

## Millionaire Software Expert Joe Firmage Sees Link Between UFO/ET Technology, Biblical Miracles, And Today's "Psychic Phenomena"

**IF Joe Firmage, the 28-year-old Silicon Valley Internet expert and multi-millionaire is correct--that UFOs and their ET occupants have been visiting earth for thousands of years (possibly appearing as angels) and that ET advanced technology can explain "miracles" reported in the Bible--Firmage could have the greatest impact on religion since Jesus and Mohammed. (If Jesus was a "hybrid," created with ET sperm, this could explain the "virgin birth" and advanced ET technology could explain the "miracles" Jesus reportedly performed.) Firmage's views on the relationship between UFOs, religion and "psychic phenomena," are detailed in a 240-page report he posted on the Internet in late November, (modestly) titled "The Truth."**

**In "The Truth," Firmage reveals his belief that a crashed saucer was recovered near Roswell in 1947, that the U.S. government is engaged in a massive UFO coverup and that an MJ-12 group exists. He believes that if the "new MJ-12 papers" recently made public by Dr. Robert Wood and his son Ryan are bogus, then the papers were intentionally created with factual errors by a U.S. or Soviet intelligence agency to discredit belief in the reality of MJ-12. [Some of the many flaws in these papers were detailed in SUN #55/Jan. 1999.] Firmage reportedly has spent 2-3 million dollars in promoting "The Truth," including advertising in major newspapers and on radio. Firmage may see himself as the "New Messiah of UFOlogy."**

Firmage was raised in Salt Lake City and had a keen youthful interest in science fiction, space travel, UFOs and computers. He entered the University of Utah as a physics major but left at the age of 19 (before graduating) to create the Serious Co. to develop object-based programming tools. Three years later, Serious was bought by the Novell Corp. for \$24 million and Firmage joined Novell as vice president of strategic planning. He left Novell in 1995 and formed USWeb Corp., a Silicon Valley company which develops Internet web sites for clients. During the next two years USWeb acquired 30 companies and most recently agreed to merge with CKS Group, an advertising agency. Firmage was slated to head USWeb/CKS when they merged in December with a total of nearly 2,000 employees. But last fall Firmage began to more openly discuss his UFO-religious views and to show the "new MJ-12 papers" as proof. As a result, by Nov. 30 when he posted the MJ-12 papers on the Internet and issued a press release about them to the national media, he had been pressured to give up the post of CEO and become the company's "chief strategist." Then, on Jan. 8, Firmage announced that he had resigned from the company he had founded, to pursue his personal interests.

**Highlights of Firmage's views were reported in a lengthy feature article by Michael Learmonth in the Dec. 10-16 edition of Metro (Silicon Valley's weekly newspaper), which carried the headline: "SILICON VALLEY CEO MEETS THE ALIENS!" The article provided a few details about Firmage's youth and religious training which offer insights into the genesis of his current views: "Firmage was raised...as a Mormon but he abandoned the faith as a teenager when he began to have questions about the more dogmatic aspects of the religion." Mormonism, or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, requires followers to believe in direct human-angel contact. According to Mormon doctrine, the founder of the sect, Joseph Smith, was contacted by the angel Mormoni in 1827 and guided to the sacred golden tablets from which the Book of Mormon was written." When Firmage briefly recounts the tale of Mormonism's genesis, he comments that Smith's "encounters with brilliant, white-clothed beings are almost indistinguishable from many modern-day accounts of first-hand encounters with 'Visitors,'" i.e., ETs. (Emphasis added.)**

## Firmage Reports His Own Weird Encounter With "Visitor"

In the fall of 1997, Firmage says he awakened in the morning to see "a remarkable being, clothed in brilliant white light hovering over my bed." According to Firmage's account, the visitor asked: "Why have you called me here?" Firmage replied: "I want to travel in space." When the visitor asked why he should grant Firmage's wish, he replied: "Because I'm willing to die for it." Then, according to Firmage, "out of him emerged an electric blue sphere, just smaller than a basketball....It left his body, floated down and entered me. Instantly I was overcome by the most unimaginable ecstasy I have ever experienced, a pleasure vastly beyond orgasm....Something had been given to me." (Emphasis added.) Seemingly, the Visitor's glowing blue ball had given Firmage the great vision and wisdom he would set forth a year later in "The Truth."

Shortly after this experience--on Nov. 25, 1997--Firmage created the prestigious-sounding International Space Science Organization (ISSO) to carry out what he calls Project Kairos. (Kairos is a Greek word that means "the right moment.") Judging from "The Truth," Firmage has many objectives. One is to convince the "scientific establishment" of the reality of UFOs and to interest more scientists in researching advanced ET technology. This, he believes, can provide an unlimited energy supply from the vacuum of space (Zero Point Energy) and "gravitational propulsion" for space travel at greater-than-light velocities. Another objective is to overturn the U.S. government's UFO coverup and to educate religious leaders on the relationship of ET visitations to Biblical history. And most important, to apply the ET knowledge for the benefit of our planet's ecology and the earth's peoples.

### DID DR. STURROCK'S JOURNAL PROVIDE THE LINK TO DR. WOOD AND MJ-12?

Firmage does not disclose how he learned of the "new MJ-12 papers" and made contact with Dr. Wood. Possibly the link was provided by the quarterly journal published by Dr. Peter Sturrock's Society for Scientific Exploration (SSE), which devotes considerable coverage to UFOs and which Firmage praises as a "mind-expanding and rigorous publication." (Sturrock has long been interested in UFOs and conducted the recent nine-man scientist panel evaluation of the best UFO evidence [SUN #53/Sept. 1998].) The spring 1997 issue of SSE's journal carried a very favorable review by Dr. Wood of Stanton Friedman's book on MJ-12: "Top Secret/Majic." In Wood's review, he refers to Friedman's chapter dealing with "three [new MJ-12] documents from Timothy Cooper...who has been sending Friedman material from unknown sources. These three documents are supportive of the existence of an MJ-12 Majic project." (Emphasis added.)

In fact, Friedman's book reports that his investigation showed at least several of the first and subsequent Cooper-supplied papers to be counterfeit, and he was suspicious of others. Several Letters-to-the-Editor commenting on Wood's review were published in the next issue of SSE's journal, including one from Friedman. However, Friedman did not correct, or even mention, Wood's significant error about Cooper's "new MJ-12" papers being "supportive of the existence of an MJ-12 Majic project." (Wood is a long-time friend of Friedman and once arranged for McDonnell Douglas to hire Friedman briefly in the late 1960s where his covert assignment from Wood was to try to "reverse-engineer" UFO propulsion systems.)

When reporter Learmonth sought an appraisal of Firmage's views on UFOs, MJ-12 et al. from the editor-in-chief of SSE's journal, Dr. Bernhard Haisch (an astrophysicist employed by Lockheed Martin), for the article in Metro, Haisch was in an awkward situation. Dr. Wood is a member of SSE's nine-person executive council and wealthy Firmage reportedly contributes funds to support SSE. Learmonth's article quoted Haisch as saying that Firmage is "one of the brighter people I've ever met. He's quite capable of carrying on sophisticated conversations in areas where he's not a trained researcher." The Metro article added: "While Haisch is open to compelling evidence of a UFO coverup--including the new Majestic 12 documents contained in The Truth--he has a hard time going where Firmage went with his analysis."

## FIRMAGE SAYS AUTHENTICITY OF "NEW MJ-12 PAPERS" IS NOT A KEY ISSUE

In Firmage's "The Truth," he admits that one or more of the MJ-12 documents may be "partial or complete forgeries." In Firmage's opinion the question of "whether every single MJ-12 document is completely accurate in historical detail, genuine authorship or pristine in authenticity is not the issue.... It is really only critical to validate any one of the principal documents. If only a single major document is validated, then MJ-12 was factual..." **SUN Comment:** But if one or more counterfeit "MJ-12 documents" have emerged from anonymous sources, then every such document requires rigorous investigation to search for flaws indicating it is a counterfeit.

For example, consider one of the original MJ-12 documents that has been endorsed both by Friedman and Wood--President Truman's (alleged) memo of Sept. 24, 1947, to Defense Secretary Forrestal, which (allegedly) created Majestic Twelve--nearly three months after the reported Roswell crashed-saucer incident.. When the memo was analyzed by Peter Tytell's Document Laboratory in New York City, he concluded that it had been typed on a Smith Corona typewriter which was not introduced until 1963--more than 15 years after the Truman memo seemingly was typed. Although Friedman was informed of this key discrepancy, he never revealed this fatal flaw in any of his papers or in his book "Top Secret/MAJIC."

## 'SUSPICIOUSLY SIMILAR' TRUMAN SIGNATURES

In a Friedman article published in the Sept./Oct. 1987 edition of International UFO Reporter (IUR), he claimed the Truman MJ-12 memo was authentic because its signature "matches that on an October 1947 letter from Truman to [Vannevar] Bush." When SUN's editor visited the Library of Congress to examine a copy of this Truman letter, dated Oct. 1, 1947, we found that the signatures matched perfectly--including accidental ink marks made by the President on one portion of the "H" in "Harry." Rather than authenticating the MJ-12 memo as Friedman claimed, the striking similarity suggested that the Truman signature on the MJ-12 document was a photocopy of the authentic signature on the Oct. 1 letter.

When we sent a photocopy of the Oct. 1 letter to document examiner Tytell for analysis, he responded that the MJ-12 Truman memo was a "classic signature transplant." His sharp eye noted other evidence. In the authentic Oct. 1 letter, the horizontal portion of the "T" (in Truman) had barely touched the end of "yours," in the closing "Sincerely yours." Because the typewriter used by the counterfeiter differed from the one used for the Oct. 1 letter, the counterfeiter had to delete the "Sincerely yours," and used "white-out" to remove it. In so doing, Tytell noted this had "hinned" down that part of the "T." (See arrow, below.)

Tytell noted that the MJ-12 Truman signature was slightly larger, elongated and a bit darker than the Oct. 1 original, as would be expected if it were a photocopy. He explained that photocopy machines enlarge material by roughly 1.2% to avoid reproducing ragged edges or material not precisely centered on the machine. Tytell told me that he had called Friedman to inform him of the results of his analysis of the two Truman signatures and had recommended that Friedman "should just wash his hands of this." Friedman ignored Tytell's advice. The next week, when Friedman spoke at a MUFON regional conference near St. Louis, he repeated his strong endorsement of the MJ-12 papers.

Sincerely yours,

### WOOD SAYS SIGNATURES ARE IDENTICAL, OFFERS RIDICULOUS EXPLANATION

Not surprisingly, Friedman has continued to deny that the two Truman signatures are the same. Dr. Wood disagrees. "If you lay them on top of one another, they are absolutely identical," Wood said in his talk at the UFO conference in Connecticut last October. This, he admitted, prompts handwriting experts to conclude that the MJ-12 signature is a photocopy. But Wood offered an alternative explanation. He showed a photo of the President using an "auto-pen," a device which enabled Truman to use a "master pen" to cause four "slave pens" to simultaneously sign four other documents. This, Wood said, could explain the identical signatures on the Sept. 24 MJ-12 memo and the Oct. 1 Truman letter to Dr. Vannevar Bush.

**SUN Comment:** A ridiculous explanation. If the memo creating MJ-12 were authentic, why would Truman not take a few seconds to sign the vitally important document on Sept. 24 instead of letting it sit around for a week until Oct. 1 when he signed the letter to Dr. Bush. If Truman's hand was too tired on Sept. 24, surely he would have been able to sign it the next day, or the following day, without letting it sit around unsigned for a week to use the "auto-pen."

### EVEN MOORE, SHANDERA ADMIT DOUBTS ABOUT TRUMAN MJ-12 SIGNATURE

The original MJ-12 documents were made public by William L. Moore, in partnership with Jaime H. Shandera and Friedman in the late spring of 1987, and initially all three staunchly defended their authenticity. In 1990, Moore and Shandera published a lengthy "analytical report" which generally defended MJ-12's authenticity. However, near the end of the report [p. 70], they admitted that the signature on the Sept. 24 Truman memo "bears a coincidentally close (indeed very close) resemblance to a known-to-be-authentic document." As a result, Moore and Shandera offered only a 35-40% probability that the MJ-12 Truman memo was authentic. However, they added that if the memo was bogus, it "very probably" had been fabricated by the U.S. government--a theory which Joe Firmage would also offer nearly a decade later.

### FIRMAGE CLAIMS MJ-12 HAS BEEN "PRIVATIZED," NOW CONTROLLED BY INDUSTRIALISTS, NOT MILITARY OR CIVIL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

In "The Truth," Firmage claims: "I have personally sat across the table from top leaders and brilliant minds of the military and science, on multiple occasions, who have confirmed the basic truth of the UFO phenomenon....Based upon what these leaders have told me, I do not believe that most elected officials or military intelligence officials have much more knowledge than the general public on the subject of UFOs....The organization responsible for managing the domain is comprised of less than 1,900 people and was long ago privatized and pulled entirely outside of the machinery of political and military command structure. It reports to no publicly elected or appointed leader, but rather a self-selected governing body which today is composed of a larger number of industrialists than military or civil officials." (Emphasis added.) Firmage does not discuss how such a group could obtain the cooperation of unfriendly governments, such as Iraq, North Korea and the Soviet Union, which would be needed to maintain a global UFO coverup.

### SUN IDENTIFIES AT LEAST ONE OF FIRMAGE'S TWO ANONYMOUS "UFO EXPERTS"

Although Robert Wood and son Ryan are identified by Firmage as his "authentication experts" on the MJ-12 papers, he does not identify by name two other persons whose "UFO expertise" helps shape his views. He claims they are "two of the most reputable investigative reporters of various anomalies in recent history." SUN has learned that one of Firmage's UFO experts is Linda Moulton Howe, who is the leading promoter of the idea that ETs are responsible for "cattle mutilations" and who more recently has expanded into the field of "UFO abductions." SUN believes that Firmage's second anonymous UFO expert is Michael Lindemann who operates a subscription-type Internet service on UFOs called CNINews.

**"THE TRUTH" FALLS FAR SHORT OF ITS TITLE--IN SUN'S OPINION**

"The Truth" includes two (partially redundant) chronologies of important UFO cases beginning with the Kenneth Arnold June 24, 1947, incident--each authored by one of Firmage's two UFO experts. Those provided by Howe are the more "colorful." For example:

\* The egg-shaped UFO that policeman Lonnie Zamora reported seeing land on the outskirts of Socorro, N.M., on April 24, 1964, *"was an extraterrestrial vehicle on its way to an official meeting arranged through the MJ-12 group..."* which mistakenly landed near Socorro when its intended destination was Holloman AFB, N.M. Howe said she later learned that when U.S. officials met with ETs, one of them *"had a very large Arabic-style nose, wore Egyptian-looking armor and had a high-peaked helmet...holding a rod in its left hand."* The ETs reportedly gave a rod/wand to the U.S. commander. When an ET spoke into its wand, its words were automatically translated into English and emerged from the U.S. commander's wand, and vice versa.

\* In describing the UFO incidents that (allegedly) occurred at the USAF air base at Bentwaters, England, in late December of 1980, Howe reported as fact the claims made by Sgt. James Penniston. According to Penniston, as he approached a disc-shaped craft he saw symbols. When he reached out and touched them he *"received binary coded information in his mind. The essence of the communications was that the intelligence behind the craft and the binary code were time-travelers from the Earth's future. Their mission was to gather chromosomes, genetic materials from humans and animals and return to their time-line several thousand years in the future where their civilization's ability to reproduce has a serious problem and faced extinction."*

Two other examples of the many inaccurate claims made in "The Truth" include:

\* In reporting the "Top Secret" UFO Estimate of the Situation submitted to USAF Chief of Staff Gen. Hoyt Vandenberg in 1948 which said that some UFOs might be ET craft, Firmage quotes Capt. Edward J. Ruppelt as saying: *"Vandenberg squelched the report, saying he just couldn't accept the idea of interplanetary spaceships."* **FALSE.** Ruppelt wrote on page 45 of his book that Vandenberg rejected the ET hypothesis because: *"The report lacked proof."*

\* Firmage quotes portions of Lt. Gen. Twining's "Secret" letter of Sept. 23, 1947, which provided the Air Force's Air Materiel Command's then-current assessment of what UFOs might be, including: *"The phenomenon reported is something real and not visionary or fictitious."* **Omitted** was Twining's statement in the same letter, written more than two months after the "Roswell incident," which referred to *"the lack of physical evidence in the shape of crash-recovered exhibits which would undeniably prove the existence of these objects."* (Emphasis added.)

**FIRMAGE'S CHALLENGE TO SKEPTICS**

"The Truth" challenges UFO skeptics: *"Step forward and comprehensively refute all the evidence: the millions of sightings, the thousands of reported landings, the thousands of abduction experiences, and the countless highly strange accompanying phenomena for which no one yet has a clear explanation: crop circles, cattle mutilations, etc....The evidence spans far more than 50 years. It goes back thousands of years, peppered throughout the ancient books and scriptures of our ancestors."* (Emphasis added.) Firmage concludes: *"In this time of great moment, more and more of us are turning again to these books for guidance. But from a scientific point of view, if any one of the great books of scripture truthfully retells of human interaction with great beings from above, then at least a few other such books are almost surely grounded in history as well..."*

**SUN Comment:** It remains to be seen whether Firmage's philosophy will be widely embraced by UFOlogists and/or those who follow traditional religions, including Jews and Muslims. We doubt that it will have any effect on the scientific community's interest in UFOs. **SUN looks forward to reading Sturrock's and/or Wood's assessment of "The Truth" in SSE's journal.**

## Clinton's Plan To Avoid Impeachment: Reveal The Truth About UFOs

According to SUN's usually UNreliable source (SUUS), President Clinton's top advisors devised a sure-fire strategy to not only avoid Congressional impeachment and/or censure but to also win Clinton worldwide acclaim as one of world's greatest leaders. SUUS has provided SUN with an early draft of the speech that Clinton was to deliver on TV:

*"My fellow Americans and all the citizens of planet Earth. Earlier I confessed that I did not tell the truth about my relations with Monica Lewinsky. But this is of scant import compared to the failure of nine previous Presidents to tell the truth about Unidentified Flying Objects, or UFOs. Every American President since Truman and Eisenhower has known that our planet is being visited by extraterrestrial craft, but they have used falsehood and disinformation to withhold the truth from you. Every American President since John F. Kennedy has known that ETs began to abduct the innocent citizens of our planet in the fall of 1961. And the pace of these horrible abductions has increased dramatically in the last decade, as reported by Whitley Strieber, Budd Hopkins, David Jacobs and others. Instead of revealing the truth about UFOs and focusing our defense expenditures on the real threat, most of our past Presidents created an imaginary threat of an expansionist Soviet Union and Communism. Ronald Reagan was the first President to try to devise a defense against UFOs via his "Star Wars" program. However, Reagan falsely claimed that the program was intended to protect against a Soviet missile attack.*

*"I have today informed Defense Secretary Cohen that the Pentagon should deploy high-energy lasers on hundreds of satellites, regardless of cost, to destroy ET craft. The world's leaders, including even Iraq's Saddam Hussein, have all agreed to forget our past regional conflicts and join with us to protect the people of this planet against the ET threat. Also, I have today instructed the director of the FBI to assign half of its agents to protect UFO abductees against further ET indignities. We will not tolerate ET abductions of innocent persons, and mutilation of our cattle and horses. And I plan to designate the city of Roswell, N.M., as a National Monument.*

*"I realize that my revelations tonight will make some persons unhappy. For example, Stanton Friedman will have to try to get a job as a nuclear physicist--which won't be easy. The TV networks will be unhappy that they can no longer use UFO-coverup shows to attract large audiences. UFO groups such as MUFON will go out of business. My fellow citizens, let the record show that I was the first President in more than 50 years to reveal the TRUTH about UFOs and--even more important--the first President to commit the Defense Dept. and FBI to protect every citizen against ET abduction. Good night, and God bless you."*

**PRESIDENT CLINTON AND HIS TOP ADVISORS WERE EAGER TO PURSUE THIS STRATEGY AND HIS TV SPEECH WAS IN NEARLY FINAL FORMAT, ACCORDING TO SUUS, WHEN WORD ARRIVED: "MJ-12 HAS VETOED THE IDEA." THE PRESIDENT KNEW HE WAS POWERLESS TO CHALLENGE MJ-12's DECISION.**

## "Alien Autopsy" Called A Hoax By TV Producer Who Once Promoted It

**Robert Kiviat, whose hour-long "Alien Autopsy: Fact or Fiction?" TV show in mid-1995 purported to show the autopsy of an ET recovered from the Roswell crashed saucer, now admits the film is bogus--according to Kiviat's recent TV show "The World's Greatest Hoaxes: Secrets Finally Revealed," which aired on the Fox TV network on Dec. 28. Not surprisingly, the recent Kiviat expose did not mention his earlier role in promoting "Alien Autopsy." Ray Santilli, a British film distributor, claimed he had acquired the film from an aging American cameraman who had filmed the autopsy. But there were many discrepancies in Santilli's tale and he refused to provide a few frames to Eastman Kodak to verify its alleged 1947 vintage [SUN #35/Sept. 1995; SUN #36/Nov. 1995; SUN #37/Jan. 1996]. One brief segment which Santilli showed to a few British UFOlogists, but which he opted not to sell for TV broadcast because**

of its very poor quality, appeared to have been filmed in a poorly illuminated tent. Seemingly, the two "doctors" were operating in a tent that had been hastily erected near the crash site to try to save the ET's life. But the footage showed one of the "doctors" pulling out the ET's innards like a butcher. If the ET were already dead, it would have been transported to much better illuminated medical facilities for the first-ever autopsy of an ET, such as those used for the "Alien Autopsy." Its two "pathologists" wore protective face masks (which hid their identity), whereas the two "doctors" in the tent sequence wore no face masks.

Through the use of image-enhancement techniques on the tent sequence, Kiviat was able to more clearly show the faces of the two "doctors," one of whom was interviewed on the recent TV show. His name was Elliot Willis, a technician who reportedly formerly was employed by AK Music, a British film production company. According to Willis, AK Music had made the tent sequence for Santilli. The man who played the second doctor was "a local butcher," according to Willis, which explains the way he pulled out the innards. Willis said AK Music did not produce the more professional "Alien Autopsy" film which Santilli later sold to TV stations around the globe, but said he had heard it was produced by a German company.

## Betty Cash Dies 18 Years After Cash-Landrum UFO Incident

Betty Cash, one of three persons (allegedly) irradiated by a giant diamond-shaped UFO which was being escorted by 23 twin-rotor helicopters near Huffman, Tex., on the night of Dec. 29, 1980, died at the age of 71 on the 18th anniversary of the incident. Her photo was featured on the cover of the MUFON UFO Journal's February issue which contained a full-page article on Betty by MUFON official John Schuessler, the principal investigator of the incident. Schuessler's article claimed that *"Betty died of health problems associated with the injuries that were caused by her close encounter with a UFO exactly 18 years earlier....Never a year passed that she wasn't hospitalized and treated for complications arising from that initial extensive radiation exposure."* (Emphasis added.)

SUN suspects that Betty's death certificate shows that her demise resulted from "heart failure." Schuessler's MUFON article made no mention of a few key facts about Betty Cash's health problems. For example, four years before the UFO incident, Betty underwent heart bypass surgery at the age of 47. Barely two years after the UFO incident, cancerous lumps were discovered in Betty's right breast and it was removed. Two months later, Betty suffered a heart attack and a month later she underwent surgery to remove her left breast. In early 1997, Betty suffered still another heart attack. So far as is known Betty never suffered from or was treated for leukemia or other radiation-induced health problems. (Shortly after the UFO incident, Schuessler used a geiger counter to check for the presence of radiation in Betty's car but found none.) Vickie Landrum--now age 77--and her grandson Colby seemingly have not suffered any long-term adverse health effects.

## NBC-TV's "Hard Evidence of Aliens" Shows How To Deceive The Public

The first 15 minutes of NBC-TV's two-hour prime-time UFO show, which aired Feb. 17, were cleverly designed to mislead viewers into thinking the program would offer a reasonably balanced treatment of the issues--despite the show's title: "Confirmation: Hard Evidence of Aliens Among US?" and the fact that Whitley Strieber, world-famous promoter of UFO abduction claims, was one of the show's two executive producers. Initially, UFO skeptics (including SUN's editor) were given almost as much airtime as UFO promoters. For example, the first segment on the 1997 Mexico City UFO video [SUN # 54/Nov. 1998] raised serious doubts about its authenticity. The next segment dealt with two UFO photos taken in McMinnville, Ore., in 1951 by Paul Trent, which SUN's editor called a hoax made with an object suspended from overhead electric wires. They were endorsed by a photo analyst who could find no suspension string but who did not assess whether the Trent's cheap camera had sufficient resolution to show same.

Next was a segment showing the video of a UFO taken by NASA's STS-48 Shuttle crew. A majority of the "experts" who appeared rejected a prosaic explanation. As the TV show progressed, airtime for UFO skeptics declined sharply. All but one of the "experts" interviewed on the "Roswell incident" claimed it involved a crashed ET craft and a government coverup. As fewer and fewer skeptics appeared to rebut UFO-promoter claims, viewers might logically conclude that the skeptics were unable to offer any rebuttal. None of the once Secret and Top Secret CIA/USAF documents of the 1947-1952 period--which contained no evidence of any crashed saucer coverup--were shown to viewers or even mentioned.

Approximately one third of the show (not counting commercials) was devoted to "UFO abductions" and "alien implants." Featured promoters included Dr. John Mack, Budd Hopkins, David Jacobs, Whitley Strieber, and "implant experts" Dr. Roger Leir and Derrel Simms. During this 30-minute segment, skeptics (including psychologist Dr. William Cone, Joe Nickell and SUN's editor) received a combined total airtime of less than three minutes. Strieber interviewed his "most impressive" abductee, Jesse Long, who had a small shard of glass removed from his left shin in 1991. Long claims it was implanted by aliens in 1957 when ETs abducted him at the age of five. Long also claims frequent abductions and that a UFO lifted his car up from a highway near Albuquerque and took him aboard to see nine of his hybrid children. The final segment featured a "lights in the night sky" type UFO incident involving police in a small Ohio town, which occurred in the fall of 1994. To impress viewers, the program moderator said: *"For many, there is no such thing as a credible UFO sighting. But what if the UFO was seen by policemen?"* This segment lasted for 14 minutes, with less than two minutes available for skeptic James McGaha to offer a possible prosaic explanation.

In reality, more UFOs reported to the Hynek Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS) in the mid-1970s by law-enforcement personnel turned out to have prosaic explanations than for any other occupation. According to Allan Hendry's analysis on p. 102 of "The UFO Handbook," investigations showed that while 89% of all UFO reports submitted to CUFOS turned out to have prosaic explanations, the misidentification rate for law enforcement personnel was 94%. The NBC-TV moderator's concluding comment was: *"Skeptics and believers will continue to debate the question: Are we really alone? Now, we leave it up to you to decide."* Based on the "evidence" offered by NBC-TV (and most TV shows on UFOs), obviously we have ET visitors.

#### SHORT SHRIFT:

\* "UFO-Lawyer" Gersten plans class-action suit for abductees: Attorney Peter Gersten, director of Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS), has revealed plans to bring class-action suit against the U.S. government in behalf of "UFO-abductees." If Budd Hopkins and David Jacobs are correct that several million Americans have suffered UFO abductions, and if Gersten tries to collect a modest \$100,000 per victim, the total sought could be several hundred billion dollars. If Gersten succeeds, this will demolish the projected budget surplus.

\* Skeptical assessment of UFO abductions from long-time pro-UFOlogist: Richard Hall, who served as deputy director of NICAP in the 1960s when it was the nation's largest, most respected pro-UFO organization, offered the following assessment of UFO-abduction claims in his monthly column in the MUFON UFO Journal's February issue: *"The more I have studied the abduction phenomenon, the more I have come to the conclusion that even our top, highly regarded investigators in this field have gradually slipped past the facts and evidence into areas of very questionable speculation..."* [Will NBC-TV's "hard evidence" prompt Hall to change his views?]

NOTE: Opinions expressed in SUN are those of its editor--unless otherwise noted--and do NOT necessarily represent the views of any organization with which he is affiliated. We thank DR. GARY POSNER for his help in proofreading.

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