

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 7-BWASHINGTON TIMES
26 November 1985

My dinner partner: A future accused spy

Washington Times columnist Steve Mastly is acquainted with Jonathan Jay Pollard, who is accused of espionage. What follows is a personal account.

By S.J. Mastly
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

It was simply Jay Pollard then. Not the televised Jonathan Jay Pollard, age 31, haggard and handcuffed in the back of a squad car. Not the accused spy, just another guy at another Washington dinner party. Today, Mr. Pollard is under arrest for espionage, his wife for possessing classified documents.

It began in late September 1984. His future wife, Anne Henderson, worked with my brother Tom at the National Rifle Association, and Tom cooked dinner for the four of us. Anne was a plump redhead, vivacious and guileless, given to wearing unflattering jumpsuits — the girl next door. Her boyfriend was different — not ominous, just different.

Paunchy but of slight build, balding, bespectacled and sporting a small mustache, Jay Pollard looked like an accountant except for the nervous edge, the slightly taut undercurrent of a futures broker or a Wall Street speculator — someone who had had two cups

of coffee too many. But conjecture was pointless, of course, because Mr. Pollard talked. Talked a lot.

I never met many spooks, certainly none who told you so before the first gin-and-tonic, but Jay was different. He worked for Navy Intelligence. He monitored terrorist organizations. He worked 18-hour days and the Free World hung in the balance. He knew everything two weeks before it happened — the Beirut bombing, the PLO, Red Brigade and Weather Underground, Beirut, Libya, Scranton and Peoria. At least he said as much.

It was no surprise, only the Washington Power Trip — primarily an affliction of young movers and shakers who have a lot to prove — but Jay played it louder than most. But talk soon turned to "classified information" beyond the realm of Yuppie upmanship.

Navy Intelligence had facts, he said quietly — photographs, depositions and documents — proving that American POW/MIA's were alive in Southeast Asia. Earlier in 1984, a French expedition flew into Vietnam out of China to rescue some U.S. POWs from a camp. They landed in Vietnam, but the camp was unoccupied. The POWs had been moved two days before, he said.

It galled him, he said, that our government would neither bring the boys home nor acknowledge their presence for fear of scandal. It was sick, he said, to think that American boys would spend another Christmas in Viet Cong prisons while Uncle Sam did nothing. He was determined to do something about it. He was going to run his own "operation."

He said he'd found a corrupt Laotian official willing to sell a live American POW in return for \$3 million and safe passage out of Laos through Thailand. He and Anne, he explained, were working with former Rep. John LeBoutellier, the New York Republican, running Skyhook II, a POW/MIA support group.

They needed a minimum of \$50,000 to launch a direct mail campaign to raise the ransom under the guise of lobbying for servicemen missing in action. He asked if The Washington Times was interested in helping and in covering the rescue? If legitimate, it was a tempting proposition.

I spoke to Jonathan Slevin, then serving in middle management. He spoke with Mr. Pollard, but "after I listened to him the idea went no further at The Times," said Mr. Slevin, who no longer is with The Times. "He got no money, not

anything at all that I am aware of."

From then on, my brother explains, Jay ceased returning his phone calls. Tom figured he had nothing else to offer. A few months later, at a cocktail party, Jay said he was "still looking for funding."

Mr. LeBoutellier sheds further light: "I met him [Mr. Pollard] in early September 1984, after I spoke at the Heritage Foundation's Third Generation lecture series.

He showed me his Navy credentials and began spinning me a line of BS. I was impressed for a minute, but it didn't take long to realize this guy was a classic BS artist.

"He might have called me a few times after that, but he was a pest," Mr. LeBoutellier said. "I'm amazed that the U.S. government would let a guy like that have access to classified documents."

I saw them seldom after that. Jay Pollard and Anne Henderson-Pollard were married this summer in a civil ceremony in Italy, their holiday including a brief trip to Israel, an alleged beneficiary of Mr. Pollard's espionage. Five months later, the couple is under indictment.

Did the Navy documents, the Laotian official, and the American POW ever exist? Maybe, but the Pollards went elsewhere in their search for money.