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LBPD Backs 'Somali Pirates' in Business Hijackings

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Part 1 of 2 Parts

By: Stephen Downing

Tracy Alcantar and his attorney, Jerry L. Steering, call them the Somali Pirates. Their names are Eugene Rotondo, Jerome Chiaro and James Wieser.

When telling his story to the *Beachcomber*, Tracy Alcantar, 60, a retired mortgage broker said, "We use to refer to them as the knuckle heads, but I decided that Somali Pirates was a better description. My attorney liked it."

Alcantar was referring to the year 2000 piracy attacks off the coast of Somalia that threatened international shipping when Somali Pirates were enabled to hijack ships with impunity because of the absence of an effective national coast guard.

Alcantar said, "It fit perfectly. These guys take over a business and sell its goods with impunity just like those pirates did when they hijacked the ships. And the LBPD helped them get away with it."

Alcantar began his story by showing the *Beachcomber* a videotape date stamped August 25, 2016, 7:20 a.m. – a Thursday.

Two men he identified as Eugene Rotondo and Jerome Chiaro stroll up from different directions, look around and casually stop on each side of the sidewalk leading to the front door of the Acapulco Inn (AI) on 2nd Street in Belmont Shore.

A third man, James (Jimmy) Wieser approaches from a vehicle parked at the curb. Wieser glances around and strolls casually past Rotondo and Chiaro to the AI's front door.

Wieser glances around and then stoops to look into the mail slot.

Alcantar, whose investment made him one of the majority owners of the Acapulco Inn four years prior, narrates the video, "So, that's Jimmy. See him looking through the mail slot, trying to see if anyone is inside?"

Alcantar explains that Wieser owns the Thirsty Isle bar on Carson Street near Lakewood Boulevard and Jerome Chiaro is owner of The Annex, on Stearns Street at Lakewood Boulevard.

He told the *Beachcomber* "both places are watering holes for LBPD's East Division. Both of them have the Police Officer's Association (POA) membership support plaques hanging in their bars."

The *Beachcomber* reviewed the POA website and found that it solicits business owner's financial support with the message, "Whether you are looking to create brand visibility or direct response, we've got you covered."

Alcantar points again to the video screen, "Now, Wieser is going to go back to his car."

The video shows James Wieser turn, give Rotondo and Chiaro a furtive nod and walk back to the vehicle parked at the curb, leaving the video frame for several seconds.

Wieser then re-enters the frame holding a power drill close to his chest. Rotondo and Chiaro alter their positions giving Wieser cover from the street.

Alcantar continues his narration, "See the drill? He's got both Gene Rotondo – one of the guys I bought the place from – and his backup, Jerome Chiaro, giving him cover as pedestrians are walking by with their dogs."

The deadbolt is cut, Wieser pushes the door open and the three men enter Alcantar's business.

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Alcantar continued his story as the interior security cameras pick up the three men inside, "So, this guy Gene Rotondo, he used to be an owner of Legends and an owner of the Acapulco Inn (AI). The AI was a dead zone back in 2010 and Rotondo and another one of his partners, Timothy Moriarty, wanted to sell."

Alcantar shuts off the video and continues, "Me, I'm a retired mortgage guy but my friend Hawaiian Bob (Aristides Gascon) who knows about running a place like the AI says, 'well why don't you and I join forces and buy those guys out?' So, I check with my wife and she says, 'Heck yeah! We can turn that place around.' So, we bought them out and over the next couple of years we made the AI a real success. So much so that these guys wanted it back."

Alcantar continues with the complex story involving years of litigation he and his partner underwent "With them pushing to make something out of some worthless shares they bought from the bankruptcy court, their fraud, phony legal filings and us spending hundreds of thousands in legal fees to fight this complete nonsense."

Alcantar said the day of the break-in his attorney had "just wrapped up the case in Judge Klein's Long Beach courtroom and finalized a sanction for attorney's fees in our favor."

Alcantar continued, "So, our attorney is in court getting that done the morning these pirates break into my business. I'm at home and around 9:25 a.m. and I get a text message from a number I'd never seen before but later found out it came from Jimmy Wieser's cell phone. It reads, 'You might want to come to AI for a change of management.'"

Alcantar said, "Right away I smelled something. So, I called my attorney who was just finishing up in court to meet me there. I got in my car and headed out. On my way I saw a LBPD black and white and waved him down."

Alcantar said that Sergeant Mark Kosoy, working out of LBPD's East Division, occupied the black and white. He briefed Kosoy about his suspicions that an illegal takeover was in process at the AI and asked the sergeant to accompany him, which he agreed to do.

When they arrived, Alcantar said, "My attorney was waiting for me outside and the three of them, Rotondo, Chiaro and Wieser, were inside sitting at the bar with all these so-called legal papers spread out to allege their phony ownership."

Alcantar said, "So, I walked in and went up to Rotondo, took him by the arm and said, 'You got to go. Now! Rotondo says, 'Don't touch me' and then the sergeant steps in and says, 'You can't touch those people.' I told the sergeant, like I had told him before, they don't belong here. I don't even know how they got in here."

Alcantar continues, "Then my attorney steps up and tells the sergeant about having been in court that morning. He shows him the papers related to the hearing and tells the sergeant how the judge put sanctions on Rotondo, pointing out that they had no legal right to even be in the place."

Alcantar shakes his head, "And the sergeant says, 'how do I know any of that's true?' That's when Rotondo starts showing the sergeant all the so-called legal paper's he's got laid out on the bar and for some reason the sergeant starts buying into his phony side of the story."

Alcantar told the *Beachcomber* that at about this time he was getting hot and Sergeant Kosoy told his attorney that he should, "Get me out of there."

"I objected," Alcantar said. "This was a hijack; I didn't even know how they got in there. It had to be some kind of break in. I said, how can the police back something like this up?"

Alcantar said his attorney told him that the sergeant was not listening to any of it and advised that they should leave and get a court order, something that the three men who broke in did not have.

"A court order, that's something that Sergeant Kosoy should have been asking them for," Alcantar said.

Alcantar continued, "So, I gave up. We left, hired another set of attorney's that cost us another \$10,000 and went back to Judge Klein's court the next morning."

Judge Kline was very familiar with the case, "Alcantara said, "and not at all happy with the blatant violations pulled by Rotondo and his pirate friends. We got the court order and they were removed from the premises that afternoon."

Alcantar showed the *Beachcomber* a copy of the court order, as well as court documents that supported the litigation to which he referred to in his story.

Alcantar said that after he took possession of the AI he discovered that the pirates damaged the security videos and it took several days to be restored by a specialist.

Alcantar played the eight-camera security video (no audio) for the *Beachcomber*.

It showed the break in at 7:23 a.m.

It showed Wieser make a phone call and while on the phone step outside, look up at the building to verify the address and then re-enter and end the call at 7:26 a.m.

It showed Chiaro clean up the inside and outside debris from the break in at 7:39 a.m.

It showed a uniform LBPD officer (Herrea) arrive at 7:40 a.m., shake hands with each of the three men, enter into a discussion, look at their papers and then shake hands again before exiting the premises at 7:45 a.m.



FEATURED VIDEO



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It showed Weiser texting on his cell phone at 9:25 a.m., the same time that Alcantar received the mysterious text that read, "You might want to come to AI for a change of management."

It showed a technician enter and install a temporary credit card processing machine at 9:36 a.m.

It showed Sgt. Kosoy and another officer (Herrea again) arrive on scene at 9:59 a.m. Alcantar's attorney is present. Alcantar arrives seconds later and leaves the scene a few minutes later.

At 10:07 a.m. Sgt. Kosoy shakes hands with the pirates and exits along with the uniformed officer (Herrea).

Alcantar told the *Beachcomber* that after reviewing the video he called East Division and informed them that he wanted to report a burglary.

Sgt. Kosoy responded.

Alcantar said, "I showed the sergeant the entire video, pointed out how they broke in, showed him the temporary credit card machine being installed, showed him test receipts on the machine and told him what several of my customers reported the pirates did the night before selling our inventory, taking in cash without ringing it up and running sales through their bootleg credit card machine."

Alcantar told the *Beachcomber* that the sergeant shrugged, told him the burglary and theft of his inventory was a civil matter and refused to take a crime report.

After reviewing this story, Tom Barham, a former Los Angeles Sheriff's lieutenant, combat veteran and distinguished constitutional rights attorney commented as follows:

"The crime of burglary is committed if a person enters, among other things, a shop, store or other building with the intent to commit grand theft, petty theft or any felony. Penal Code 459.

The police are obligated to take reports of alleged crimes and convey those reports to either a city prosecutor or district attorney. In Long Beach, the city prosecutor is responsible for misdemeanor and infraction prosecutions whereas the Los Angeles County District Attorney prosecutes felony crimes.

"It seems that the good sergeant didn't stay in his lane when he decided for the prosecutors that this was a civil matter," Barham said.

Alcantar and his partner went back to running the AI – but there would be a second take over by the Somali Pirates 13 months later – their criminality would again be immunized and protected by the LBPD and this time Tracy Alcantar would report it to the LBPD's Internal Affairs Division.

Part Two of this two-part series will report on Alcantar's experiences with LBPD Internal Affairs and the staff of the Citizen Police Complaint Commission (CPCC), the classification of police conduct during the second criminal invasion as No Further Action (NFA) and how – as Alcantar said, "I came to learn just how deep the cover-up of police misconduct is allowed to thrive in the City of Long Beach."

Stephen Downing is a resident of Long Beach and a retired LAPD deputy chief of police.

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Sun, 10/14/2018 - 3:53pm

This article is a joke. Tracy Alcantar is a fraud, who embezzles money. His attorney Derek Paradis has been reprimanded by the Calif. State Bar for improper activities related to this business and others. The AI partners found out Tracy was embezzling and had to get him removed through the court system.

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Mon, 10/15/2018 - 12:40am