The New Bogus Majestic-12 Documents

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*The new crashed-saucer documents, like their 1987 predecessors, are riddled with flaws.*

“Majestic Twelve"-better known as “MJ-12"-first achieved international fame in the world of Ufology in mid-1987. It was then that Ufologist William L. Moore and two associates made public three (purportedly) “Top Secret” documents which indicated that President Harry Truman had created a super-secret MJ-12 group forty years earlier to deal with extraterrestrial (ET) visitors. Truman’s (alleged) action was prompted by an alleged crashed-ET craft that had been covertly recovered near Roswell in mid-1947.

The Roswell crashed-saucer claim had been the centerpiece of a book published seven years earlier (1980) which Moore had coauthored with Charles Berlitz. (Berlitz previously authored a book describing the “mysterious dangers” of the Bermuda Triangle.)

Recently, a large batch of additional “Top Secret Majestic Documents” have emerged, provided by another Ufologist named Tim Cooper, who claims he obtained them from several covert sources. Their authenticity has been endorsed by Robert Wood, a respected, retired McDonnell Douglas scientist and his son Ryan. (Wood is a member of the nine-person Executive Council of Peter Sturrock’s Society for Scientific Exploration.) Based on the Woods’ assessment, wealthy Silicon Valley software expert Joe Firmage, who recently revealed his conviction that some UFOs are extraterrestrial visitors, also endorsed Cooper’s documents in mid-1999.

However, on November 25 the International Space Sciences Organization (ISSO), which Firmage recently created to pursue his UFO interests, issued a statement that “ongoing research indicates that *many, possibly all, the so-called MJ-12 UFO documents were officially fabricated as instruments of U.S. covert psychological warfare . . .*” (emphasis added). This is ridiculous! The new Cooper documents, like their 1987 predecessors, are so riddled with flaws that they could never fool Soviet or Chinese intelligence experts. Even some long-time pro-Ufologists have denounced them as obvious counterfeits.

One of the original MJ-12 documents released by Moore and his two partners (UFO lecturer Stanton Friedman and TV producer Jaime Shandera) purported to be a memo from President Truman to Defense Secretary James Forrestal, dated September 24, 1947, which authorized the creation of the MJ-12 group. My investigation revealed that the Truman signature was a pasted-on photocopy of a genuine signature-including accidental scratch marks-from a memo that Truman wrote to Vannevar Bush on October 1, 1947 (see “New evidence of MJ-12 hoax,” SI 14[2], Winter 1990).

A second MJ-12 document released by Moore et al. purported to be a November 18, 1952, briefing for President-elect Eisenhower, prepared by Rear Admiral R.H. Hillenkoetter, who had been director of the CIA and, purportedly, was now head of MJ-12. There were numerous flaws in the “Eisenhower Briefing Document” (EBD), the most obvious being *its reference to the (bogus) Truman memo of September 24, 1947.*

Further, the EBD repeatedly used a very unusual date-format-a hybrid combination of civil and military formats with a superfluous comma, i.e., 18 November, 1952. This unusual hybrid date-format was one repeatedly used by William L. Moore in his personal letters - until I pointed out this “curious coincidence” in my first article debunking the original MJ-12 papers (see SI 12[2], Winter 1987-1988). The third of the MJ-12 documents made public by Moore et al. in mid-1987 purported to be a brief memo, dated July 14, 1954, from Robert Cutler to USAF Chief of Staff General Twining informing him of change of date to brief the President on the "MJ-12 Special Studies Project.” Investigation revealed that on the date that Cutler allegedly wrote the memo, he was out of the country. Moore claimed that he and Shandera had found the Cutler memo in an unlikely location when they visited the National Archives. The memo, which had been double-folded, could easily have been carried into the Archives in Moore’s or Shandera’s coat pocket.

Less than two years before Moore made public the initial MJ-12 papers-on April 16, 1983-he had confided to then-close friend and Ufologist Brad Sparks that he was contemplating creating and releasing some hoax Top Secret documents-as first revealed in the March 1997 issue of my *Skeptics UFO Newsletter*. Moore explained to Sparks that he hoped such bogus documents would encourage former military and intelligence officials who knew about the government’s (alleged) UFO coverup to break their oaths of secrecy. Sparks strongly recommended against the idea.

It was not until nearly seven years after release of the original MJ-12 documents that a new “MJ-12 document” surfaced on March 14, 1994. On that date, Don Berliner, a long-time pro-Ufologist, received in the mail an undeveloped roll of 35 mm film from an anonymous source. When the film was processed, Berliner found photos of what purported to be copies of pages from a “Top Secret/MAJIC/Eyes Only” special operations manual (SOM 1-01) intended to inform military crews how to recover crashed saucers and their ET crews. SOM 1-01, purportedly printed in April 1954, contains many flaws. For example, it stated that crashed ET craft should be sent to “Area 51 S-4” in Nevada. But that portion of Nellis Air Force Base was not given the name “Area 51” until several years *after* SOM 1-01 allegedly was printed.

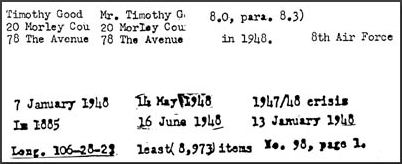
As a result of numerous flaws in SOM 1-01, a statement denouncing it as counterfeit was released on March 14, 1999. It was signed by Berliner and several other prominent pro-Ufologists. By this time, a new batch of more than a dozen Majestic documents obtained from Tim Cooper had recently been made public by Robert Wood and his son Ryan at a UFO conference in Connecticut. They had strongly endorsed the authenticity of the documents, although Wood admitted that there were flaws in them. But he claimed that these anomalies “tend to indicate authenticity. . . . [Document] hoaxers generally try to make sure they are perfect.”

No mention was made by Wood that his long-time good friend, UFO lecturer Friedman - who remains one of the staunchest supporters of the original MJ-12 documents - had earlier investigated several of Cooper’s documents and concluded that at least one was counterfeit. Friedman had reported his findings and suspicions about other Cooper documents in his book *Top Secret/MAJIC*, published three years earlier.

British Ufologist Timothy Good, who in 1987 had strongly endorsed the authenticity of the original MJ-12 documents in his best-selling pro-UFO book *Above Top Secret*, has more recently characterized them as bogus, largely on the basis of the phony signature on the Truman memo of September 24, 1947. But in the early 1990s, prior to Good’s disavowal of the original MJ-12 papers, he began to receive some of the “new” Majestic documents from Cooper.

Good’s suspicions about the new Cooper documents were aroused by some factual anomalies in their content. More important, Good noted that mechanical flaws in the typewriter Cooper had used to write two letters on October 4 and October 7, 1991, resembled those of the typewriter used for one of his Majestic documents, allegedly typed in *1952*. At my request, Good provided me with copies of Cooper’s two letters for analysis.

Cooper’s two 1991 letters to Good not only had the same typeface as the (purported) 1952 Top Secret MJ-12 Annual Report, but more importantly the upper-case (capital) G and N were *slightly elevated* relative to the adjacent lower-case letters. However, an experienced questioned document examiner informed me that it was conceivable, though unlikely, that both Cooper and the 1952 document typist might have failed to depress the “shift key” to its lowest possible position when typing G and N.



*Figure 1. “Elevated 8” in Cooper’s letters and in one of his “MJ-12 documents.”*

*Top: Cooper’s letters of October 4 and 7, 1991 (enlarged slightly)*

*Bottom: From Cooper’s “MJ-12 Annual Report" requote; (enlarged slightly)*

*However, both Cooper’s letters and the 1952 document also have an “elevated 8"-which does not require the use of the typewriter’s shift-key*(see figure 1). This curious coincidence was reported in the November 1999 issue of *Skeptics UFO Newsletter*, a copy of which was provided to Wood. His response of December 13 (via e-mail) was: “The question is whether that ["elevated-8"] is a characteristic of that typewriter design as distinguished from any particular machine serial number. We need other examples from the same typewriter design and I would hope to find some.”

In other words, Wood suggests that this mechanical flaw was a possible *uncorrected* characteristic of *all* of the typewriters produced by this manufacturer for at least several decades. Nothing further has been heard from Wood on this key issue since mid-December 1999.

Meanwhile, Tim Cooper posted a lengthy treatise on the Internet on December 30, offering his assessment of his “new Majestic documents.” Highlights of Cooper’s views are quoted below:

*The question of whether they [Cooper’s documents] are genuine, authentic, or real is not the issue here. The important point . . . is the information contained in the documents themselves. . . . In my own humble opinion, the Majestic documents are basically reliable as far as content is concerned with the exception of the questionable hypothesis that there are other intelligent, thinking, machine building cultures visiting planet earth on a regular, day to day basis [emphasis added].*

Yet the opening page of the Web site that the Woods have created to promote MJ-12 states: “The Majestic Documents: Evidence That We Are Not Alone. Curious about the documentary record of military and government participation with UFOs, wreckage retrieval, and extraterrestrials? This site is all about it! The documents, the forensics, the military and intelligence history, and stunning validating evidence. Join us on a journey into the beyond Top Secret world that a government cabal has been hiding since 1941." requote; (One of Cooper’s documents claims a crashed saucer was recovered in the spring of *1941* near Cape Girardeau, Missouri, six years before the alleged Roswell Incident. If true, the Eisenhower Briefing Document completely forgot to mention this historic event.)

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Phil Klass was a UFO researcher with a background in electrical engineering. He was author of seven books on UFOs, including *UFOs Explained* and *UFO Abductions: A Dangerous Game*. He was also editor of the *SUN* newsletter, a UFO-related publication.