

BULLIS CASE

BAINBRIDGE, *Commissioner* (for the Commission):

Henry C. Bullis, a native-born citizen, of the United States in August, 1900, and for nearly two years previous thereto, was employed as chief mechanical and electrical engineer by the Electric Light Company of Maracaibo, Venezuela. Some of the employees of the company were sympathizers with the revolutionary party then making preparations for an uprising. Quantities of bombs, cartridges, and other munitions of war were brought to the electric-light works, stored there, and taken from there for distribution throughout the city to members of the revolutionary party. Some of the bombs were found by the Venezuelan authorities at the electric-light works in a room to which Bullis had a key, and in his private residence several firearms and a quantity of cartridges for Mauser rifles were found.

Bullis was arrested charged with a violation of the laws of Venezuela. He was tried in the municipal court of Santa Bárbara, convicted, and on November 8, 1900, was sentenced to an imprisonment of three months in the public jail. The case was appealed to the district court of Maracaibo, and the sentence of the lower court was affirmed on November 26, 1900, the court stating in its judgment, that "the guilt of said Henry C. Bullis is plainly proven." Through the intervention of the United States legation at Caracas, Bullis was liberated two weeks before the expiration of his sentence.

A claim is here presented on behalf of Bullis in the sum of \$ 50,000 for wrongful arrest and imprisonment.

A careful examination of the evidence presented in this case convinces the Commission that Bullis was arrested, tried, and convicted in strict accordance with the laws of Venezuela, to which he was at the time subject, and in conformity with the usual procedure of its courts; that his trial was not unnecessarily delayed; that he was provided with counsel; that he was allowed to communicate with the representative of his Government; that there was no undue discrimination against him as a citizen of the United States, nor was there, in his trial, any violation of those rules for the maintenance of justice in judicial inquiries which are sanctioned by international law. It does not appear that he was subjected to any unnecessarily harsh or arbitrary treatment during his imprisonment.

The respondent Government has incurred no liability to this claimant. Every nation, whenever its laws are violated by anyone owing obedience to them, whether he be a citizen or a stranger, has a right to inflict the prescribed penalties upon the transgressor, if found within its jurisdiction; provided always that the laws themselves, the methods of administering them, and the penalties prescribed are not in derogation of civilized codes.

The claim must be disallowed.
