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## Trends. Banning Espionage

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SECRECY NEWS from the Federation of American Scientists Project on Government Secrecy reports that "the United States and its allies...have committed not to engage in espionage against one another." The NEWS position is that banning espionage or at least limiting intelligence collection methods would be a benign development in the relations among nation-states. It cites as problematic factors in banning espionage only the complexities of forging multilateral agreements and mutual concessions and the resistance of those with vested interests-- financially, professionally, and sentimentally.

However, the main problematic issue is that of human psychology. Most germane are common psychological constructs of self-deception and the deception of others, evolutionary constraints of trust and loyalty, instrumentality of contingency making, and situational situatedness of personality and group and organizational behavior. Added to these is an historical record rich in psychological betrayal of self and other.

Considering these psychological aspects, one might well conclude that advocating and working towards a ban on espionage would actually be espionage enhancing. In fact, the idea of banning espionage as a step towards a better, less deceptive world could well reap and sow the seeds of its own contradiction and negation. (See *An espionage treaty?* (April 17, 2001). SECRECY NEWS <http://www.fas.org/irp/news/1996/960207>; Cramer, R. E., Manning-Ryan, B., Johnson, L. M., & Barbo, E. (2000). Sex differences in subjective distress to violations of trust: Extending an evolutionary perspective. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 22, 101-109; Elangovan, A. R., & Shapiro, D. L. (1998). Betrayal of trust in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 23, 547-566; Kahn, P. H., & Turiel, E. (1988). Children's conceptions of trust in the context of social expectations. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 34, 403-419; Mikulincer, M. (1998). Attachment working models and the sense of trust: An exploration of interaction goals and affect regulation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 1209-1224.) (Keywords: Ban, Espionage, SECRECY NEWS.)