

**THE GALLUP POLL**

# Only a third deny existence of UFOs, extraterrestrial life

By GEORGE GALLUP

PRINCETON, N.J. — For millions of American adults a "Close Encounter of the Third Kind" is a distinct possibility, with only about one in three flatly denying the existence of either unidentified flying objects or extraterrestrial life.

In a new Gallup survey, 50 percent express the belief that there are "people somewhat like ourselves living on other planets in the universe," while 34 percent are skeptical and 16 percent unsure. The current figures are virtually unchanged from those recorded in a 1978 survey, but considerably more now than in either 1973 or 1966 believe in extraterrestrial life.

Similarly, 49 percent of those who have heard or read about UFOs think they are real, while 30 percent are doubtful and 21 percent uncertain. Belief in UFOs is down slightly from its peak in 1978, when 57 percent thought they were real.

In the new survey, one person in 11 (9 percent) reports actually having seen something he or she thought was a UFO, statistically similar to the findings of earlier polls.

Belief in the existence of life on

other planets and in UFO's is substantially higher among persons who attended college than among those whose formal education ended at or before graduation from high school.

Men are more likely than women to believe in extraterrestrial life, 62 percent and 40 percent, respectively, but men and women share the same opinions about UFOs.

As a rule, people 50 and older are less convinced than their juniors that either phenomenon has a basis in fact, but more older than younger adults are undecided. Westerners are most apt to be believers; Southerners, least so.

Following are the questions, the trends and the latest findings among key demographic groups:

Respondents were first asked: "Have you heard or read about UFOs (unidentified flying objects)?"

The latest findings are based on telephone interviews with 527 adults, 18 and older, conducted in scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period Feb. 2-18. For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 6 percent.

(Credit and thanks to FSR Consultant Graham Conway of British Columbia who brought this interesting item to our attention.

EDITOR)

"Have you ever seen anything you thought was a UFO?"

**SIGHTING OF UFO**

1987	9%
1978	9%
1973	11%
1966	5%

"In your opinion, are UFOs something real or just people's imagination?"

**EXISTENCE OF UFOs**

	Real	Imaginary	Not sure
1987	49%	30%	21%
1978	57%	27%	16%
1973	54%	30%	16%
1966	46%	29%	25%

**EXISTENCE OF UFOs**

	Real	Imaginary	Not sure
NATIONAL	49%	30%	21%
Men	50%	31%	19%
Women	49%	28%	23%
Attended college	56%	26%	18%
No college	44%	33%	23%
18-29 years	53%	32%	15%
30-49 years	57%	21%	22%
50 & older	36%	39%	25%
East	52%	30%	18%
Midwest	48%	27%	25%
South	39%	39%	22%
West	62%	19%	19%

"Do you think there are people somewhat like ourselves living on other planets in the universe, or not?"

**EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE**

	Yes	No	Not sure
1987	50%	34%	16%
1978	51%	33%	16%
1973	46%	38%	16%
1966	34%	46%	20%

**EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE**

	Yes	No	Not sure
NATIONAL	50%	34%	16%
Men	62%	30%	8%
Women	40%	38%	22%
Attended college	57%	33%	10%
No college	46%	35%	19%
18-29 years	52%	36%	12%
30-49 years	56%	35%	9%
50 & older	42%	33%	25%
East	55%	29%	16%
Midwest	49%	34%	17%
South	38%	48%	14%
West	63%	21%	16%

## THE SPANISH SCENE

### 1. Alleged "UFOs" seen near Canary Islands claimed to be missiles from Soviet submarines

IN recent years many publications in various parts of the world have carried a report that on March 5, 1979, two UFOs were seen by hundreds of witnesses to rise out of the sea from an area lying 200 miles to the south-west of the Canary Islands (Lat. 29° 30' N., Long. 17° 00' W.) in the North Atlantic Ocean, and have printed some of the numerous photographs taken at the time. A brief account of the affair appeared in World Round-Up (p. iii) of FSR 25/2

(March-April 1979), reporting a lecture on the sighting by Spanish Ufologist Juan-José Benítez.

FSR Correspondent J. Plana Crivillén has now sent us the text of an article, 'OVNI, Destino Siberia' ("UFO" — Destination Siberia) by Carlos Yáñez, which appeared in the Spanish newspaper *El País* of June 14, 1987. In this article the author states that preliminary findings of a special commission, set up at the time by the Spanish Air Force to study the events of March 5, 1979, now indicate that the two so-called "UFOs" seen by so many people that night were in fact two intercontinental missiles fired from a Soviet nuclear submarine towards a target-area in Siberia. (Enquiries made of the American authorities brought the reply that most emphatically no submarine of theirs had been involved.)

Sr Crivillén adds that he has personally discussed this case with Carlos Yárnoz, the author of the article, and says that he is himself in a position to be able to confirm many of the details of the story as given.

If, therefore, it looks as though one is now under an obligation to regard the "UFOS" of March 5, 1979, as highly dubious, what are we to think of a much earlier report, dating from June 22, 1976, which was compiled at some length by J.M. Sánchez and constituted the lead-story (with cover-photograph) for FSR 23/3 (October 1977)? J.M. Sánchez's account dealt not only with various "things seen in the skies", but also with a huge luminous sphere seen hovering very low over Gran Canary Island and containing two gigantic entities about 3 metres in height.

One has to recognize that the photograph taken from Maspalomas in the southern part of Gran Canaria Island that night does look all too suspiciously like the photographs of the "Soviet missiles" as now identified by the Spanish authorities! So what are we to think?

But, on the other hand, be it noted that the huge craft which was seen by many witnesses (including members of the crew of the Spanish warship "Atrevida", then cruising south of Fuerteventura), to fly in a northwards curving trajectory, at a speed of some 3,000 km.p.h., and from east to west, across the whole of the Canary Island Group, from Fuerteventura in the east to Tenerife in the West, was not travelling in the correct direction to be a Soviet missile bound for Siberia!

At this late date, it is not likely that we shall ever learn much more about these two episodes, namely of June 22, 1976, and March 5, 1979. But we can tuck them away carefully in our "mental records", as we have always done over claims by James Oberg or others that certain "UFO phenomena" over Russia have really been rocket firings from Plesetsk. After all, all these things are perfectly possible and perfectly reasonable. (*But nobody, in 1988, is going to persuade*

*us, as Oberg wishes to do, that all "UFOS" are Russian rockets!*)

And — as regards the Canary Islands — given the normal degree of Government secrecy on UFOs still prevailing in Spain, how do we know that this latest story about the Soviet submarines isn't itself just another *cover-up*?

## 2. Queen Sophia of Spain sees secret UFO files

The article by Carlos Yárnoz concludes with an interesting item. It will be recalled that, in FSR 32/3, we have just published the *magnum opus* by J.P. Crivillén and his colleagues on "The Attitude of the Spanish Authorities towards the UFOs", and the strict secrecy maintained on our subject in Spain.

Carlos Yárnoz now tells us that

**"When no logical or reasonable explanation is found, several possible hypotheses remain, and the case is filed away.**

**"In the Air Force Headquarters there exists a small Archive where all these files, classified as "materia reservada", i.e., secret material", are kept.**

**"This Archive is inside the Flight Safety Section, which is under the direction of Colonel Sergio Rubiano.**

**"In recent years, only one person outside the Air Force Headquarters has been able to read these reports on what are considered to be UFOs. This is the Queen, who takes a keen interest in these matters, and who, some months ago, asked whether it would be possible for her to see the documents in question. A few days later, the entire set of files, complete, was forwarded by the Air Force Chief of Staff to the Royal Palace (Palacio de la Zarzuela) and, shortly afterwards, the Queen returned them." — G.C.**

## PECULIAR DEATH OF A BRITISH SCIENTIST

As FSR readers will know, there was a spate of "mystery deaths" in 1987 involving British scientists who had been engaged on secret defence work, communications satellites, and such projects.

One of these cases involved David Sands, a Marconi scientist who died when his car crashed at high speed into a restaurant wall and exploded into a ball of flame.

The North Hampshire coroner, Mr John Clark, was told by the Police that there had been much speculation in the British media that this death might be "linked in some sinister way" with the deaths of other scientists, several of whom had recently died in mysterious circumstances in and around one particular region in the West of England even though they did not all work or live there. However, the coroner said he found no grounds for linking the deaths.

David Sands, aged 37, of Itchen Abbas, Hampshire, had been a project manager with Easams, a sister company of the big British defence contractors, Marconi.

Pathologist Dr Roger Ainsworth told those participating in the inquest that the crash had occurred at Popham on March 30. Mr Sands, who, as the pathologist emphasised, *had not been drinking*, was badly burned, and sustained multiple injuries which proved fatal.

Mrs Anna Sands told the inquest members (the

enquiry was held in Basingstoke, Hampshire) that her husband had been happy in his work, though he was concerned at the prospect of the imminent death of his father. She said they were happily married, and had two children.

Mr Sands had talked vaguely about seeking a change of job and, *two days previously*, had "seemed a bit confused" when he returned home after being "missing" for several hours. She said he did not seem to realize how long he had been absent.

The officials at the inquest heard that Mr Sands had been dedicated to his work on Communications, including work on *satellites*. He held a senior managerial post, and was very successful. He had never expressed dissatisfaction with what he was doing, and in any case could always have switched to work on other projects had he so desired.

P.C. Anthony Rush, giving evidence, said Mr Sands was wearing his seat-belt at the time when his car was driven "at high velocity" into the building, where it demolished the wall and became embedded in the property. There were no skid-marks on the road. The vehicle could have been steered into the building or it could have deviated into it for some other reason.

The coroner said that it would be unsafe to return a verdict of "suicide", as there were no letters or notes left by Mr Sands, who had gone to work that day in the usual fashion. It seemed, however, that for some