

8-17-2001

Trends. Personnel Security and Counterintelligence: No Evidence of Racial Bias as Racism

Editor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp>

 Part of the [American Politics Commons](#), [Law and Race Commons](#), [National Security Law Commons](#), [Other Political Science Commons](#), [Other Psychology Commons](#), and the [Personality and Social Contexts Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Editor (2001) "Trends. Personnel Security and Counterintelligence: No Evidence of Racial Bias as Racism," *International Bulletin of Political Psychology*: Vol. 11 : Iss. 7 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp/vol11/iss7/4>

This Trends is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Bulletin of Political Psychology by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact commons@erau.edu.

International Bulletin of Political Psychology

Title: Trends. Personnel Security and Counterintelligence: No Evidence of Racial Bias as Racism

Author: Editor

Volume: 11

Issue: 7

Date: 2001-08-17

Keywords: US Department of Justice, Personnel Security, Security, Counterintelligence, Racial Bias, Racism

The United States (US) Department of Justice recently has released portions of an internal inquiry report on the investigation of an individual who had been suspected of engaging in espionage for the People's Republic of China and against the US. The inquiry report has found that the investigation--carried out by the US Department of Energy (DOE) and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)--was "inadequate?wayward?flawed?inaccurate [and] abysmal." But what about the very public allegations that the inquiry also was racist--based on the Taiwanese-American ethnicity of the suspect, the seeming conflation of Taiwanese with Chinese, and the apparently premature closure on the suspect as the only suspect?

The author of the inquiry report has found "'no evidence of racial bias.'" This finding seems to be based on discovering no substantiated statements by DOE and FBI personnel that Taiwanese-Americans are more likely to commit espionage than other US citizens and that the suspect in question must "have done it" because of that suspect's ethnic identity. If this is indeed the basis of the finding, the author of the inquiry report might well seem quite disingenuous, if not naive.

Unfortunately, in an era wherein US Government bureaucrats have been sensitized to possible allegations of racism, sexism, and the like, the harboring of racist attitudes and other racist cognitive-emotional-motivational complexes often is distorted to pass through or otherwise evade the bureaucrat's own censorship, the censorship of other bureaucrats, and the censorship of the mass media and other US citizens. Sometimes, the distortion is developed and maintained concurrently with the awareness that one may, indeed, be racist. At other times, one can be truly unaware of one's own racism. As well, the "culture wars" and "political wars" aspects of racism allegations form a context that distortion finds most nurturant. And in addition, there are cases wherein the individuals harboring and acting in a racist fashion employ little or no distortion as to defend a self-ideal of not being racist but only to be successful in achieving racist goals or other goals through achieving racist goals.

When the entire inquiry report is released, one might find information not supporting the above analysis. It may well turn out that not only racism, but also a host of infrequently mentioned phenomena may be salient to the quality of the DOE and FBI investigation. These phenomena would include motives to hurt the careers of one's in-house bureaucratic competitors, to seek to look "in charge" and competent, to protect and act on one's worldviews and ideologies, to defend the *raison d'etre* of one's organization--viz., spy-hunting organizations must find spies--and to act out psychodynamic conflicts. In fact, one might even consider jettisoning many aspects of counterintelligence and personnel security systems altogether. (See Allen, T. D., Freeman, D. M.,

International Bulletin of Political Psychology

Russell, J. E. A., Reizenstein, R. C., & Rentz, J. O. (2001). Survivor reactions to organizational downsizing: Does time ease the pain? *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, 74, 145-164; De Meuse, K. P., Bergmann, T. J., & Lester, S. W. (2001). An investigation of the relational component of the psychological contract across time, generation and employment status. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 13, 102-118; Johnston, D. (August 14, 2001). Justice Dept. cites problems in 2 inquiries at Los Alamos. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Larsson, G., Tedfeldt, E.-L., & Andersson, B. (1999). Conditions affecting experiences of the quality of psychological debriefings: Preliminary findings from a grounded theory study. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health*, 1, 91-97; Morris, J. H., & Moberg, D. J. (1994). Work organizations as contexts for trust and betrayal. In T. Sarbin, & R.M. Carney (Eds.). *Citizen espionage: Studies in trust and betrayal*. (pp. 163-187). Praeger Publishers/Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.)