



National Archives and Records Administration

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The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission **of the United States** **(Record Group 299)**

The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States (FCSC) is an independent agency within the Department of Justice. It is responsible for adjudicating claims of U.S. nationals against foreign governments under specific jurisdiction conferred by Congress, pursuant to international claims settlement agreements, or at the request of the Secretary of State. The FCSC was established in 1954. It assumed the functions of two predecessor agencies: (1) the War Claims Commission (WCC) and (2) the International Claims Commission (ICC). The records of the three commissions constitute RG 299: Records of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission.

The War Claims Commission (WCC) was established in 1948 pursuant to the War Claims Act of 1948 as a temporary agency. It was responsible for adjudicating claims and paying out compensation to American prisoners of war and civilian internees of World War II. Payment and administrative expenses were funded by liquidation of German and Japanese assets seized by the U.S. after World War II.

The International Claims Commission (ICC) was established within the Department of State in 1950 pursuant to the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949. It was established to adjudicate claims of the U.S. Government and U.S. nationals against foreign government out of lump-sum agreements negotiated by the U.S. Government. Initially set up to handle claims resulting from the Yugoslav Claims Agreement of 1948, the establishing law made it responsible for handling claims arising out of future lump-sum agreement between the U.S. and other countries.

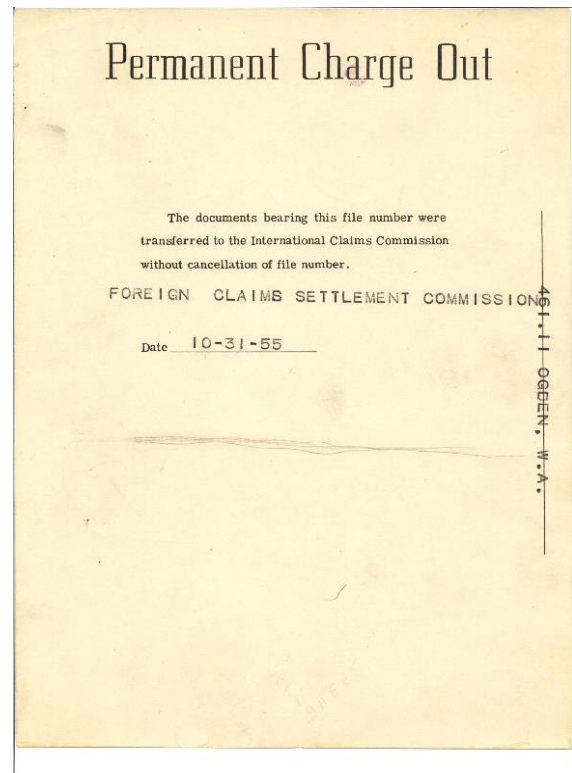
For the most part, the records of the ICC, WCC, and FCSC in RG 299 are arranged by claims program, although there are some overarching administrative records. The National Archives holds claims files the following claims programs:

- ◆General War Claims*
- ◆Bulgarian (2 programs)*
- ◆Czechoslovak*
- ◆Ethiopian
- ◆Hungarian*
- ◆Italian (2 programs)*
- ◆Micronesian
- ◆Panamanian*
- ◆Polish*
- ◆Romanian*
- ◆Soviet*
- ◆Yugoslav (2 programs)*
- ◆U.S.S. Pueblo

The claims files are arranged numerically by claim number. The National Archives has scanned alphabetical name indexes to the claims files of those

programs marked with an asterisk (*). The scanned indexes are attached to the pertinent National Archives Catalog description under "Online Resources."

Before establishment of the WCC, the ICC, and the FCSC, the Department of State handled claims by American citizens against foreign governments. Documentation on those matters is found among the files constituting the Department's central files, part of RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, and especially among the files of various claims programs now part of RG 76: Records of Boundary and Claims Commissions and Arbitrations. As the claims program developed in the late 1940s, a great deal of the documentation accumulated by the Department and incorporated into the Department's Central Decimal File was transferred to the various claims commissions and formed the basis of many claims files. Those documents primarily came from the files in Class 3 (Protection of Interests) and Class 4 (Claims) of the 1910-49 version of the Central Decimal File and Class 2 (Protection of Interests) of the 1950-63 version of the Central Decimal File thus explaining why those documents are "missing" from those series of records and why documents with Department of State file numbers are found among the claims files of the FCSC and predecessor commissions. In some cases, documents removed from the Department's files are indicated by a withdrawal card (see illustration). The removed documents do not date only from World War II and later. Documents relating to claims issues dating as early as World War I but adjudicated at a later time were incorporated into the claims files created and maintained by the WCC, ICC, and FCSC.



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