



Gary McKinnon: Interview transcript

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Hacking the Pentagon : Gary McKinnon London, England, June 2006

Start of interview

Kerry Cassidy: I'm here with Gary McKinnon, and we're here to talk about his possible extradition to the United States for some hacking that he's done, and some investigation he's also done on the part of UFOs and disclosure.

So, Gary, maybe you can tell me what it is the US government is really on about in regard to you, and your perspective on it.

Gary: The main thing that concerns me is I've made full and frank admissions all the way down, in two police interviews, that yes, I did obtain unauthorized access to these systems. But they're piling on these ridiculous damage claims. And I've since found out that for it to be worth a year in prison in America for an extradition case, it has to be worth at least \$5,000 damage, because it comes under cybercrime.

So as if by magic, lo and behold, every machine I was on I'm accused of causing exactly \$5,000 worth of damage. It's patently untrue. And in my opinion, and the opinion of others more well-informed than me, the pressure they're bringing to bear is more to do with where I've been and what I may have seen.



KC: OK. So I found that very interesting that they were actually claiming damage, because my understanding is you were on a dial-up modem and that you didn't even download files. So how is it that you actually did any damage?

GM: They've got no explanation. I mean, they just claim that. Under this new extradition law you don't have to provide any evidence, which is ridiculous. And also it hasn't been signed on your side of the water. Congress, the Senate, hasn't ratified it. So at the moment it's a treaty with only one signature.

KC: OK. And you had one hearing. When was that exactly?

GM: The last one was, I think, in the middle of May [2006] or toward the end of May. I'm not sure.

KC: And you have another one coming up in July? Is that right?

GM: No hearing is scheduled as yet. We've got until June 21st to make representation to the Home Secretary, after which time he'll make his decision as to whether or not the extradition is

allowable. And then if he decides that it is allowable - which I'm sure he will - then I can go into the appeals process.

KC: OK. And so once you're in the appeals process you're still basically safe over here, so to speak, in terms of they actually can't do anything to you yet. Is that right?

GM: That's correct. Yes. I've been on bail now, £5,000 security for months and months... well, for four years since the arrest.

KC: For four years?

GM: Yes. In March of 2002 they arrested me.

KC: Wow. OK. So, maybe you can explain exactly what you're in for - or "up" for, I guess might be a better word.

GM: Apparently it's seven counts of intentional malicious damage and unauthorized access, each count carrying 10 years maximum. Each.

And previously the American government had tried to do some deals with me whereby they said: If you don't force us to go through extradition and just come across of your own free will, then we'll give you only 3 to 4 years in prison, most of which you can serve in your own country after the first 6 months or 12 months.

I said: Fine; that sounds great. Give me that in writing. [Smiles, shrugs] Guess what happened. I didn't get it in writing. So I said no to the various deal offers.

So it looks like on paper, they said to me: If you don't accept the deal we'll prosecute to the max. That's a verbatim quote from Ed Gibson, who was the attaché at the US Embassy in London at the time.

To me that's not a deal. A deal is something arrived at after reasonable discussion between two or more parties.

KC: Absolutely.

GM: They're saying: If you don't take it, we'll prosecute to the max. So, yeah, I think they do want to try to push for 60 or 70 years in prison which is ridiculous, considering they had blank passwords, in other words, *no* passwords.

KC: Right, so let's get into that a little bit. You basically - I don't know if you want me to use the word *hack*. I don't know if you consider yourself a "hacker," or did at the time?

GM: I never did consider myself a hacker at the time. Also, basically all I was doing was, because it was an administrator level account, let's not forget, with full control of the local machine with a blank password. So it was almost like logging on.

KC: So let's back up one minute here. Exactly what were you looking for when you were doing this?

GM: At first I was looking for anything to do with UFOs. As I got more into the subject and listened to more serious talk and discussion about the subject, and was introduced to the Disclosure Project, and realized that there were, you know, 400 witness testimonials from people who worked in everything from civilian air traffic control, up to military radar operators, right up to men and women in charge of whether or not to launch nuclear missiles. I thought these were surely credible people.

And the whole suppressed technology thing, which kind of grabbed my humanitarian side. I thought: Crikey, we're having wars over oil, and we're burning fossil fuels, polluting the environment, and we have old age pensioners dying in Britain because they can't afford to heat themselves because fuel bills are so high.

And so I thought: Why on Earth is this technology being sat on? I can see perhaps some of the arguments that may be for it. For example, you know, what if terrorists had free energy, or terrorists had antigravity? Well, you know, what if terrorists had guns? Everything's dual-use. You have to protect it, make it tamper-proof, anything, but just get it out to the public. Surely everyone should have it.

KC: OK. But as far as the hacker community - you said, I believe, in some things I read, that you came across a lot of other sort of "interested parties" that were investigating the same places you were, and were aware that there were blank passwords, and were able to get into via the administrative sites. Is that right?

GM: Yes. I mean, I would have been surprised if there wasn't anyone else, because it wasn't even really a "hack" to get into. It was large-scale fishing with blank passwords. And some of these places, you know, were pretty special places; they were places you wouldn't think wouldn't have firewalls or blank passwords.

KC: And this was what year that you were involved in this?

GM: 2000, 2001.

KC: So it's not that long ago. So computer systems should have been... especially for government, military and NASA... you would think they would be covered for things like that.

GM: Yes, absolutely. In fact I think there are supposed to be federal guidelines, you know.

KC: So in a way you did them a favor, isn't that true?

GM: Yeah, you could look at it like, that because I'm sure... I mean, the other connections that were there - Turkey, Holland, Germany, all across the world - you could see the IP addresses that connected to the machine and you could look it up and find out which country they're in and even which businesses own the IPs. And I don't know whether that was foreign governments. It could have been Al Qaeda. It could have been someone else just like me, just snooping around. Who knows?

KC: That's a very interesting point. So you've got these administrators, basically, that got found out because of what you did. Is that what we can assume?

GM: No. It's good to clarify that it's the Administrator *account*. A lot of the time, on a corporate network or a large organization like the Army or the Navy, they didn't actually use "an Administrator," but it's a built-in account. You can't delete it. You can re-name it. But that's for, say, if someone wanted to do something system-wide across the whole network, they would use that account to log in remotely. That gives you full control over the machine. But it doesn't actually refer to a particular person.

KC: Oh. So there's no particular worker involved in that, that maintains the site or anything.

GM: That's correct, yes. Well, obviously they must have IT staff that look after things.

KC: Right. And didn't you encounter once such person, or was he an IT guy, on the other end?

GM: Yeah. He was a network engineer. Because I had graphical remote control of the machine, it was literally like sitting on the chair opposite the screen, opposite the monitor. And I think I must have got the time zone wrong, or he was working late hours or whatever. But he obviously saw the mouse moving across the screen. And next thing I know, WordPad flashes up and someone types: "*Who are you?*"

And I panicked. I didn't want to get caught. I thought very quickly on my feet and turned around my own investigations into an explanation to answer him.

And I said: "I'm from Nipponet Security" - which is a non-classified internet protocol and router network - "And I've discovered some unauthorized scanning coming from this machine. I'm here to investigate it." And he immediately - it was a good ploy of my human nature, you know - tried to impress me with his knowledge and showed me this, did a virus scan, and pretty much showed me that the machine was clean - and then moved along.

KC: Wow. And he was never the wiser? Because I know that this was somehow linked to you actually getting caught, what, a month later, or I don't know how much longer.

GM: I can't actually remember when that incident took place. I was doing this every night, all night practically, for two years. I'd not really looked after myself very much, so dates and things are a bit mangled.

KC: So this was a real passion of yours, in other words?

GM: Oh yeah. Yeah.

KC: Was the passion for information related to UFOs and hidden technology? Was that your passion? Or what would you say is your passion in that regard?

GM: I passionately believe that we should all have this technology. And not so much, obviously, if you could confirm the existence of extraterrestrials and their contact with us, then that would be good. But to me it was more important to have this free energy system.

KC: OK. So what did you find out?

GM: About free energy, nothing. Unfortunately, I got nothing at all.

But the UFO thing: it may sound circumstantial to some, but as far as I'm concerned it's proven. As part of the Disclosure Project, Donna Hare - a NASA photographic scientist who had a Top Secret clearance and was in Building 8 at Johnson Space Center - she says in her testimony that one of her colleagues who was doing some photographic work invited her over to look at it. And she saw high-res satellite images of half a k[ilometer] above the treetops - I think it was like a white disk.

And she at first thought: Oh; it's a blob in the emulsion, you know, some kind of fault with the photographic process. And he said: well, look, you know, blobs in the emulsion don't have perfectly formed shadows going in the same direction as the trees? Etcetera, etcetera. All the detail was there. And she basically was saying that they had this whole base in Building 8 for airbrushing out UFOs on a regular basis, because they then sell on their images to universities and the like.

And having been all over other NASA installations already - I asumed the blank password scanning method will work the same at Johnson Space Center - *and it did*. Once I was in there, I used various network commands to strip out the machines that were in Building 8. And I got on to those. And the very first one I was on literally had what she said. I can't remember if it was "Filtered" and "Raw", Processed" and "Unprocessed," but there were definitely folders whereby there was a transformation in the data taking place between one and the other.

These folders were full of images in a proprietary NASA format, or in a format I'd never seen before: no jpegs or gifs. They were also 200 to 300 megabytes in size. And being on a 56K dial-up modem, there was no way I was going to download that at five minutes per megabyte.

So what I did... The remote control program that gives you graphical control of the machine - I turned the resolution right down to, I think, 4-bit color and then on the desktop on the NASA machine, navigated to the folder, double-clicked on the first image. The application launches. The image comes up on the screen, but it's still very, very slow.

And what I saw, or was hoping to see, was what she was describing as a saucer, very definite imagery. And what instead I saw I assume was the Earth. This was in shades of gray. You had the Earth's hemisphere taking up about 2/3 of the screen and then halfway between the top of the hemisphere and the bottom of the picture there was a classic sort of cigar-shaped object, but with golf-ball domes, geodesic domes, above, below, and this side [gesturing to the right], and I assume the other side as well. It had very slightly flattened cigar ends. No seams. No rivets. No telemetry antennae or anything like that. It looked... it just had a feeling of not being man-made. There was none of the signs of human manufacturing.

KC: So in essence it was a craft, is what you're saying?

GM: Yeah. At first when I saw the top half I thought: Bollocks, it's just a boring satellite picture. But as more of the thing was revealed, it was obvious it wasn't like any satellite I'd ever seen. I've been space-mad since I was about 14, so I've seen lots of pictures of satellites.

KC: OK. So you knew what you were looking at, to some degree. [Gary nods.] So, basically, did you feel during those two years that you were doing this investigation, threatened by what you were doing? I mean, technically, you got caught out by one guy, right? [Gary nods yes.] Was that the only time?

GM: No. That guy, that network engineer, sort of saw me but didn't realize that I shouldn't have been there. The chap that actually caught me was in NASA when this photograph was about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down on the screen. He sees the mouse move, he right-clicks the local area network connection icon, chooses Disconnect, and - bash, that's me. And that's why it was such a strange moment. It was triumphant in a way, of course. I had completely corroborated what Donna Hare had said on my own, but then got caught at the very same moment.

KC: Now when you say you got caught... how did he catch you? I understand he closed down the network so you couldn't continue to visit. [Gary nods yes] But does that mean he actually knew who you were at that point, or did it take them a lot more investigation to find out actually where you came from?

GM: It took them a while longer, I think a good while longer, although I'm not sure how much longer. Again I can't remember if that was... That was fairly near the end of my investigations. I think that may have been late 2001. I was arrested in March of 2002. But what happened, I'm told, is that NASA and the various military establishments that I was in shared information - which I think these bodies should do more often - they don't do it enough just by law enforcement, and they realized that whoever had been in the system was using the same tools, the same programs, the same method of entry.

And I think NASA knew it was from a United Kingdom IP address. This is the thing: I wasn't a professional hacker; I wasn't always covering my tracks and stuff, or thinking properly. I had been in time zones when people were still working in the offices. So, yeah

KC: OK. Donna Hare. I guess you heard her testimony or saw her testimony somewhere? Was it on the web?

GM: It was the Disclosure Project website, their 2001 National Press Conference.

KC: Oh, I see. And has she ever gotten in contact with you at all?

GM: No. But her secretary has.

KC: Huh. OK. And you've actually been interviewed by a number of publications, reputable establishment so-called, such as the BBC. Is this right?

GM: Yes. BBC, Channel 4, Channel 5, ITV, BBC World Service...

KC: And The Guardian?

GM: The Guardian.

KC: The Financial Times?

GM: Yes, the FT. I've been in The Metro, The Standard... The Daily Mail want me at the moment but I've yet to return their call.

KC: OK. And just recently, Linda Moulton Howe for Coast to Coast, or possibly for Coast to Coast at some point, and for her own website.

GM: Yeah. For Earthfiles and Dreamland.

KC: OK. Just wondering because I know that your cause is kind of a *cause celebre* here in the UK, but it's not really getting the kind of coverage that it deserves in the United States at this point. Isn't that right?

GM: Yeah. In my view there's a deliberate news blackout over there. I've only had contact from, I think it's CNN, and none of the other news networks - because I think there seem to be two factions in the US military and government. One of them is hugely embarrassed by what you could term failings in security - no firewalls, no passwords, *no* security, basically. Especially since 911, you know, security should be a lot more strong. The other faction seems to want it all out in the open and to have a big show trial, a big circus trial saying: *This Is What Happens to Hackers*.

KC: Oh, I see, to use you as a scapegoat kind of person. [Gary nods yes] Well, that sounds unfair and it sounds like, just from the most obvious level, why didn't they just hire you [Kerry laughs] since you basically pointed out a real hole in the system? They could have brought you on board. It sounds like you're not totally against security, computer security.

GM: No, not at all. Not at all. I've got a great respect for law enforcement agencies and military agencies, when they're thinking correctly. But these days... they know I'm in complete disagreement with years and years of - not *American* foreign policy - I hate when people say it's American this, American that - it's not the *American people*. It's just they've been the victims of a succession of very bad governments, with, you know, very short-termism outlook. So I think they know that I wouldn't work for them.

KC: And how is the British government actually treating you? Have you had any interactions with members of the British government?

GM: Well, you know, we obviously write to MPs and that sort of thing. But I am very disappointed when you think the first thing the British government did with this was hand it over on a plate to the American government. All the evidence was in London. My hard drive was in London. *I* was in London. I'd made a full and frank admission to all the unauthorized access. All the details were there.

And at first the police here were quite friendly. They said: Oh, you may get 6 months community service, just helping the community at large, etcetera. But when they went over to America and had meetings with the Office of Naval Intelligence, and I think possibly the Air Force Office of Special Investigations as well, they came back with a *completely* differently attitude: Very, very heavy; very, very serious. And then suddenly you've got all the headlines about "criminal masterminds", and all this rubbish.

KC: Oh. Right. And isn't it true that you also sort of were inspired by *War Games* to some degree... the movie?

GM: That's kind of a misquote by John Ronson. I said I had seen that, but I wasn't really inspired. What actually inspired me was *The Hacker's Handbook* by Hugo Cornwall, who is now Peter Sommer at the London School of Economics.

KC: Oh really...

GM: [Nods, shrugs] Uh huh. It was the first hard information publication that I read. In fact the first issue was banned by the UK government and they had to make a reprint with stuff taken out.

KC: But now he's basically teaching. Isn't that right?

GM: Yeah. I'm not sure what he lectures in, though.

KC: OK. Well, that's very interesting that you sort of got into this via someone who you could certainly say is working for the establishment on some level, right?

GM: [Nods] Uh huh.

KC: But he wrote a book about hacking. And "hacking" is a way of finding out information that's kind of slang for somebody who's an investigator but maybe not liked? Or not appreciated by the powers that be?

GM: Yeah. OK. Like a journalist, hacking away at it.

KC: Right. So, can you tell me what else you found? Because I know you have some information in regard to *Non-Terrestrial Officers*. Is that right?

GM: Yeah. There was an Excel spreadsheet and the title was "Non-Terrestrial Officers," and it had names, ranks... it wasn't a long list; it didn't fill the whole screen, I don't think.

KC: Could you just generally say how many? I mean, if you were to guess, are we talking 20, 50?

GM: 20, maybe 30.

KC: Did you notice if they were male or female, by chance?

GM: That I can't remember.

KC: OK. First names and last names?

GM: [pauses thoughtfully] Definitely ranks, but nothing to say *Army* captain, or *Navy* captain, or *US Air Force* captain.

KC: Ah, so the designation wasn't there as far as which organization they worked for?

GM: Yeah. I mean, that was the title "Non-Terrestrial Officers", and obviously it's not little green men. So I was thinking: What force is this? And that phrase is nowhere to be found on the web or in official Army documentation or anything. And the other thing was a list of ship-to-ship and fleet-to-fleet transfers - and bear in mind fleet-to-fleet, that means multiple ships - movement of materials. And these ships weren't, you know, US Navy ships. Again, I don't remember any of the names, but I remember at the time looking and trying to match up the names, and there wasn't anything that matched.

KC: So, now, this theoretically would have been pretty top secret information if indeed *non-terrestrial* is what it sounds to be, which is off-world, right?

GM: Yeah. I mean, I gleaned from that information... What I surmised is that an off-planet Space Marines is being formed. And if you actually look at DARPA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, literature at the moment and in the last few years, a lot of government and space command stuff is all about *space dominance*. It is really, you know, the final frontier. Yeah, so I think it's natural for them to want to control space and to be developing a space-going force in secret. But I think most likely using technology reverse-engineered from ETs.

KC: To get out there, in other words?

GM: Yeah. And also to be cloaked, otherwise how many other governments would see this going on.

KC: So, was this NASA? Where was this? Are you at liberty to say?

GM: [laughs] Again, I wish I was. I find it so hard to remember all of it. It's strange: I can remember IP addresses... but [I can't remember] a lot of the names, and where I was when I

found the particular thing. I remember thinking at the time that this must be NASA *and* the Navy, you know, or secret parts thereof. So it was either the Navy or NASA. I really think it was most likely the Navy. But I'm not entirely sure.

KC: OK, so at this point this kind of a discovery is really stupendous, right? I mean, for any researcher to come across something like that is pretty intense.

GM: If... [searching for words]... what I surmise to be correct was correct, yes. And it does kind of point that way, I think.

KC: OK. Are you familiar with the Serpo story? We've mentioned it to you. But I don't know if you've actually... because you're not on the web, right? You haven't been on the web for a number of years?

GM: That's correct. Yes.

KC: That's part of your... what do you call? Probation?

GM: My bail conditions, yeah.

KC: So perhaps you didn't know about it, but it's an alien-human exchange program that supposedly took place between, I think it's 1965 and 1978. And there's been a release of information on the web, and I've given you an article here from *The Fortean Times* to kind of fill you in on it.

But just offhand and hearing about this, there were 12 astronauts that actually went to another planet. The planet was called Serpo in the Zeta Reticulian system - supposedly. Now, a lot of people say this is all disinfo, but the interesting thing is that when you say non-terrestrial officers, there's actually a chance that it could be the Serpo astronauts that this is referring to. Does that link up for you at all?

GM: Well, yes, it certainly could do. I think all things are possible in these kinds of cases. I think... hmmm. I mean, just the fact that it's not based on Earth doesn't necessarily mean it's orbiting the Earth, does it? It could be based on another planet, in another solar system.

KC: Right. Because it's non-terrestrial, meaning not on the Earth.

GM: Yeah.

KC: So, yeah, we're talking about people that are based somewhere else in the solar system - theoretically - whether they're up circling the planet in a space ship or they're actually on another planet. Anyway, it's an interesting link-up that's kind of unexpected, I would say.

GM: Yeah.

KC: So what exactly happened to you when... sort of the blow-by-blow of when you got discovered?

GM: I'd been asleep for an hour. It was about 8 o'clock in the morning and my girlfriend answered the door. It was a national high-tech crime unit - four or five officers, big police van. They came into the house. They had a warrant for the address. My girlfriend at the time and I were living in her auntie's house. We had the ground floor and her auntie had the top two floors. But the warrant was for the entire house. So, unfortunately, as well as taking my PC and my girlfriend's PC, [they took] four other PCs I had there to fix for friends, and they also went upstairs and took my girlfriend's auntie's PC.

Then they separated us both, and did the Mr. Nice and Mr. Nasty routine. Like: "We know what you're like, mate, I used to dabble a bit, if you know what I mean. Oh, you got into NASA and the Pentagon, did you?" ...trying to get me to admit things before I was even in the police station. So I kept my mouth shut, obviously.

And then we went down to the police station. I was there for four hours, which time I used to catch up on some sleep because I was absolutely knackered. Then they brought me out of the cell after interviewing my girlfriend at the time. They interviewed me for a few hours, threatened to go back and arrest my girlfriend's 15 year old cousin just because she was at the house that the warrant was for, and basically put me under great duress to actually say something without a lawyer being present.

KC: Wow.

GM: And I thought: Well bugger this; it's all on my hard drive anyway, so I may as well just tell them now since they'll find out anyway. That's been my style ever since, my full and frank admissions to the unauthorized access and the material I did download. But not the ridiculous claims of damage.

And then after that I had two police interviews, the second of which the police had just been to, I think, Washington, the ONI (Office of Navy Investigation) and possibly the AFOSI [Air Force Office of Special Investigations] as well. And they had a very different tone then: very, very serious. And they asked me more and more questions, actually trying to get me to admit to being in places that I *hadn't* been in, which I found interesting.

And then in November of 2000 - having been arrested in March - in November of 2000 the Department of Justice said they intended to apply for my extradition. They didn't actually apply for it then, but said they intended to.

And then we waited and we waited and we waited. Nothing happened. And then came along the 2003 Special US-UK Extradition Act Only which required no evidence whatsoever on the part of the Department of Justice to be provided in order to take a UK citizen. Now, we can't do that to a US citizen. You're protected by your Constitution. And this treaty had only been signed by the British, not signed by the Americans. 400 people are currently under threat of being extradited with this.

KC: Are they?

GM: Yes. And America has extradition agreements with 119 countries and only Britain and Ireland agree to extradite of their own nationals with no evidence. It's a ridiculous situation.

KC: And I guess there's also the Guantanamo Bay sort of specter out there.

GM: Yeah. Someone said to me... They said the fact that most people in Guantanamo Bay haven't even had trials yet, and they're not proven to be terrorists, although I'm sure many of them *may* be... whereas I have allegedly directly attacked American military sites. So... you know.... [despondent shrug]... sounds like a good one-way ticket to me. And also the fact that it's military order number one, where you have a secret military tribunal, no right of appeal, no right of comment. They declare national security, and the whole thing is in a black hole from then on.

KC: So, you have a lawyer. Is that right?

GM: Absolutely. Yes. And I get legal aid here. Because I'm unemployed, we get free legal advice.

KC: OK. I don't know whether you're at liberty to say as to how they're going to be supporting you in this?

GM: [pauses] Umm... We felt that District Judge Nicholas Evans who ruled in my last hearing didn't really properly address all the main points we brought up. I'm not sure if he's really qualified or experienced enough to properly address them in the House, and if that's why he didn't. And so we feel that we've got a better chance on the appeal of getting things changed. Also we're actually trying to get the law changed. It's not just about me. It's about many other people, and the fact that you can be extradited without evidence. So we're trying to get judicial reviews in motion and put some pressure on, and we've got petitions going, etcetera.

KC: OK. And you have a website. Isn't that right?

GM: That's right. Yes. Freegary.org.uk.

KC: OK. Very good. So maybe you can tell me what it is that you thought when you saw the Non-Terrestrial Officer list?

GM: I thought WOW, I'm really on to something here. [Kerry laughs] But that, along with the material transfer thing, were the only two things I found. Bear in mind that 99% of the time you find nothing, absolutely nothing. I was trawling the system for years. There were times I did know where I was, but it was vague. I knew I was in the Pentagon, obviously. But a lot of the time, when you're first getting your entry into the fringes of the systems to try and obtain deeper entry that leads to control, you're kind of shooting blind at first.

And there's a chap over here, Peter Warren, an investigative journalist, who tells me that he went over to America and interviewed the top brass and said, you know, to his face: *Why are you pursuing this guy so vehemently? Why is this the first extradition-hacking case ever?* And someone apparently said to him: "It's not the person or what he's done and what he's saying, it's where he's been and what he may have seen that he's *not* saying."

KC: OK, well, let's pursue that for a second. Is there some stuff that you haven't revealed to the press? For example, that you might have come across? You know, sort of your ace in the hole, some cards you're holding?

GM: If there was, I wouldn't tell you. [laughs]

KC: Oh, really. OK. OK. Fair enough. And there's a sense that if you have information, that it would be stowed somewhere safe. Because, look, people disappear every day, isn't that right?

GM: Uh huh.

KC: So hopefully you've protected yourself on some level.

GM: [pauses, thoughtful] I'm not going to disappear.

KC: Yeah? OK. So in a sense, are you actually considering yourself a bit of a warrior? You're fighting a battle?

GM: No. No. I'm certainly in conflict, but...

KC: What I mean is, in a sense you're fighting a battle for disclosure, when all's said and done, in the acts that you've taken part in, isn't that right?

GM: I guess I am. But I get very impatient with this cloak of grandness that a lot of people in this field tend to cloak themselves in. [Kerry laughs] For me, it's just a job that has to be done and it has to be done pragmatically. I don't really see myself as anything. I just want to beat this rap and then carry on following UFO disclosure, but obviously through legitimate channels this time.

KC: OK. So, just out of curiosity, have you thought of writing a book?

GM: I hadn't thought of it, and then John Wiley & Sons approached me and they got me to write the blurb, you know, the new book proposal document. And write some stuff for the back. You know: Gary McKinnon tells us this, that, and the other. And they said: Oh great, sounds really good, wow. And then they had a meeting with their legal department from Stateside - it's an American based company, ultimately - and [snaps his fingers] that was it.

KC: Oh wow, they pulled... Well, I've got some people in Hollywood that might be interested. How do you feel about that?

GM: [Gary smiles broadly, gestures, two thumbs up] Yep! As long as I can stay in this country and film it.

KC: Oh, very good. OK. So, as far as your background... You're not really a skilled, I don't know... educated IT guy, is that correct? Do I have that right?

GM: I am skilled, but I've got no formal qualifications.

KC: But when you started this sort of search, had you worked in the field?

GM: Oh Yeah. Yeah. I had my first computer at 14, learned to program in Basic, then learned to program in Samba, and then I didn't do any computing work for a long time but it was a hobby... graphics programming, OpenGL, artificial intelligence, games programming. And then I went to study computing but found I had a lack of ability at high level maths, so I couldn't even start a computer science degree.

So they bumped me down to a Higher National Diploma and I *still* had trouble with high level maths, and so I had to leave that all together and just went to work in it. I got my first job with no experience whatsoever apart from my own hobbyist experience, just installing and configuring Windows. And from then on you get another contract, get more experience, do more stuff. And at that time employers respected experience more than pieces of paper. I found later on they started to respect the pieces of paper more, but I could sit next to ten guys with MCSEs and whatever, and be better than all of them put together because of 20-odd years of experience behind me.

KC: Great. So you've done some game and artificial intelligence work as well?

GM: Not for work, for pleasure. Genetic algorithms, fuzzy logic, that sort of stuff.

KC: Fabulous. And I understand you're also into graphics? You have a background in that as well?

GM: Yeah. I'm using OpenGL as a way to learn C++ programming language because you get a lot of visual feedback. It's a very rewarding way to learn something that's quite dry, really.

KC: OK. Cool. So you're very self-taught in a lot of ways.

GM: Mm.

KC: Now I'm just curious, have you had the "hacker community" come out for you in any way?

GM: Well, I was never part of the scene, so to speak. I did contact a couple of chaps whom I saw in a newsgroup posting with what seemed like very, very well-informed and knowledgeable comments on my case, and one of those chaps is now the guy who runs [the freegary website](#). He's, you know, very knowledgeable, very worthwhile, very, very caring - one of these people that seems to be sacrificing his entire self for the good of everyone else. And I've read some stuff that lots of hackers are angry. I've read that hackers have said: If Gary goes to jail in America, we'll hack the bejesus out of the American government. [Kerry laughs]

[Gary shakes finger admonishingly at camera] *Please don't do that, chaps.*

KC: Do you have other people sort of in there battling for you? Like family? Friends?

GM: My mum's a tower of strength, you know. But I'm lucky enough to have four parents... I speak to my step dad and my real dad. And my step mum, not quite so much because she's still living in Scotland. But yes, friends are incredibly supportive, having told me to stop doing what I was doing. They didn't know exactly what I was doing, but they knew I was in places I shouldn't have been. And they would always say: It's very silly for you to do that. And they would try to discourage me from doing it. And then they were very angry when it first came out that I had been caught. But, yeah, they're incredibly supportive.

And I think the best thing is when we just make jokes about it. Because it's quite dark sometimes, thinking: God, I could be facing 60 years in jail! So it's good to keep a sense of humor.

KC: OK. You know, when you do investigation for two years, I'm sure that a lot of it sort of goes into the back of your head somewhere. I'm just curious whether or not - of course I don't know what you're reading lately or anything - but if you ever find things that corroborate what you might have come across. That sort of thing.

GM: Ah, yes. I mean my story in itself - just the hacking story - I didn't find out... Well, there were only a few items. There's nothing more that I've got on that. That's all there is. The Excel spreadsheets and the picture. But you're absolutely right: having read lots of stuff recently, I've had so many people get in contact with me, and thanks to all them for sending me books and DVDs. And being unemployed and stuff, it's been nice to have something for your brain to chew over, you know. I did realize there were places I've been, which I didn't know at the time but we found out, are apparently hot-beds of UFO activity - China Lake...

KC: Well certainly, I guess, Johnson Space Center? [laughs]

GM: Well, yeah, absolutely Johnson Space Center. A couple of NSA machines at Fort Meade as well, actually. Yeah, the stuff... I do think I probably was in places that were more sensitive than I realized at the time. I probably *missed* a whole lot of stuff, you know?

KC: So you did keyword searches. Isn't that right?

GM: Well, no. Once you're actually... You have to become... It's no good just being an Administrator of the machine. You have to become what they call in the Microsoft network the "Domain Administrator", so you've got full control of the entire network. Once you've got that, you can run a program. I used one called Land Search, at the time, which just searches every single computer and picks up files of certain types. But unfortunately at that time it wasn't good enough to lift the keywords within the file, so I had to get creative with filenames.

KC: Wow. So you could have missed something that was top secret just because it was called some innocuous name that didn't trigger any idea?

GM: Yeah. And also I basically realized... There was one network I was on - I won't say which - where because of the technique of... Rather than going around with a CD and installing Windows on every machine individually, you create what's called an image and then you shoot that image across the network on to each machine. On this particular network the image had been made with a blank administrator password, so I had 5,000 machines all with blank administrator passwords. What was the question there?

KC: How do you search something like that?

GM: Oh right, yeah. That's what I started to realize. It's just too huge a job for one person. I thought: Cripes, it would take me years and years and years. And it did become boring because most of the time you find nothing. And also my relationship was going down the pan. I left my job. I was going down the pan, wasn't eating properly, wasn't washing properly. It was a proper unhealthy obsession.

KC: So you were really motivated, though, on a certain level.

GM: Yeah. I thought I was doing something that would ultimately benefit a lot of people, so...

KC: Well, I think there are a lot of people out there that would support the right to know on a certain level - certainly free energy. And look, if we're sending officers off-world, then what are we doing using things like the Space Shuttle, ancient machinery that's blowing up in space?

GM: Yeah. I think what you're saying about hacking to find stuff out, I think I wouldn't advise anyone to do it, or anything like that. But there have been plenty of times in history where you can only gain freedom by breaking the law... Jesus himself, I remember in the Bible, telling people off where poor people were stealing food off the table and, you know, they were cutting their hands off. Things like that. They're poor, they're starving. Let them steal a little bit. How's it going to hurt you?

KC: Right. You know, do you envision a future for yourself?

GM: I'd like this whole thing to be dropped, or at least to be tried in my own country. That's the first thing. That's obviously taking up a lot of my energy at the moment. Beyond that, I'm absolutely fed up with fixing people's computers. [Kerry laughs] I'd like to follow my singing ambition, which is where my main passion lies - singing and song-writing.

KC: Oh... great. OK!

GM: I'm sick of machinery, and technology, and fast living, and profit.

KC: OK. So, is there anything else that you'd want to tell people about this experience? About where you were at, those two years? Obviously it's a few years later and you're kind of older and wiser, but you know, is there a message [Gary smiles] within what you were doing back then? If you can place yourself back then.

GM: Yeah. [looks directly into camera and speaks seriously] *Always Listen to Your Girlfriend.* [laughs]

KC: [laughs] OK. I hear that. Very good!

OK. Well, this is Kerry Cassidy, and we've been talking here with Gary McKinnon and having a beer [Gary raises his glass to the camera] out in the back of a local pub here in London, on the outskirts. Isn't that right?

GM: That's correct.

KC: And I do have one other question. I'm wondering. Do you think, to this day, that you've got organizations that are using that kind of administrative blank password, duplicating desktops?

GM: Right. well, I'm not sure, but I mean... Is it the Government Accounting Office over there? Or the General Accounting Office? They put out a report every year praising federal security in the critical national infrastructure. I read that every year, and every year it doesn't get any better. So I think... I'd stake a hefty amount of money that if I went and did that again today, you could probably do the same thing again. Yeah.

KC: So what that actually means is that there could easily be some people out there that are coming across the same things you are.

GM: Right, I reckon.

KC: They're just not getting caught.

GM: Yeah. [shrugs, smiles]

KC: All right. Now, just in terms of the ET situation, did you ever have a sighting yourself? Or have you ever had, you know, any interactions with other races, other beings from other planets?

GM: No. I saw something once when I was about, maybe 11 or 12, I think. It was just a light in the sky. It was night time and it wasn't moving in a straight line. It was moving very erratically [draws side-to-side zigzag line in the air] - in a general direction, but it was moving very erratically side to side. And I thought: It's not a meteor and it's not a satellite. But I didn't know what it was. It wasn't an aeroplane. The lateral motion was quite fast.

KC: OK.

GM: And my stepfather had seen some stuff, and had dreams about UFOs. He lived in Falkirk, near Bonnybridge, and Bonnybridge is now quite a hotspot for UFO sightings. And he was a sci-fi fan, got me into sci-fi when I was young, and that kind of sowed the seed of that kind of stuff. And also, God, just the thought of meeting beings from somewhere else! That would be better than swimming with dolphins, wouldn't it? [smiles]

KC: [laughs] Good point. So, did you do any investigation of your own government, or are you at liberty to say?

GM: Let me put it this way: our government security is very, very, very, very good.

KC: Oh really? How about that.

GM: Yeah. But then again, so's the CIA, in Langley. That's very, very, very, very good as well.

KC: But you were able to get into the Pentagon and you were able to get into the NSA?

GM: Yeah, but that wasn't via breaking their security mechanisms as such. That was via a very old technique called "trust relationship exploitation". You start off in, say, a Navy logistics site which isn't well protected. And because you're already coming from a dot-mil internet address, then all the other dot-mils trust you. So you gradually go up the hill and get in deeper.

KC: OK. Huh. So were you reading emails? During this time, were you able to come across that kind of thing?

GM: No. I made it a personal rule not to read people's emails.

KC: Oh. That's interesting.

GM: I mean, I was looking for documentation, not communiqués. Once you start reading emails, Crikey, what a lot of data to sift through...

KC: Right. What about the Majestic... are you familiar with the Majestic website with Majestic documents? Top secret documents, some of which have been exposed?

GM: Yeah. I've heard about that. See, at the time I wasn't really into the UFO scene. I was not really in the act, you see. There is lots of stuff I wasn't aware of. And if I had've been, I probably would have done a better job and got more out of it. But as far as I know the Majestic things aren't proven to be real or false yet, are they. But I don't like to trust anything that I don't know is absolute fact, which is why I went to find out for myself rather than, you know...

KC: All right. Well, thank you very much, Gary. This has been great. And we're going to try to call Jerry Pippin now, who's helped set this up for us. And we hope to hear a lot more from you. We'd love to know what you're carrying in your back pocket, so to speak. [Gary smiles] I hope the day will come when disclosure allows you to actually reveal as much as you may have come across.

GM: Well, I didn't say I was carrying anything in my back pocket! [laughs]

KC: Absolutely. I understand. But you gotta understand that, you know, there's always the question... and it's a fascinating subject.

All right. Well, thank you very much.

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