

Insistent Infections

Karpovich certainly did not wait long to throw his first punch. On April 26th, he contacted the Washington news office of Bloomberg and says in reference to their previously reported projections for Audre "...all the numbers are grossly exaggerated, it is going to be a fraction of that." Bloomberg went on to report "The DOD official said as it now stands, Audre will get just a small portion of a \$45 million, three-to-five-year contract. He said he could not be more specific because the agency doesn't yet know precisely how many Audre systems it will buy." It was quite a change of tune since the statements he gave Bloomberg on January 11th: "The number of Audre systems ordered by the Pentagon will depend upon the amount needed to complete the automating project, said John Karpovich, Special Assistant to the Director for Technology at the Navy's Publishing and Printing Service. He said Audre should receive about \$15 million in orders in 1993."

With an eye out that January to obtain some stock options, he could not have been more articulate: "Karpovich said Audre's software was chosen because, "no one else has the level of Audre's technology, in terms of its use of neural technology." In a computer, neural technology means that a computer "learns" certain patterns, creating a form of artificial intelligence. Now, he was referred to as "a Department of Defense official" and "the Official, a Systems Director at the DOD's Printing Service who's closely involved with the contract." "Hit us where it hurts" and "payback time" must have been his mottos, especially now that he was not going to be enjoying those healthy stock options he tried to extort from me.

Nelsen was horrified that I had antagonized John and Ann. He was entirely depending upon them to widely publicize the availability of Evergreen's mils specs and I was quickly becoming a liability to his soon to be realized life of leisure. Now that Adams was gone, not that he was a favorite of John's, it was Barry's suggestion that I desperately needed a buffer to stand between us and it was his recommendation that I hire Karpovich's former driver from CACI, Greg Mc Clay. Greg had served John as his primary driver, mover, shaker (if he fell unconscious) and placer, bringing him home each evening after some very long hours at "work". As a former Navy man and CACI employee, Greg was fairly technically astute and looking for an opportunity. Mc Clay assured me he would work hard to moderate my conflict with John, and he knew well that we were all hanging onto the same tar-ball of hopes and wishes.

To complement Mc Clay's chances for success, I concurrently hired an extremely competent technician to work with Greg, and we were soon ready and able to prepare for the upcoming test. Back at company headquarters, Audre was very active on both the R & D front and in continuing to transfer our software to what seemed to be an endless array of proprietary operating systems. Our latest effort was to move onto the Sun UNIX platforms. Given that we were already on the Apollo UNIX computer, that would appear on its surface to be easy, but in a pattern that contributed to the demise of a lot of companies, Apollo used AT&T UNIX while Sun used Berkley UNIX and they were each defiantly incompatible.

I was spending most of my time attending an innumerable amount of fundraisers and special events. Despite the inclusion of our language in the House Appropriation, the Senate was horse trading program budgets and you had to stay on your toes. All the bad stuff happens at midnight on the last day of the budget reconciliation conference and if you are not careful you could be left out. Easy for them to say "no worries, we will get you in next year", but for us this had to happen to retain our credibility on the street. Especially with Karpovich now working overtime to undermine us and get revenge against me for bringing on the heat.

In another strong step forward, on November 9, 1993, the "Conference Report on H.R. 3116, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1994" finally passed and was sent on to the President for his signature. I was proud to read that it still contained the wording I typed in to prevent anyone from the DOD messing with it. With Karpovich and Barnes on the warpath, the exacting legal directive would become essential to preserving our place at the table. The language mirrored the general explanation Karpovich originally gave to Bloomberg as to why we were selected and I vowed I would make him eat every sentence if I had to, to insure our rightful participation.

We continued to expand our employee base to approximately 100 personnel and relocated our headquarters into a much bigger facility in anticipation of training large numbers of Defense personnel to conduct the tests. The building had been lavishly appointed with all the interior accouterments imaginable. We had 52 private offices, a couple of cubicle areas, a nice lunchroom, a large demonstration - training hall with a two-story ceiling and most importantly for initial impressions, a beautiful reception area with a brass trimmed curved staircase leading to the second floor.

There were built in desks and cabinets everywhere, with the sides of the secretary stations in the hallways sheathed in multi-hued green or tan suede, depending upon the floor. In a very nice touch, there was a foot of glass on all the office walls where they touched the ceiling to allow natural light to pass from the outside to the most interior of spaces. Most of the walls were curved, which is highly unusual but very pleasing to the eye and planters with overhead lights were incorporated throughout. My second-floor executive quarters were housed in a separate suite of offices accessible through etched double glass doors. I had a private conference room, a bathroom with a shower, my own entrance to the main conference room and a private stairway to enter and exit the building. My built-in platform desk was so large and modern it looked like the command console of the Starship Enterprise and was dubbed as such. Usually, meetings in my office were held seated on the sofas that ringed a large coffee table on the side of the room by the windows, so that no one would fear getting zapped by my phaser.

Although the government's fiscal year starts October 1st, the general procedure is that the Pentagon's Controller never sees the money until February. By then you are already five months into the year and almost a year from when the funding was originally approved. You would think that there would be some preparation taken, given the vast advance notice, but that was generally not the case, especially with Karpovich and Barnes. They literally had to be forced into conducting the test that they had once so enthusiastically asked me to go to Congress to get the funding for. But of course, now they were determined to make us fail and they knew that would not be an easy scheme to succeed with.

Wilkes and I continued to maintain our relations on the Hill, with my spending another week in Washington in early 1994. There wasn't anything on our schedule to do at night, so he mentioned we should try and hook up with his buddy Dusty. Ever since we had started working together, he had made mention of his best friend Dusty and how they had known each other since High School. College roommates, they remained the closest of friends as Brent went on to become a CPA, and Dusty a San Diego and then Los Angeles Police Officer. Eventually Dusty joined the CIA and they re-teamed to shuttle their collegiate colleague Bill Lowery and other members of his Defense Appropriation Committee to Dusty's postings in Honduras and El Salvador.

Brent had continually asked me to join Dusty and him at these poker games they had been hosting for as long as they were buddies. Brent always went on and on about how much fun they were and how Congressmen and CIA agents would attend. He would relay detailed descriptions of how the room would be filled with the smoke of Cuban cigars and the tables would be covered with a top drawer spread of food and alcohol. It was a great place to make new friends and literally influence people, especially by getting to better know the congressmen that attended. I never cared much for poker or hanging around in that kind of environment, so I always politely turned him down. Despite my many refusals, he was persistent, continually expressing a keen interest in having me host some of the gatherings as a means of establishing myself as a shaker and mover.

The perfect resolution to my resistance, he proclaimed, would be to meet Dusty and realize what a great guy he is. After hearing so much about Dusty, I agreed that since we had nothing else going, it was fine with me that we all get together and have an evening on the town. Brent immediately set it up and I finally got to meet the famous Kyle Dustin Foggo. We arranged a rendezvous at one of Georgetown's restaurants, not far from the towpath canal and locks that picturesquely flow above the Potomac. It was a relatively casual affair, with Brent catching Dusty up on our congressional activities and conflicts with Karpovich, and Dusty telling me a little about his career in law enforcement and how that had prepared him to be proficient at playing the covert agent game.

Without revealing details, he described a couple of cat and mouse excursions with Soviet and then Cuban agents in a couple of foreign postings. Dusty said everybody basically knew who was spying for whom, and the game was to ditch the other guy's surveillance when carrying out an operation, or hanging in while they in turn tried to throw him off the trail. It was pretty interesting stuff, and he was obviously proud to be telling the stories. Soon the conversation went back to our work on the Hill and the various personalities of the congressmen we were working with. He was familiar with a lot of them and once again I got to hear about the Generalissimo's ranch in Honduras, and what a "good" time it was to bring the congressman down to have at all those little jungle girls. Of course, their continuously toking on those delectable Cuban and Honduran cigars deserved honorable mention.

Dusty then moved on to describe his close relationship with Charlie Wilson, the long serving and very personable Texas congressman who was affectionately known in government circles as “Good time Charlie”. Charlie was famous for getting very involved with the CIA during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, using his seniority as the second ranking member of the Defense Appropriations Committee to single handedly funnel tens of millions of dollars to the CIA’s covert operations and most notably, outfit the mujahedeen fighters with shoulder launched Stinger Missiles. Charlie was ultimately acknowledged as the man who “won the war”, and was provided with the unprecedented honor of being recognized by the CIA for the role he played, all of which is currently being glamorized in a film entitled “Charlie Wilson’s war”.

Charlie was such a famous womanizer, he almost lost his seat in congress years earlier when stories surfaced about his partying in Vegas with a couple of showgirls and a lot of cocaine. Dusty’s story was eventually highlighted by his retelling of the many occasions he set Charlie up with prostitutes at his various postings. Most famous of all, and previously often referenced with awe and envy by Brent, was the time in Vienna when Dusty could not decide on what type of girl to get for Charlie, so he famously elected to get him one of each – a blonde, a brunette and a redhead. Apparently, Charlie was not seen for quite a while and eventually emerged eternally appreciative of Dusty’s initiative.

I cannot remember much else about dinner, because the rest of the evening was so strikingly memorable. Suffice it to say that we were soon on our way to one of Georgetown’s finest “adult entertainment” clubs. When we arrived, there was somewhat of a line up a staircase to get into the club. With authority, Dusty made his way to the front with Brent and me following closely behind. At the door, I was surprised to see Dusty wave over the doorman to then turn open the front of his suit jacket, revealing the CIA badge which was pinned to his inside lapel pocket and more than a little overtly giving him a good glimpse of his shoulder holster and handgun. So much for Dusty conducting himself like a secret agent.

The good news is that we were let right in and taken to seats lined along the front of the stage. There were a couple of booths on either side of the stage that appeared occupied by wealthy Arabic gentlemen. All in all, it was a popular establishment, and the dancers were exceptionally good looking. Every once in a while, when an especially beautiful stripper was performing,

the Arabic guys would forgo slipping what appeared to hundred-dollar bills into their G-strings, and would literally stand over the dancer and shower them with c-notes. Needless to say, that garnered them a lot of attention in their booth from the dancers after they left the stage.

As the girls twirled around on the poles or grinded in front of us, the conversation took a decidedly carnal turn. Dusty was all excited about a woman he had met while attending for the CIA a continuing education program at Harvard. Foggo had apparently been having an affair with her and he proudly announced to Wilkes that he thought that she was ready for a threesome. Wilkes liked the idea but had some questions about making the approach. I remember Dusty laughing as he suggested that Wilkes sneak up on her when they were already making love, and just join in. Wilkes thought that was pretty funny and a good idea, but Dusty interjected that they had to get the ground rules established first.

He then went on an on, in nauseating detail, to make the point that the offer was open only so long as he was the one to get to fuck her in the ass. It soon became apparent that he was obsessed with anal sex. Not only obsessed, but so fixated on it that the entire remainder of the evening was spent discussing it. Now I do not begrudge anything between consenting adults, but I am not an ardent admirer of anal sex. It may be because I had spent too much time in the medical business, possibly all the infection control work I did for Nobel. Maybe I have too much respect for my dick. Whatever. But I am willing to accept that others are entitled to their opinion and will laugh or listen, up to a point. It does become a problem, however, when the point has been made and now the conversation is just plain boring and ultimately becomes revolting.

When I say obsessed, I am not kidding. Every time a stripper walked by us or shook her bootie in front of us, he had to inform us that more than anything else, he would love to fuck her in her ass. I do not doubt that everyone in the audience was thinking about fucking one, some, or all of the dancers, but I didn't notice many who had to proclaim it at every opportunity. So much for talking about politics, foreign policy, or anything else for the remainder of that evening. The guy was so into it he obviously had missed his calling as a woman's proctologist. Eventually we moved on to another "adult" venue near Georgetown, at a place where the strip clubs sit side by side. Although the club changed, and not for the better, the conversation remained the same and I was glad for the evening to finally conclude. Brent

and Dusty reached agreement to play by the rules when double teaming Foggo's classmate, and I placated them by stating I would reconsider attending or possibly even sponsoring their poker game. Fat chance of that. After seeing Brent off with some kind of mutual affirmation about what a great guy Dusty was and the inevitable "...see, I told you so" reply, I determined never to occupy the same space at the same time as Foggo.

What a creep. More precisely he reminded me of a vice cop. The kind of cop that is so seethed in vice that he becomes as demented as those that he is charged to apprehend. After hearing all those stories about his carrying on in Honduras and Vienna, he left me with the impression that he was nothing more than a vice cop that had moved up town and turned into a pimp. The sad distinction was that he specialized in having congressmen as his clients. Foggo was definitely not the intellectual kind of agency employee, and I was shocked to find out twelve years later that he had vaulted through the ranks to become the Executive Director of the CIA. He was probably placed in charge of looking for weapons of mass destruction up someone's ass.

Having now made contact with Foggo, the next phase of Brent's plan to integrate me into the poker pool was to spend time with Mr. Charlie Wilson himself. Naval war games were being held off the coast of San Diego and it was the perfect opportunity for all of us to spend some time together. It was to be a familiar setting for the former Annapolis graduate and naval officer. Having served in the United States Navy for four years between 1956 and 1960, then Lieutenant Wilson had spent most of his time on a Destroyer chasing Soviet submarines. It sounded like an appropriate posting for someone who had graduated eighth from the bottom of his Naval Academy class.

Congressman Wilson graciously made arrangements for what I remember to be a group of roughly ten to be flown out on the morning of March 27th from North Island to the USS Kitty Hawk, returning late the following day. It was a fantastic opportunity, and I was looking forward to it.