

Duking it Out

Speaking of big fools, Cunningham continued to fit the bill, only it was not derived from a misplaced sense of loyalty. The Duke's stupidity sprung from pure arrogance and avarice. The LA Times reported "In May 2000, a month after his firm received the \$5 million, Wilkes wrote two checks to Cunningham for a total of \$100,000. These payments were used in the bribery case."

The Inspector General's report was finally published on May 2, 2000. Typically a paragon of understatement, it questioned the "lopsided funding, and said it caused some military officers to "lose confidence in the fairness of the selection process." It wasn't just military officers that had lost confidence. Cunningham and Wilkes' corruption was cutting out the core of the entire effort to convert weapon systems designs to computer. Their grabbing of the cash not only meant that all the money was wasted; it also inflicted incalculable harm by allowing virtually nothing productive to get accomplished. The Inspector General's report noted "The impact of not funding the four ADCS projects on procurement lead time and project completion was significant. The Army Aviation and Missile Command, UH-60 Stable Base Conversion Project sponsor stated that the time required to copy Mylar (drawings in ink on polyester film) drawings for a procurement varies from 4 days to 180 days, depending on where the drawings are stored...When drawings are stored digitally, the time needed to provide the requested data is reduced from days to minutes, virtually eliminating the lead time to provide technical drawings for a procurement. Because the UH-60 project was not funded, 3,000 Mylar drawings were not converted to digital drawings."

"In addition to the lost opportunity to reduce UH-60 lead time, the following benefits were also lost: time saved by no longer redrawing an entire Mylar drawing each time a minor modification is made, elimination of Mylar reproduction costs, the ability to provide electronic backup of digital drawings, and elimination of the filing cabinets and storage facilities required to store Mylar drawings." "The two Air Force project sponsors stated that project schedules were set back significantly. The cancellation of FY ADCS funding for the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center Stable Based Media Conversion project", (one of Audre's customers) "resulted in the loss of more efficient spare part reprocurments and weapons system maintenance support through lower processing costs, reduced process flow time, and error reduction." "Cancellation of the funding for the Pacific Air Forces Base

Facility/Infrastructure Drawing project affected the utility of the Geospatial Information System and the base planning and command and control capabilities. The Geospatial Information system directly supports the Pacific Air Forces base planning and command and control capabilities and requires a digital representation of base facilities and infrastructure drawings to function properly.”

For our part, as the big ADCS Program checks continued to get sent Wilkes' way, the SPAWAR contract we ended up signing the prior month put us in line for a whopping \$78,000 of DARPA funding. That was about 15% of Wilkes' latest takedown, and half of one percent of the money he had gotten since the F-22 program was extorted. To make matters worse, there was no other work to be seen on the horizon, despite the military's continued advocacy for our product. Cash was getting to be a scarce commodity at eXtr@ct as the payments emanating from the reorganization had cleaned out our coffers, and Bowie's continuing refusal to consider most of our objections to paying the conspirators was lining up to cost us considerably more. All the orders to all the bases we had worked so hard to earn had not only gone unfilled, they were now just a figment of our imagined belief that anyone in the ADCS Program Office would do anything they promised or proposed. I could no longer stomach even speaking with Kratz, as it was both a waste of time and an exercise in frustration as his word was good for only as long as it took Wilkes, Cunningham, or now Intergraph, to come calling. Yes indeed, Intergraph, with the able assistance of Senator Shelby, had restored their position back at the ADCS Program Office table as Kratz's program administrator, replacing CACI.

In what appeared to be a compromise with Cunningham, after Wilkes got first cut at the cash, all the remaining change would be cordoned off for Intergraph to manage. Having given up on continuing to promote their mediocre conversion system, they reverted back to familiar territory, overseeing the manual digitizing of service bureau projects. It was a trip back to the future. For a cut of the action, generally 17%, Intergraph would manage conversion contracts handed out to a set of companies qualified by them to be part of their service “stable”. Ironically, and in an affront they seemed to no longer care about, to my knowledge, none of the companies used any Intergraph products, relying instead on AutoCAD to re-draw all of the technical documents. Intergraph's amazing decline as a company was a sight to behold over the seventeen years I had known them by that time. Starting as an offshoot of some work performed by a group of IBM people,

they had risen to the pinnacle of workstation based Computer Aided Design and Manufacturing. Intergraph's expansion into developing their own line of Clipper-chip-based computers started them down the wrong path, and now that personal computers had taken hold, their once heralded software suites were mostly yesterday's news. Like Digital Equipment Corporation, one of Intergraph's original hardware suppliers, their attachment to their own workstations was so great that by the time they realized that PCs would prevail, it was already too late.

They did, however, maintain good relations with a number of agencies, most notably through their NAVSEA and NACAIR contracts with the Navy, and Intergraph's policy of hiring retired military officers continued to keep them in the game. Talk about quid pro quo, they wrote the book. In that vein, the current head of Intergraph's Federal Group was none other than retired Admiral Andy Wilkerson. Formally the Director of the Defense Mapping Agency, the Admiral was running the federal sector's ship and doing a fine job. I always found the Admiral to be an upstanding person, but a very difficult competitor. Wilkes had handed him more than a few whippings, but ever since Duncan told me to take my problem with Duke up with the Duke, I had little stroke, and was scraping along succeeding at grabbing only SPAWAR's smallest snippets. I never trusted Intergraph for good reasons and even while dealing on those few occasions when the Admiral and I crossed paths, I had to be very careful to accurately articulate whatever we were agreeing to. If anything was open to interpretation, believe me when I say it would not go our way.

With all of the service work going on, I started to pound the tom-toms of our Indian friends in an effort to drum up some new action. I had asked our Native American partners in February to have tribes in support of our program write Congressman Hunter and request his assistance in supporting our program. Starting with a letter from the Executive Director of the Southern California Tribal Chairman's Association, Denis Turner, Ernie and Lorenzo delivered more than 14 letters to Wendell and Cato at Duncan's office. I also took the liberty to send the same package of letters on July 12, 2000 to Congressman Randy "Duke" Cunningham, four days after I paid a whopping \$55 to "socialize" with him in a Poway home. Jeff Baxter of Eagles/Doobie Brothers fame was the guest of honor, and it was too much to resist.

Unfortunately, Jeff did not bring his guitar, instead giving a lecture on using the Navy's Aegis System for missile defense. It was a good idea, one that earned him an unlikely position within the Department of Defense, and he was certainly knowledgeable. Cunningham was even friendly to me, probably because he had things well in hand for Wilkes, and the Audre threat was no longer. We got to talk a little about the Native American program I was setting up with the help of Cato with the Army Corps of Engineers. Even though I could not stomach dealing with Kratz anymore, he and Cato were getting along. The Corps project was so puny that even the Duke appeared not to be disturbed, besides he was interested in re-ingratiating himself with the Casino boys, and it appeared I had some cash rich friends.

Of course, Cunningham never did a thing for us, but I thought at the time his not strafing the program office to shoot us down was some kind of second-hand success. He was certainly right about the tribes though. The Southern Californian Tribal Chairman's Association controlled the second largest concentration of casinos in the world, and they were enjoying the power and prestige that was finally coming their way. I liked the Native American guys a lot. They were often crude and coarse, but always completely down to earth. Their riches came late in life for most of them, so they had long since formed their personalities, and to their credit they would not stray far from their roots. They also loved to drink and get crazy, causing me to usually schedule our meetings before 2:00 PM to avoid things from getting out of hand. I had eventually earned their trust, something that was not easy to do, nor often granted to a white man. My openness and lack of any hesitation to deal fairly with them regarding the finances proved to be the clincher. Besides, they considered eXtr@ct's and their interests both to be come from behind underdogs, and it gave us a common cause. I also let them use my conference room anytime they wanted, but it was probably my comfort when dealing with political situations that gave them the most confidence. We had gotten together with Duncan over Christmas and that went well, although towards the end I had to physically position myself to block Duncan from seeing how much booze they were relentlessly downing.

I had also used the occasion of Duke's Christmas pancake breakfast in 2000 to briefly show up and attempt to break the Bell Gardens icicles. Ken Shamrock and his kids came with me, so it gave Cunningham and his staff a kick to have the "World's Most Dangerous Man" meet our District's fighter pilot Ace and the well of Congress' fist-fighter. Duke always hosted the Marine Corps toys for tots gift program at his breakfast and the Leathernecks

loved Shamrock, one of their own. It was a start, and Ken was a good sport about it, signing autograph after autograph. Shamrock was also very popular with the Native Americans, especially at Ernie's reservation. Ken had by this time left the WWF and resumed fighting back where he started, in Japan. His first match in May had resulted in his triumphantly knocking out Alexander Otsuka in the first round! Although he threw in the towel after suffering exhaustion at a match in August, Ken was now full-on back into it and looking to set up fights for some of the members of his Lion's Den team at the Soboba Casino with the King of the Cage organization.

I remember Ernie calling me one Saturday night screaming into the phone that my friend Shamrock had virtually killed another fighter at one of their events. I initially told Ernie he had to be confused since Ken did not fight for King of the Cage, but he quickly corrected me to say that it was outside of the men's room and there was blood everywhere. Well, it turned out Ken had an issue with comments another UFC fighter, Mark Hall, had made to his wife Tina regarding a conflict that had arisen when she promoted World Pancrase on the day of the Superbowl, so Ken gets into an argument with Hall backstage at the Soboba event and literally beats him to pulp. Ernie thought it was hysterical, regretting only that Ken didn't settle the grudge in his ring where he could have quadrupled attendance. Things calmed down after that, although Hall sued Ken and the misery from that momentary mashing lingered on for another five years.

I formally introduced Shamrock and Salgado at the next Soboba event on September 16th. Ernie liked a good fight as much as the next guy and appreciated Ken's fame, but he was not a hardcore fan. He loved, however, that his children all got to meet the champ and get Ken's autograph. Ken had a lot of respect for Native Americans, having grown up in Susanville California near the Diamond Mountain Reservation. He had fought and made friends with more than his share of Indians, and like me, he was comfortable in their company. The KOTC promoters were always appreciative when Ken showed up. His presence lended a lot of credibility to their events, and they insured that his seats were in the front row, in full view of the audience and their cameras. Ken showed me which ringside seat was mine and then ran backstage to help his fighters warm up. Much to the pleasure of my surprise, my seat was one vacancy removed from an extremely shapely and attractive woman. I was beginning to wonder if this was my lucky day until I noticed a large shadow forming between us. Catching myself as I was mustering up to say something hopefully

provocative and probably stupid, I paused long enough to look up at the source of this sudden shade. I froze with words in my mouth as a mountain of a man sits down between us and starts conversing with the lady.

We still laugh about it to this day, as it turned out that the man was none other than Dan Freeman, Ken's best friend. Dan also happened to be a former Junior Mr. America, although at 280 pounds of massive muscle there is nothing diminutive about him. Oh yeah, the lady in question? It was Dan's wife Michelle, herself a professional fitness and nutritional expert. It would have been humiliating to have her slap me for saying the wrong thing; it definitely might have been my end of days if Dan ever slugged me. As it was, Ken returned in a minute with his new girlfriend Alicia and made all the introductions. Dan and I have remained friends ever since, meeting every year like migratory birds at most of the Ultimate Fighting matches. The Lion's Den had brought Jerry Bohlander and Joe Hurley to fight at the event and both walked away winners. It would be one of many successful nights for the Lion's Den on the Soboba reservation. Ken, Ernie, and I soon became a regular team at many political events as we started to press the flesh on behalf of our Army Corps project. Like usual when dealing with Kratz, the project was moving along slowly and had its share of twists and turns before finally getting issued a year late and many dollars short.