commissioner

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).)