

2013 11 12 Tuesday

Art Bell

Gabcast Interview

**GABCAST (a collection of AB-hep fellows) [G]**

G: "And as a special surprise, which is ... well, I'm going to need a change of clothing soon – I hear we have Art Bell on the phone.

Hi, Art!"

AB: "Hello there."

G: "Oh my gosh!"

AB: "Gentlemen, how are ya?"

G: "That's unbelievable!"

G: "Doin' well. How are you?"

G: "I hope my nervousness doesn't show."

G: "I'm quite stunned. I ... I'm going to go over here in the corner and just listen to everybody else talk."

G: (laughs).

G: "So Art, are you annoyed with us yet? Ah, I ... I always have the feeling that when you hear these shows with everyone's sitting around henpecking at everything you're doing and the things that you're talking about publicly, that it's probably annoying for you.

I'm wondering if my perception on that is correct?"

AB: "Ahh, no it isn't. Otherwise I would have gone away."

G: "Okay." (G laughs).

Well, ah, ..."

G: "Good point."

G: "Well, I guess I'll say: *I'm so supremely depressed with the fact that we can't hear your radio show anymore.* And I don't care in what capacity we hear it, from where, what the platform is ... just the logistics of how it happened ...

Is there anything you can say to make me less depressed?”

AB: “Um, not that I can think of. Um, I ... I’ll say this:

Um, look, ah, it is what it is. Um, I was surprised like everybody else, um, when Coast suddenly showed up on [Sirius Channel] 104 [Dark Matter’s old channel]. Um, I guess not ... when I say ‘surprised,’ not that surprised, ‘cause I had a feeling something was goin’ on. Um, and sure enough, it was.

I think that George [Noory] may have posted something suggesting that they were in negotiations, ah, and he may have mentioned something about *paying (!)* So there ... whether or not any money changed hands in this deal I don’t know, but if it did, ah, that’s certainly changes the equation a little bit.

Um, ...”

G: “Look, I don’t wanta get too petty here, but I can’t think of anybody wanting to listen to George *unless he did pay them (!)*, so ... I apologize (AB chuckles), but I ... I ...”

AB: “You know, it’s funny, I turned on ... I turned on the show for just a few minutes last night and I heard George, ah, ask somebody – **I swear to God!** – if the typhoon, which is now in Vietnam, ah, was causing the rain in Hawaii. And I ... I shook my head and I turned it back off again.

Um ...”

G: “So Hawaii’s not next to Vietnam, then?” (All laugh).

G: “You can see it from your backyard – that’s the question.”

G: “See that would have been logistically really great during the Vietnam War. We would have had just such awesome mechanics at our disposal during Vietnam had it just been right there off the coast of Vietnam ... *but it’s not!*”

AB: “Yeah, that’s right.”

G: “I am ... I am constantly amazed ...”

AB: “So ... here we are, um, it is what it is.

In other words, they have ... they’ve put that show on. And so all the time I was waiting for some word, ah, from Sirius XM apparently that’s what was goin’ on behind the scenes. So that’s a done deal.

Now the only question left in my mind is the noncompete. Ah, and there is a noncompete, and yes, I did sign that. And, um ...

You know, a lot of people don't understand with radio or television or motion pictures, or whatever, anytime you sign an agreement it always contains a noncompete ... always!

I mean, that's standard.

So ... I'm left dealing with that. And what to do?

Well, initially I thought, ahh, you know, why ... why fight it, but my ... my opinion now is go ahead and legally challenge it. And so we'll see if we can deal with a noncompete.

If we can, then we'll go ahead and do a show. And, um, I'll do what I said I would do and stream ... *and stream for free at that!*"

G: "Art ..."

AB: "I do ... I kinda find it ironic – somewhat hypocritical – that during the time that I was in negotiations with, ah, Sirius XM to simply allow me to stream – because the streaming wasn't working over there well at all – um, they ended up going with somebody who did exactly what they said they ..."

G: "I KNOW!"

AB: "... didn't wanta do."

G: "That's the craziest thing."

G: **"They just bring in an inferior product that's got even less exclus- ... no exclusivity. And ... and ... and the guy that everyone really does want to hear, ah, is not going to be allowed on the air!"**

\* \* \*

G: "Hi, ah, do you have a question for Art Bell?"

Hello, hello?"

G: "Man, we lost 'em."

G: "Okay. Well, I understand the nervousness – *it is 'The Great Art Bell.'*"

Ah ..."

AB: "It's not 'The Great Art Bell.' I'm just me, guys. I'm not ... I'm not absorbed with myself."

G: "Well, Art, I have a question. And my instinctive take on this was:

And there ... I'm tired of people saying that there were no streaming problems and that Art's just blowing smoke up everybody's butt.

I had the problems! There's post ..."

AB: "I had the problem."

G: "... after post after post after post on the forum of people having the prob-  
...

So my question is this: Um, does a contract of the nature of which ... of what you signed, ah, does it typically contain a provision that requires your Boss – the Company – the platform through which you're broadcasting to, ah, transmit the show to the listener in an appropriate, ah, reasonable fashion? And if that provision does exist and they don't do it, aren't they in breach and doesn't that cancel everything?"

AB: "That is certainly an appropriate argument. Sure ... it is an appropriate argument and one that we will make if we get to that point.

So, if we challenge the noncompete, yeah, of course that's going to be an issue.

Ah, that was the issue that stopped the show and as I say in a message I ... I think that I posted earlier, I ... I would do the same thing again, ah, if I [was] faced with the same situation. A lot of people had no idea what was going on behind the scenes ..."

G: "Yeah."

AB: "... and what was going on was meeting after meeting after meeting. And I told, ah, Sirius XM that this would affect our partnership if something wasn't done, so we had phone conferences with the brass at, ah, Sirius XM about the streaming problem and, um, there was *a lotta talk*, but the problem is still there now."

G: "Ah ... ah ..."

AB: “There are aspects to this that ... that I know of, that I can’t discuss because I did receive the information confidentially, but you know, if it gets to, um, a court challenge of the noncompete, then it’ll be a different story.”

G: “Oh, please God, challenge it!”

\* \* \*

G: “Hi, you’re on the air. Do you have a question for Art Bell?”

Aud: “Ah, yes, ah, I just wanta say ... well, um, I’m not sure we’re still saying ‘Roswells,’ but, ah ... (G laughs) ... good to talk to ya at any ...”

G: “No, you’re not allowed to say that, but continue.”

Aud: “Ohh ... okay. (G laughs more).”

All right. I just wanted to ask him like ... if he thought like, you know, there’s ... you know, if you ... if you’d wanta do this: If George Knapp was, you know, a full-time host or if, you know, someone else like that caliber was the host of Coast to Coast, if he would just be okay in retirement, rather than, you know, fighting the noncompete or even signing with Sirius?”

AB: “You know, I said a long time ago that if George Knapp, who’s a great guy, was the, ah, host of Coast to Coast, I wouldn’t have even tried to come back with Dark Matter.”

G: “Okay, let me stop you right there ...”

G: “Wow!”

G: “... because I’ve listened to George Knapp – and I like him, don’t get me wrong – but man, I don’t know how to say this to you ... and I’m not tryin’ to blow sunshine up anybody’s rear end here – you really ... man, you ... **you were a big part of my nights for a decade. And I miss that.** And I don’t want ’chu to ever try to minimize that in thinking that you know what? George Knapp can do it – *because they can’t!*

**I’ve never heard anyone be able to master the radio the way you do.**

And ... okay.”

G: “The question is why can’t people do that today? Why is there not another Art Bell that’s ... that’s come up?”

G: “No one can encaps- ... if you could answer that question, there would be multitudes of Art Bells. And I will say this ...”

G: “Right.”

G: “... the genre itself – and Art not trying to blow more smoke, but we may never speak again so I gotta ... I gotta get in. Ah, I’ve never really cared about the genre enough to listen to it being discussed by anybody other than Art Bell. I’ve listened to all the replacement hosts on Coast. You can go listen to as many podcasts as you want, but there’s just something intangible about Art Bell talking about this stuff that you can’t ... you just don’t find anywhere else, ah ...”

G: “We don’t ... we don’t wanna make you uncomfortable with the compliments, but we want ’cha (another G laughs) to understand that, you know, by saying ... well, shit, I’ve said it ... I’m sorry. Go ahead.”

AB: “Look, ah, thank ... thank you all very much. I really appreciate that.

Um, you know, I’m ... I’m just me. I’m not, um ...”

G: “We get ... we get that, but ...”

AB: “Yeah.”

G: “... *but just you is pretty important to us.*”

G: “And Art also, um, I’m sure there was a period of time on the Forum as your ... as you announced your departure from Sirius XM. I’m sure there was a point at which you said to yourself: ‘Holy You-Know-What! I mean, these people are supposed to be my fans – I can’t believe some of the anger and vitriol, and just the visceral ... just the visceral nature of things that I’m seeing right now. But ya gotta understand that people are so passionate about you and the product you deliver, and their desire to hear you back on the radio that that’s just sort ... that’s just sort of how it manifested itself, ah, as people were in shock and they just didn’t know how to deal with things. And I’m guessing you’ve probably reached that conclusion yourself already without me having said that to you.”

AB: “I am just as passionate if not more so, than ... than my audience. **I love it!** You know, I absolutely love it.

*And for anybody who thought I wanted to quit: “**Boy, is that wrong!**”*

\* \* \*

- Aud: "I just wanta say I would love it if you were back on the air, as everybody else would."
- AB: "Thank you so much. I'd ... I'd love it too, so ... we're gonna see what happens. Um, I said that I would follow this through and I said that I would get to streaming – and for free! – if I could. That's my goal and I'm still trying to do it, so ... ."
- G: "Art, I ... I have a question for you in that regard."
- AB: "Sure."
- G: "Um, are you concerned at all, I mean, you were a little ... you were ... I don't know what the word is to use – I'm still nervous 'cause I'm talking to you. But you were bothered by the fact that it's seemed as though your base just wasn't there, possibly because of the platform itself, ah, the streaming issues certainly did not help, particularly as, ah, as far as getting new subscribers was concerned, and so I'm kinda curious as to what your thoughts are ... what your expectations would be if you were to just stream through your website? Ah, do you think that you would have an uphill battle there in rebuilding your base and getting an ... getting an established audience there? Do you think that would be a problem?"
- AB: "Not for a minute, no.
- I think that if we offered a free stream and we offered a quality product ... and I consider by the way that *Dark Matter* was a quality product ..."
- G: "As do I."
- G: "And I think we all agree."
- AB: "We were just gettin' off the ground, ah, and it would've become better and better and better. But, um, there was not a viable future with the streaming problems we had.
- Now again, I offered them within forty-eight (48) hours, um, a proposal that we simply continue as we were, except that I would be allowed to stream either for a year or until, ah, the streaming problems were fixed.
- Um, they said: 'No,' and then turned around ... what? ... within a week and put on a show that (AB chuckles) was an awful lot more public in terms of, ah, radio stations and streaming, and all the rest of it than ... than we were proposing to do. We were only proposing to stream four (4) live hours for four (4) days! It would not have brought the walls of Jericho down !!!

Ah ...”

G: “Well, Art, do you think that that helps your position on the noncompete? Being able to say: ‘Look at what they did in light of what I offered them.’ Is that gonna help you you think in your position to be able to say: ‘Hey ... ?’”

AB: “Well, I ... yeah, I think a lot of things that unfortunately I ... I can’t talk about would help ...”

G: “Right.”

AB: “... ah, in trying to defeat a noncompete. In other words, things were said and things were (AB pauses) ...”

G: “So if you were to give ...”

AB: “... asserted that ... that ... that didn’t ... that I can’t talk about right now – I’m really sorry – ah ...”

G: “No, that’s all right.”

G: “That’s okay.”

\* \* \*

AB: “Um, look, somebody did make a comment on ... an, ah, *BellGab* [Facebook webpage] that I did take to heart, and that was about the Halloween show.

But it wasn’t because of that comment – it was because that comment was true (!): **It was a weak show.** And the reason ...”

G: “Why?”

AB: “... it was ... the reason it was a weak show is because at that point my base had pretty well gone. My call screener was unable to call the people who had sent in emails. He ... he called quite a number of them and then after a while was unable to get through. And, you know, so yes, it was a weak show, and that comment did, you know ... it hit me as being true. So it wasn’t [the] comment itself that did it, it was simply the ... the truth of the comment that ...”

G: “Yeah.”

AB: “I recognized.”



\* \* \*

- G: “Art, is there perhaps a ... a clause in your noncompete – I ... I don’t, ah, have any knowledge about, ah, the noncompetes and how they work, but is there perhaps a clause in there that you might be able to challenge because you were only on the air for such a short time?”
- AB: “I ... don’t know, but I can tell you this: The noncompete covers streaming. The noncompete covers virtually every form of communication invented and some of those not yet invented.”
- G: “So you ...”
- AB: “So in other words, it covers right across the board.”
- G: “So you can’t even stand on your porch and talk to your neighbors without, ah, (AB laughs) Sirius XM comin’ in?”
- AB: “Pretty close. (G laughs). Ah, it’s ... it’s very comprehensive. So if I have any hope to do what I wanta do and that is, *stream*, then I’m going to have to legally take care of this noncompete.”
- G: “I ...”
- AB: “And that’s how I wanta do it ...”
- G: “I asked this question on the Forum to you – I don’t know if you were able to see it?”
- ‘Is there anything that we common folk out here can do to help you?’”
- AB: “It’s a good question.”
- G: “Yes.”
- AB: “I’m not sure what that would be.
- Um, I guess ... um, I don’t know. Maybe go to Sirius and hold up signs saying: ‘Free Art Bell.’” (All G laugh).
- \* \* \*
- AB: “Well, when I ... when I look at when George [Noory], ah, obtained his new ‘crown’ [replacing AB on the same Sirius XM channel] (G laughs), date ... date-wise (AB grins), um, it would suggest to me that these talks might have been going on prior to my ...”
- G: “Oh! Bet on that!”

AB: "... prior to my leaving. Um, I can't be sure of that, but it certainly would suggest that."

G: "I ... I ..."

G: "One thing ..."

G: "Go ahead. So my ..."

G: "I deal with ... I ... I rub elbows with a lot of management people and they're always conniving. They've always got some back deal going on to cover any ..."

G: "Contingency ..."

G: "Right ... that ... that might possibly show up.

And ... well, I don't wanna speculate much further than that, 'cause it would just show how stupid I really am ..."

G: "Art ... ? Oh, I'm sorry, go ahead. I thought you were done."

G: "No, go ahead."

G: "Well, I was gonna say, Art, you know something even before you announced your return to Sirius ... something that I thought would have been *just so awesome!*, is if you would have, ah, run your show directly through KNYE and streamed it from KNYE as a KNYE product. And then somehow allowed other radio stations to syndicate with that.

Is that ... could [that] ever be possible in the future? Is that logistically possible? Is it a bad idea?

I'm curious as to your thoughts on that."

AB: "You know what? I don't wanna go back to terrestrial radio."

G: "Really?"

AB: "I just ... I don't want to.

Um, no I've had, ah ... ah, many, many offers, ah, to do that and I really don't wanna do it."

G: "Okay."

AB: "I wanta do it on my terms, and right now my terms mean ..."

G: "Well, you've always been ..."

AB: "... I would like to stream."

G: "... I'm sorry."

AB: "I would like to, ah, stream."

G: "You ..."

AB: "That's Number One (1)."

G: "You've always been a groundbreaker in that way.

I mean, you were the first one to really bring the internet into radio to begin with, so ..."

G: "I remember in the late nineties (1990s) Art having **video (!)** – in the late nineties – having video ..."

AB: "That's right."

G: "... of himself doing the show from the desert in Nevada, and then like eight (8) years later, Rush Limbaugh starts providing video on his website and proclaims himself to be the first person to have ever done it! (Others laugh). And I'm just like thinking there's a big, huge elephant in the room here and his name's Art Bell. I don't know why he's, ah, not being mentioned here.

*You were a pioneer in all of those regards."*

G: "Don't forget that cats are now a really popular part of the internet too."  
(Gs laugh).

AB: "Actually guys, ah, it goes back even further than that. Ah, we associated a BBS back in the days ..."

G: "Yep."

AB: "... of dial-up."

G: "That's right. Yeah ..."

G: "A lot of people remember that."

AB: "With the radio program. So ... yes, I think we were first out of the chute with that."

\* \* \*

G: "Art ..."

G: "I remember thinking ..."

G: "... another question, Art, that I've heard people ponder over many, many times over the course of the years is, ah, there've been a lot of people who've popped up – little pirate radio streams of your show here and there on the internet – and people have always been curious as to what your take is on that ... how you feel about that (?)"

AB: "Well, um, okay, here you go: You know, ah, at the beginning, ah, we were taken aback by the amount of pirating that was going on – you know, it was up everywhere. There were ... my shows were showing up *the next day* on the internet.

And then it got worse (!) People were doing live streams.

And ... (AB scoffs) God I ... you know, it's like: 'How come everybody else can stream but me? (!)'"

G: (laughs). "Isn't that just the silly ... silliness of the era we live in? The DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act) and, ah, just all the rules – everyone can break the rules except the people who are following the rules."

G: "And creating the content."

AB: "I could not have said it better."

G: "This ..."

G: "Was Sirius actively going after these people, or were they just letting it slide?"

AB: "I ... I don't know of one instance in which they went after anybody. But they might've."

G: "Right."

AB: "I ... certainly I wasn't aware of it."

\* \* \*

Aud: “Art, ah, you seem really interested in, ah, in being on the air in some capacity, ah, now. Ah, I just wonder at what point, ah, all this becomes, um, not worth it anymore? And, ah, also, ah, what’s your motivation to be on the air? Is it ... is it money? Is it, ah ...”

AB: “No.”

Aud: “... is it just to have something ... have something to do? Or ...”

AB: “It’s not money.

I ... you know, money I have. Um, my motivation in being on the air is: **‘I love it!’**

And I ... I’ve got, ah, you know, I’ll say this: Um, my motivation in being on the air is because of what’s on the air now.

I ... I really love a quality product, and ...”

G: “There’s few of those these days.”

AB: “I ... I ... you know, I’m tryin’ to be careful in what I say here, but ...”

G: “Well said.”

AB: “... my goodness!

You know, I did turn on the radio for a few moments last night at the beginning of, ah ... the other show. And the first thing I heard the other show’s host suggest (AB laughs) that, um, a typhoon that was over in Vietnam might be the cause of rain in Hawaii.”

G: “Yeah.”

AB: “And I just kinda like shook my head and went ...”

G: “We’ve been dealing with that for a decade now ...”

G: “Oh, yeah.”

G: “... and screaming in the wind. And I will tell you, ah, the reason BellGab is successful is because there’s a thing called Google, and on this thing called Google, people have a tendency to type the words: ‘George Noory sucks.’ And I will tell you that probably seventy-five to eighty percent (75%

– 80%) of the, ah, people who populate that Forum found it as a result of typing those three (3) words.

I have never seen with such uniformity and ubiquity, ah, such displeasure with a radio talk show host. And how he maintains this control over that show that he's maintained for a decade now is it ... it's a declining ..."

G: "Right."

G: "... of standards among Americans? Or is it, ah, just the fact that he's malleable, and corporations like malleable people?"

Ah, what is it? (!)"

AB: "I ... I think all that's fair, um, in terms of ..."

Yeah, it's fair.

**Ah, look, I ... I love the genre. I love the paranormal. And I want to see it treated fairly.**

Um, I guess that's the best way I can put it and I ... I don't think that it's getting a fair treatment right now. Do you?"

G: "Um, I would agree, no."

G: "No."

G: "It's dead to me."

It's not being challenged."

G: "Yeah. Go ahead."

G: "First ... a couple of things."

First of all, the man can't even ask a coherent question. Ah, he ... he doesn't follow the conversation. He's hardly ever prepared for whatever the person's talking about. And then he says inane things like: 'Do you think comets have a brain?'

I mean ..."

G: "And they know which side of the Earth to crash into?" (Gs laugh).

G: "Yeah. I mean ..."

- AB: "Yeah ... I know."
- G: "I mean ... I just ..."
- AB: "I know ... **paranormal deserves better (!)**"
- G: "Much better."
- G: "Yeah, I agree."
- G: "It just needs ... it needs to ..."
- G: "I mean, especially now when there's so many things out there to hear ..."
- G: "Right!"
- G: "... that quality doesn't rise to the top like it should."
- G: "And that they can be frustrating ..."
- AB: "Well, there probably are some people out there doing pretty good shows. Um, I don't know that they've received enough attention or wide enough distribution to be effective.
- Um, and it is tough. You know, it's a tough road to climb. I'm lucky because I've got a name. I'm lucky because I built a program. Um, and I have to admit, you know, I ... I ... I'm the one who laid down the law and said: 'Look, if ... if we can't stream, if we can't get to my base, ah, if we can't seed the future growth of this program – then I can't continue with it. And that was on Monday.
- Um ..."
- G: "That crushed me by the way. I want 'cha to know that. That crushed me."
- G: (laughs). "Well, I think one question that ..."
- G: "I mean, my life's more fuller than that actually, but I was ... I was like: 'Please man, just stick it out. Just ... it'll get better. I promise it'll get better.'"
- AB: (laughs).
- G: "Well, the ... the question is that I think a lot ..."

G: "Hold on ... hold on, just a second.

Art, I guess that's a question for you is: 'What do you say to people who say – and this was my take on the matter – that six (6) weeks in ... in the context of broadcasting just isn't enough time to really build anything and that maybe you should've stuck it out just for that reason alone. What do you say to that?'"

AB: "Oh yeah, I know a lot of people say that.

Well, um, I could've stuck it out, and when I do a show – whatever show it is – I give it a hundred and ten percent (110%). I mean, I really work my butt off (!) ..."

G: "I believe that."

AB: "... ah, for the show."

G: "It shows too."

AB: "And ... and ... um, I was willing to continue to do that, *but only if we had a way forward. Only if we could continue to grow it.*

**And under those conditions we could not continue to grow it!**

So I'll put forward that effort – trust me, guys – I will keep pluggin' away with all my heart and all my soul, but I want to see that I have a road I can go down that's gonna lead somewhere."

G: "All right.

Let me offer ... let me offer you this:

I live in North Carolina. The police can't find anybody in North Carolina. I got two (2) acres. You can do anything you want! ... just an offer. (Gs laugh). Play around with it for a while."

G: "Talk to Erin – see what she has to say. He can ... he can hook you guys up with a really nice tool shed that's got running water, ah ..."

G: "I got a really ..."

AB: "I know North Carolina. I was born there."

\* \* \*



Aud: "Hi, Art. I would like to ask you if using the services available that currently that Sirius has and with what you've seen people that can do things on the internet with your show and your product already, is there any viable solution out there that going forward you are seriously considering and are going to do once you get ... out from the two (2) year noncompete?"

AB: "Boy, I'm not getting all this guys. Ah, could you repeat the ...?"

G: "He was basically asking you where you're going to conduct business if and/or when you get out of the noncompete? I guess that's the gist of his question."

G: "I think a follow-up to that is I know there was a test happening, ah, on your website for streaming. How did that ... what were the results of that test?"

AB: "Ah, the results of that test were very good, and if we can get out of the noncompete, we would stream from there. Um, you know, we'd do it from a studio here. We would stream from there and we had servers lined up from here to Toledo, Ohio. In other words we could've handled as many tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands as would care to, ah, streaming."

\* \* \*

G: "I don't know, Art, is there, I mean, is there anything more to this situation than has been pondered publicly and pontificated over ..."

G: "That can be ... ?"

G: "... speculated on?"

AB: "Well, there is, but as I've mentioned, I ... there's information I was told in confidence and I'm keeping that confidence."

G: "Sure."

AB: "Um, at least up until the point that we get into some sort of a legal situation. And then, you know, 'Katy bar the door.'"

G: "Hmpf."

G: "One (1) question I have for ya is when you first started out with the deal with Sirius, how big was streaming in your mind at that point? Did you see it as a ... a major vehicle for ... for broadcasting the show or was it

something after the fact when it had a problem that you realized that the wait ...”

AB: “Well, um ...”

G: “Good question.”

AB: “Actually, um, I received a message from the, um ... um, the management person who enticed me to come to Sirius in the first place, *which suggested that the streaming was wide open available in America, Canada, and Worldwide.*

And, um, you know that wasn’t exactly true.”

G: “No.”

\* \* \*

Aud: “I was wondering what you think about the old streams like Fine Art streams?”

G: “Oh, great question!”

G: “Yeah, that’s, ah ... he’s been ... that’s basically the same question. What do you think about the ... the, ah, pirate streams out there that are playing old Art Bell shows?”

AB: “Okay, I was starting to say earlier that, um, in the beginning I was pretty upset by the amount of piracy that was going on, but as the streaming difficulties became *apparent* – and very apparent – ah, I told Keith ... I said: ‘Look, you know, until this gets fixed ... let ’em go!’

You know, stop sending links back to Sirius. And we had been doing that. We had been sending links of, ah, pirate stuff back to Sirius to let them handle it.

Ah, but it got so bad, got so rough, that I said: ‘You know, let’ em go!’ And that’s ... that’s where it stands.”

G: “What about in the ten ... in the interim, ah, the ten (10) years prior to your return to Siri- ... I mean those types of streams were *everywhere* just as people longed for the return of ‘The Great Art Bell.’

Um, did you ever have any thought about those streams, ah, playing your Coast to Coast shows, ah, prior to your return to Sirius?”

- AB: "Well, no, those were owned by – and are owned by – Premiere [Networks, Inc.] and, ah, if Premiere wanted ta [sic] stop them, then Premiere had to get out there and do it."
- G: "You know, in my opinion they've gotta be the dumbest people that walk. I mean, talk about advertising for you!
- Having ... playing your shows on a competing radi- ... on a competing station, which is so much better than their main talent is like ..."
- G: "That is odd."
- G: "I ... I ... I ... I mean ..."
- G: "That brings up, Art."
- G: "Go ahead. I didn't mean to interrupt."
- G: "No, I interrupted you. Go ahead." ...
- AB: "During the ten (10) years that I was, ah, '*retired*,' and Coast was on a daily basis, I frequently wondered if anybody in management at Premiere actually listened to the show. (?)"
- G: "I don't think so. I really don't."
- G: "I think that they looked at the, ah, the amount of money coming in for advertising ..."
- G: "'Cause ..."
- G: "... and [that must be it? – unintelligible]."
- G: "I keep bash- ..."
- AB: "[Unintelligible] as well."
- G: "I keep bashing this guy, but it's ... it's too easy."
- \* \* \*
- AB: "Well, here's somethin' else I wanta say – *I really wanta say this*.  
Um, I originally thought: 'You know what? George Noory is a nice guy.'"
- G: "Um-hmm."

AB: "I really thought that.

Um, and I thought that that was George's main attribute – that he was a nice guy. I have absolutely changed my opinion and ... and that began about a week prior to the program, ah, when they put on a guest [David John Oates], who had said ..."

G: "Yeah."

AB: "... hor- ... **HORRIBLE THINGS ABOUT ME (!)** ..."

G: "Oh, believe me, I said ..."

AB: "... and then ..."

G: "I ..."

AB: "... then continued, ah, to get worse and worse and worse.

So ... my opinion of George Noory is that he lost his main attribute in my opinion."

G: "Yeah."

G: "Which alone isn't enough of an attribute to sustain a radio broadcast anyway."

\* \* \*

Aud: "Do you think the weather on this planet is being deliberately controlled?"

AB: "Um, no ... not really.

I ... I ... I don't think we have the ability. I think we've made attempts to control the weather, but, um, I don't think they've been successful.

If ... if we were able to control the weather, a lot of the bad stuff that's happened recently should not have occurred."

G: "You know I'm kinda curious, ah, just asking Art Bell-type questions, rather than questions specifically about all of this business stuff, um, over the years, Art, you've taken a lot of criticism from people because you're not necessarily on board, ah, *or not on board at all* with the whole 9-11 conspiracy notion."

AB: "Right."

G: "And that was one of the things I always appreciated about you, because you're one of the few hosts ..."

G: "Yeah, me too. Me too, yeah."

G: "... of this genre, who are not walking around with tinfoil on their head believing that a missile struck the Pentagon. And I'm kinda curious if your position on the matter has evolved over the years?"

AB: "No, actually not.

Um, I was awake and watching when the planes hit the, ah, the Trade towers and the Pentagon. And I still think the planes hit the buildings and the Pentagon. And so, no I don't think it was somebody with, ah, with dynamite, ah, or some other, you know, [unintelligible] or whatever that blew up the buildings – it is what it was.

And ..."

G: "Yeah, I agree. I absolutely ..."

G: "Yeah."

G: "What do you think about people out there ..."

AB: "And I took a heluva lot of heat ..."

G: "You did."

AB: "... I tell you ..."

G: "Yeah."

AB: "... ah, because I said that.

So ..."

\* \* \*

G: "Do you guys have any more questions for Art? I mean we've really played ... we've really just plugged his ... I ... I ... I ... he must be sweating at this point. We've really worked him."

G: "The only question I have is ..."

[Unintelligible].

AB: "I'm sorry. What was ... what was the last question?"

G: "Ah, at least for me – this is Curtis. Ah, that, ah, what's your opinion of podcasting and the future of that? Do you think at some point it's gonna takeover where terrestrial radio is now? Ah, do you think it's gonna ... ?"

AB: "Oh I think it's the future! It's so totally the future!

And, ah, I think it's even the future for Sirius XM (!) And I have told them as much.

It is the future and if they don't get on board, the years are gonna pass them by. And so ... and the technology is going to pass them by.

So yeah, it's the future!

Look out, terrestrial radio!

Look out AM and FM, and look out satellite radio!

You either get on board or it'll ... you'll be left behind."

G: "I don't even think ... I don't even think podcasting is the future. I think it's the present. I can't really ..."

G: "Who can say?"

G: "Aside from your show, Art, ahh ... maybe occasionally Rush [Limbaugh], I can't really think of many shows on terrestrial radio that I would care to listen to."

G: "Yeah, I agree."

G: "Everything else I listen to is in the form of a podcast. And then it seems to me as you look around at statistics, ah, across the country, radio stations are seeing record lows in their revenue."

G: "Yep."

G: "Ah, the Grim Reaper, he is knocking on the door. I just don't know how many of them really acknowledge these standings [ratings] here."

G: "Like the newspaper business."

G: "I ... I think radio's gonna be around a long time. It's just everybody's gotta stop tryin' to do the same damn thing. You can't do politics 24/7."

And that's what people wanna do, and it's just ... you know, that ... that's just so incestuous.

So, anyway ...”

AB: “Boy, I agree totally.

But ... but look, *the net is the future.*”

G: “I agree with that.”

AB: “There's no two (2) ways about it – it's the future. And, ah, and you're gonna see a slow but sure erosion of AM and FM numbers. And you're gonna see a slow but sure increase in, ah, stuff on the net.

And let me tell you, Sirius XM, which you know is primarily aimed at vehicles right now, is in the next couple ... few years looking at internet that's gonna be in vehicles. And then ‘Katy, bar the door,’ because ...”

G: “Right.”

AB: “... everybody's gonna have to ...”

G: “Right. You're absolutely right there. Yeah, I agree with that.”

G: “The flood- ... the floodgates just open in terms of what type of content is available to you.”

\* \* \*

Aud: “I know you're all for the internet and the, ah, streaming – and that's fantastic – and that's gonna be your future, I'm sure, but what's to stop you from goin' on like, ah ... ah, terrestrial again?”

And ... I'm sure ... I'm sure you could get a show in a flash.

What's ... is it ... are you really that against it? Or are you ...”

AB: “Well, of course ...

Aud: “... still under contract to people ... ?”

AB: “... okay, now the noncompete covers terrestrial as well.”

Aud: “Oh!”

AB: “But even without the noncompete, I’m not looking to move backward. I want to move forward. And forward is the internet.

So ... given an opportunity to be out of this noncompete, um, that’s the direction I’m headed. I’m gonna stream.”

\* \* \*

Aud: “I suppose this is a pretty small question compared to the big items we’re dealin’ with here, but these shows – *Dark Matter* shows – were some of the best ever! And I would love – and pay dearly – to get a CD [Compact Disk] of those. Is that ever possible?”

AB: “Well again, I don’t own them.

Um, I’m here, big enough to admit I made a *big mistake* by getting involved with another-large-company.

What I should have done is go to streaming in the first place. But, um, I thought that, ah, here’s Sirius XM and I thought: ‘Gosh!’ You know they came at me and said: ‘Art, we’ve got, ah, satellite radio all over the U.S. and Canada. (Ah, it was very tempting). We’ve got streaming that covers the U.S., Canada *and the World (!)*’ – which turned out not to be quite so true.

And, um, and I thought it was a good opportunity away from terrestrial radio – so I’d give it a shot! My mistake! I should have gone directly to streaming, but you know, hindsight is 20-20.”

G: “Yeah.”

\* \* \*

G: “Hey, Art, in the course of these decisions you’ve made recently that led to you appearing on Sirius XM and led to your subsequent departure, people are wondering what kind of representation you have and what kind of advice you’re getting?”

G: “I mean, during the course of all of this, perhaps, ah ... ah, through your contract negotiations and whatnot, did you have legal representation or do you even want to comment on that?”

AB: “No, I didn’t. I did not.

Ah ...”

G: “Do you regret that or do you feel like it was okay that you just went it solo?”



AB: “Well, I’m not sure that legal representation in ... in the beginning would have made any difference. The noncompete still would have been there. I doubt ...”

G: “Right.”

AB: “... any lawyer would have managed to have that removed.  
So ... I guess the time for legal representation is coming now.”

G: “Good.”

G: **“I’m so happy to hear that!”**

AB: (laughs).

G: “Yeah ...”

G: “Golly!”

G: “... so we need to know there’s a plan.”

\* \* \*

Aud: “I got a question for ya no one’s asked. I remember when the movie [*The Day After Tomorrow*] came out. And they said: ‘Tornados couldn’t appear in the LA [Los Angeles] basin.’

What about you and Whitley [Strieber] writing an update?

And the same with *The Art of Talk* [AB’s autobiography].

If they can’t keep ya on radio, they can’t keep ya [from] writin’ a book!”

AB: “No, they can’t keep me from writing a book. Okay, and I might just do that – you never know.”

G: “How about the, ah, BellGab coffee table book?”

G: (laughs).

AB: (laughs also).

G: “I’m buyin’ ten (10) copies – let’s do it!”

\* \* \*

- Aud: "I know that Art and George Knapp are good friends. And I believe George Knapp still fills in on Coast.
- Um, has ... did that ever put you in an awkward position? Is George supportive?"
- G: "Did ... you mean, did that put George Knapp in an awkward position?"
- Aud: [Unintelligible].
- AB: "Let me just say: I think George has been in an awkward position. When he came and did the story on me in the first place while he was working for Coast, I'm sure he took some grief about that.
- Um, certainly I've not been in an awkward position, but George ... . Look, I'll say it again. I think he's a great guy. He's a good broadcaster ..."
- G: "Knapp."
- AB: "... and, ah, and he does a great paranormal show as well as a great newscast here in Las Vegas on Channel 8."
- G: "And we're leavin' out Ian Punnit in this. What's he up to? Do you have any idea? Do you stay in touch with him?"
- AB: "I don't. I know why of course he left the air."
- G: "Right ... right."
- AB: "Ahh, medical reasons. And, um, and I don't know what he's up to."
- G: "When you say you know why he left the air, is that something the rest of us don't know?"
- G: "No, he's got, ah ..."
- AB: "Ahh, no, I think he's ..."
- G: "... tinnitus."
- AB: "... got tinnitus. Ah ..."
- G: "Tinnitus – that's it exactly. 'Cause he ... he definitely sounded like he didn't want to leave, but he had to."
- AB: "Right."

\* \* \*

G: "Well, I don't know ... I feel like we've ... we've real- ... I'm out of questions. What about the rest of you?"

AB: "I ..."

G: "I would just like to hang out with Art Bell. I mean, do you just wanta hang out? We can have lemonade – I can ship it."

AB: (laughs)

G: "Ah ..."

AB: "Guys, I've got dinner coming up. Probably on the table already. But I ... I did wanta do this. I'm glad to answer any questions I can."

G: "Do ... do you primarily eat Phillippina, ah, Phillippine cuisine or is it just a lotta frozen pizzas 'n' stuff?"

AB: (laughs heartily) "We ... we eat a combination of, ah, Phillippine and American food. Ah, there's a lotta good Phillippine food, that's for sure."

G: "It's spicy though, is it not?"

AB: "Ah, no, that would be Thai food ..."

G: "Ahh."

AB: "Phillippine food is not quite so spicy."

G: "Hmm."

Well Art, I'm just in shock. I started listening to you when I was thirteen (13), I'm thirty-four (34) now. You've been, ah, well ... can we do one (1) more question? Just real quick ... ?"

AB: "How ... how 'bout one (1) more statement?"

G: "Okay."

AB: "Um, and that ... that is that it seems to me that Sirius XM really doesn't have a good reason to hold me to this noncompete as long as I don't cross the hours.

I mean, they are carrying *Coast to Coast [AM]* now, right? So as long as I don't cross the hours of *Coast to Coast*, it seems to me that: 'My goodness, after six (6) – seven (7) weeks of, ah, of working for them, ah, I'd be more than glad to purchase the studio equipment that's here and, ah, just do a streaming show that does not conflict with *Coast* – *and stream it!*

And I ... I just don't know why they would have reason to hold me to that noncompete unless there's a reason un- ..."

G: "Is it ... is it just anger?"

AB: "Um ... unstated ..."

G: "Revenge?"

G: "A vendetta on their part possibly?"

AB: "Can't rule that out!"

G: "Why would we?"

AB: "I'm not in their head ..."

G: "I mean, it's as possible as anything."

AB: "... so I don't know."

G: "Yeah, that's ..."

AB: "I'm not in their head, so I don't ... yeah, I really don't know."

G: "But we do have to remember that's a public company, so if we could put enough pressure on them, who knows what could happen?"

\* \* \*

G: "Well, Art, I feel better. I ... I mean I'm nervous that you called tonight. It made me nervous and now my stomach hurts, but on the other hand, I feel reassured that wheels ... '*wheels are in motion*' as the guy on *Seinfeld* said."

AB: "I, ah ..."

G: "So thank you for calling very much. We're so appreciative."

AB: "You're very welcome, guys."

G: "And thank you, Art."  
AB: "And thank you for being there ..."  
G: "It was great!"  
G: "Man!"  
AB: "A vicious but vaguely loveable [AB describing Gabcast] ..."  
G: "There we go!"  
AB: "... and that's why I'm still there."  
G: "Thank you, Art."  
AB: "See you later."  
G: "Hope you have a wonderful ..."  
G: "Call again ... please call."  
AB: "All right, Bye-bye."  
G: "Yeah ... take care."  
G: "Okay. Take care, Art.  
That's Art ... Art Bell."

\* \* \*