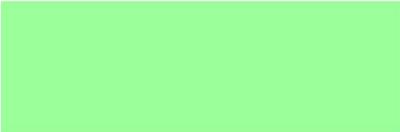


(b)(6)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of Administrative Appeals
20 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090

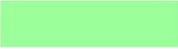


U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

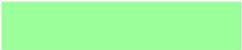


Date: **DEC 30 2014**

Office: NEWARK, NJ

FILE: 

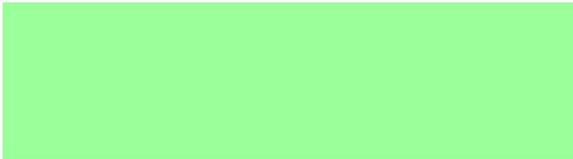
IN RE:

Respondent: 

APPLICATION:

Cancellation of Certificate Pursuant to Section 342 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1453

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:



INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosed please find the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) in your case.

This is a non-precedent decision. The AAO does not announce new constructions of law nor establish agency policy through non-precedent decisions. If you believe the AAO incorrectly applied current law or policy to your case or if you seek to present new facts for consideration, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen, respectively. Any motion must be filed on a Notice of Appeal or Motion (Form I-290B) within 33 days of the date of this decision. **Please review the Form I-290B instructions at <http://www.uscis.gov/forms> for the latest information on fee, filing location, and other requirements. See also 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. Do not file a motion directly with the AAO.**

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Rosenberg".

Ron Rosenberg
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The Newark, New Jersey Field Office Director (director) cancelled the applicant's certificate of naturalization and the matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

Pertinent Facts and Procedural History

On April 16, 2014, the director issued a decision cancelling the respondent's certificate of naturalization. The director's decision was based on a finding that the respondent's naturalization was unlawfully obtained from Robert Schofield, a former U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) employee. In 2006, Mr. Schofield pled guilty to, and in 2007 was convicted of, among other crimes, unlawfully procuring naturalization by providing certificates of naturalization to individuals who were not entitled to U.S. citizenship.¹ In his plea, Mr. Schofield identified the respondent as one of nearly 200 individuals to whom he illegally issued certificates of naturalization.

On appeal, the respondent maintains that he relied on his attorney to properly file his naturalization application, that he was unaware that his application was handled by Mr. Schofield, and that he was and continues to be eligible for naturalization. *See* Appeal Brief.

Applicable Law

Section 342 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1453, provides, in relevant part, that:

The [Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security] is authorized to cancel any certificate of . . . naturalization . . . if it shall appear to [he] satisfaction that such document or record was illegally or fraudulently obtained from, or was created through illegality or by fraud practiced upon, [he] or the Commissioner or a Deputy Commissioner; but the person for or to whom such document or record has been issued or made shall be given at such person's last-known place of address written notice of the intention to cancel such document or record with the reasons therefore and shall be given at least sixty days in which to show cause why such document or record should not be canceled. The cancellation under this section of any document purporting to show the citizenship status of the person to whom it was issued shall affect only the document and not the citizenship status of the person in whose name the document was issued.

The regulations at 8 C.F.R. § 342 outline the process for cancellation of a certificate of naturalization under the Act. The AAO notes that the director properly notified the respondent of his intent to cancel the certificate of naturalization and afforded him an opportunity to respond as required by the Act and the regulations.

¹ *United States v. Schofield*, No. 06 CR 00427 (E.D. Va. Apr. 20, 2007).

Analysis

The evidence in the record establishes that the respondent obtained his naturalization certificate from Mr. Schofield. The record further demonstrates that the respondent's certificate of citizenship was illegally issued, without regard to his eligibility to derive U.S. citizenship under any section of the Act. USCIS records contain a naturalization application, listing the applicant's address in Washington, D.C. even though the applicant was residing in New Jersey at the time. The naturalization application contains red check marks, suggesting that the applicant attended an interview, but there is no evidence in the file that the applicant was properly examined with respect to the English language and civics knowledge requirements. The record indicates that the application was not properly adjudicated. Rather, the application was approved and stamped by Mr. Schofield. The respondent's certificate, No. [REDACTED] was thus obtained, regardless of the applicant's eligibility, through the unlawful acts of Mr. Schofield.

On appeal, the respondent states that he had no knowledge of Mr. Schofield's illegal actions. *See* Appeal Brief. Regardless of the respondent's culpability, or lack thereof, the evidence of record clearly establishes that the respondent's certificate of naturalization was obtained from Mr. Schofield through fraud. The certificate of naturalization was unlawfully procured by Mr. Schofield, and not provided to the respondent after the completion of a lawful naturalization process.

Conclusion

The burden of proof in cancellation proceedings is on the government, and cancellation of a certificate of naturalization is authorized "if it shall appear to [the] satisfaction" of the Secretary of the Department Homeland Security" that the certificate was illegally or fraudulently obtained. Here, the director has met his burden of proof and shown that the respondent's certificate of citizenship was illegally obtained and properly cancelled. The respondent's appeal will therefore be dismissed.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. The certificate remains cancelled.