



The Traitors

Deception, seduction, betrayal. The tricks of the spy trade are condoned in the service of friends, condemned when in aid to an enemy. The latter we call treason. And throughout history, we have punished it with death.

KINGS OF COLD WAR TREACHERY

Robert Hanssen and Aldrich Ames

Robert Hanssen and “Rick” Ames were arguably the worst traitors in the history of the Cold War. You name it, they gave it away. The names of nearly a dozen Soviet double agents? Sold by Ames, the CIA analyst. The existence of a multimillion-dollar eavesdropping tunnel under the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C.; the secret spot where America’s leaders would hide in a crisis; U.S. estimates of Soviet missile strength? FBI agent (and onetime cop) Hanssen told the Soviets all that and more. Ames earned top dollar for his scoops: \$2.7 million and a

promise of an additional \$1.9 million, the biggest reward for any spy, says David Wise, author of *Nightmover*, a book about Ames. But Hanssen wasn’t exactly underpaid. He raked in \$600,000 from the Russians, with a promise of \$800,000 more.

But you can’t put a dollar value on the damage they did. “Ames gave away the CIA’s network inside the Soviet Union,” says Wise. “The CIA went blind for a while because all their agents were rolled up.” Ten of the “rolled up” agents were re-



Robert Hanssen

called to Moscow and executed. Hanssen, however, compromised CIA and FBI intelligence operations to a far greater degree by betraying strategic information, including codes and ciphers. “The material was much more broad-ranging in its importance,” says Wise, who has also written a book on Hanssen called *Spy*. A highly classified,

600-page Justice Department report will assess the damage, as will a formal review by CIA Director George Tenet.

Both agents volunteered to spy for the KGB within six months of each other in 1985. (Hanssen spied for a rival Soviet



EYE ON A SPY. An FBI video shows Ames in Colombia, on his way to meet a Soviet contact.



agency years earlier but switched to the KGB after a hiatus because he thought it paid better.) And that's not the only commonality. Three unlucky Soviet double agents were compromised just months apart, first by Ames, then by Hanssen. Two were executed. Yet the KGB handler for both Hanssen and Ames so expertly compartmentalized the spies that "they never knew of each other," says Timothy Berezney, deputy assistant director in the FBI's Counterintelligence Division.

Mr. CIA. Nor did the KGB know everything about Hanssen, who never revealed his real name or employer. Berezney told *U.S. News* that Hanssen threw off the KGB (and the FBI) by selling information that seemed to come from the CIA and by sharing false personal details. According to Berezney, in one of 38 post-arrest debriefings, Hanssen said he even used the code name Ramon Garcia because it ended in "C-I-A." Hanssen spied for the Russians for 22 of his 25 years in the FBI's counterintelligence division before Michael Rochford, now chief of the FBI's counterespionage section, made a crucial contact with a former KGB agent and purchased the mole's identity for millions of dollars. The agent handed over Hanssen's original KGB dossier: 15 years of correspondence, the titles of compromised documents, a taped conversation between a KGB officer and the unknown mole. The package also included a black plastic trash bag Hanssen used to wrap secrets for his dead drops, with two of his fingerprints on it.

Hanssen played mind games with colleagues and family. On the surface, he was an ultraconservative Roman Catholic. Most of the spy money went for living expenses: dental work and parochial school tuition for his six children, college tuition for four, a \$70,000 home remodeling. But he had a secret seamy side. He spent \$80,000 on a stripper he befriended. Strangely, he wanted to preach to her instead of having sex. Not that he was a prude. He anonymously posted nude pictures of his wife, Bonnie, on pornographic Internet sites, along with his sexual fantasies. He let his best friend watch him have sex with Bonnie and even offered to drug her so his childless buddy could impregnate her. "Every spy has his quirks," says the FBI's Rochford. "This guy just had an abundance."

Ames flaunted his illicit gains. An alcoholic with an expensive wife and a salary of roughly \$70,000, he drove a \$40,000 Jaguar to work, paid cash for a half-million-dollar house in Arlington, Va., wore expensive Italian suits, and racked up monthly credit card bills of \$30,000. The 31-year CIA veteran spied

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: STEVE HELBER—AP; BILL PERRY—CORBIS BETTMANN; VINCE MANNINO—CORBIS BETTMANN



EXPOSED. John Walker (far left) is led out of a Maryland detention center; brother Arthur (above left) is escorted to a hearing; son Michael (below) arrives at court.



undetected for nine years, but in the end his lavish lifestyle placed him in the CIA's cross hairs. A CIA mole-catcher found substantive proof Ames was the traitor by correlating his lunch appointments with a Soviet official (whom he was ostensibly recruiting) and sudden spikes in his bank balance.

Ames was caught in 1994, Hanssen in 2001. Both pleaded guilty and are serving life sentences. But that's not the end of the story. Rochford believes the Russians might still try to pay money owed to the spies' families. "They like the idea," he says, "of getting word out they take care of the families of agents who have been compromised." —*Chitra Ragavan*

SECRETS, CHEAP

John Anthony Walker

On Dec. 18, 1967, a fresh-faced Navy communications officer slipped through the wrought-iron gates of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C., and asked to see security. Escorted into a small side room, the 30-year-old didn't mince words. "I want to sell you top secrets," he told Yanis Lukashovich, an official he assumed to be KGB. The budding spy promptly handed over settings for the KL-47 cipher machine, which handled the sensitive per-

sonal messages of the Navy brass. He said he could provide the KGB with full data on four other principal military communications systems, essentially the keys to the American cryptographic kingdom. Asked his motivation, the officer replied: "Purely financial."

John Anthony Walker Jr. left that day with a stack of \$50 bills, 20 in all, the first installment in a 17-year traitorship that would ultimately yield him more than \$1 million. For the Soviets, Walker proved quite a bargain. He gave them the locations of American nuclear submarines and the procedures the United States would follow to launch nuclear missiles at the Soviet Union should there be a war. The Soviets were also alerted to the locations of secret underwater microphones used by the United States to track Soviet nuclear submarines. What's more, KGB agents learned each and every American troop and air movement to Vietnam from 1971 to 1973, and they passed on to their allies the times and planned sites for U.S. airstrikes against North Vietnam. "It was the greatest case in KGB history," Vitaly Yurchenko, a KGB officer who defected for a brief time in 1985, told American intelligence officers. "We deciphered millions of your messages. If there had been a war, we would have won it."

Walker was able to elude the authorities for so long because the Soviets took extraordinary precautions to conceal their source. At most 12 Russians knew of his existence, says Oleg Kalugin, the former KGB chief of counterintelligence now living in the United States. That did not include two spies the Americans had working in the Soviet Embassy in Washington. Another measure of his value: The first Soviet handler of the case, Yuri Linkov, later joked that he and his wife didn't have children because he was too busy chasing down Walker's leads. KGB head and later Soviet General Secretary Yuri Andropov called Walker "Agent No. 1."

As the years passed, however, "Agent No. 1" began to take stupid chances and let greed overwhelm him. Walker refused to pay his former wife, Barbara Crowley, \$10,000 to keep her quiet, so she called the FBI in 1984 and drunkenly ranted about her husband's espionage. An alert pair of field agents took an interest in the case, and it was soon established that Walker had employed his best friend and his brother in the scheme. He had also placed his son in the Navy to continue the ring. At 3:30 a.m. on May 20, 1985, the FBI arrested Walker, who was staying in a Ramada Inn near Washington. The FBI team forced Walker to take off his hairpiece and brought him to FBI counterintelligence agent David Major. Walker claimed he was working for the French, doing industrial espionage. Major, already apprised of the FBI's considerable evidence against Walker, says he had one overriding thought: "I'm looking at the Rosenberg of my generation." —*Jeff Glasser*

TRIAL WITHOUT END

The Rosenbergs

As teenagers, Julius Rosenberg and Ethel Greenglass personified 1930s New York City. She was a gifted student and aspiring singer; he was a budding electrical engineer. Both were children of Jewish immigrants. But shortly after their promising paths crossed, they began a journey that would end prematurely in international notoriety.

In the 1940s, appalled by Hitler's atrocities in Europe, the Rosenbergs joined thousands of other Americans in becoming active members of the Communist Party. By now married, they led otherwise ordinary Lower East Side



GUILTY. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg face reporters during their 1951 trial on charges they sold secrets to the Soviets.

lives. Julius, after a stint in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, opened a machine shop; Ethel kept house and cared for their two young sons.

But it was the cusp of McCarthyism, and nothing was as it seemed. A war in Korea was likely, the Soviets had built an atomic bomb, and details of the Manhattan Project had been leaked. J. Edgar Hoover's FBI was determined to uncover an American spy ring. The feds were eventually led to Ethel's brother, David Greenglass, who had worked on the Manhattan Project before joining the family machine shop. Greenglass, in turn, fingered Julius and Ethel, who adamantly proclaimed their innocence.

Devastating. Greenglass's dramatic story unfolded in March 1951 in what even then was being called "The Trial of the Century." He said Julius persuaded him to share details of his work at Los Alamos National Laboratory with an informant, who then delivered the information to Julius. Ethel typed up the messages,

her brother said, and Julius passed them to the Soviets. The prosecution was devastating, and it had no match in the defense—which was presented by a sole practitioner who was clearly overwhelmed by the case. (In a move that dumbfounded the court, he asked the press to leave while Greenglass detailed the information he had shared with Julius, giving the impression his story was incontrovertibly true.) In less than a month, the jury delivered a verdict of guilty. And in a move that stunned even Hoover, Judge Irving Kaufman sentenced the couple to death.

The Rosenbergs never wavered from their denials. And much of the country was in an uproar over the trial's unanswered questions. The Communist Party fueled countless more protests abroad. Still, the verdict stood. On June 19, 1953, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed, one after the other, in the electric chair at Sing Sing.

The debate has hardly ended with the Rosenbergs' deaths. As recently as 1993, the American Bar Association staged a mock Rosenberg trial, using evidence withheld from the defense at the time. The jury found the pair not guilty. "I think they clearly did not get a fair trial," says Harry Reasoner, a partner at Vinson & Elkins who provided defense. "They were not permitted adequate defense to show the insignificance of the material they were accused of giving to the Russians."

In 1995, however, many of the most ardent Rosenberg supporters were forced to change their minds. The United States declassified key KGB correspondence that clearly connects Julius to a Russian spy ring. Ethel's role remains controversial; David Greenglass, who served 10 years in prison for his role in the affair, recently said he lied about his sister's activity under pressure from prosecutors.

The effort to clear the Rosenbergs will most likely never die. There is more evidence yet to be uncovered. The private papers of Judge Kaufman may be unsealed by the Library of Congress in 2026. And Aaron Katz, the 87-year-old director of the National Committee to Reopen the Rosenberg Case, recently requested a congressional hearing on the case. After 50 years, he says, "It's not going to be easy." —*Megan Barnett*

Q&A

What is the most daring feat a spy ever accomplished?

The Navy intelligence service was working with the CIA off the Soviet coast. The Soviets were firing new test weapons; we wanted to know how far they could go. We were also interested in plugging into the cables that the Soviets had at the bottom of the ocean. They did it, and they did it brilliantly.

JUDGE WILLIAM WEBSTER, former director of both the CIA and the FBI