

# Conservative Research Department

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CONFIDENTIAL


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PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 87

Since Croydon N.W. two surveys have been conducted in Crosby. They both show Shirley Williams having a significant lead over the Conservative Party.

The interviewing for our latest Gallup 'tracking' study was conducted well before the results of the Croydon N.W. by-election were known. Our next tracking study (which will be the same as figures published in the Daily Telegraph this Thursday) will have been conducted largely after the Croydon N.W. by-election.

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*10/27/81*

D. K. Britto

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PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 87

(produced 26th October 1981)

1. Introduction

The Granada TV programme 'A Week on Friday' transmitted on Friday 23rd October included the results of the first survey to be conducted in Crosby since the death of the sitting Conservative Member. The survey conducted by MORI on Friday 23rd October found 40% claiming they will vote for Shirley Williams, 34% Conservative and 25% Labour. MORI found that most electors in Crosby claimed that the result in Croydon N.W. would make no difference to their voting intention, but a significant 17% of prospective Alliance voters claimed it made them 'more likely' to vote for the Alliance candidate. An NOP poll published in the Daily Mail on 26th October and conducted in Crosby on 24/25 October found 46% claiming they would vote for the Alliance, 34% Conservative and 20% Labour.

The interviewing for our latest private Gallup 'tracking' study was conducted from 14th to 19th October - well before the Croydon N.W. by-election. The survey found a drop in Social Democratic support after the upsurge we found in our previous week's tracking study conducted during and immediately after the Social Democratic Conferences. We found no change in Liberal support but a slight (not statistically significant) increase in support for both the Labour Party and us.

The results of the next Gallup tracking study will be published in the Daily Telegraph on 29th October - the interviewing for the survey will have been conducted largely after the Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance victory in the Croydon N.W. by-election.

Details of the results of voting intention question (excluding don't knows are shown below:-

VOTING INTENTION

	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>SOCIAL</u> <u>DEMOCRAT</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>LEAD</u>
1979	%	%	%	%	%	%
May (GE)	43.9	36.9	13.8	-	5.5	+7.0
13/18 June*	42.0	43.5	13.0	-	5.0	-9.0
3/8 June	31.0	40.0	14.0	12.5	2.5	-9.0
9/15 June	29.5	37.5	18.0	12.5	2.5	-8.0**
16/22 June	32.0	37.0	15.5	13.0	2.5	-5.0
24/30 June	29.0	40.0	17.0	12.0	2.0	-11.0
1/6 July	30.5	39.5	14.0	13.0	3.0	-9.0
8/13 July	30.0	40.5	14.5	12.0	3.0	-10.5**
15/20 July	29.0	36.0	16.0	17.0	2.0	-7.0
22/27 July	26.0	38.0	13.0	21.0	2.0	-12.0
29 July/ 3 Aug	25.5	40.0	11.5	20.5	2.5	-14.5
5/10 August	27.0	36.0	15.0	18.0	4.0	-9.0
12/17 August	28.0	38.5	13.0	19.0	1.5	-10.5**
19/24 August	29.0	34.0	17.0	18.0	2.0	-5.0
26/31 August	26.0	41.0	15.0	16.0	2.0	-15.0
1/7 September	25.0	41.0	15.0	16.0	3.0	-16.0
9/14 September	32.0	36.5	11.5	17.5	2.5	-4.5**
16/21 September	25.0	36.5	16.0	19.0	3.5	-11.5
23/28 September	24.5	33.5	16.5	24.0	1.5	-9.0
30th September/5th October	26.0	38.0	12.0	21.0	3.0	-12.0
7/12 October	27.0	31.0	12.5	26.5	3.0	-4.0
14/19 October	28.5	34.0	12.5	22.0	3.0	-5.5

\*First Gallup post-Election survey

\*\*Published Polls

The trend of support in response to our two prompted voting intention questions was similar to that in the unprompted question. Details are shown below - it should be noted that these particular questions have not been re-calculated to exclude don't knows.

VOTING INTENTION IF  
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE  
(including don't knows)

	<u>3/8</u>	<u>9/15</u>	<u>16/22</u>	<u>24/30</u>	<u>1/6</u>	<u>8/13</u>	<u>15/20</u>	<u>22/27</u>	<u>29 July</u>	<u>5/10</u>	<u>12/17</u>
	June	June	June	June	July	July	July	July	3 Aug	Aug	Aug
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	22	23	23	21	22	21	21	18	20	20	20
Labour	27	28	28	31	29	29	28	28	30	27	27
Liberal	9	12	11	11	8	9	11	9	7	8	8
Others	2	1	2	1½	2	2	2	1	1	2	1
Social Democrat Party	23	20	19	19	20	20	23	29	26	25	26
Social Democrat/ Liberal Alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/it depends	17	16	16	16½	16	18	16	16	15	18	18

	<u>19/24</u>	<u>26/31</u>	<u>1/7</u>	<u>9/14</u>	<u>16/21</u>	<u>23/28</u>	<u>30th Sept</u>	<u>7/12</u>	<u>14/19</u>
	Aug	Aug	Sept	Sept	Sept	Sept	5th Oct	Oct	Oct
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	21	20	19	23	18	18	19	19	22
Labour	25	28	29	27	27	23	29	23	25
Liberal	11	9	10	7	11	11	8	8	9
Others	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
Social Democrat Party	25	24	25	24	27	30	25	30	25
Social Democrat/ Liberal Alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/it depends	16	18	15	18	15	17	17	18	18

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC/LIBERAL ALLIANCE

	<u>3/8</u>	<u>9/15</u>	<u>16/22</u>	<u>24/30</u>	<u>1/6</u>	<u>8/13</u>	<u>15/20</u>	<u>22/27</u>	<u>29 July</u>	<u>5/10</u>	<u>12/17</u>
	June	June	June	June	July	July	July	July	3 Aug	Aug	Aug
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	21	22	24	20	22	20	21	18	20	20	19
Labour	27	27	27	29	28	27	27	27	29	25	27
Liberal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	1
Social Dem. Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Democrat/ Liberal Alliance	32	30	28	32	28	31	33	37	33	33	33
Don't know/it depends	18	19	19	18	19	19	18	16	16	19	19

	<u>19/24</u>	<u>26/31</u>	<u>1/7</u>	<u>9/14</u>	<u>16/21</u>	<u>23/28</u>	<u>30th Sept</u>	<u>7/12</u>	<u>14/19</u>
	Aug	Aug	Sept	Sept	Sept	Sept	5th Oct	Oct	Oct
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	21	19	20	23	16	18	18	19	22
Labour	25	27	28	26	26	23	27	22	25
Liberal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
Social Democrat Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Democrat/ Liberal Alliance	35	31	33	32	40	40	34	38	33
Don't know/it depends	18	22	18	18	16	19	19	19	18

2. Government Record

Slight improvement in the level of approval for the Government's record in this latest tracking study conducted during and immediately after our Conference. Details are shown below:

	<u>GOVERNMENT RECORD</u>		
	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %
<u>1979</u>			
13/18 June	34	41	25
<u>1981</u>			
3/8 June	26	60	14
9/15 June	26	63	11
16/22 June	29	59	12
23/30 June	23	67	10
1/6 July	24	63	13
8/13 July	23	66	11
15/20 July	23	66	11
22/27 July	23	66	11
29 July/ 3 August	23	65	12
5/10 August	23	64	13
12/17 August	23	66	11
19/24 August	26	64	10
26/31 August	23	64	13
1/7 September	23	65	13
9/14 September	26	63	11
16/21 September	21	67	11
23/28 September	21	66	13
30th Sept/5th Oct	21	70	10
7/12 October	20	68	12
14/19 October	24	65	12

3. Popularity of Political Leaders

Our latest study found a sharp improvement in Mrs Thatcher's popularity and a slight improvement in the popularity of Mr Foot and Mr Steel. Details are shown on the following page.

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## 3. Popularity of Political Leaders (cont'd)

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat.</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is not</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is not</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1981</u>									
3/8 June	36	58	6	29	41	21	59	19	22
9/15 June	33	61	6	28	48	24	61	18	21
16/22 June	34	60	6	29	50	21	60	20	21
24/30 June	30	65	5	28	52	21	60	19	21
1/6 July	31	62	7	25	54	21	60	17	23
8/13 July	30	65	5	25	52	23	56	20	24
15/20 July	31	65	4	22	59	19	59	19	22
22/27 July	26	68	6	23	55	22	59	21	21
29 July/ 3 Aug	27	68	5	26	53	20	57	23	20
5/10 August	30	65	5	27	56	17	62	18	21
12/17 August	28	66	6	23	57	20	61	18	21
19/24 August	33	61	6	25	51	24	63	19	19
26/31 August	28	66	6	29	52	20	60	20	21
1/7 September	28	67	5	29	52	19	63	18	19
9/14 September	32	62	6	28	54	18	56	21	23
16/21 September	27	68	5	28	52	20	64	16	20
23/28 September	28	67	5	25	57	18	64	17	19
30th Sept/5th Oct	27	68	6	31	49	20	60	20	20
7/12 October	26	68	6	28	50	22	62	19	18
14/19 October	31	62	7	31	50	20	64	15	21

4. Published Polls(a) N.O.P. (Daily Mail 26th October 1981)

An N.O.P. poll published in the Daily Mail on October 26th and conducted in Crosby on 24/25 October found 46% of the electorate claiming they would vote Alliance, 34% Conservative and 20% Labour. NOP found that 36% of Alliance supporters had previously voted Conservative, 34% Labour, 16% Liberal. 4% had voted for a number of other parties and 8% had not voted at all.