

# Unidentified Flying Objects - Project BLUE BOOK

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## General Information

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The United States Air Force retired to the custody of the National Archives its records on Project BLUE BOOK relating to the investigations of unidentified flying objects. Project BLUE BOOK has been declassified and the records are available for examination in our research room. The project closed in 1969 and we have no information on sightings after that date.

The National Archives has received numerous inquiries concerning documents identified as "MJ12" and "Briefing Document: Operation Majestic 12." We have made extensive searches among the records in our custody of the U.S. Air Force and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to identify these documents. The Truman and Eisenhower Libraries have also searched their holdings for any references to, or copies of, the documents. In addition, the records of the National Security Council (NSC) for the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations are in the custody of the National Archives. Searches were made of the indexes to the NSC's Policy Paper and Meeting Minute files under the subjects MJ-12, majestic, unidentified flying objects, UFO, flying saucers, extraterrestrial biological entities and Aquarius. These searches were all negative with the exception of a "Memorandum for General Twining, from Robert Cutler, Special Assistant to the President, Subject: "NCS/MJ-12 Special Studies Project" dated July 14, 1954. The memorandum, one page, refers to a briefing to take place on July 16. The memorandum does not identify MJ-12 or the purpose of the briefing.

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## Project BLUE BOOK Reference Report

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Textual records of Project BLUE BOOK (the documentation relating to investigations of unidentified flying objects), excluding names of people involved in the sightings, are now available for research in the National Archives Building. The records include approximately 2 cubic feet of unarranged project or administrative files, 37 cubic feet of case files in which individual sightings are arranged chronologically, and 3 cubic feet of records relating to the Office of Special Investigations (OSI), portions of which are arranged chronologically, by OSI district, and by overseas command. A cubic foot of records comprises about 2,000 pages. Finding aids for these records include a file list for the project files and an index to individual sightings, entered by date and location.

Access to BLUE BOOK textual records is by means of 94 rolls of 35mm microfilm (T-1206) in the National Archives Microfilm Reading Room. The first microfilm roll includes a list of contents for all of the rolls and the finding aids. Photographs scattered among the textual records have also been filmed separately on

the last two rolls.

Motion picture film, sound recordings, and some still pictures are maintained by the Motion Picture & Sound & Video Branch (NNSM) and the Still Picture Branch (NNSP).

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## **U.S. Air Force Fact Sheet Concerning UFO's and Project BLUE BOOK**

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The following is a copy of the US Air Force Fact Sheet distributed by Wright-Patterson AFB in January 1985.

United States Air Force  
Public Affairs Division,  
Wright-Patterson AFB,  
Ohio 45433

### **UFOs & PROJECT BLUE BOOK**

On December 17, 1969, the Secretary of the Air Force announced the termination of Project BLUE BOOK, the Air Force program for the investigation of UFOS.

From 1947 to 1969, a total of 12, 618 sightings were reported to Project BLUE BOOK. Of these 701 remain "Unidentified." The project was headquartered at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, whose personnel no longer receive, document or investigate UFO reports.

The decision to discontinue UFO investigations was based on an evaluation of a report prepared by the University of Colorado entitled, "Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects;" a review of the University of Colorado's report by the National Academy of Sciences; past UFO studies and Air Force experience investigating UFO reports during the 40s, '50s, and '60s.

As a result of these investigations and studies and experience gained from investigating UFO reports since 1948, the conclusions of Project BLUE BOOK are:(1) no UFO reported, investigated, and evaluated by the Air Force has ever given any indication of threat to our national security;(2) there has been no evidence submitted to or discovered by the Air Force that sightings categorized as "unidentified" represent technological developments or principles beyond the range of present-day scientific knowledge; and(3) there has been no evidence indicating that sightings categorized as "unidentified" are extraterrestrial vehicles.

With the termination of Project BLUE BOOK, the Air Force regulations establishing and controlling the program for investigating and analyzing UFOs were rescinded. Documentation regarding the former BLUE BOOK investigation has been permanently transferred to the Military Reference Branch, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, and is available for public review and analysis.

Since Project BLUE BOOK was closed, nothing has happened to indicate that the Air Force ought to resume investigating UFOS. Because of the considerable cost to the Air Force in the past, and the tight funding of Air Force needs today, there is no likelihood the Air Force will become involved with UFO investigation again.

There are a number of universities and professional scientific organizations, such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which have considered UFO phenomena during periodic meetings and seminars. In addition, a list of private organizations interested in aerial phenomena may be found in Gayle's Encyclopedia of Associations (edition 8, vol- 1, pp. 432-433). Such timely review of the situation by private groups ensures that sound evidence will not be overlooked by the scientific community.

A person calling the base to report a UFO is advised to contact a private or professional organization (as mentioned above) or to contact a local law enforcement agency if the caller feels his or public safety is endangered.

Periodically, it is erroneously stated that the remains of extraterrestrial visitors are or have been stored at Wright-Patterson AFB. There are not now nor ever have been, any extraterrestrial visitors or equipment on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

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## **Majestic 12 or "MJ-12" Reference Report**

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The National Archives has received many requests for documentation and information about "Project MJ-12." Many of the inquiries concern a memorandum from Robert Cutler to Gen. Nathan Twining, dated July 14, 1954. This particular document poses problems for the following reasons:

1. The document was located in Record Group 341, entry 267. The series is filed by a Top Secret register number. This document does not bear such a number.
2. The document is filed in the folder T4-1846. There are no other documents in the folder regarding "NSC/MJ-12."
3. Researchers on the staff of the National Archives have searched in the records of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs on Staff, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, and in other related files. No further information has been found on this subject.
4. Inquiries to the U.S. Air Force, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the National Security Council failed to produce further information.
5. The Freedom of Information Office of the National Security Council informed the National Archives that "Top Secret Restricted Information" is a marking which did not come into use at the National Security Council until the Nixon Administration. The Eisenhower Presidential Library also confirm that this particular marking was not used during the Eisenhower Administration.
6. The document in question does not bear an official government letterhead or watermark. The NARA conservation specialist examined the paper and determined it was a ribbon copy prepared on "diction onionskin." The Eisenhower Library has examined a representative sample of the documents in its collection of the Cutler papers. All documents in the sample created by Mr. Cutler while he served on the NSC staff have an eagle watermark in the bond paper. The onionskin carbon copies have either an eagle watermark or no watermark at all. Most documents sent out by the NSC were prepared on White House letterhead paper. For the brief period when Mr. Cutler left the NSC, his carbon copies were prepared on "prestige onionskin."

7. The National Archives searched the Official Meeting Minute Files of the National Security Council and found no record of a NSC meeting on July 16, 1954. A search of all NSC Meeting Minutes for July 1954 found no mention of MJ-12 nor Majestic.
8. The Judicial, Fiscal and Social Branch searched the indices of the NSC records and found no listing for: MJ-12, Majestic, unidentified flying objects, UFO, flying saucers, or flying discs.
9. NAJA found a memo in a folder titled "Special Meeting July 16, 1956" which indicated that NSC members would be called to a civil defense exercise on July 16, 1956.
10. The Eisenhower Library states, in a letter to the Military Reference Branch, dated July 16, 1987:

"president Eisenhower's Appointment Books contain no entry for a special meeting on July 16, 1954 which might have included a briefing on MJ-12. Even when the President had 'off the record' meetings, the Appointment Books contain entries indicating the time of the meeting and the participants ..."

"The Declassification office of the National Security Council has informed us that it has no record of any declassification action having been taken on this memorandum or any other documents on this alleged project ..."

Robert Cutler, at the direction of President Eisenhower, was visiting overseas military installations of the day he supposedly issued this memorandum--- July 14, 1954. The Administration Series in Eisenhower's Papers as President contains Cutler's memorandum and report to the President upon his return from the trip. The memorandum is dated July 20, 1954 and refers to Cutler's visits to installations in Europe and North Africa between July 3 and 15. Also, within the NSC Staff Papers is a memorandum dated July 3, 1954, from Cutler to his two subordinates, James S. Ia and J. Patrick Cone, explaining how they should handle NSC administrative matters during his absence; one would assume that if the memorandum to Twining were genuine, Lay or Cone would have signed it."

**When certifying a document under the seal of the National Archives we attest that the reproduction is a true copy of a document in our custody. We do not authenticate documents or the information contained in a document.**

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## The "Roswell Incident"

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**The National Archives has been unable to locate any documentation among the Project BLUE BOOK records which discuss the 1947 incident in Roswell, New Mexico.**

On September 8, 1994, the Secretary of the Air Force, Sheila E. Widnall, announced that the United States Air Force had completed its study to locate records that relate to the alleged 1947 UFO incident near Roswell, New Mexico. Pro-UFO researchers claim that an extraterrestrial spacecraft and its alien occupants were recovered near Roswell in July of 1947, and that this fact was kept from the public.

At the request of Congressman Steven H. Schiff (R-NM), the General Accounting Office (GAO) initiated an audit in February of 1994, to locate all records relating to the "Roswell Incident" and to determine if such records were properly handled. The GAO audit was completed and the results published by the

Headquarters, U.S. Air Force in 1995. The publication is entitled "The Roswell Report: Fact vs. Fiction in the New Mexico Desert." This publication may be obtained from most U.S. Government Depository Library. The call number is **ISBN 0-16- 048023-X**.

The General Accounting Office audit involved a number of government agencies but focused on the Air Force. To support this audit, the Air Force initiated a systematic search of current Air Force offices as well as numerous archives and records centers which might help explain the incident. Air Force officials also interviewed a number of persons who may have had knowledge of the events. Prior to the interviews, Secretary Widnall released those persons from any previous security obligations that may have restricted their statements.

The Air Force research did not locate or develop any information that the "Roswell Incident" was a UFO event nor was there any indication of a "cover-up" by the Government. Information obtained through exhaustive records searches and interviews indicated that the materials recovered near Roswell was consistent with a balloon devise of the type used in a then classified project. No records indicated or even hinted that the recovery of "alien" bodies or extraterrestrial materials.

All documentation related to this case are now declassified and the information in the public domain. Documentation has been turned over to the office of the Air Force Historian.

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**The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration**

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