

## JUSTICE NEWS

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## **Former Government Contractor Pleads Guilty to Federal Charge of Willful Retention of National Defense Information**

### **Law Enforcement Recovered Classified Material, Stolen Over Two Decades, From the Defendant's Home and Car**

Harold Thomas Martin, III, age 54, of Glen Burnie, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to the federal charge of willful retention of national defense information.

The guilty plea was announced by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John C. Demers, U.S. Attorney Robert K. Hur for the District of Maryland, Assistant Director John Brown of the FBI's Counterintelligence Division and Acting Special Agent in Charge Jennifer L. Moore of the FBI's Baltimore Field Office.

"The American people entrusted Harold Martin with some of the nation's most sensitive classified secrets," said Assistant Attorney General Demers. "In turn, Martin owed them a duty to safeguard this information. He has admitted to violating their trust and putting our nation's security at risk. With today's plea, we are one step closer to holding Mr. Martin accountable for his dangerous and unlawful actions."

"Harold Martin was entrusted with highly classified national defense information. Today, Martin admitted that he betrayed that trust and for more than 20 years he stole and retained a vast quantity of highly classified government information," stated U.S. Attorney Robert K. Hur. "We will prosecute government employees and contractors who flagrantly violate their duty to protect classified materials."

"Federal government employees and contractors with security clearances pledge to protect classified information, an essential part of guarding our national security," said Assistant Director Brown. "Harold Martin repeatedly violated that pledge by taking large quantities of classified information over many years. This case demonstrates the FBI does not take such violations lightly and will vigorously investigate these cases."

"Security clearance holders bear a profound public trust - to safeguard classified information in secure settings with strict adherence to law and policy," said Acting Special Agent in Charge Moore. "When this trust is broken, as with Mr. Martin, the FBI will be tireless and comprehensive in its investigation to hold wrong doers accountable. The take away from this case is for security clearance holders to abide by laws and security policy for handling classified information, to keep it safe for the good of the country."

According to his plea agreement, from December 1993 through Aug. 27, 2016, Martin was employed by at least seven different private companies and assigned as a contractor to work at a number of government agencies. Martin was required to receive and maintain a security clearance in order to work at each of the government agencies to which he was assigned. Martin held security clearances that allowed him to have access to Top Secret and Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI) at various times. A Top Secret classification means that unauthorized disclosure reasonably could be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security of the United States. An SCI designation compartmentalizes extremely sensitive information. Because of his work responsibilities and security clearance, Martin was able to access government computer systems, programs, and information in secure locations,

including classified national defense information. Over his many years of holding a security clearance, Martin received training regarding classified information and his duty to protect classified materials from unauthorized disclosure.

Martin admitted that beginning in the late 1990s and continuing through Aug. 31, 2016, he stole and retained U.S. government property, from secure locations and computer systems, including documents that bore markings indicating that they were the property of the United States and contained highly classified information of the United States, including TOP SECRET/SCI information.

As detailed in his plea agreement, Martin retained a vast quantity of stolen documents and other information, in both hard copy and digital form, bearing standard classification markings and relating to the national defense, at his residence and in his vehicle. Martin knew that the hard copy and digital documents stolen from his workplace contained classified information that related to the national defense and that he was never authorized to retain these documents at his residence or in his vehicle. Martin admitted that he also knew that the unauthorized removal of these materials risked their disclosure, which would be damaging to the national security of the United States and highly useful to its enemies.

Martin and the government have agreed that if the Court accepts the plea agreement, Martin will be sentenced to nine years in prison for willful retention of national defense information. U.S. District Judge Richard D. Bennett has scheduled sentencing for July 17, 2019.

Assistant Attorney General Demers and U.S. Attorney Hur and commended the FBI for its work in the investigation and thanked the National Security Agency for its assistance. Mr. Demers and Mr. Hur thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Zachary A. Myers and Harvey E. Eisenberg, and Trial Attorney David Aaron of the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section, who are prosecuting the case.

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