

**Plenty of  
EXCUSES  
but no  
GOOD  
Reasons**

**A discussion about the  
reporting of Espionage  
Indicators**



## **Plenty of Excuses but NO Good Reason not to REPORT**

Espionage activity can take many forms. Clearly there is no established formula for recognizing that someone is involved in espionage. This is evident even in a brief review of the espionage cases against the United States. But one aspect common to each of the espionage cases is the presence of potential indicators of the spying activity. In all but a few cases, these indicators have gone unreported, allowing the spies to continue in their treasonous careers. Time and again security officers emphasize the importance of reporting known or suspected problems and any unusual behavior on the part of coworkers. Reporting on a coworker can be a difficult task. Several emotional factors influence a person's willingness to report information. However, a problem arises when these feelings prevent us from fulfilling a responsibility. By understanding the following factors, we can go beyond them and see them as the excuses they really are:

### **Social Influences**

*"Mind your own business. Don't get involved."*

Modern Society discourages us from participating in situations that do not directly involve us.

### **Transfer of Responsibility**

*"Someone else will report it. I don't have the time."*

We shift responsibility to act on information by expecting another person to deal with the situation.

### **Fear of Response**

*"If I report it, they'll either ignore it or 'go off the deep end' about it. They won't take me seriously."*

We are hesitant to report a problem if we do not believe it will be acted on quickly and discreetly.

### **Conflict**

*"If it becomes known that I reported information about a coworker, it'll only cause tension and mistrust in the office."*

We are unwilling to make a report if it will jeopardize office harmony or our status in the office.

## **Disbelief**

*“I can’t believe John could ever be involved in something like this. He is loyal!”*

We tend to avoid accepting the idea that someone’s unusual behavior may be a symptom of espionage. For example, John seems to be living beyond his means, but has offered a plausible explanation for his extra money. In all other ways, John appears to be a loyal American. Therefore, we dismiss the idea that John could be involved in any wrongdoing, especially espionage. This tendency to discount the possibility of someone’s involvement in espionage inhibits us from making a report.

## **Internalization**

*“It’s not my job. I don’t have all the facts. It’s just not my problem.”*

Sometimes we go through a process of internal rationalization, giving a variety of seemingly logical reasons why we should not make a report.

## **Violation of Values**

*“It’s not right to tell on someone.”*

The childhood sneers of “tattle-tale” and “snitch” are familiar to everyone. Some of us will not report another’s behavior because “tattling” goes against our values.

## **Loss of Freedom**

*“The government is not going to tell me what to do – I don’t have to do this!”*

Americans ardently guard our rights and our freedom, resisting anyone’s efforts to restrict them or put demands on them. We may not comply with rules that don’t directly benefit us.

The emotional trials described about can cause us to feel stress and anxiety. Armed with an understanding of what they mean, we can challenge these factors and overcome them in order to make the rational decision to report.

## Where We Failed



A case which demonstrates the need to overcome excuses and report concerns or problems to security officials is that of *Aldrich Hazen Ames*, CIA intelligence officer. Ames was arrested on 21 February 1994, on charges of providing highly-classified information to Russia over a 9-year period and was later sentenced to life imprisonment without parole. Ames succeeded for nearly a decade in operating within the heart of U.S. intelligence, supplying the Soviets and later

Russia's SVR intelligence service, with the most important U.S. secrets about recruited agents, double agents working against the Soviets, important information about U.S. intelligence officials and vital defense secrets. According to CIA officials, Ames betrayed at least 11 agents recruited by the CIA from within the Soviet and Russian governments.

The Ames case is about accountability, both individual and managerial. The investigation of Ames uncovered a vast quantity of information about his professional sloppiness, his failure to file contact reports and requests for foreign travel, and his disregard for personal security, both professionally and in his espionage activities. By and large, these weaknesses were observed by Ames's coworkers and supervisors and were tolerated by many. Some of the traditional indicators of espionage were present. They were either not reported or they were ignored.

### Unexplained Affluence

Despite his GS-14 Salary of 68,843 a year, Ames lived a lavish lifestyle. He paid cash for a \$540,000 house in an affluent neighborhood of Arlington, Virginia. He purchased a Jaguar with cash and ran up \$500,000 in credit card debts over several years. He bought two condominiums and a ranch in Colombia. He spent \$99,000 on home improvements.

### Blatant Violation of Security Rules

Ames seemed predisposed to ignore and violate agency security rules and regulations. In New York in 1976, he committed a very serious security violation when he left a briefcase full of classified information on a New York subway train.

Inside the study at Ames's residence, his personal computer stored over 100 highly-classified cables with details of agency operations. Removing classified materials clearly violated security rules.

Ames had a reputation among coworkers for aggressive inquisitiveness and had a reputation for asking questions of colleagues about secret operations and secrets for which he had no need to know. He clearly circumvented the need-to-know principle.

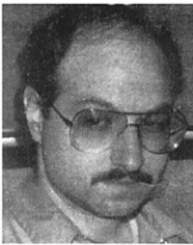
### Unreported Foreign Travel

Ames made several trips to South America to meet with his Russian handlers. He was required to inform the agency of his foreign travel. He did not notify the CIA of the travel and in fact told his wife to tell CIA officials he was in Annapolis, Maryland, if they made any inquiries.

## **Alcohol Problems**

Ames was a heavy abuser of alcohol. A significant number of individuals who have worked with Ames stated that it was not uncommon for Ames to sleep at his desk during working hours. This behavior often coincided with Ames having returned from lunch where he consumed alcohol.

## **A Success Story**



*Jonathan J. Pollard*, intelligence analyst with the Naval Investigative Service, was apprehended on 21 November 1985, outside the Israeli Embassy in Washington D.D. as he and his wife Anne Henderson-Pollard vainly sought asylum with hope of fleeing the country. Both he and his wife were charged under the espionage code for selling classified documents to an Israeli intelligence unit for \$50,000. It is reported that Pollard's detection resulted from tips from fellow employees that he was seeking and copying more classified documents than his job required. Seized at the Pollard residence was a suitcase full of classified materials including many marked Top Secret and related to military capabilities of foreign countries. On 4 March 1987, Jonathan Pollard was sentenced to life imprisonment.

## **Reporting Can Do More Than “Catch A Spy”**

A report of questionable behavior can sometimes provide the opportunity to help individuals before their problems lead them to espionage. A supervisor reported to DIA's Office for Security and Counterintelligence that an Agency employee was experiencing serious financial problems. The problem was so extensive that the individual had reportedly made a comment to the effect that, “I don't know what I would do if someone offered me money for classified information.”

A representative from Security subsequently interviewed the individual. It was learned that his financial problems had been “snowballing” over the last year, and although he was attempting to resolve his problems, these efforts were not helping.

The individual was extremely cooperative. As a result, DIA allowed him to remain in a fully-cleared status while formulating a plan to resolve his financial problems. With help, he resolved his financial problems and also built up a nest egg to deal with future eventualities.

## **What To Report**

We are required as cleared employees and assignees to report certain behavior or activities. This includes activities of co-workers as well as our own activities. The areas of concern that must be reported include:

- Indication of disloyalty to the United States.
- Indication of emotional, mental or personality disorders.
- Unreported foreign travel.
- Close and continuing association with non-U.S. citizens.
- Alcohol or drug abuse.
- Unexplained affluence or financial irresponsibility.
- Willful violation of security regulations.
- Coercion, blackmail, or recruitment attempts.
- Unauthorized disclosures or new leaks.

## **The Bottom Line**

Of course, the fact that an individual exhibits one or more of these indicators does not automatically mean he or she is engaged in espionage. However, the combination of several factors is a cause for concern and raises certain questions which merit investigation to determine whether a problem exists.

The importance of reporting changes in a coworker's behavior becomes clear when looking at the cases described. The Ames case alone represents at least four of the indicators listed above which must be reported.

Pollard's requests for information for which he had no need-to-know and his excessive copying of information were noticed by others, but the difference in his case was that one of these people reported the observation. Because his coworker followed through on his responsibility to report any questionable behavior of individuals in the office, Pollard's activities were stopped and the potential for further damage was greatly reduced.

The excuses which immediately come to mind when we notice a problem must be seen for what they are – excuses. None of the emotional factors are rational reasons not to report. When suspicious behavior and activities are reported to the Office for Security and Counterintelligence, the matter will be investigated quietly and discreetly. Innocent people will not be harmed by your report – only the guilty ones will.

Department of Defense personnel with information of a possible counterintelligence nature should contact the DIA Counterintelligence Division in person or call the DIA Counterintelligence Hotline at:

**(703) 907-1307**



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