

**Interview of Dr. Joel Brenner
National Counterintelligence Executive**

With Bob Orr – CBS Evening News

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Transcript – As Aired**

Travel Tips from the National Counterintelligence Executive – *Traveling Overseas with Mobile Phones, Laptops, PDAs, and Other Electronic Devices:*

<http://www.ncix.gov/publications/reports/traveltips.pdf>

Mr. RUSS MITCHELL (CBS News): China has spared no expense in providing physical security for the games, with more than 100,000 officers deployed. But cyber security is a different story. On that front, Americans are being told to watch out. Here's Bob Orr.

Mr. BOB ORR (CBS News): US intelligence officials have issued a strong warning, that Americans traveling overseas, particularly visitors to the Olympics in China, face a serious risk of having sensitive information stolen. The travel alert is blunt: "All information you send electronically--by fax machine, personal digital assistant, computer or telephone--can be intercepted."

Dr. JOEL BRENNER (National Counterintelligence Executive): Somebody with a wireless device in China should expect it to be compromised while he's there.

Mr. ORR: In an exclusive interview with CBS News, Joel Brenner, the government's top cyber security official, urged Americans to leave all devices at home. And those who must take phones and BlackBerrys with them should remove the batteries.

Dr. BRENNER: The public security services in China can turn your telephone on and activate its microphone when you think it's off.

Mr. ORR: If the phone's in my pocket and it's off, you're saying an outside force, an outside agent can turn it on.

Dr. BRENNER: Yeah.

Mr. ORR: And listen to what I'm doing?

Dr. BRENNER: That is what I'm saying.

Mr. ORR: And my BlackBerry.

Dr. BRENNER: Same thing.

Mr. ORR: China is one of a number of countries pushing active cyber espionage programs, primarily aimed at cracking US national security computers and stealing corporate trade secrets. Billions have already been lost. In addition, cyber gangs and criminals, many based in Asia, have stolen bank accounts and credit card numbers from an untold number of Americans. For protection, Brenner's office says travelers should frequently change passwords, update anti-virus and spyware programs and avoid wireless or wi-fi networks whenever possible; in some countries, they're controlled by state security forces. The fear is compromised mobile devices give thieves open access to all of your computer files back home.

Dr. BRENNER: We are giving advice based on a pattern that is relentless and ongoing of what we see as information theft.

Mr. ORR: And the government says no overseas traveler should discount the threat. Don't assume, the bulletin warns, that you're not important enough to be targeted. Bob Orr, CBS News, Washington.