October 10th, 2001
11:00 AM
Interview of Dr. Richard Rosen
Special Agent CIA
[redacted], Secretary, USDTO / "Goon"
[redacted], Under Secretary, USDTO / "Lookalike"
Special Agent William McCarthy, CIA
Kasey Kirkpatrick, Attorney

Goon: All right, uh, let the record reflect that the time is - it's 11 o'clock. This starts our second interview of Dr. Rosen.

Rosen: Where's Wendy?

Goon: We've decided it would be easier to discuss individually and...

Rosen: Uh-huh.

McCarthy: Goon, did you get that report from the [redacted] investigation?

Goon: Yup, I have it here somewhere... here.

McCarthy: That's all. We should state our names for the record, Dr. Rosen, you know the drill.

Rosen: Doctor Richard Rosen.

McCarthy: You'll have to state your affiliation too.

Rosen: Faculty of [redacted]. Invented [redacted].

McCarthy: Special Agent William McCarthy, CIA.

Goon: Secretary Goon of the USDTO.

Lookalike: Lookalike, Under Secretary USDTO.

Rosen: Are we good?

Goon: We still need hers - ma'am, would you?

Kirkpatrick: Oh, sorry. I'm uh Kasey Kirkpatrick, the attorney representing Mr. Rosen here. K & C law firm.

Goon: Thank you. Uh, hand me that there… - thank you.

Lookalike: Here, this too.

Goon: Good. Richard, would you like a drink, or uh, something to eat? We have a vending machine down the hall.

Rosen: I'll take a soda pop. Any kind.

Goon: Bill?

McCarthy: Sure.

[McCarthy exits]

Goon: While he's doing that, let's talk about your work. What prompted you to begin research in your branch of math?

Rosen: I always liked it, you know. Chaos theory is something, right? It felt natural.

Goon: "Natural"?

Rosen: Sure, yeah. I love the stuff, it makes sense to me.

Goon: And this led you to work on chaos theory, and eventually h[redacted]y?

Rosen: Yeah. I got my degree in chaos theory and went on to study at uh, [redacted].

Goon: I see. And when did your work on [redacted] begin?

Rosen: Oh, huh. It was probably, like, early 90's. If I were to wager, I suppose.

Goon: And how did that work go?

Rosen: It took a bit. Slow starting but it picked up, eventually. Like, it didn't need a ton of extrapolation, I guess. Like Einstein's relativity, it's not hard to understand - the metaphors at least - but it still shook our world, to this day.

Lookalike: You compare yourself to Einstein?

Rosen: No! No, hardly. I'm not… I'm no genius, no. It's just, uh, his work was revolutionary, but he didn't invent physics or anything. I didn't invent much, either. I just connected the dots, where they were.

Goon: Your work is impressive, though.

Rosen: Thanks.

Goon: Tell us about how you got the idea for your APA. Apparatus.

Rosen: It wasn't mine. Wendy came up with it, it was her work really, and I just gave the math. She was the one who got the idea to put it on an algorithmic system.

Goon: Put what on an algorithmic system?

Rosen: My theory, [redacted]y. It was her idea to use a supercomputer for the heavy lifting. Without that, my theory wasn't all that applicable.

Goon: How did you secure funding for this?.

Rosen: We scraped together what we could, I guess. Some of it was out-of-pocket, like, a lot, actually. The university thought it was a fool's errand. Chaos was thought to be impervious to any prediction. So hardly anything was donated.

Goon: You've got our funding, now, so you won't have to worry about that anymore.

Rosen: I still worry. Just not about money.

Goon: You - your plan was to build the first prototype in 1999, correct?

Rosen: Uh, we began our work in December '98, but it didn't really take off until spring. Then it was off to the races, yeah.

Goon: Off to the races?

Rosen: Like we told you yesterday -

Kirkpatrick: Hang on, may I speak with my client for a second?

Lookalike: Sure.

[1 minute 30 seconds elapse, Rosen and Kirkpatrick inaudible, McCarthy returns]

Goon: Jesus, Bill, what took you so long?

McCarthy: Sorry, it was jamming up on me. Here, Rich.

Rosen: Don't call me that.

McCarthy: Sorry.

Kirkpatrick: Please continue.

Goon: All right. Richard -

Rosen: Dr. Rosen, thank you.

Goon: Dr. Rosen, you and Wendy went on to make quite a few successive iterations in, uh, record time. Yeah?

Rosen: Yeah. It was good stuff.

Goon: Ok, let's go through their capabilities. Bill, give me - yeah, the test logs. Dr. Rosen, the first iteration in '99, tell us about the, uh, "randomized digit" test.

Rosen: We made a system, and, uh, generated a random number on an isolated system that the Apparatus predicted...

Goon: Before or after the number was generated?

Rosen: The number was generated about an hour after the Apparatus ran its prediction.

Lookalike: How do we know - how can we know the number was truly random?

Rosen: It's never truly random. That's the whole point. Most computers use things like, uh, CPU temperature, or something else arbitrary to derive randomness. It's the butterfly effect, you get one small variation that leads to a larger randomness. That's what the Apparatus is trying to work against.

Lookalike: Is - does that mean anything is truly, ah, random?

Rosen: I liked to think some randomness was still possible - during the first couple iterations. But as you know, it predicts even the craziest thing now. The third one predicted what one of our graduate assistants would have for lunch, the next day.

Lookalike: It knew what would happen the next day? Is randomness - is it truly possible that, ah, we can escape this machine's predictions?

Rosen: I don't think so. Ever since the last iterations, it's basically, uh, like I mentioned yesterday - fate.

Goon: Let's remember that fate is, uh, just a metaphor.

Rosen: Sure. It's not possible to, like, know if fate exists. Truly, I mean.

Goon: Iteration four, it says here that your test predicted three student's grades on a midterm exam. Was it accurate?

Rosen: Oh, no. That one resulted in an error. It got the letter grades correct, for the most part, but the actual points were off by a large margin. We didn't know exactly what, like, caused it. We figured it might be due to poor input variables, or something. That's when we started looking into making an automated input device.

Goon: Automated Input Device? It says here you installed this on the fifth iteration. Tell me more.

Rosen: Well, up until that point, we had been only putting in what we thought was, you know, necessary variables for it to predict the outcomes. But our system began needing more and more input variables, more detail, if you will. For more complex predictions.

Goon: So you made the, uh, A-I-D?

Rosen: Yep, that's the acronym. Yeah - yeah, we used the fourth iteration to help predict the best design for the AID, and then implemented it into the fifth iteration of the Apparatus.

Goon: How does the AID function, exactly?

Rosen: It has a whole suite of measurement tools for baseline physical measurements, and some ways of reading relevant information from the Internet and digitized encyclopedias for more information.

Goon: It's not just encyclopedias and websites, is it? Your AID uses more than just that.

Rosen: Uh, yeah, it has a digitized book collection, too. It's pretty comprehensive. Lots of works, not just books.

Goon: And how many works was this? What kind?

Rosen: Mostly academic stuff, verifiable facts and statistics.

Goon: How many works, again?

Rosen: Oh, uh -

Kirkpatrick: We don't know.

Rosen: Yeah, we don't know.

Goon: Well, Dr. Rosen, there does seem to be an issue in this - this issue of copyright infringement. Did you secure the rights to use these manuscripts in their digital format?

Kirkpatrick: Don't answer that, Richard.

Rosen: I - uh, you heard her.

Goon: Well, you don't have to worry, regardless of your participation in this infringement - the DTO is happy to let you continue using these, uh, let's see the exact figure... 545,892 works. Regardless of how the hell you managed to digitize that many works -

Rosen: It was mostly available-

Kirkpatrick: Richard.

Rosen: Right.

Goon: As I was saying, regardless of, uh, how these were collected, there's a lot of copyright issues here. And Dr. Rosen, we both know that you were at least complicit in this - this massive operation. So... we need your cooperation here. We can give you some protection if you just help us out here. You get me?

Rosen: Uh-huh.

Goon: So, you give us your expertise, and we let you keep using these works. Otherwise, uh, let's assume for the sake of argument that, uh, 90% of those works were copyrighted. That means... well, that means a lot of counts of copyright infringement and even media piracy, I suppose.

Kirkpatrick: If I may, sir, these accusations do not align with the definition of copyright infringement. Even in the hypothetical case that my client digitized these materials, he did not republish these materials for profit. The act which you insinuate amounts to... it amounts to just reading. What's the difference between reading a book and applying its knowledge, and letting a machine read that book and doing the same?

Lookalike: Ms. Kirkpatrick, while your definitions of copyright may be, uh, partial to Mr. Rosen, our lawyers have already built up a substantial case against him and his team. The mere act of scanning - cataloguing - an entire library of documents is bad, but his publication of these documents on an uh, publicly-accessible web server is most certainly illegal.

Kirkpatrick: Is that - did you publish those documents, Richard? Hold - hold on, let's speak.

Rosen: Sure, uh, yeah.

[Kirkpatrick and Rosen inaudible]

Rosen: Yeah, I never intended it to be publicly accessible, and I deny any allegations otherwise.

Lookalike: Sure. Anyways, uh, Goon, continue.

Goon: Your employment under the DTO will allow us to look the other way as long as your database of documents is used for the cause of national defense. Look - this isn't some moral question, you're doing your country a favor, right?

Rosen: Then why are you strong-arming me?

Goon: Because we need to know you'll be loyal to, uh, the project. Under its new management.

Rosen: "New management"?

Goon: The DTO.

Rosen: Oh, right.

Goon: It'll be good for you, Richard. I - we both know what you're capable of, and with the funding of the United States behind you, you could do anything. You'll be our top scientist, chief mathematician, whatever you want to call it.

Rosen: Yeah, ok.

Lookalike: Let's see, uh, let's talk about what's happened since yesterday. I want to know, are you aware of, uh, the employment records from your project at [redacted]? The ones that were lost. I think we discussed them.

Rosen: I recall some records, yes.

Lookalike: Well, it's been discovered that a fragment was found in a ditch, uh, near your house - burnt. Do you know how it got there?

Kirkpatrick: Don't answer that.

Goon: Do you know, Richard?

Rosen: If we're working together, you'd best call me Dr. Rosen.

Lookalike: Richard, it's all right, we know you were protecting -

Rosen: It's Dr. Rosen.

Lookalike: Sure then. But Dr. Rosen, those documents are vital to finding -

Kirkpatrick: Do you have tangible proof that it was my client?

Lookalike: We have circumstantial -

Kirkpatrick: Is he under arrest? Or is he being hired?

Lookalike: We just needed to sort out what's happening.

Kirkpatrick: Because this sounds like a job interview and an interrogation. Make up your mind, sirs.

Lookalike: Perhaps you're right. Let bygones be bygones, Dr. Rosen?

Rosen: I guess.

Lookalike: Then, Goon, uh, you had more to ask?

Goon: Dr. Rosen, I really wish there wasn't any animosity. This is a good job, you know? We have lots of funding and in some sense you're really going to help. Really.

Rosen: I know, I just don't like it.

Goon: We will accommodate you, Dr. Rosen. You can rest assured. We just need you on our side, because who knows what geniuses the, you know, Chinese and Russians got. They might not use this predictive stuff for good purposes.

Rosen: So you need me to help you win this race?

Goon: Yeah. That's what we need you for, yeah. They could fuck us over, hard, if we let them take it. They say the cold war's over, but it's just a stalemate. Shit's gonna hit the fan soon, and we need people like you, Dr. Rosen.

Rosen: Well, I, uh, I'll consider it.

Goon: It's your best choice in this situation. Should we discuss the specifics of you employment?

Rosen: Sure, right now?

Goon: Yes, right now. Bill, hand me the employment file. Yeah, that one. Thanks. Here, doctor.

Rosen: What's this?

Goon: Information on your employment with the USDTO. Your position, responsibilities, [redacted]

[Redacted]