

Treason's a vile offence

The jolts of electricity that killed Julius and Ethel Rosenberg also sent a shock through an entire generation of Americans. For the ensuing 20 years, very few Americans were caught spying for the Soviet Union.

Today, the Rosenbergs have been transformed by Hollywood's left-wing film barons into innocent victims of Sen. Joe McCarthy's anti-communist witch-hunt. No matter that all evidence conclusively proves that they passed American nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union, the Rosenbergs are presently enshrined as martyrs of the left. But note how few emulators these "martyrs" had in the decades after their well-deserved execution.

We are now seeing a new generation of traitors, men who sold America's most vital secrets to the Soviets for cash rather than ideology. Just this past week the One Man's Family of espionage, John and Michael Walker, plea bargained themselves to reduced sentences even though they had given Moscow information that gravely compromises U.S. security. The U.S. will now have to spend nearly a billion dollars to repair — just in part — the damage caused by the Walkers and their accomplice Jerry Whitworth.

Over the past decade, American traitors have sold some of America's most important military secrets to the Soviet Union. These include detailed data on U.S. strategic reconnaissance satellites that monitor Soviet nuclear weapons deployment; the means to decoy, spoof or jam such critical systems; and methods to improve Soviet reconnaissance capabilities.

Much of America's advanced radar, materials and electronics technology has been sold by traitors to the Soviet Union. As a result, the USSR is presently fielding an entire new generation of fighters, bombers, missiles and electronic systems that are, in large part, carbon copies of stolen U.S. and European technology.

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What makes this massive campaign of theft so grave is that superior technology is the only counter the West has to the East bloc's massive numerical military superiority. Thanks to American and European traitors, the USSR has managed to jump an entire generation and save some \$50 billion in weapons development. The technology stolen by western traitors now is pointed directly at our heads.

But looking at the smiling faces of John Walker and other spies, one realizes that treason has become something of a banality, a sort of white-collar crime like embezzlement or stock fraud. Even a 20-year prison term can mean as little as eight years with time off for good behavior — and there is always the hope of a spy swap.

Such light sentences encourage others to take the risk of betraying their country for \$100,000 or so. Silicon Valley is filled with desperate men who cannot pay their mortgages or their cocaine bills or their alimony.

We cannot, in our free society, impose the same all-pervasive controls that make communist nations into huge prisons. The only solution is the threat of punishment. There is nothing about the nature of a democracy that requires punishment for acts of lawbreaking to be lenient.

In the past, treason was justly regarded as the most heinous of crimes and one meriting the maximum severity. Today, we often tend to forget that traitors are not merely unfortunate individuals or idealists but rather potential murderers on a grand scale.

Should war occur, the information given by traitors to our foes would likely mean the death or wounding of thousands of our soldiers, sailors and airmen. Recall that in World War II the key battles of Moscow, Kursk, and Midway were all won thanks to espionage.

Traitors also cause the death of western agents behind the Iron Curtain; in Moscow, there is no plea bargaining. And they mean the implanting of the future seeds of treachery in our soil as moles and "sleepers" agents are recruited and positioned to undermine our republics.

To combat the renewed spreading of treachery, western democracies must implement mandatory death penalties for spying. We must remember what our fathers and their fathers well understood. Treason is, in a sense, attempted murder against all the citizens of a state, the most morally despicable and dangerous of all crimes.

Treachery must never be countenanced, never excused, never "understood." Those who dare contemplate this most vile offence must be made aware that swift, terrible and merciless punishment awaits.



"Remember Rennie Garcia? Guess who's dictator of Bolivia?"