

MJ-12: The hoax that quickly became a disinformation operation

*by
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Stan Friedman and I once had a brief face-to-face debate about the Majestic-12 (MJ-12) documents, as I was helping him move his luggage from his hotel room to the lobby, to await the taxi to the airport, following the III World UFO Forum in Curitiba, Brazil in June 2009, at which we both spoke.

One of those documents, the key Eisenhower Briefing Document (EBD), purports to be a Top Secret report to president-elect Dwight Eisenhower, prepared by Rear Admiral Roscoe Hillenkoetter, in which the Roswell Incident—the recovery of an alien spaceship and the bodies of its crew—is outlined for the soon-to-be new chief executive.

Along with this earth-shattering news, Eisenhower is told of the existence of a Top Secret group, the Majestic 12 or Majik 12, a “Research and Development Intelligence” operation whose 12 members oversee basically everything related to the case.

After I pressed him on the point, Friedman actually agreed with me that the obscure elements in the EBD—which he publicly claims prove its authenticity—could have been researched by counterintelligence personnel, military or civilian, and planted in the “document” to lend it an air of legitimacy. This includes the mention of UFO skeptic Dr. Donald Menzel as a member of MJ-12—whose covert relationship with the National Security Agency was only exposed after the EBD was made public—as well as other items.

In other words, if the MJ-12 affair is a disinformation scheme involving a counterintelligence group, and not just a simple hoax—as I maintain—the arcane aspects of the Eisenhower Briefing Document (and Cutler-Twining Memo and Truman-Forrestal Memo) that Friedman holds up as evidence of their authenticity, might instead be explained by the spooks who created them having done their homework. If their task was to muddy the waters, so to speak, certainly they would have been allowed access to various relevant historical materials that would have assisted them in the creation of passable forgeries.

As one of the first investigators of MJ-12, who helped expose its bogus origins—together with Barry Greenwood, Kevin Randle, and the late Bob Todd—I have detailed information about the early manifestations of the caper. My widely-circulated March 1, 1989 paper, “The MJ-12 Affair: Facts, Questions, Comments” is available at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ufo/hastings.htm>.

While Greenwood and Randle believe that a simple hoax, designed to make money, was perpetrated by researcher Bill Moore and U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) Special Agent Richard Doty, I contend the available evidence strongly suggests that the MJ-12 fraud, while originating as a hoax, was quickly co-opted by AFOSI and perhaps other intelligence groups, as a means to disinform/misdirect ufologists and the public-at-large, regarding the nature and extent of the U.S. government's involvement with the UFO phenomenon.

I am fully aware that Stan Friedman will never agree with this scenario—and may claim that our conversation in Brazil never happened—so I am merely going to itemize the following for the benefit of others who have an open mind about the subject:

- According to files donated to MUFON by the late Bob Pratt, the name “MAJIK 12” was assigned to a proposed work of fiction about UFOs, the official cover-up of them, and one intelligence agent's quest to expose the facts. The novel was to be co-authored by journalist Pratt and researcher Bill Moore, probably with the assistance of Richard Doty.

All of this was discussed some three years before the first supposedly real Majestic-12/Majik-12 “document” surfaced. *MAJIK 12* was the book's working title; *IAC*, for Identified Alien Craft, was an alternate title. However, at some point, *The Aquarius Project* was unilaterally selected as the title by Moore. The terms “Project Aquarius” and “IAC” later appeared in the allegedly real Majestic-12 documents, as did “EBE” for Extraterrestrial Biological Entity, another term associated with the proposed fictional work.

- Two years before the MJ-12 documents were released to the public, Moore suggested to researcher Brad Sparks that fake documents relating to the Roswell UFO recovery be created and disseminated, the idea being that military veterans with a knowledge of the event would be enticed to come forward with their stories, thereby breaking the case wide open. Sparks states that he strongly recommended that Moore not do it.

- The undeveloped roll of film containing images of the EDB and Truman-Forrestal (TF) documents was mailed to Moore's associate Jaime Shandera from Albuquerque, New Mexico, coincidentally the location of Kirtland AFB—where OSI agent Richard Doty worked.

- In April 2009, the late Gabe Valdez, a retired New Mexico State Policeman famous for his cattle mutilation work, told me that fellow state trooper Richard Doty had confessed to him that he had forged “lots” of UFO-related documents while working as an OSI agent. Doty became a New Mexico State Policeman after retiring from the Air Force in 1988.

Doty's fraudulent “Craig Weitzel letter”, “1977 Ellsworth AFB incident document”, and “Aquarius Telex”—the first document to surface that actually mentioned MJ-12—were exposed in the 1980s. Three fakes hardly constitute “lots” of forgeries. What other “documents” did Doty foist on ufology and the rest of the world?

Gabe Valdez asked me not to tape our 2009 conversation or to quote him publicly;

now that he is dead, I feel I can do so.

- In May 2009, I posted various MJ-12-related statements on a blog, at one point referring to Doty as “a government disinformation agent who forged documents.” On May 24, 2009, Doty emailed me, angrily saying, “A simple fact, Mr. Hastings, everything I did during my intelligence days were [sic] sanctioned.” This is Classic Doty, notorious for his frequent grammatical and spelling errors. I note here that the MJ-12 documents have a number of such errors sprinkled throughout them.

Not that Doty is necessarily a candidate for the forgery of the EBD in particular; its somewhat complex content required a level of sophistication arguably beyond Doty’s rather limited abilities. Instead, higher-level intelligence types, and Bill Moore himself, must be considered to be high on the list of persons who might be responsible for its creation.

Remember, Moore once told researcher Lee Graham that he was an intelligence operative, and even showed Graham an ID badge that Graham said was “identical” in appearance to the badges shown to him by two members of the Defense Investigative Service (DIS) who had once visited him.

When I published Graham’s comments in 1989, Moore quickly said that he had only been joking with the hapless researcher and that the badge was only a laminated MUFON field investigator’s card. However, Graham remains adamant that the badge he was shown was a genuine government ID card.

But if Doty is not responsible for the creation of the EBD, the ridiculous mumbo jumbo found in the so-called “MJ-5 Memo” is right up his alley. On October 14, 1988, Doty appeared anonymously (back-lit and voice-altered) as “Falcon” on the absurd TV farce *UFO Cover-up Live!*, together with USAF intelligence officer Capt. Robert M. Collins, who also appeared anonymously as “Condor”. The pair claimed to be high-level intelligence insiders who knew about multiple UFO crashes, live aliens being held captive by the U.S. government, and other such fare. Apparently the aliens liked strawberry ice cream and Tibetan music, according to Doty and Collins.

In November 1987, the same Capt. Robert Collins showed Linda Moulton Howe a ring-binder full of MJ-12 documents at his home in Albuquerque. According to Howe, Collins had been “frantically” trying to reach her so that he could present those supposedly important files. The EBD was prominently featured, as was the MJ-5 Memo, together with another memorandum that mentioned the live aliens held at Los Alamos—among other items.

Howe swallowed it all, of course, soon sharing information about the bogus evidence with ufologists and the public, following-up on her earlier “revelations” about alleged secret U.S./alien treaties, underground alien bases, and other such disclosures—all of which had been provided to her by OSI Special Agent Doty.

In 2009, Collins denied showing documents to Howe (and John Lear) at his house in 1987. Fortunately, I recorded my conversation with Howe less than a year after the event and she described the goings-on in detail. A summary of all of this, as well as my telephone transcript, may be read in my Operation Bird Droppings article.

According to his self-written bio at Amazon.com, appearing with a summary of his book, *Exempt From Disclosure*, Robert Collins is a “former Air Force Intelligence Officer, Capt, O-3 (Chief Analyst/Scientist in theoretical Physics holding a Top Secret/SCI clearance) at the Foreign Technology Division (FTD)...Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, with an extensive background in Aircraft Avionics Systems, Ground Communications, and Engineering Physics (graduate school—Electro-Optics, Plasma, and Nuclear Physics) totaling over 22 years...”

Gee, not a single word from Collins about his appearing on a national television program masquerading as a “high-level intelligence source, code-named Condor” who also “frantically” disseminated disinformation relating to MJ-12.

Summarizing here, in the early days of the ruse, two of the leading proponents for the legitimacy of the now-discredited MJ-12 material were a counterintelligence OSI agent, who later confessed to forging UFO-related documents, and a positive intelligence officer who willingly posed as something he was not—someone having intimate knowledge about various crashed UFOs and captured aliens being held by the U.S. government.

Try as he may, Stan Friedman cannot credibly distance the supposedly “good” MJ-12 documents—EBD, CT, TF—from the “bad” ones that were circulating in the 1980s. They were all lumped together and presented as equally important and legitimate by two Air Force intelligence operatives—clearly acting as disinformation agents—who were aggressively foisting them on well-meaning but gullible people such as Linda Howe.

Once the shenanigans perpetrated by the Kirtland AFB Cabal were effectively exposed, by Greenwood, Todd and myself, Bill Moore saw the writing on the wall and finally acknowledged much of what we had written.

During his infamous “confession” speech, at the MUFON conference in Las Vegas, on July 1, 1989, Moore said, “Disinformation is a strange and bizarre game. Those who play it are completely aware that an operation’s success is dependent upon dropping information upon a target, or ‘mark,’ in such a way that the person will accept it as truth and will repeat, and even defend it to others as if it were true. Once this has been accomplished, the work of the counterintelligence specialists is complete. They can simply withdraw in the confidence that the dirty work of spreading their poisonous seeds will be done by others.”

Linda Howe and others—including Stanton Friedman—certainly did their part in the game, helping to create a mythology that endures today.

As I wrote earlier, the available evidence strongly suggests that while the MJ-12 Affair began as a legitimate money-making project, involving the writing of a novel, it eventually became a hoax, involving forged documents—with money again being the objective, resulting from various related schemes—before finally morphing into a disinformation ploy orchestrated by intelligence and counterintelligence groups within the U.S. Air Force.

Today

I am distressed that the MJ-12 debate (actually, debacle) continues to have ramifications 30 years later, perpetually polluting the legitimate UFO research database.

For example, MJ-12 was prominently featured during the Citizens Hearing on Disclosure, held in Washington D.C. in May 2013. Linda Moulton Howe breathlessly characterized the MJ-12-related SOM 1-01 Special Operations Manual—which directs military personnel how to recover crashed UFOs and dead aliens—as having “stood the test of time”. Hardly! Military document expert and longtime UFO researcher Jan Aldrich has discovered over 50 factual errors and/or discrepancies in military protocol in the so-called “manual”.

Another high-profile personage in ufology, self-described “historian” Richard Dolan, has repeatedly vouched for the legitimacy of the MJ-12 materials in various UFO “documentaries” on television.

And Robert and Ryan Wood, at their Majestic Documents website, still regularly churn out pro-MJ-12 “evidence” and commentary. As I pointedly said to them, from the podium at the 2012 Society for Scientific Exploration conference, if one is going to have any hope of deciphering the U.S. government’s covert response to UFOs, one must adhere to the fundamental principles underlying academic scholarship or, at least, traditional investigative journalism, to figure out what is real, as opposed to what is not.

In other words, relying only on *authenticated* documents and *vett*ed witness testimony when evaluating historical developments. In response, the Woods just stared at their shoes and said nothing.

Given that the MJ-12 proponents routinely ignore this valid advice, and spout off incessantly about their supposedly-insightful “findings”, it’s no wonder that the bullshit typed-up by OSI Agent Doty, con artist Bill Moore and, later on, hoaxer Tim Cooper, has only gained ground on the Internet over the years, at least among the less-discriminating members of the public.

At least Cooper has now completely disavowed the MJ-12 2.0 “documents” that he was actively disseminating a few years ago. Oh, you didn’t know about that? See my “Operation Bird Droppings” article addendum. Regardless, questions about Cooper’s possible role in creating those forged files remain unanswered.

Jeez, what a colossal waste of everyone’s time! There are legitimate areas in ufology that go begging for attention by qualified researchers. It’s nothing short of pathetic that so much effort has been spent on the MJ-12 Affair, especially when the basic facts about its dubious origins and early machinations have been well researched and publicized for years.

To the reader, I say this: Please do your homework. The facts are indeed available, if one is willing to take the time to discover them. Start by asking yourself whether any “evidence” offered by the MJ-12 proponents would meet the standards of academic or journalistic investigative research. Can even a single MJ-12 “document” be *proved*

to be genuine, by any accepted definition of that word?

Bizarrely, Stan Friedman has recently asserted that provenance—the chronology of the ownership, custody or location of a historical object—is not even an issue when it comes to analyzing the MJ-12 documents! Would any academician or investigative journalist dare make such a claim about a disputed document that has mysteriously appeared out of nowhere, if he/she hoped to have any credibility at all after doing so? Of course not!

The great many documents underlying my own UFO-Nukes Connection research can be verifiably traced to a given government department or agency. Can the MJ-12 proponents honestly make that claim? No, they cannot. All they can offer are their opinions about how it might be *possible* for these supposed documents to be real.

Whoopee...

For the record, I personally believe that the Roswell Incident—the secret recovery of an alien spaceship and the bodies of its crew—did in fact take place. I recommend a review of the on-the-record statements by the late U.S. Air Force Brigadier General Arthur E. Exon, as presented at <http://roswellproof.homestead.com/exon.html>. While having only an indirect knowledge of the incident and its aftermath, acquired from some of the military participants who were involved in the operation, Exon's revelations are far more insightful and valuable than anything emerging from the MJ-12 fiasco.