

SALT iConnections NY 2024

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The Real Black Swan Event: The Controlled Disclosure of UAP & Non-Human Intelligence

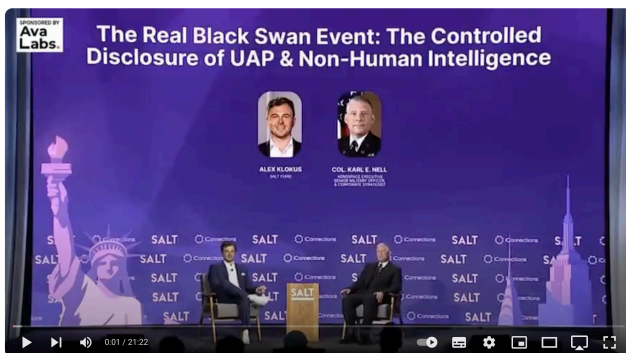
Interview with Army Colonel Karl Nell (Ret)

5:00 PM - 5:20 PM ET

May 21 2024

The Glasshouse, 660 12th Ave, NYC

Video:  SALT iConnections Conference, New York City May, 2024 | Karl Nell (Full Interview)



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Transcript

Hello, everyone.

Thank you for coming this evening.

I'm glad that we are the final talk of this year's SALT event.

And I'm very excited to discuss what I consider to be one of the most consequential questions of our lifetime, which is, are we alone in the universe?

And I'm very lucky to have Karl Nell here joining me for this conversation.

Karl, thank you so much for coming.

And Anthony and AJ over at SALT, thank you so much for hosting this.

So Karl, maybe to begin, can you share a little bit about your background, who you are, and perhaps why people should care what you say?

Sure.

Well, thanks, Alex.

It's a pleasure and honor to be here.

It's a fantastic event.

And I'm glad to see a large bunch of folks that stuck it out to the end for this talk.

So I was fortunate.

I had a four-year ROTC scholarship to Penn.

I graduated with a degree in electrical engineering.

The Army sent me overseas to do Signal Corps engineering projects.

So I did a lot of strategic com projects in Europe.

I ended up working in Army Space Command.

I commanded a satellite ground station war trace to the Joint Chiefs.

I spent some time at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

The Army ultimately sent me to get a master's in mechanical engineering, a master's in strategic studies, graduate work in computer science.

I was on track to stay in, but I decided I wanted to pursue more of a technical career.

So I got out and ended up working at Bell Labs, which was a fantastic place.

Unfortunately, I was there during the Trivestiture that folks may be familiar with, where the company got split up.

I left Bell Labs and ended up working in Lockheed Missiles and Space.

I worked at Northrup Grumman.

I ran strategic technology programs in the defense industry, worked for a lot of the three-letter agencies, ultimately was a deputy CTO for a \$2 billion company.

I was a vice president general manager of a Northern Virginia-based R&D firm.

I stayed in the military in the reserve.

I commanded at every grade level through brigade.

I was fortunate to stand up the Army's newest Expeditionary MI Brigade.

I was the deputy chief of staff for a combatant command.

Ultimately, this experience sort of combined to give me the opportunity to come in and advise Army Futures Command, the largest reorganization in the Army Reserve since really 1973, on how the Army could be more effective.

And my last assignment was involved with the UAP task force, which maybe is the most apropos for this discussion.

And so, Karl, here's the million-dollar question. Do you believe that a higher form of non-human intelligence has visited this planet?

Right.

So non-human intelligence exists.
Non-human intelligence has been interacting with humanity.
This interaction is not new, and it's been ongoing.
And there are unelected people in the government that are aware of that.

*And so, Karl, that is quite a bold statement.
I'm wondering, and I'm curious, how confident are you that that is true?*

There's zero doubt.

*And Karl, what evidence have you seen? What was the moment where you developed this level of conviction?
Because what you're saying is extremely consequential and very important.
And I know that a lot of people here, even perhaps, may not believe that statement.*

Right.

Well, probably a better way to ask that is, how can the folks in the audience come to a common understanding of what this phenomenon is?

And so there's sort of two tracks here.

One is from first principles, and another is actually from the data.

So let's take a look at the data.

So we can look at some folks that have very high-level access to information, like Paul Hellyer, who was the Defense Chief for Canada, has come out and said the same thing.
We can look at Ham Eshed, the former head of Israel's Space Force, has said the same thing.
Chris Mellon, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Intel, SAPCO (Special Access Programs Central Office) has essentially said the same thing.
Lou Elizondo has said the same thing.
David Grush has said the same thing.
David Grush cleared for presidentially-level material.

So you're looking at people that are in a position to know this, and they're telling you the same thing.

You could take a look at the Gang of Eight in the Senate and in Congress.

So there's two members of the Gang of Eight, Marco Rubio and Senator Chuck Schumer, that signed up to the UAP disclosure amendment last year that basically said, they're not being told the truth, and we need to push forward on that.

So that's sort of an overview of some of the data.

From a first principle standpoint, what's so unusual about this realization?

There's billions of stars in the galaxy.
Life here evolved in 500 million years, which is basically a blink of an eye.
We found planets around every star that we looked at.
It's likely that the universe is full of life.

If you look at the SETI program in particular, the SETI program has all the same assumptions that you would accept and probably make with respect to this topic, except that they believe that non-human intelligence is transmitting signals here.

But at the same time, like we're not transmitting signals.

SETI doesn't transmit signals.

And the only signals that are actually broadcast of high enough power into space for somebody to pick up come from broadcast television and ballistic missile early warning systems, which you could argue our technology is moving away from.

We're going to satellite.

We're going to fiber.

Broadcast TV is a thing of the past.

And if you get to some state where society is stable, maybe we don't need ballistic missile early warning systems.

So the other guy is probably not going to transmit.

But what the other guy may do is come here if that's possible to do.

And there's physics models that suggest that that may be possible.

And Karl, I mean, what you're saying is extremely consequential.

And you've referenced other people that have said the same thing that also have similar credibility.

There's similar reasons for why we should believe many of these folks.

Yet the government itself has not formally disclosed.

They've been very reluctant to do that.

Why? Why do you think that is?

So there's six basic reasons.

And this, again, you could draw this out from first principles.

- There's a national security reason.
- There's the lack of a plan.
- There's the potential for societal disruption.
- There's the possibility that there's some non-public agreement.
- There's the potential for misdeeds and the desire to cover up misdeeds.
- And there's just the basic organizational intransigence and lack of priority that might be associated with the topic.

So all these things are factors.

The issue is that really the national security issue subsumes all the others.

And so there's an opportunity maybe to contract the national security issue similarly to what was done with nuclear weapons and nuclear energy, such that nuclear energy is not necessarily classified and is available to the public.

But lack of a plan and the potential for societal disruption are key ingredients that would prevent any responsible leader from coming forward with information that they don't have the means to address in a responsible way.

It would be irresponsible to do that.

OK, so what you're saying is that you have absolute conviction that a higher form of non-human intelligence has visited this planet, that there are factions within our own government that know about this.

Yet we still don't have a plan, and they may represent a security issue.

This may pose a threat to humans.

*Yet you still believe that we should disclose.
Is that right?*

Correct, right.

So there's really three reasons that trump all those others.

And those others are basically valid, like I said.

So the first issue is the moral right.

The government exists for and by the people.

And so the nature of reality is fundamentally not government information.

People have a right to know the world in which we live, and the pursuit of happiness requires that knowledge.

So that's sort of the first kind of overarching philosophical foundation for this.

But as a corollary to that, if there are misdeeds that were done, then they need to be remediated.

If there's lack of proper oversight, which is suggested by some of the whistleblowers, that needs to be remediated.

So the first issue is the moral issue.

The second issue is being in a reactive mode is never preferable to being in a proactive mode.

So a reactive mode is basically trying to prevent disclosure.

But failing that, you might get a situation where you have catastrophic disclosure that creates all the problems that you were trying to prevent.

So a more balanced middle path of control disclosure is the best way to do this, which is, again, an argument for some amount of disclosure.

And the third part is simply societal advance and global competitiveness.

More brain trust needs to be brought into this topic in order to make progress and to improve society.

And so all three of those things together trump the six other reasons for non-disclosure.

*And what do you think happens if we don't disclose?
I know you mentioned this idea of catastrophic disclosure.*

Maybe disclosure may be forced upon us.

How do you think about that?

So the situation is usually thought of as a binary state.
It's like an all or nothing.
And people have sort of argued this.

But anybody paying attention realizes the government has already indicated that unidentified anomalous phenomena are real.

**They're not ours, and they're not our adversaries.
The Pentagon has said that.**

For people that are paying attention, that shoe already dropped.

So for a lot of people, they think that the second shoe to drop is this is non-human intelligence.

And maybe the conversation stops there.
The president comes out and says there's non-human intelligence.

The truth is that that will precipitate this crescendo of other questions that maybe the government's not ready to answer.

That will court, if not precipitate, potential negative ramification for society.

And so as an example of this, I would actually point to something from the ancient past, the Bronze Age collapse.

So Eric Klein, Princeton University, 2015, wrote a very interesting book called 1177 BC, 'The Year that Civilization Failed'.

And so this is well known to current scholarship.

Within a single lifetime, all of the very effective ancient civilizations of the Bronze Age failed due to a confluence of reasons that are not necessarily fully understood today.

So we're talking about Egypt, the Hittite Empire, the Minoan Empire, the Minasian Empire, the Babylonian Empire.

All these civilizations failed never to return, other than, let's say, Egypt.

And so these were highly sophisticated civilizations with highly developed infrastructures, highly developed administrative states.

They were globalists, in a sense, very similar to today in terms of the known world, the known near east.

They were economically interdependent.
They had both diplomatic ties and commerce ties.

And yet these civilizations failed in a single lifetime because of stressors that these civilizations collectively could not address within the time frame.

And so if we look at our society today, one might argue that it's similarly fractured, similarly under

economic stress, similarly under cultural stress as well, fractured and fragile, diplomatic situation.

It mirrors very much this scenario.

And so for a responsible decision maker, that is certainly a factor.

And so I guess when you say that, are you implying that perhaps we as a society may not be ready for disclosure?

Or are you saying that we may not be able to defend ourselves against this other force?

So there's sort of different viewpoints on whether people are ready to deal with this phenomenon.

And popular culture is kind of infused with this stuff.

Roswell became a meme a long time ago.

We got programs on ancient aliens, Skinwalker Ranch, all this stuff.

I guess I would draw an analogy, though, for people that believe in a certain faith tradition, whatever that faith tradition is, and hold to that and subscribe to that in a very serious and devout way.

And sort of pose the question, even for folks of that ilk-- and I would count myself as one-- if you're confronted with the reality of your religious belief system, like the reality of the metaphysical, an angel, a messenger from God, what have you, that's going to be a sea state change in your way of dealing with reality, even though you already believe it.

So it's one thing to believe, and it's another to know.

And I think in this context, this phenomena has the potential for an analogous effect, both on the individual and on society.

Yeah.

But do you think that this non-human form of intelligence represents a threat to humanity?

So this is a good question, too.

And some of the other folks have sort of framed things in that light.

And I guess I would suggest that the universe is governed by conservation laws.

And it's probably reasonable to assume the laws of nature that we understand apply everywhere.

We may have incomplete understanding, undoubtedly we do, of these laws.

But they're sort of homogeneous, and they apply throughout the universe.

And so those laws are governed by conservation rules.

There's conserved quantities.

And so this reality really forces a Darwinian-type competition in order to survive.

And so it's reasonable to assume any other civilization that's evolved has come up through the same Darwinian evolutionary process.

So I think it's naive to expect complete altruism until and unless you get to a state of post-scarcity, where you essentially have no physical needs that we're kind of encumbered with in this universe.

And so in some sense, it's the economics of the future that are going to determine whether there's cooperation, competition or some kind of symbiosis and inform the intention.

But to assume either malintent or complete altruism, I think, is somewhat naive.

Yeah. So it sounds like what you're saying is it's impossible to know the true intentions of a higher intelligence.

*We may be competing for the same scarce resources.
We may not be.*

We may be almost irrelevant to them, and they may be acting altruistically, although we cannot safely assume that.

And so I guess I'm curious.

If we continue down this disclosure path, do you believe that disclosure is inevitable?

So again, people that sort of look at this topic and study it, and there have been some good examinations on this from a historical standpoint, have realized that we're not in really a new state.

This sort of disclosure emphasis has come and gone over time.

And so this is not the first time we've arrived at this stage.

I would suggest that maybe the peak of this current cycle happened last December with the Schumer Amendment, and then it got rolled back and was defeated in the House.

And so it remains to be seen if the process is good to continue.

One hopes and can maybe draw a little bit of confidence that maybe this will come around is the colloquy that Senator Schumer and Senator Rounds had back in December.

After their amendment got killed, they basically went on the Senate floor and articulated their rationale for the legislation.

And I think Senator Schumer, to quote him, almost said it was a travesty that this did not pass.

So this is a bipartisan colloquy on a topic that I guess most people would probably consider fringe.

And yet these two senators felt the need to do that and to double down on their desire to see this through.

So hopefully we'll see maybe a reintroduction of some version of that this summer with the goal of maybe putting it into the NDAA by the end of the year.

Do you think that it's imperative that the United States leads on the disclosure efforts?

So this is an interesting question too, because **this is a global phenomenon, and it's affecting other countries just like the United States.**

The reporting on this is clear over decades.
Other countries have reported this stuff.

And not only that, the Vatican has come out and made statements that reference or tangentially reference this topic.

So organized religion has a say in this topic as well.

So it's really a whole of planet, whole of humanity problem.

And so the US has got its role to play, but these other countries have their role to play, and **it would**

behave us to recognize that US action could be preempted by another party, and it would be probably more conducive to work collectively.

Yeah, I mean, I think the one thing that I don't fully understand that I'd love to get your thoughts on, Karl, I mean, if we assume that a higher form of non-human intelligence has been visiting this planet, if we assume that some of the statements made by folks like Dave Grush are true, that we have crashed materials, and if we assume that those craft that we may have exhibit characteristics that defy our current understanding of physics, it would seem that that technology would provide an incredible strategic advantage to whatever nation ends up reverse engineering at first.

And so to me, that would imply that there is a race happening to reverse engineer this, and that this topic would be a top priority.

Do you agree with that?

So I think some of what you say is a reasonable conclusion to be drawn, and I've suggested something similar in past statements.

The point here though is to go from a pre-disclosure to a post-disclosure world, maybe two stable states that are separated by an unstable middle ground.

And so how you make that transition, again, this speaks to the concern about this catastrophic disclosure.

And this has come up in sort of arms regulation too, mutually assured destruction, however much we don't like it, is sort of a stable kind of geostrategic regime.

The Reagan era defense shield idea is also a very stable scenario, but to go from one to the other is very unstable.

And so this topic sort of mirrors that.

Yeah, and I know you and I were talking earlier about this idea that in order to really understand the phenomenon, it's likely that we have to further our understanding of reality itself.

And I guess I'm wondering, I can imagine a future where we acknowledge and we know that there is a higher form of non-human intelligence, yet we still don't truly understand the phenomena.

We still don't truly understand reality.

And so I guess I'm wondering, do you think that we'll ever truly understand what's going on or if part of the game, part of the journey, part of life itself is operating in an environment where at least part of it is fundamentally unknowable to us? - So this is totally philosophical, epistemological question, right?

Really about the nature of knowledge itself, right?

Like how can we know what we know, and how can we be sure about what we know?

I guess personally, I subscribe to the idea that there is an ultimate truth and that humanity being created in the image of a higher power is endowed with the quality to pursue an understanding of that.

And so part of our objective in this existence is to seek that out and try to understand that ultimate truth to a greater and greater degree.

And this would be a component of that, obviously.

Well, Karl, I really appreciate you taking the time to chat with us today.

I'm hopeful and optimistic that together, maybe we can move the ball forward here and further our understanding of what is really going on because I certainly agree with you.

I think it is very consequential that we figure this out.

So thank you again for coming.

Thank you again to SALT for hosting us and thank you all for listening.

Bye.

My pleasure, thank you.