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Artikel

Promisgate: World's longest spy scandal still glossed over /Part III

A Spy in the White House?

 **David Dastych** - In September 2005, the FBI arrested one of its own intelligence analysts for computer-based espionage. The arrest of Leandro Aragoncillo, an FBI intelligence analyst, has rekindled concerns about computer security at the F.B.I. that were first raised in the wake of the February 2001 arrest of FBI Agent Robert Hanssen for computer-based spying for the Soviet Union and the Russians.

An October 7, 2005 article in the New York Times, for example, entitled "New Spy Case Revives Concerns Over Security at F.B.I." reported that the arrest of Aragoncillo was probably the result of happenstance, rather than the result of the pro-active auditing by the FBI, which the FBI was supposed to have begun because of the Hanssen case, into the actual uses of its case management system.

The FBI complaint against Aragoncillo stated that he emailed to associates in the Phillipines more than 100 sensitive intelligence documents that he had downloaded from the FBI's computer-based ACS case management system. There have, moreover, been U.S. press reports, including a report by ABC, that Aragoncillo spied for the Phillipines by downloading classified information from the computer systems of other agencies. Prior to joining the FBI, Aragoncillo was a U.S. Marine assigned to the Office of the Vice President, and reportedly used computers in that office to download classified documents from computer systems at the Pentagon and at the CIA.

The case of Aragoncillo can be compared to the earlier case of Robert Hanssen. The FBI complaint filed against Hanssen in February 2001 stated that Hanssen had made "extensive use" of the FBI's computer-based case management system to steal U.S. intelligence secrets for the Russians, and that he had also given the Russians a copy of a technical manual on the COINS II (Community On-Line Information System, 2d version), a software system used by various U.S. intelligence agencies to track the intelligence information they produce. A report by the washingtonpost.com in 2001 stated that Hanssen had also stolen U.S. intelligence secrets from the computer systems of other agencies such as the CIA, NSA, the Pentagon, and the White House.

In both cases, the spies planted in the FBI had evidently been able to gather information by using the PROMIS-derivative software system underpinning all of these U.S. intelligence community database systems.

Reporting on the recent Phillipino spy case, John Diamond of USA Today wrote:

"After the Hanssen case, the FBI began a \$170 million upgrade of its computer network. Severe technical problems

led that upgrade to be scrapped, and only now is the FBI seeking bids for a new system, called Sentinel."

The FBI has serious problems.

Teaching a Lesson to China

U.S. Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales accompanied President Bush on his November 2005 trip to China, primarily to talk turkey to the Chinese authorities about their need to better enforce the copyrights protecting U.S. intellectual property. A recent study estimated that 90% of all software sold in China has been stolen from its copyright owners. On November 10, 2005, just days before the President's visit to China, Gonzales unveiled proposed legislation called the Intellectual Property Protection Act of 2005. The proposed legislation seeks to promote full restitution to companies victimized by copyright infringement.

The new legislative proposal and lobbying of the Chinese Government expose the Bush Administration and its Justice Department to charges of hypocrisy. The United States is attempting to convince China to do a better job of enforcing software copyright rights, and, where necessary, to see to it that "victim companies" receive full restitution. But the U.S. Government has set a poor example by refusing for two decades to make any restitution to Inslaw.

Moreover, the Justice Department, which is the U.S. Government's main agency for enforcing copyright rights, has instead obstructed attempts to get to the bottom of the Inslaw affair, according to the fully-litigated findings of two federal courts and the investigative findings of two congressional committees.

"Inslaw deserves to be compensated. More importantly, the American people deserve to know the truth: Did government greed and bureaucratic hubris lead to a wholesale sellout of our national security? The Bush White House's credibility is on the line," wrote nationally syndicated columnist, Michelle Malkin, in The Washington Times. There is no better way to state it.

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