

The Governments of the United States and Albania concluded an agreement for en bloc settlement of claims of United States nationals against Albania on March 10, 1995. *Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the Republic of Albania on the Settlement of Certain Outstanding Claims*, March 10, 1995 (entered into force April 18, 1995) ("Settlement Agreement"). Claims covered by the Settlement Agreement are

the claims of United States nationals (including natural and juridical persons) against Albania arising from any nationalization, expropriation, intervention, or other taking of, or measures affecting, property of nationals of the United States prior to the date of this agreement[.]

Settlement Agreement, Article 1(a).

The Agreed Minute to the Settlement Agreement further provides:

For purposes of article 1, the term "United States nationals" shall include dual United States-Albanian nationals only if those nationals are domiciled in the United States currently or for at least half the period of time between when the property was taken and the date of entry into force of the agreement.

In effect, this residency requirement limits the Commission's jurisdiction over the claims of dual nationals to those cases where the owner of the claim either (1) was domiciled in the United States on April 18, 1995 (the effective date of the Settlement Agreement), or (2) was domiciled in the United States for at

least half the period of time between the date the property was expropriated and April 18, 1995.

Claimant here, a United States national by birth, seeks compensation for 10 hectares of property said to have been expropriated by the Albanian government between 1947 and 1952. At that time, according to claimant, the property was owned by his father, Ahmet S. Kutchi, who was naturalized as a United States citizen in 1926. The claimant further states that he inherited the right to claim for the property upon the death of his father in 1977.

Unfortunately, the information provided by claimant to date is not sufficient to establish his right to compensation. It appears that claimant is a dual U.S.-Albanian national, because his father was an Albanian citizen. Under Albanian law, claimant retains Albanian nationality notwithstanding his U.S. nationality.

Because claimant is a dual United States-Albanian national, the Commission is constrained to apply the residency requirement in the Agreed Minute to the Settlement Agreement. There is no evidence that claimant was living in the United States on April 18, 1995. Nor is there any evidence that the claim was owned by someone living in the United States for at least half the time between April 18, 1995 and the dates of the expropriations.

Section 531.6(d) of the Commission's regulations provides:

The claimant shall be the moving party, and shall have the burden of proof on all issues involved in the determination of his or her claim.

45 C.F.R. 531.6(d) (1995).

The Commission finds that claimant here has not met the burden of proof in that he has failed to prove either that he was living in the United States on April 18, 1995, or that the claim was owned by someone living in the United States for at least half the time between April 18, 1995 and the dates on which the claim arose. In the absence of such evidence, the Commission is unable to find that the residency requirement in the Agreed Minute to the Settlement Agreement is satisfied.

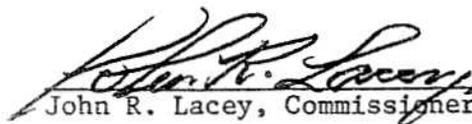
Accordingly, while the Commission sympathizes with claimant for the loss of his family's property, it cannot find -- on the evidence submitted to date -- that this claim is compensable under the terms of the Settlement Agreement. The claim therefore must be and is hereby denied.

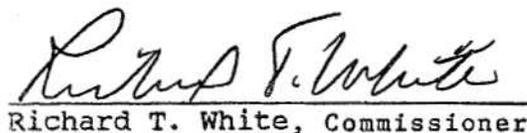
The Commission finds it unnecessary to make determinations with respect to other elements of this claim.

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

JAN 28 1997


Delissa A. Ridgway, Chair


John R. Lacey, Commissioner


Richard T. White, Commissioner

This decision was entered as the Commission's
Final Decision on MAR 25 1997

NOTICE: Pursuant to the Regulations of the Commission, any objections must be filed within 15 days after service or receipt of notice of this Proposed Decision. Absent objection, this 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 Regulations, 45 C.F.R. 531.5 (e) and (g) (1995).