

United States Courts
Southern District of Texas
ENTERED

NOV 05 2003

Michael N. Milby, Clerk of Court

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION**

UNITED STATES SECURITIES
AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION,

Plaintiff,

v.

RODNEY R. PROTO and
EARL E. DEFRATES,

Defendants.

H-03-4659

FINAL JUDGMENT AS TO DEFENDANT RODNEY R. PROTO

The Securities and Exchange Commission having filed a Complaint and Defendant Rodney R. Proto ("Defendant") having entered a general appearance; consented to the Court's jurisdiction over Defendant and the subject matter of this action; consented to entry of this Final Judgment without admitting or denying the allegations of the Complaint (except as to jurisdiction); waived findings of fact and conclusions of law; and waived any right to appeal from this Final Judgment:

I.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED that Defendant and Defendant's agents, servants, employees, attorneys, and all persons in active concert or participation with them who receive actual notice of this Final Judgment by personal service or otherwise are permanently restrained and enjoined from violating, directly or indirectly, Section

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10(b) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Exchange Act") [15 U.S.C. § 78j(b)] and Rule 10b-5 promulgated thereunder [17 C.F.R. § 240.10b-5], by using any means or instrumentality of interstate commerce, or of the mails, or of any facility of any national securities exchange, in connection with the purchase or sale of any security:

- (a) to employ any device, scheme, or artifice to defraud;
- (b) to make any untrue statement of a material fact or to omit to state a material fact necessary in order to make the statements made, in the light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading; or
- (c) to engage in any act, practice, or course of business which operates or would operate as a fraud or deceit upon any person.

II.

IT IS HEREBY FURTHER ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED that Defendant and Defendant's agents, servants, employees, attorneys, and all persons in active concert or participation with them who receive actual notice of this Final Judgment by personal service or otherwise are permanently restrained and enjoined from violating Section 17(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 (the "Securities Act") [15 U.S.C. § 77q(a)] in the offer or sale of any security by the use of any means or instruments of transportation or communication in interstate commerce or by use of the mails, directly or indirectly:

- (a) to employ any device, scheme, or artifice to defraud;
- (b) to obtain money or property by means of any untrue statement of a material fact or any omission of a material fact necessary in order to make the statements made, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading; or

- (c) to engage in any transaction, practice, or course of business which operates or would operate as a fraud or deceit upon the purchaser.

III.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED that, pursuant to Section 21(d)(2) of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. § 78u(d)(2)], Defendant is prohibited, for five years following the date of entry of this Final Judgment, from acting as an officer or director of any issuer that has a class of securities registered pursuant to Section 12 of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. § 78l] or that is required to file reports pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. § 78o(d)].

IV.

IT IS HEREBY FURTHER ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED that Defendant is liable for disgorgement of \$1,503,669.77, representing losses avoided as a result of the conduct alleged in the Complaint, together with prejudgment interest thereon in the amount of \$513,837.84, and civil penalties in the amount of \$1,703,669.77, pursuant to the Insider Trading Sanctions Act, Section 21A of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. § 78u-1] and Section 21(d)(3) of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. § 78u(d)(3)]. Defendant shall satisfy this obligation by paying \$3,721,177.38 within ten business days to the Clerk of this Court, together with a cover letter identifying Rodney R. Proto as a defendant in this action; setting forth the title and civil action number of this action and the name of this Court; and specifying that payment is made pursuant to this Final Judgment. Defendant shall simultaneously transmit photocopies of such payment and letter to the Commission's counsel in this action. By making this payment,

Defendant relinquishes all legal and equitable right, title, and interest in such funds, and no part of the funds shall be returned to Defendant.

The Clerk shall deposit the funds into an interest bearing account with the Court Registry Investment System ("CRIS"). These funds, together with any interest and income earned thereon (collectively, the "Fund"), shall be held by the CRIS until further order of the Court. In accordance with the guidelines set by the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, the Clerk is directed, without further order of this Court, to deduct from the income earned on the money in the Fund a fee equal to ten percent of the income earned on the Fund. Such fee shall not exceed that authorized by the Judicial Conference of the United States.

The Commission may by motion propose a plan to distribute the Fund subject to the Court's approval. Such a plan may provide that Fund shall be distributed pursuant to the Fair Fund provisions of Section 308(a) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. Regardless of whether any such Fair Fund distribution is made, amounts ordered to be paid as civil penalties pursuant to this Judgment shall be treated as penalties paid to the government for all purposes, including all tax purposes. To preserve the deterrent effect of the civil penalty, Defendant shall not, in any Related Investor Action, benefit from any offset or reduction of any investor's claim by the amount of any Fair Fund distribution to such investor in this action that is proportionately attributable to the civil penalty paid by Defendant ("Penalty Offset"). If the court in any Related Investor Action grants such an offset or reduction, Defendant shall, within 30 days after entry of a final order granting the offset or reduction, notify the Commission's counsel in this action and pay the amount of the Penalty Offset to the United States Treasury or to a Fair Fund, as the Commission directs. Such a payment shall not be deemed an additional civil penalty and shall not be deemed to change the amount of the civil penalty imposed in this Judgment. For purposes

of this paragraph, a "Related Investor Action" means a private damages action brought against Defendant by or on behalf of one or more investors based on substantially the same facts as alleged in the Complaint in this action.

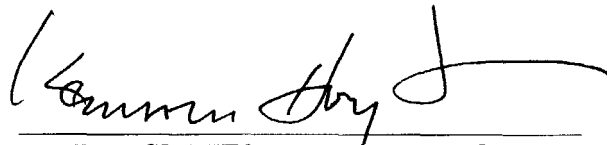
V.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED that the Consent is incorporated herein with the same force and effect as if fully set forth herein, and that Defendant shall comply with all of the undertakings and agreements set forth therein.

VI.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED that this Court shall retain jurisdiction of this matter for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this Final Judgment.

DATED this 4th day of November, 2003.


UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE