

of claimants should be extended, and also stated in the report of the Hon. Senator Russell B. Long, as follows:

"We find that we have funds over and above those necessary to take care of these claims (claims of those who were American citizens at the time of loss), which funds we shall proceed to devote to satisfy claims of those who became American citizens subsequent to the time the property was seized.* * *"

"Inasmuch as Italy has been more liberal than have most other nations, in making such funds available, we have provided that after those who have other claims have been satisfied, insofar as funds remain, they could be made available to American citizens who acquired American citizenship subsequent to the cutoff date * * *"

"If we had some settlement which was similar to the Italian settlement, which is unique in many respects, in that the Italian Government settled in effect 100 cents on the dollar for American claimants, and made available over and above that amount for any other liabilities which might be outstanding, then we could make those funds available to other citizens."

We can rightly ask why these views which led to the enactment of Public Law 604-85 should now be completely disregarded, as its reasoning applies in every respect also to the present residual balance of the Italian Claims Fund.

May I finally point out that the claimants eligible according to the afore-cited Public Law 604-85 and according to paragraph 9, page 5 of the present bill H.R. 9063, are almost all poor working people, old retired men and women, for whom this compensation would mean a great deal, and who are disappointed that other claimants in the same category as they are received 100% compensation under the original Italian Claims Program, for the sole reason that they filed their claims with the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission in the regular filing period for Italian claims, at which time these claimants were not eligible according to the law.

This is a great inequity which should be corrected. It is understandable that these people are embittered, particularly on learning about two large claims for which private bills were filed and which last year passed in the Senate Committee. They feel that there will again be discrimination against them in the use of these funds.

The National Conference for Equality under Claims Legislation appeals to this Honorable Committee not to change the proposed provision of the present bill concerning the Italian Claims Fund.

In the event that after distribution there will still remain some undistributed funds, I am resubmitting an amendment according to which a small number of claimants who are American citizens and are not eligible according to Public Law 604-85, should benefit from this balance, if any balance remains. I wish to say that this should be done only if and when there is an undistributed balance after old claims, in accordance with the provision contained in the present bill H.R. 9063, have been fully paid.

With regard to this amendment, it should be emphasized that the Lombardo Agreement by which the Italian Claims Fund was established, provided that the money be used "** * ** in such manner as the United States of America may deem appropriate, in application to the claims of United States nationals arising out of the war with Italy and not otherwise provided for." Needless to say, the only restriction in the handling of these funds by the United States is—that they *may be used solely* for the satisfaction of claims of U.S. citizens against Italy. This is the reason this amendment is being submitted.

I wish to add that it is also the conviction of the members of the National Conference for Equality under Claims Legislation that the constitutional rights of naturalized citizens should be preserved by not discriminating against them as to date of their naturalization, if claims funds are being distributed which are located in the United States and which are subject to domestic legislation.

I respectfully submit these remarks for your favorable consideration, and I wish to thank you for permitting me to present my views to your Committee, as well as the views of the National Conference for Equality under Claims Legislation.