

TRANSCRIPT: INCOMM Security Breach 1995 PART 1

Aaron: Yes, so uh, I was asked to give information regarding the uh, INCOMM Mission of 1995 to the, uhm, PAC Base. What happened is that, uh, on St. Valentines day in 1995 the, uhm, CMO International and RTC moved into INCOMM to shut it down. Uh, what had been discovered was a fairly substantial security breach where a member of INCOMM had put information regarding, uh, very particular documents out on the Internet. The reason why I'm talking about this: this is possibly the, in my opinion, the greatest violation of basic fundamental human rights, uh, ever in the history of the Sea Org that I witnessed personally.

What happened is on that day, uh, Liz Ingber, one of the more senior, long-term Sea Org members, uh, took a team into INCOMM and without warning locked all the doors, uh, to the entire INCOMM location in the Pacific Base in Los Angeles. None of the staff knew what was going on, uh, and they were all kept in the dark. Over at CMO IXU [Int Extension Unit], over at the other location of 6331 Hollywood Boulevard we knew what was about to happen. Uh, the reason why we knew is that we were told there would be a large number of replacements probably needed for the INCOMM staff after the mission had been through with them. We knew that there was probably going to be only one or two security breaches but the uh, the fact of the matter was that the process of discovery of those security breaches was probably going to result in a couple of the staff members wanting to leave, or being required to leave.

Anyway, so the staff were all hoarded into an office and in another, uh, office all the missionaries were waiting for them. And what they did is, the staff were one by one put through the office, told to empty out their pockets, take off their shoes and so forth, and then they were each separately interrogated. Uh, what happened was is that the, they knew that a modem over at INCOMM had been used to transfer information out, and now they wanted to know which INCOMM operator had done it, and also whether any of the other INCOMM staff were in on it.

None of the INCOMM staff were allowed to make any phonecalls to family, none of the INCOMM staff were permitted to see any of their family members in the Sea Org or even their children. At that point all communication was barred, even between INCOMM staff themselves. Over the next several weeks, all of them were made to sleep there in INCOMM, and there were guards posted on all the doors and they were not permitted to leave. The food was brought to the location and they were given meals, and made to sleep there in INCOMM, totally against their rights. They, all of them asked to leave, all of them were refused to leave. Uhm, they made repeated requests to leave, it just wasn't going to happen, not until we found out what that security breach was.

It was strange for other members of the uhm, of AOLA and other Sea Org members at that base because they knew that all of a sudden all of the INCOMM staff had just disappeared and they knew that there were guards posted at the doors. And even the Estates Project Force, which was the basic training for the Sea Org, knew about this because they were asked to take food to the door, where the food was then taken through, and all the trash was taken out.

The, eventually personal hygiene became a problem because they weren't showering, so what happened is we had guards take, uh, all the INCOMM staff one by one up to receive a shower, and they were only permitted three minutes for personal hygiene, and then they were brought back down to INCOMM and locked up again. Uhm, what then followed was, uh, later on, uhm, some of the people just lost their minds and they were just, they weren't just security checked or interrogated by one person, they were security checked and interrogated by another and another and another and then another, uhm, on this. And most of them didn't make it through this.

I remember seeing some of them, uh, later on afterwards that we had to replace, cause my job was to provide the, the resources, the personnel resources, uh, to replace other staff in the Sea Org that could then go and fill the spots that had now been lost in INCOMM, because... they just lost their minds. Y'know, or lost their families? It was,

it was horrible. And some of them were from international locations, they didn't have any means or resources to survive, so they took the option of going on to the RPF. I mean, it was disgusting and then they were committed to never discuss it, ever again with anybody.

That was my involvement in it, and then it got worse for me, because all the computer systems around the world were considered, uh, to be defunct, and susceptible to attack. And there were three missionaries selected to go around the world. One was Eric Profittlich, he was to do Europe. The other one was.. uhm, a Mexican fellow... he was the Qualifications Director at CMO and he was asked to go to do the South American front, to re-encrypt the computers there. And the final mission was to go to the Flag Land Base and the Freewinds ship in the Caribbean, and I was selected for that. Very unusual mission, uh, no-one was to know about it. No-one was to know who I was seeing, no-one was to know I was a Sea Org member, I was to go as a civilian, undercover, uhm, I was to take the encryption tapes in briefcase handcuffed to my hand, and I was to travel to the Flag Land Base, provide those to... I believe it was Greg Johnson, at Flag Land Base, to re-encrypt the computers there, then I was to go to the ship.

But early on, troubles started to surface. First one is, there were no written Mission orders. The only people that knew about my mission was Luca Saccomanno, Fleur Thomas, W. D. C. [WatchDog Committe] so-and-so, Amy Mortland, uh, and the RTC reports officer who I never knew the name, I just spoke to him over a phone. No Mission orders were in writing, uh, the mission was never to be revealed to another human being, the mission was never to be discussed. What happened is, the mission's fired out, in my briefing I was told that there was a, a high risk potential of being intercepted, to have the tapes, uh, removed from my person, and I was told that in that event I was to, I was to place my life on the line to protect those tapes, because those tapes represented the, the very security of the Sea Org.

Uhm, I was due to fire out at midnight, and this was around about, uh, early March. Uh, I was due to fire out around midnight, and I did not fire out because I lost my passport (laughs). Uh, that was entirely my fault, it was no Sea Org paranoia involved there at all, I, I misplaced it and I, eventually I found it. Uhm, but they said security had been breached because I had fired late. And as a result I was to take a number of plane trips through, uh, down to Houston, Dallas, Pensacola, uh, New Orleans and all these other locations in order to get down to Miami, and then from uh, but before Miami go to Florida. Uhm, it was a highly paranoid state of affairs.

Uhm, I violated my Mission orders and for some reason, I don't know why to this day, but uh I packed up my mission uniform anyways and took it along as luggage. I just wanted to have it with me. I think it ended up saving my life, having that, uhm, uniform with me and I'll get to that later. I arrived at the Flag Land Base around about 4am and went to the uh, to the Clearwater building where I met Greg Johnson. He took the tapes from me, went into the computer room and then he came back out about a minute later. And this seemed strange to me because I knew myself with the INCOMM computers that the, the encryption time would have to be within the five to ten minute margin, he couldn't possibly have encrypted the systems with the new information so fast. And that was the first alarm bell that rang off in my head.

But he gave me the tape back and said "Now this is for the Flag Land Ba- uh, for the ship." So I went out to a berthing and I crashed there, uh, in a berthing there for a few hours, and then I was taken out to the airport where I flew to Miami, and then from Miami I took Aruba Airlines and flew to Aruba.

This was where I was first intercepted. Uh, the gentleman on board the flight made it a point to come and sit next to me, uh, he was asking me a lot of questions and it became quite clear to me that he knew exactly what I was doing on the, uhm, airline with the, the suitcase being strapped to my hand. I told him to, to get lost, I told him I didn't want to speak to him, blah blah blah. When I landed in Aruba, I went through the gates of clearance and an unusual thing happened, uh...

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Aaron: One reason they were very suspicious of the tapes that I had and the partition where you go through to get your stamp to go on the isle was sealed off and two armed guards took position behind me and had machine guns pointed at me, and they remained there until I finished answering the questions. And I answered the questions and I was allowed to go through. When I got outside, uhm, I was met by a man I didn't know, he was clearly NOT a Scientologist, uhm, and, he knew who I was, I don't know how he knew that, and he took me to a bar called The Talk of The Town. And I stayed there because the ship wasn't, hadn't docked yet, it was to dock at midnight.

Midnight came, and I was walking up the gangplank, uh, up the ship, and Greg Wilhere pops out. And, now, he's the Inspector General at the time, second only to David Miscavige in the Sea Org. He popped out, shook my hand, said "Thanks for coming aboard" and just rushed me into the place. There was no introduction to the Captain or anything, I was just taken straight in. I was taken into the uhm, into the uh, the offices, and Greg Wilhere briefed me that he had been on the ship during security checking, that Marty Rathbun was on the ship, uh, going through conditions and handlings, which I found shocking because the idea that Marty Rathbun would have doubts on the Sea Org... was just unreal for me. I mean, the man was a solid icon of the tech. It blew me away to hear that.

But anyway, Greg Wilhere told me that he had security checked the entire ship, and he told me that they believed that the REAL security breach they were REALLY after was actually on the ship, and he told me to take caution in my mission. So I immediately grabbed, there were two computer operators on the ship: uh, one for the ship, and then one just for the IAS. And, I forget the name of the man for the ship, but I'll never forget the man from the IAS, uh, it was, his name was Viet Le Quang.

What happened was, I went to uh, the offices, the pier offices and there I had the encryption done, uh, by the ship operator. And I quizzed him for a time and finally he

admitted that there was a way to breach this encryption tape and he told me the exact procedure for it. I asked him if Viet Le Quang would know this, and he said he would. So what I did is I then called in Viet Le Quang, into the offices, and put him through the same procedure, and quizzed him. And he wouldn't admit that there was a way to breach the encryption tapes. So finally I told him how to do it, based off of what the operator had not only told me, but shown me, and Viet Le Quang doubted it, went red in the face, and said "Oh, I don't think you can really do that."

Bang! That was it. HCO Bring order, you're under house arrest. Picked up the phone: "Security, HCO Bring order NOW, computer room." Bang! Security comes, collects up Viet, Viet Le Quang and off he goes. I immediately tell the computer operator not to leave the office; I then go and see Greg Wilhere, I tell Greg Wilhere what happened, he goes "Right. Go to your cabin and wait there." So I went to my cabin, waited there.

Three hours later, Greg Wilhere has messengers come and get me, I come and see, uh, Greg, and listen what he told me. Now this is paranoia, ok! You have to believe... the... this is what he told me, ok. You cannot reconcile this event. He told me that Viet Le Quang had a history, that he had just discovered on sec check, that he had worked for the NSA, he worked for the FBI and possibly even the CIA. This is what he told me.

It blew me away because Greg Wil- Greg Wilhere just told me he sec checked everybody on the ship! So how did he miss that? This is Greg Wilhere! But, you don't question it, Greg Wilhere just told me "We're gonna, we're gonna fix up Viet Le Quang" and I said "Well, he should be beached" and he goes "No, he knows something right now" and I said "Well, we'll beach him afterwards" and Greg said "We certainly will". So I left it at that, you know. What do I do now on the mission? You know, this was not in the mission orders. He said to wait there in my cabin again, so I waited in the cabin.

He called me back to the office and told me I was not to leave the ship, there was to be no communication back to Los Angeles at all, that I was to only make one call to the RTC Reports Officer and that was via a mobile phone, ok? And no communications were to be gone off the ship with my name on it. Ok, I called up the RTC Reports Op. and he said "find the solution to the security breach". So I came up with one, which involved another encryption tape, being kept in a file safe room which was kept in a Class, uh, the OT8 Course, uh, folder room on the ship, and that the um, the security would have to escort the uh, computer operator daily to go grab the encryption tape. A, a pretty weak solution, but my other follow-ups included a honeypot idea, and a tracking system for INCOMM to deploy against future hacks. Uh, that's quite a lengthy explanation on that, and I gave that, uhm, in writing to Greg Wilhere, and he kept it.

What then happened is uh, over the next day I spent on the ship, uhm, I don't recall a great deal of what happened, I, I, I simply, I just don't. I was given a tour of the ship by the Deputy Commanding Officer of CMO on the ship, and post that I was told and given a call on the mobile by somebody, not the RTC Reports Officer, just to go leave the ship, which was just still in port in Aruba, and there would be a car waiting for me and I was to leave. Ok? And that was to happen around 6 or 7am or something like that.

What then happened is I went back to my cabin, and in the middle of the night the Deputy Commanding Officer of CMO Ship came to my cabin and she told me to put, that the package of my uniform had arrived from the airport, and sh- her first question was "Why wasn't it carry-on luggage?" and I told her because I had the briefcase, and they wouldn't let me take two packages on board the airline; so it had to be stowed under, even though it only weighed two kilograms. Uhm, she said it'd been returned and she wanted wear it. And I said I couldn't do that, it was a, it was a confidential mission, nobody was supposed to know that I'm even a Messenger. And she said, uhm "Well, I think it would be a good idea if you did wear this uniform and walk around the ship."

She appealed to my ego, because she said "Well, this could slap the crew and get them better producing." I mean, it appealed to my ego because at the time, uh, Greg Wilhere himself was on the ship. If that guy isn't going to get you producing, noth- no-ones going to get you producing. But, she got to my ego, so I did. I walked around the ship, and did this, and then I went out on their, the deck early in the morning, and I had a Cuban cigar on the deck to celebrate the end of the mission. The, the, uh, the following, that morning-

Oh, oh, while I was on the deck of the ship, a photo was taken of me from one of the uh, from the top deck. I didn't know who took the photo, it was a polaroid shot. I just heard this woman saying "Got you..." I assumed it was the DCO, the Deputy Commanding Officer on the ship, uh, for CMO, but I didn't know. And I never saw her again.

Uhm, what then happened is I then went back to the cabin, showered, went out to the airport, and took a whole series of planes to Los Angeles; but before I got back to Los Angeles, the same man that was on the, uhm, plane flight from Miami to Aruba was on the flight that I took to Houston. And he confronted me. And I uh, I decided I had to deal with this, he was getting aggressive. I had tapes that were given to me by Greg Wilhere to take back to Los Angeles; I didn't know what was on the tapes. So, I confronted him in a bar, uh, at the Houston airport - it was a stopover - and I don't remember what happened. I, I just do not know what happened.

The next thing I know, I'm in Los Angeles, I'm at the airport and there's no car waiting for me. I call up External Communications at the Hollywood Guarantee Building and go "Hey! It's Aaron. Where my car?" And they're like "Sorry, sir, what car?" "I've landed! Where's my car to get back to the building?" Like, "Sorry sir, I didn't receive any request to pick you up." "Ok, well can you come and get me?" "Ok." They come out, get me, they drive me back.

When I get back, I don't go to my berthing straight away, I go straight to the building to report the mission completion, and uhm, I get to the building, walk in the front door, I go up to level uh, s- level six, where CMO was located at that particular time. Or no, level seven. Level seven or six... seven. And uhm... my security card doesn't work any more. Well that's strange! So I wait, and wait for a Messenger to walk out the door, and they're like "Oh, Aaron, you're back! Where have you been, I had no idea." I walk in the door, and uh -

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Aaron: Uh, I walk straight into the, Luca's office, Deputy Commanding Officer for CMO, and he just looks so surprised to see me "Aaron! Haha, you're back!" Like, "Yeah, didn't you know? Hey, what's with my security card? It's cancelled or something." Y'know, and he diverts the conversation, and I look on the desk and he's got all my files on the desk. And I missed a withhold on him, there's something in the files he doesn't want me to see, and he shoves the files to the left side. I can see that there's a piece of goldenrod there, but I don't know what it is.

And then he pulls out this photo. It's the Polaroid that was taken of me on the ship! Which means that the person who was on that ship must have taken a Polaroid - it's not something you can send by email, it's a flash Polaroid photo - which means that someone else had brought back that photo as fast as I could get to Los Angeles. And alarm bells started ringing off in my head. I didn't get it, I didn't understand what was going on.

A- anyways, I um, then went back up to the International Clearance Office, because that's where we we- were working on, on the um, the clearances for all the new INCOMM staff. And I was told up there "Aaron, you're being immediately cleared. Don't tell anybody you're being cleared. You're going to the INT Base, you're going now. We've got to get your clearances done in 24 hours." I said "Why? Wh- wh-, why am I going to INT?" "You have to go. You have to go now. So you're not the HCO Chief any more, you're not on post any more, ok? You're going to INT." "Oh, ooh, ok. Going to INT, great."

And that night, walking back to my berthing, my brain started to send alarm bells. Why was my security card cancelled? Why was there no car? Who was that guy that followed me from the ship? Who was the guy on the Aruban Airlines flight? And alarm bells just went off and off and off.

And I blew that morning. I took off. And uh, the first phone call I made, after a day being out, I wanted to speak to Luca Saccomanno, cause I knew they'd be looking for me. And I called into the Hollywood Guarantee Building on the main line number, and when I got to reception the receptionist said "Oh, sir, are you calling from Europe?" I went "No." She goes "Oh, you're not on, you're not in Europe on mission?" "No, I'm here in Los Angeles, can I please speak with the Deputy CO CMO please?" "What the hell's going on?" [not sure if Aaron or receptionist's words] Ok, I, I hung up the phone.

I then called up, we had a travel company that uh, did all the flights for all our missions and stuff, so I called them up and they, and I had a security code that, which hadn't been cancelled yet. And I booked a first-class ticket back to New Zealand, from LAX. And I booked it to leave in two hours, and I got it. Maybe three or four hours, actually, to be more accurate. And, I didn't have any intention of going on the flight. I just went to the LA terminals, I waited across the road, because I wanted to find out how many people that they would send out after me. And I was shocked. A van pulled up, a van pulled up, and Jeff Porter, Sue Porter, and CMO staff, and a lot of OSA staff JUMP out of the van, I'm talking nine people, and came RUNNING into the LA terminal after me. And Jesus Christ they REALLY wanted me to not go on that flight.

But I knew I couldn't run away from them forever, I'd have to go back. So I went running around Los Angeles. Called up my mum in New Zealand and she told me they'd called there for, looking for me. And I called back into the building, spoke to Luca and he said "If you don't come in right now, we're sending 20 people off to Australia, we're sending people off to New Zealand, to talk to your family, we're gonna find you." And I told him to call it off, I'll come in.

I came back in, and what happened between March 1995 and the end of my career with the Sea Org in January 1996 is just the most insulting story of paranoia and control you've ever imagined. And I'll go into it another time. But I wanted to keep this about the INCOMM mission, and the facts of the matter there. We are talking

about the greatest violations of human rights, that all those members of INCOMM staff around the world, uh, suffered, and... if you want to talk about false imprisonment, and, uh, blackmail: go find the INCOMM staff that were hassled and harassed in February 1995 and find out what happened to them. Their stories are all true, as unbelievable as they may sound - I was there and I helped with this, there's nothing fictitious about it.

This happened right in the heart of Los Angeles: first class country, where human rights are celebrated and appreciated, and right there, in East Hollywood, just off Hollywood Boulevard, these guys were trapped and contained for some periods that exceeded more than a month [ed: 4 months for some]. And there's no justification for it. There is just nothing you can imagine that could tell you the horror those staff went through, because they were bullied and controlled for...

I don't know, I think some of them thought they were going to die. Some of them wanted to kill themselves; it came up in their security checks, they wanted to end their lives because of the, the punishment they received, for even ALLOWING a fellow INCOMM staff member to cause a breach was now their fault and they were all punished severely for it. And I want the Governor of Los Angeles to launch an inquiry [with?] the affidavits and statements from not just the Sea Org victims on that case, but from the people like Liz Ingber, the Bolstadts of this world, Deputy Senior CS International and the RTC security staff that did, did that horrific sec checking on all those people and just absolutely screwed with their minds. And I think everybody wants to see that too. It's not just me. But you wanted a specific example of a, the greatest human rights violation in the Sea Org, that ever happened? There's your date, there's your time, and I wish I could give you the names of the INCOMM staff members, but you know what, they've already spoken out on the internet, but nobody believes them. It's all true.