



Tag, You're It

"When you enter into an unethical agreement with another party, you may be expected to do it again and again. One little secret turns into larger secrets that eventually become impossible to hide."

- Special Agent with the U.S. Department of State

As a special agent with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS), you have the responsibility and privilege to protect foreign dignitaries when they come to the United States to visit with the President, with the Secretary of State, or to attend conferences at the United Nations (UN) in New York City.

You've just completed a grueling two-week protective detail for the Iraqi Prime Minister. He had come for a special meeting of the UN Security Council stemming from a series of events regarding Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Because of your background and discipline as a former U.S. Army officer, DS selected you to serve as the shift leader for this detail. In this capacity, you supervised 20 other agents from shift-scheduling to tactical planning. Now that the detail is finished, the protectee's personal assistant has informed you that the Prime Minister would like to give each agent a \$500 Tag Heuer watch as an expression of his appreciation for the hard work. The State Department's policy does not allow employees to receive any gift over \$250 in value. To complicate this, other DS agents have already heard about this gift from the Prime Minister's staff, and they are looking forward to receiving the watch.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER...

1. What should you do and why?
2. Why do such policies regarding gifts exist?
3. How could this practice impact international politics and relations with Saudi Arabia?
4. What are the second- and third-order effects of accepting the watch?