

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20550



Office of
Inspector General

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 25, 1993

FROM: [REDACTED] Investigations Section

VIA: [REDACTED], Special Agent-in-Charge
Investigations Section

SUBJECT: Misrepresentation by [REDACTED]

TO: Case No. I93040015

On April 1, 1993, we received an allegation that a misrepresentation by a [REDACTED] had occurred. According to the allegation, Dr. [REDACTED], a Program Director in the Division of [REDACTED] who had retired effective January 3, 1993, had assured [REDACTED] University [REDACTED] that continuing funds were forthcoming for a grant. [REDACTED] officials claimed the university had spent over \$800,000 in anticipation of the forthcoming funds, based on Dr. [REDACTED] assurances. Those assurances allegedly were given both in late January 1993, in a conference call, and in February 1993 at a professional society meeting, after Dr. [REDACTED] was no longer an [REDACTED]

We interviewed Dr. [REDACTED] by phone on May 5, 1993. Dr. [REDACTED] stated that he did in fact retire on January 3, 1993, but that he was frequently in his old NSF office for the next month, cleaning files and resolving unfinished business; he stated that he was in this office when he participated in a conference call with [REDACTED] officials concerning the anticipated grant funds. Dr. [REDACTED] confirmed that the conference call occurred after he was retired. He also stated that he did not know whether [REDACTED] officials were aware that he no longer formally represented NSF and, as the subject was never discussed, conceded that [REDACTED] could have believed him to still be the cognizant Program Director. Dr. [REDACTED] stated that he did not intend to misrepresent himself, but meant to speak only in an advisory/old friend capacity. He recalled that the substance of the discussion concerned NSF's awaiting the arrival of its official budget, at which time funds, such as those for the [REDACTED] grant, could be disbursed; he stated that [REDACTED] the Division Director of [REDACTED] was not aware of the conference call.

Regarding the February 1993 professional society meeting, Dr. ██████ confirmed that he did attend, that he saw the ██████ grant's Principal Investigator, ██████, at the meeting, and that they spoke. He did not recall discussing the ██████ grant with Mr. ██████. Dr. ██████ stated that he was certain that Mr. ██████ knew of his retirement in early January, since it was mentioned directly to Mr. ██████ by him and by the Assistant Program Director, ██████. Dr. ██████ stated that he has had no communication with ██████ officials since he saw ██████ at the professional society meeting, and that he no longer used his old NSF office.

We also interviewed the ██████ Division Director, Dr. ██████ who was Dr. ██████'s supervisor. He stated that ██████ was a very devoted, well-liked, and dedicated employee. Dr. ██████ confirmed that he gave Dr. ██████ permission to come in after his retirement to clean up and to resolve loose ends, but did not set a time limit for ██████ use of the office, leaving it instead to ██████ discretion. He stated that Dr. ██████ did have trouble disengaging from his NSF position; it was clear to him, by the 2nd or 3rd week in January, that Dr. ██████ was "dragging it out too long." In approximately the first week of February, 1993, Dr. ██████ directed Dr. ██████ to move his remaining belongings out of the office to make room for his replacement.

Dr. ██████ stated that he was not aware of the conference call between Dr. ██████ and ██████ officials; he heard of it some time later through Dr. ██████ replacement, ██████. He was aware of Dr. ██████ attendance at the ██████ meeting in ██████. Dr. ██████ had been hired to staff the NSF booth there, answering questions and distributing information about NSF. Dr. ██████ stated that he did not know of any contact between Dr. ██████ and ██████ officials at that meeting, nor of any other communication since the January conference call. Finally, Dr. ██████ stated that a memorandum had been sent from him to all of Dr. ██████ field contacts, informing them of ██████ retirement; he provided us with a copy of that memo, dated March 3, 1993.

We counseled Dr. ██████ on the importance of not representing himself as an NSF official after his retirement, either implicitly or explicitly. We also counseled Dr. ██████ about the dangers of allowing former employees to continue to use office space. We found no other improprieties or irregularities in this matter.

This case is closed.