

B-2 Stealth Engineer Sold Secrets To China

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Mark Neisse, Associated Press Writers

HONOLULU (AP) — A former B-2 bomber engineer who marketed and sold his stealth expertise to China is facing life in a federal prison following his conviction for bartering U.S. military secrets.

Noshir Gowadia, 66, was found guilty Monday on charges that he designed a cruise missile component for China and pocketed at least \$110,000, which he allegedly used to help pay a \$15,000-a-month mortgage on a multimillion-dollar oceanview home he built on Maui's north shore.

Prosecutors said Gowadia revealed classified information to foreign powers at least twice: during a PowerPoint presentation on his cruise missile technology, and when he showed the technology's effectiveness by comparing it to American air-to-air missiles.

"This case was unique in that we litigated know-how, the very concept of exporting your knowledge base that you derive, in whole or in part, from your activities working in United States classified programs," Assistant U.S. Attorney Ken Sorenson said. "If you can take that and go sell it or market yourself on an international stage in secrecy to other governments and not suffer criminal sanctions for it, then we're in trouble."

Gowadia's defense attorneys argued during the nearly four-month trial that while it's true he gave China the design for the cruise missile part, he based his work on unclassified, publicly available information. Gowadia plans to appeal.

"Mr. Gowadia is obviously disappointed with the verdict. He felt that he hadn't committed a crime," said his attorney, Birney Bervar.

Gowadia, who has been in federal custody since October 2005, was convicted on 14 of 17 counts, including conspiracy, violating the arms export control act, tax evasion and money laundering. He was acquitted on charges of knowingly communicating national defense information. He will be sentenced in November.

The decision came after more than six days of deliberations at a federal court in Honolulu.

"Mr. Gowadia provided some of our country's most sensitive weapons-related designs to the Chinese government for money. Today, he is being held accountable for his actions," said Assistant Attorney General David Kris. "This prosecution should serve as a warning to others who would compromise our nation's military secrets for profit."

Gowadia helped design the propulsion system for the B-2 bomber when he worked

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at Northrop Corp., now known as Northrop Grumman Corp., between 1968 and 1986.

Prosecutors argued Gowadia helped China design a cruise missile exhaust nozzle that would give off less heat, allowing the cruise missile to evade infrared radar detection and U.S. heat-seeking missiles.

They said Gowadia traveled to China between 2003 and 2005 while designing the cruise missile and used e-mail to arrange payment for his work.

Prosecutors also charged Gowadia with attempting to sell classified stealth technology to the Swiss government and businesses in Israel and Germany.

Born in India, Gowadia moved to the U.S. for postgraduate work in the 1960s and became a U.S. citizen about a decade later. He retired from Northrop for health reasons in 1986, two years before the B-2 made its public debut. He moved to Maui in 1999.

The case is one of a series of major prosecutions targeting alleged Chinese spying on the U.S.

In March, Chinese-born engineer Dongfan "Greg" Chung was sentenced to more than 15 years in prison after he was convicted of six counts of economic espionage and other federal charges.

Investigators learned about Chung while probing Chi Mak, a defense contractor engineer convicted in 2007 of conspiracy to export U.S. defense technology to China. Mak was sentenced to 24 years in prison in 2008.

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