

consider the statement above and the semantically equivocal juxtapositions in the article to be harmful to our reputations and perhaps even unfair journalistic license.

At the time of our departure from Brandeis in June 1973, we were midway through the third year of a 5-year grant from NIH. I served as principal investigator and my wife as coprincipal investigator. Several months before our leave-taking, we corresponded with NIH to obtain information in order to arrange for the premature termination of the grant. We also provided the university with an itemized list of equipment and supplies left in our laboratory and obtained permission to take certain major items with us. Some time after our departure, NIH auditors arrived on campus in connection with a dispute involving the fiscal practices of another department. While there, they spot-checked other accounts including our own. Questions arose concerning several expenditures which could not be accounted for satisfactorily by the individuals present. We were not contacted to provide the needed information and explanations. In the absence of these, NIH disallowed the expenditures in question and the costs were absorbed by Brandeis. The items included:

1) One month's salary and fringe benefits to my wife and myself. (She received her total salary from the grant. I received a stipend representing 2/9ths of my annual salary.) We arrived in Israel on 15 June and began work shortly afterward. Between then and October, the start of our appointments at the Hebrew University, we did considerably more than 1 month's work which eventually culminated in eight significant publications, all bearing formal acknowledgments of NIH support.

2) Approximately \$6000 for assorted small items of equipment ranging from a flash evaporator (\$300) to a centrifuge rotor (\$895). These were brought to Israel and used in the performance of the work described above. Each of the items was vitally necessary to our work, and the time required for their replacement would have resulted in delays of 4 to 6 months. More than a year later, after learning of the disallowance by NIH, we offered to ship the items back to Brandeis at our expense. Instead, Brandeis donated them to the Hebrew University.

3) The sum of \$111 for shipping plus \$21.50 for a telegram. We shipped a package to Israel by Air Freight containing frozen antisera and enzyme preparations that had been collected during

the tenure of the grant. The telegram was to warn a graduate student to pick up the package at the airport.

In assessing the ethical niceties of our actions, three considerations might prove revealing.

1) Before my departure, I was urged to accept a leave of absence rather than resign my position. Had I accepted the leave I could have retained a token laboratory at Brandeis and continued to use the grant funds, thereby subverting the NIH policy on support of overseas research.

2) Although my wife is an independent investigator of recognized international stature, her annual salary at the time of our departure was \$12,000. This significant underpayment reflects our joint desire to convince the most skeptical examiner of the propriety of our professional relationship.

3) In 27 years of support from the Office of Naval Research, the National Science Foundation, and NIH, we have never overspent our grants, nor has any item of expense been disallowed before or after this experience.

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### Decision-Making: What Basis?

Decision-making by the source rather than the force of an argument is universally condemned in retrospect but widely embraced in practice. The history of every human discipline teems with illustrations of extreme examples.

I have been advised by a professor of mathematics at a major university, himself a joint author of a high school geometry text, that his time is too valuable to waste on a brief manuscript on the foundations of geometry which I asked him to review. He said, in effect, that the foundations of geometry were worked over in the last half of the last century "by some pretty good mathematicians." He did not say, but he implied, that that work is inviolate and no useful contribution could come from someone not recognized in the field.

Were this an isolated incident, the cost would be minuscule. That it is widespread, nigh universal, is the real tragedy.

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