Coast to Coast, Dec 17, 2017

Transcribed by Desta Barnabe

So, heard any UFO news lately? Anything at all come to mind? I mean, what a week? What an amazing week or week-end.

 About 2 weeks ago I sent out this cryptic tweet, cryptic on purpose and it said, you know, when it comes to news, all road lead to Las Vegas, all big news stories have a Las Vegas link. But it didn’t say what the story I was referring to, and now you can guess.

Major news organizations all over the country, all over the world, developed severe cases of UFO fever; they are scrambling for stories, sources, documents, trying to get up to spend. a few of them on TV, you know, if you have seen the stories over the last couple of days they have thought out as many of the same smirks and clichés they always use when he ufo subject is mentioned, but I think this time it's harder to get away with the usual snark because the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, amongst many others, have reported in front page stories, the face that there was a secret project, authorized by the Pentagon, and key members of Congress to study what we might call UFOs, anomalous aerial threats.

The kind of unknown objects encountered by military and commercial pilots and by warships at nuclear missile bases other sensitive sites, by our military forces all over the globe. That was the premise for this, what turned out to be a 5 year program studying, to find out how these objects or craft can do what they are known to do, because we can’t do it.

Some of the encounters, as we now know, have been dramatic in the extreme me. the now famous "tick-tac case' the USS Nimitz carrier group, 2004 up the coast of san Diego, we have discussed the program that that incident on this program a couple of times over the last 2 years.

Jeremy Corbell was here last time to talk about it, we have now learned much more, back in October when a panel of former insiders went public at an event launched by a rock star Tom Delonge, a former intelligence official named Chris Mellon told us that day that the Nimitz incident was one of several during a two week period there and since that incident our military forces have had run ins with these giant tic tac type UFO craft at other places.

If you have been in a cave for the last couple of days and haven’t read about the secret UFO study, about why the Pentagon took this seriously. We have articles on the Coast website that can bring you up to date.

After the New York Times piece broke, Politico had its own story then the Washington Post, NBC news, CNN, BBC; probably dozens of news outlets have taken a stab at it by now.

I think it will take a while for some of these organizations to learn the basics. I mean they have routinely bashed and dumped all over UFOs for so long, I don’t think they know as much as say the casual coast to Coast listener knows because until it became their story it was all nonsense, right? I don’t think that's true anymore.

The New York Times played it straight, they talked to Nevada senator Harry Reid and got the lowdown on how this program was created, they got a comment from Robert Bigelow about how he housed the program with him and his aerospace company under something else called BAASS.

Some of you might remember that Bob Bigelow first spoke publically about the program on this show. He announced a couple of years ago that he was involved in a new UFO Research project and that he had a partner.

He didn’t say who the partner was but it was pretty clear who the suspects might be... supposedly this program was cancelled after five years and 22 million dollars because it didn’t come up with anything no useful information, well that is simply not true.

A few of the things have not been printed about this program, they have not been made public yet but I can tell ya that that research project produced mountains of information, they had 38 major reports, some of these reports were hundreds of pages long.

One that was mentioned by the Post had 490 pages that was just one of the reports, that information has not been made public in the report it but a lot of it likely will be. It was created under a private entity, I think because  it was not searchable by FOIA, and ya, I knew about some of it, from the beginning, around 2007

I think because it was when they first were working on securing funding for it. I wasn’t allowed to know all of the information, only some of the basics, on the condition that I would not report it until or unless I got the green light for it, but that it was eventually going to be made public.

So you know I’ve had to sit on it for a long time, but I was allowed to be a fly on the wall, some of the more sensitive stuff I couldn’t know about but I picked up bits and pieces here and there for instance there was one line in the New York Times story that should have jumped out at everyone who read that piece.

It references certain material, exotic material of unknown origin that was kept in a secure building, here in Las Vegas, on the Bigelow site.

I haven’t seen this stuff. I’m not allowed to do that, but I’ve heard plenty about it. For all intents and purposes to say it shouldn’t exist. It is certainly engineered by someone, by some technology, unknown to us, to the US government. Its' super thin, super resilient, multi-layered… What is it?

And I guess there is a propulsion system that has been studied, that was first revealed in these military videos, the first ever formally released by the Pentagon of what we would call UFOs. Recorded on video by military pilots and now released.

Those are the videos that Tom Delonge has been promising to unveil and now he has. The first two are posted on his To the Stars website, along with analysis by the former Skunkworks engineer, Steve Justice. I think we have a posted link of the Coast site, if you haven’t seen them yet, it is amazing.

You can hear the pilot’s voices. They react as if they know it's amazing too. I think more videos will follow thanks to a guy named Luis Elizondo. For ten years it was his job at the Pentagon to analyse and study UFO information. Photos, videos, reports that would come in from various military sources or units or sensors around the world. A lot of them.

Luis Elizondo is one of the men that were on stage with Tom Delonge back in early October. He quit his job at the Pentagon because he felt this subject was not being taken seriously and he wanted to work on it fulltime, figure out what was going on.

Because he and others know, as Senator Reid said, “the Russians and the Chinese are studying this stuff too they take it much more seriously than we have.”

 That was enough of a reason for the Senator and other lawmakers to authorize the funding for this secret study. Remember we need to get around to figuring this stuff out. I think at its height the study; here in Nevada had 46 full time investigators.

They operated out of a security facility in North Las Vegas. They formed into rapid response teams to be dispatched into the sites of UFO incidents. Get there quick, and interview witnesses, collect evidence, study what it means, what technology may have been involved.

Much of that information I think has been private details about the witnesses so it can’t be released until it gets scrubbed a little bit, but it's going to come out.

You know three days after the Delonge announcement event back in October; he (DeLonge) brought Luis Elizondo to Las Vegas to meet with Bob Bigelow. I was invited to join them for dinner.

 I don’t remember what we ate, but I will always remember that conversation, of some of the things I was told and shown that night, I mean Holy Moly, and I’m not going to get into it except to say that Luis Elizondo had written a letter to his boss, Secretary of Defense James Mattis, in which he explains he is resigning because he wanted, this needs to be taken seriously, he wants to study it.

I think I’ll probably write my own stories on this stuff pretty soon, injecting some details about how the Pentagon study intersected with Skinwalker Ranch in Utah, a topic of some interest here.

You know no one can say for sure when the New York Times story was going to break, it's been delayed several times, dates were changed, which is the reason Tom Delonge would announced something “Hey, it’s coming soon!”, and then he had to back track more than once and people groaned about it but it wasn’t something that was under his control and now it's out.

So, let's talk about it. I’ve invited Alejandro Rojas of Open Minds to join me for the first 2 hours tonight to talk about the biggest UFO stories of 2017, kind of anticipating that this big story might be out by now and lucky for us, it is. So we will start with that. There are many other dramatic, important incidents and stories out there from 2017 that we can talk about as well and we will get to as many as we can and who knows what other surprises might pop up here…

In a moment Alejandro Rojas, UFO news of 2017

Alejandro Rojas is a radio host for *Open Minds Radio*, part of Open Minds production, where he is a writer and research specialist dealing with UFO and related phenomena and topics for several years, for several years, you might recall, he was sort of the spokesperson for MUFON and he has been my guest several times on my program, Alejandra, always great to have you here.

**Knapp:** you and I were talking and we were kind of hopeful that maybe we would have something really big to talk about but we didn’t know for sure. There is an amazing list of stuff that we are going to go over, but this is the toper, the story that broke this week, can you give me your general reaction to the news that came out?

**Rojas:** The news to me is Huge, I mean, it's really big, we haven’t had really a government acknowledgement of an unknown object for literally decades, you know I don’t think since Bluebook closed. So to have that is big, let alone for years. Those of us that have been researching, talking about, there have been investigations that have gone on after 1969 since the Air Force stopped doing their investigations, despite what the Air Force says, even in their own documents.

But this is an acknowledgement of that and you know a lot of the news outlets, the *New York Times*, *Politico*, they haven’t really given us that credit even though they've been making fun of people who look into to this and have been dismissive especially of these claims that there are investigations that have gone on past 1969.

You know this is a vindication to show that it was true, this has gone on and it should have been taking on more seriously. Beyond that, you talk about the intersection with Skinwalker Ranch, there are so many intersections with this field and it’s kind of like this whole project has been in the background of the Ufology and all this research going on.

I’m able to connect some dots that, for instance, you mentioned how I worked for the MUFON and I was doing PR, I was a spokesperson for them in 2009 when they had a partnership with Bigelow to investigate, to help Bigelow collect some information, essentially to share information with Bigelow and Bigelow would help fund some investigations with MUFON.

We were asked to sign a nondisclosure agreement and I thought that would be a bad idea, I was a PR guy and I didn’t want to accidently say something I shouldn’t have but some of the guys that did sign it said “You would be really fascinated if you knew who was really funding all of this”.

So I think I have a little better insight into all of this now. And that is just some of was many, many connections and so my head is spinning as I’ve been attempting to unpack all of this information and you had mentioned earlier that it had felt like this story coming out a week ago and that's how it feels to me, it's shocking just to sit here and to thing that this story only came out yesterday.

**Knapp:** well you know you get the feeling that there is more to come. Back in February you and Open Minds announced that Tom Delonge was the UFO Researcher of the Year and I know you got grief for it, and there were people that people were complaining about it.

The same king of things that we catch here but I think this is also vindication for Tom, I think that explains what has been going on with his organization, and that their plans are real.

They were promising to have these videos to come out I was thinking that it'd be great to have Tom on the show. That is not possible, but we do have somebody who's just called in and its Chris Mellon who is the guy who was on stage with Tom Delonge, the guy who To The Stars Academy, he was a long-time insider dealing with classified projects with the government, Chris, great to have you with us

**Mellon:** George, it's great to be here, I’m delighted.

**Knapp:** I know it’s pretty late where you are, I just wanted to get your take on it. what I was told, Chris, is that you were instrumental in getting the New York Times on track on this story and I wanted to know if it's played out the way you wanted it to play out.

**Mellon:** Yes, it's a good start, it is making it more legitimate to talk about the issue in terms of the mainstream press and the public, I think it's starting a conversation that is long overdue, I think that there's a lot of good questions being raised and I hope that it's going to begin to list some of the veil of secrecy and help us engage more people in academia and the scientific community as well as the government to get answers.

**Knapp:** You know you have taken so much grief, Tom Delonge has taken so much grief, because of perceived delays, but now it becomes kind of obvious that you were hoping that this would kick things off and it wasn’t in your control?

**Mellon:** well that's right, I mean, I think having such a highly respected mainstream news organization independently vet the information with their reporters and their processes and of course their always concerned about their reputation and being embarrassed and so for them to wrap (??) and this story and go with it on their first page and also have a second story naval aviators involved in an incident off the coast of San Diego in 2004, and describe their experiences.

I think really helps to make the point that the phenomena is real, that this is not as many people perceive, that are not really familiar with the data that happens only to people that have had too much to drink some nights or misperceiving misperceiving some natural phenomena, the most credible, possible observers in the world, naval aviators, drug tested, security clearances, trained observers, operating in groups have been encountering these objects which are simultaneously verified on the worlds most sophisticated navel radar platforms and airborne command posts, all simultaneously, over a period of weeks in some cases, on a recurring basis.

So the skepticism that some people have is healthy and normal, but it is also derived mostly from a lack of recognition familiarity with the data and when you have the opportunity to sit with some of these naval aviators as I have, and they look you in the eye and they tell you and they recount these experiences in detail.

And then you have independent validation for example you can see it in video yourself, some of what they saw and encountered, it really helps to change the equation. It's very compelling and really underscores that the conversation needs to be about how we come to better understand this phenomena and what it portends and less worry about what was done in the past, what was not done or should have been done but what can we do going forward.

**Rojas:** You know, that’s what I think has been really difficult and I have heard interviews done with Chris and I’m familiar with his involvement in this field and I' know that it's been difficult to find that legitimacy to try to uncover information and I know George and I struggle with this all the time as well, having credible sources, credible information and not going down that rabbit hole of conspiracy  that you often hear about or gets  a lot of news and is highlighted in the U.K's tabloids and especially on a daily basis.

That's what's wonderful about this material and what’s wonderful about a lot of the groups Chris has been involved with to demonstrate there can be a phenomenon without the major kind of conspiracy that people think about.

The problem with the big conspiracies is that it leads people to believe that they can’t interface with their government. They can’t work with their government. There is no solution to work together towards discovery. I think this is an example of where that is not the case, that it can be done that we now have access to Luis Elizondo and that our words were heard by the right people, by our representatives, that they did do something to fund some research.

It's nice that finally that information is being shared with the public, too bad it wasn’t done in the past but the great thing that Chris says is that now we have a better idea of the landscape and how we can move forward together....

We are talking with my scheduled guest AR and a surprised guest, Chris Mellon about this blockbuster UFO story that broke this week and other UFO news of the year...

**Knapp:** Chris Mellon, did you know about this UFO study while you were on the inside, if you can say? And could you comment on the reasons it ended, because the one story I read said because they just weren’t finding anything that was useful.

**Mellon:** Sure, great questions, George. I had departed the department when this program begun - when this funding was acquired to begin this program, so I was not aware of it because it did not exist.

As to your question in regard to why did the funding end, Great question. I think the best way for me to answer that is with a very short story. So, in the week of the Desert One rescue fiasco during the Carter administration when we tried to rescue the hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran and suffered casualties and a national humiliation, there was a clearly identified shortfall in long-range capabilities to insert and exfiltrate special operations forces.

The Senate on Armed Services Committee as much as Senator Reid tried to do with his funding along with Senator Stevens and Senator Glen. The Senate on Armed Services Committee at that time earmarked funds appropriated money with their colleagues to directive that air lift shortfall and year after year the Air Force would reprogram the money for those helicopters to purchase more F-16's.

At the time we had over 500 F-16s, we had almost none of the airlift capabilities required for these special operations forces but they didn’t have a mission at a high level. Even as vast of our defense budget is, it's 600 billion dollars, anyone who has been involved will vouch for the fact that there is a voracious competition for resources. If you don’t have somebody who has authority and has an advocate at a high level to compete and to justify the use of those funds, you lose out.

 And that is what happened in this case. it's difficult from the outside to change and to rectify these problems and the bureaucracy that are inevitably gaps and dysfunctional areas, we do some things absolutely magnificently, but it is hard to change through time and it is hard to find support signs for even critical things as I tried to illustrate in that example. If you don’t have the right advocacy and structure inside the bureaucracy. So that was the principle reason that it died in my view and I think that remains a central problem today.

**Knapp:** you are now familiar with the contents with what was collected during that study, do you think it's worthwhile, that the information is worth collecting?

**Mellon:** well, I think it absolutely is, I think it’s unfortunate and inappropriate to judge the necessity and the requirement by dint on what was acquired in that program with an amount of money on an annual basis that is less in total than  we sometimes lose when a part falls off a truck in the defense department.

The figure that was bandied about, they didn’t get all that money other organizations and offices grabbed some of it, but more importantly I think , they did not have an advocate that had the collection in tasking authority to use national assets that are already bought and paid for to try to collect information about this phenomenon. so, with this small amount of money that they had and the short time span, they did the best they could and I credit them greatly in swimming upstream against the atmosphere in which this topic was considered almost heresy, and I do think, for example, that the information on the Nimitz case, which is truly extraordinary, and I hope that some congressional committees will get a briefing on that case and talk to the military personal involved and look them in the eye and listen to these people.

**Knapp:** do you think that will happen? Congressional hearings?

**Mellon:** well, I don’t know if they will have open public hearings, I predict tomorrow there will be some phone calls lobbed into the building. I worked in the Armed Services Committee staff and the Intelligence Committee staff for many years and have a sense of how those things operated and they are very responsive to UFO's in the press.

And so are other people in the top tiers of government across the board. And this is going to raise a lot of questions in their minds and they are going to want to know what really was going on with that program and what other programs are there like this and what is the evidence.

Some of those people, there are enough of these committees and there are enough of these curious and dutiful people out there that they are going to want some answers, I predict. Some of them, they will probably get it in private, they will ask for some briefings. I hope they ask the right questions to the right people. I hope they will call on my colleague Luis Elizondo and others to help them ferret some of this out and if they feel so inclined.

**Knapp:** I have one other question and I’ll let Alejandro jump in as well. I’ll ask what comes next. The NY times mentions Luis Elizondo and his reasons for leaving and now he is with To the Stars, with you, working on this new program. Does To the Stars inherit a study like this? And do these stories directly help the organization and d its mission?

**Mellon:** I think it does and I think it works both ways. We are eager to engage in a number of different ways to raise awareness and understanding. We want to explore this in partnership with others. We are already having a number of productive discussions. We want to explore this through movies and television and books, both fiction and nonfiction, to continue the discussion and examination of the evidence and to promote serious scientific research and we have an aggressive aerospace research effort that we are promoting because we recognize that somebody has cracked the code in terms of some very sophisticated and stunning aeronautical capabilities and achievements in that domain.

So there is a proof principal. We know it can be done and that is hanging like a prize in front of some of our brilliant engineers and they are really eager to chase that and engineers love solving hard problems.

If you know engineers and you work with engineers, you know that's the wonderful thing, problems that most of us would just make our heads hurt and we would just give up, they love that challenge. and this challenge is hanging out in front of them and it's attracting some really top notch people and it's very exciting so

I think it's moving in a great direction and I think if we all keep it, make it about the data and not lead to conclusions and not get too far in front of our headlights and there is a lot of speculation and confusion about terms and people who think that we are leaping to conclusions about what we think the phenomena are about. What we really need is more and better information and perhaps in some cases less speculation and as Alejandro said fewer conspiracy theories and less finger pointing.

**Rojas:** I know one of the things that To The Stars Academy is trying to do, similar to what Bigelow was trying to do with getting involved with the investigation of this phenomena, is to glean the technology that seem to be being observed so now we have more data from Elizondo as far as the videos, but George had eluded to this materials that they may have recovered.

Blumenthal, one of the writers for the *NY Times* article was on MSNBC and he also spoke about these unknown materials that have been collected. Even with what has now come to light is there a potential that this information could be used to develop some technology and help move you all and others along?

**Mellon:** There are a number of interesting threads here and there is more data and some of it of a more hard tangible scientific nature than most people realize.

Some of this is a bit preliminary and is being pursued and examined but I think there are some fruitful avenues along that line.

For example, the very eminent accomplished scientist Dr. Jacque Vallee, who I’m sure you are familiar with, I know George is, I know both of you must be, I know he is collected over the years, he has written about this publically, samples of materials that have been acquired, UFO sighting incidents, for example,  flagged material that has fallen off of.

Those kinds of things are available to some researchers and I think because of some breakthroughs in material sciences technology we have a better understanding, a better ability to access and diagnose some of those materials and I think some of the researchers are finding some getting some interesting results.

That’s not my information, I cannot speak for them, but I do think that is yet another example of the kind of opportunities that are in front of us if people will just take a neutral, open and scientific approach and keep it about the data and not approach the issue with their minds made up based on a lot of assumptions that may not be valid.

**Knapp:** CM thanks you very much....

**Knapp:** yes, it's a big story and to reiterate what he was saying, we don't jump to conclusions, we don't want Senator Reid. I’ve known him since 1980 and you know he had authorized to help get this program underway, he wanted to emphasize that we are not talking about little green men here. We are not talking about aliens from another planet. We are talking about technology that does something that we can’t do, that we would like to be able to do. We don't know where it comes from and that is the reason for the study....