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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Bell's Site 'Hack Hoax' Draws Backlash

From: **UFO UpDates - Toronto** <updates@globalserve.net>
Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 04:54:33 -0500
Fwd Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 04:54:33 -0500
Subject: Bell's Site 'Hack Hoax' Draws Backlash

Source: Jeff Rense's 'Sightings'

<http://www.sightings.com/ufo3/backlash.htm>

Bell's Site Hack Hoax Drawing Strong Backlash 4-1-99

From: Clyde Lewis <clyde@earthbroadcasting.com Ground Zero -
<http://www.clydelewis.com>
To: Sightings
Subject: Fw: GROUND ZERO UPDATE:
--April Fools day prank from Art Bell
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 18:46:15 -0700

GROUND ZERO UPDATE - April Fools day "prank" from Art Bell

Ground Zero Reported this morning that the Art Bell Web Page was hacked by the Beograd Hackers. Keith Rowland Art Bell's Webmaster has now stated that it was an April Fools "prank" devised by Bell and Himself. If this is the case, then why was it listed at <http://www.2600.com> as being Legit? Ground Zero mirrored the site, and so did 2600.com. The Art Bell site has now been changed.

After the announcement it seems a bit of a backlash has occurred. While Art Bell feels that using a tragedy is all in fun and is proving a point, some are not so impressed. This "prank" was not only reported on 2600.com as legit it also found it's way to the Drudge report, MSNBC and many other credible sources for information. This has developed unwittingly into a gross publicity stunt and For that Ground Zero issues an apology.

After we were made aware of the "prank" Ground Zero did some checking. We Contacted 2600.com To let them know of what had happened. We asked if it would be possible to track just who hacked what and what hacked whom. We received a prompt response from Emmanuel Goldstein. He wrote;

"There's no way to verify one way or the other since that's the nature of a hacked site. April 1st is the best date for a bogus hacked site but it's impossible to know whether or not it's a joke when we report on it unless it's clearly pointed out in the text or the source. Therefore, his saying we were "fooled" is about as accurate as fooling someone with an unloaded gun during a stickup."

Biff Macki of 2600.com responded also:

"In cases like these it's hard to know for certain who was

responsible. The Art Bell "hack" is pretty suspicious.

It wouldn't make much sense for politically motivated hackers or "hacktivists" to hack a website that agrees with their message, what would be the point? The idea usually would be to hack a counter site so that people looking for the other side's opinion, are forced to hear yours instead. Also vast majority of hacked sites don't have such clean formatting, or look so pretty (they're busy trying to get into the site, not coding HTML). There are other little things like the filenames and directory structure of the graphics which make it look like an in-house job.

None of these things determine for certain one way or the other, but given that it's April Fool's day, and that he's announced that it was a joke, I'm inclined to believe him. I have sent an inquiry to a group in Kosovo who may know more about the Beograd hacker scene.. We'll see if anything comes of it.

The Bottom line is whether or not you trust Art Bell. One day he says he is a Journalist, the next he is a mere entertainer relying on the maturity and wisdom of his listeners.

<snip>

A listener Comments on the Art Bell Site:

"You sick bastard! This April fools joke has got to be one of the most horrible ones I've seen yet! How dare you make fun of all the suffering? My God! Posting pictures of people with legs torn off, etc. That was not funny. You should be ashamed of yourself! You are a horrible person! All respect I've had for you and Art is now gone. Keith, what the hell were you thinking?"

We can only guess what he was thinking. That Maybe he has come to a point where he is untouchable? incorrigible? He constantly points out that he is the master of late night. With over 400 stations under his belt. With appearances on Millennium and Larry King, its easy to think that you have made it and that the whole world is banking on your every word. You hear that Art? It's the sound of radios switching off. Just a little April fools joke.

Clyde Lewis

From: Kim Burrafato <lensman@stardrive.org> To: skywatch@ltlb.com
Subject: Re: (Skyopen) Art gets Hacked

Right. And if anyone out there believes a word of that Bell sh*t, then you really ARE an April Fool! The hacker net, particularly the people at 2600, said Bell's site was definitely hacked into. Once again, Bell &Co. are simply doing what they do best - lying to the public. Thank goodness for media people like Jeff Rense, who actually knows of what he speaks, and actually reads his guests' books. Bell is nothing more than an egomaniacal "entertainer"/moron, who more than likely is operating under someone else's shadowy dizinformatzia agenda. Da?

"Skywatch International Inc." wrote:

from www.artbell.com... <Is this a joke like his quitting? LOL
Jim

April Fools Prank During the beginning hours of April 1st, we pulled an April Fools Prank Hack on our own web site. Many of you were fooled, but we're here to tell you it was indeed posted by us. The site did not get hacked by any outside organization.

Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 11:51:47 +1000 From: vince@holon.net
To:Sightings Subject: Art's Prank

Dear Mr Rense

I e-mailed this to Art Bell, though I thought I'd share this

commentary with you as well.

Kind regards

Vincent M. AUSTRALIA _____

Dear Mr Bell

Yeah, great April fool's prank. Within the context of trying to understand the reasoning behind your April Fool's joke, I find it intriguing to hear you say: "Though I do not agree in any way with what the Serbs are REPORTED to be doing, it is none of our damn business", saying that if the bombings are part of the NWO, then you want no part of it. And yet later on, you say: "If we must act beyond our own borders, then let us help those displaced by the madness". We ARE involved, Mr Bell, by mere fact that we are witnesses to the event, regardless of whether bombings occur or not. And by helping those "displaced by the madness", then we need to go beyond our own borders, our boundaries and if necessary, our own comfort zones.

Kosovo is not just about political or ethnic ideologies, Mr Bell. It is about nation being concerned about nation, and about concern for our fellow human-beings. It is also about understanding what is appropriate action to take when we do witness carnage and evidence of ethnic cleansing.

Kosovo, like the Gulf War, is also about media propaganda. We see it every day, and it shields us from understanding where the real origins of these conflicts lie. The ethnic war is just a front and an excuse used by those hidden ones who pull the strings and desire and strategize for a certain outcome. Those 'hidden' ones would prefer that our attention be dispersed and yet glued to the veneer of the situation, so that hopefully as many of us remain so horrified, confused or dazed that we just don't want to know any more about it, let alone understand it by scratching below the surface. In that light, Kosovo is about understanding and a prod for many of us to 'wake up', and your prank doesn't assist that cause. Whatever point you chose to make, dressing the plight of the these displaced Kosovan groups as a prank has only added its quota to the mass profusion of confusion already present. Why not be a voice that fosters understanding and clarity, instead of sensationalism.

Yeah, great joke, Art!

From: Autmnkiten@aol.com Date: Fri, 2 Apr 1999 00:58:42 EST
Subject: Re: Art Bell April Fools "Prank" To:
webmaster@sightings.com MIME-Version: 1.0 Reply-To:
Autmnkiten@aol.com

Since you gave plenty of space to the people who sent letters condemning Art Bell and his webmaster Keith Rowland for their April Fools "Prank", perhaps you would be so kind as to post this in defense of what they did. I expected more out of the people who join me in listening to Art's show every night. He presents facts and ideas (always with the caveat that it is up to us to believe them or take them worth a grain of salt) in a format that allows his listeners to act as free thinking adults. This is refreshing in a time when main stream media spoon feeds us what they think we should know. I suppose uptight people could construe some of the things Art has done as being in "bad taste", but I do not believe his disappearance in October was a "stunt". I have never doubted his sincerity, even when I do not agree with his philosophy, and he seemed very upset at that time about having to leave. Also, Art was not taking advantage of the situation in Kosovo to make a joke. He was taking advantage of April Fools Day to get a message out. And look how many people's attention the message got! People have accused Art of not supporting the troops because he doesn't support the Nato air strikes. Well, Art was in Vietnam. He probably knows the difference first-hand. Nothing Art has said on the air or that Keith has posted on the site has given me the feeling Art is against the troops. I applaud them for taking an original approach to dealing with this conflict while most others just sit back and accept the fact that we are at war again.

Sincerely, Kelly M. Ener

Kellmarie@yahoo.com

SIGHTINGS HOMEPAGE

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