

Aldrich Ames

Quotes

*Names, Agency, People, Kgb, Unions, Betrayal, Giving, Effort, Ideas, Might,
Tasks, Mean, Strength, Pertinent, Attitude, Criminals, Country, Party, Men,
Roles*

Espionage, for the most part, involves finding a person who knows something or has something that you can induce them secretly to give to you. That almost always involves a betrayal of trust.

~Aldrich Ames

The betrayal of trust carries a heavy taboo.

~Aldrich Ames

The use of the polygraph has done little more than create confusion, ambiguity and mistakes.

~Aldrich Ames

The U.S. is, so far as I know, the only nation which places such extensive reliance on the polygraph. It has gotten us into a lot of trouble.

~Aldrich Ames

The FBI, to its credit in a self-serving sort of way, rejects the routine use of the polygraph on its own people.

~Aldrich Ames

I saw a limit to what I was giving as kind of a scam I was running on the KGB, by giving them people that I knew were their double agents fed to us.

~Aldrich Ames

Perhaps my information hurt the Soviet Union more than it helped. I have no idea. It was not something I ever discussed with the KGB officers that I was dealing with.

~Aldrich Ames

The only thing I ever withheld from the KGB were the names of two agents whom I personally had known and handled and had a particular feeling for.

~Aldrich Ames

The human spy, in terms of the American espionage effort, had never been terribly pertinent.

~Aldrich Ames

An espionage organization is a collector: it collects raw information. That gets processed by a machinery that is supposed to resolve its reliability, and to present a finished product.

~Aldrich Ames

The difficulties of conducting espionage against the Soviet Union in the Soviet Union were such that historically the Agency had backed away from the task.

~Aldrich Ames

I found that our Soviet espionage efforts had virtually never, or had very seldom, produced any worthwhile political or economic intelligence on the Soviet Union.

~Aldrich Ames

I came into the Agency with a set of ideas and attitudes that were quite typical of people coming into the Agency at that time. You could call it liberal anti-communism.

~Aldrich Ames

By the late '70s I had come to question the point of a great deal of what we were doing, in terms of the CIA's overall charter.

~Aldrich Ames

I handed over names and compromised so many CIA agents in the Soviet Union.

~Aldrich Ames

I knew quite well, when I gave the names of our agents in the Soviet Union, that I was exposing them to the full machinery of counterespionage and the law, and then prosecution and capital punishment.

~Aldrich Ames

To the extent that I considered the personal burden of harming the people who had trusted me, plus the Agency, or the United States, I wasn't processing that.

~Aldrich Ames

Historians don't really like to carry on speculative debates, but you could certainly argue that the likelihood of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe was extremely, extremely low.

~Aldrich Ames

You might as well ask why a middle-aged man with no criminal record might put a paper bag over his head and rob a bank. I acted out of personal desperation.

~Aldrich Ames

The national security state has many unfair and cruel weapons in its arsenal, but that of junk science is one which can be fought and perhaps defeated.

~Aldrich Ames

Foreign Ministry guys don't become agents. Party officials, the Foreign Ministry nerds, tend not to volunteer to Western intelligence agencies.

~Aldrich Ames

I'm a traitor, but I don't consider myself a traitor.

~Aldrich Ames

I said in court a long time ago that I didn't see that the Soviet Union was

significantly helped by the information I gave them, nor that the United States was significantly harmed.

~Aldrich Ames

No one's interested really in knowing what policies or diplomatic initiatives or arms negotiations might have been compromised by me.

~Aldrich Ames

My little scam in April '85 went like this: Give me \$50,000; here's some names of some people we've recruited.

~Aldrich Ames

The Soviet Union did not achieve victory over the West, so was my information inadequate to help them to victory, or did it play no particular role in their failure to achieve victory?

~Aldrich Ames

I could have stopped it after they paid me the \$50,000. I wouldn't even have had to go on to do more than I already had: just the double agents' names that I gave.

~Aldrich Ames

Deciding whether to trust or credit a person is always an uncertain task.

~Aldrich Ames

When Reagan was elected, I felt that the Agency had gone much more into the service of a political tendency in the country with which I had already felt very strong disagreement.

~Aldrich Ames

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