

Conservative Research Department

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KB/sgc

Director: ALAN HOWARTH

Mr Derek Howe
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London SW1

[Handwritten signature]

25th August 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Derek,

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 78

The results from our latest Gallup 'tracking' study are the same as those published in the Daily Telegraph on 20th August 1981. Compared with the previous unpublished Gallup poll (conducted 8/13 July) this latest study found a substantial jump (7%) in the level of support for the Social Democrats. Compared with the results of our previous unpublished tracking study, the increase in support for the Social Democrats was fairly small (1%).

Looking back at the level of support for the Social Democrats since the Warrington by-election, it would appear they have managed to improve their overall level of support from around 12% to the 18/19% mark.

*Y J
Howe*

D. K. Britto

Enc.

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 78

1. Introduction

The results from our latest Gallup 'tracking' study are the same as those published in the Daily Telegraph on 20th August based on a survey conducted from 12th to 17th August. This published poll found a 7% increase in the level of support for the Social Democrats when compared with the results of the previous published Gallup poll - conducted before the Warrington by-election in the period 8/13 July 1981. Comparison of this latest study with the previous published Gallup poll shows a slight fall in support for the Labour, Conservative and Liberal parties. The net effect of these changes in the level of support for the parties was no change in Labour's lead over the Conservatives. It should be noted that this comparison is based on voting intention figures that have been recalculated to exclude 'don't knows'.

Comparison with the results of our unpublished tracking study conducted during the previous week (5/10 August) does not show such changes. Comparison with the latest survey found a very slight increase in support for the Conservatives and Social Democrats (1% in each case), a 2½% increase in support for Labour, a 2% fall in Liberal support and a 1% increase in Social Democrat support. The net effect of these changes was to increase Labour's support over the Conservatives from 9% (5/10 August) to 10½% (12/17 August).

Full details of the level of support for the main parties in response to our three voting intention questions which differ slightly from the results in the Daily Telegraph - these tables include 'don't knows' as a separate category - are shown below.

VOTING INTENTION
(including don't knows)

	<u>31 Mar</u>	<u>8/13</u>	<u>15/21</u>	<u>22/27</u>	<u>29 Apr</u>	<u>6/11</u>	<u>13/18</u>	<u>19/26</u>	<u>26 May</u>	<u>3/8</u>	<u>9/15</u>	<u>16/22</u>
	6 Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	5 May	May	May	May	1 June	June	June	June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	26	27	26	27	29	29	31	28	28	28	27	29
Labour	29	31	34	32	31	32	33	35	33	36	34	33
Liberal	15	13	16	13	15	16	16	14	17	13	16	14
Other	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2
Social Democrat Party	17	17	16	14	12	10	10	11	12	11	11	11
Don't know/it depends	10	16	9	12	11	9	8	9	9	10	10	10

	<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	July	July	July	July	3 Aug	Aug	Aug
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	26	27	27	26	24	23	24	25
Labour	35½	35	36	32	35	36	33	34
Liberal	15	12	13	14	12	11	14	12
Others	2	3	3	3	2	2	4	1
Social Democrat Party	10½	11	11	15	19	19	16	17
Don't know/it depends	10	11	11	10	9	9	10	11

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

	<u>31 Mar</u> 6 Apr	<u>8/13</u> Apr	<u>15/21</u> Apr	<u>22/27</u> Apr	<u>29 Apr</u> 5 May	<u>6/11</u> May	<u>13/18</u> May	<u>19/26</u> May	<u>26 May</u> 1 June	<u>3/8</u> June	<u>9/15</u> June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	21	22	22	23	25	23	25	23	21	22	23
Labour	21	24	25	24	25	24	27	26	27	27	28
Liberal	10	10	11	9	10	11	11	10	12	9	12
Others	2	1	1	2	4	3	2	2	2	2	1
Social Democrat Party	26	27	22	24	21	21	20	21	20	23	20
Social Democrat/Liberal Alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/it depends	20	17	19	18	15	18	15	18	17	17	16

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

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC/LIBERAL ALLIANCE

	<u>31 Mar</u> 6 Apr	<u>8/13</u> Apr	<u>15/21</u> Apr	<u>22/27</u> Apr	<u>29 Apr</u> 5 May	<u>6/11</u> May	<u>13/18</u> May	<u>19/26</u> May	<u>26 May</u> 1 June	<u>3/8</u> June	<u>9/15</u> June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	20	21	21	22	21	22	24	23	20	21	22
Labour	20	23	24	24	24	22	25	25	25	27	17
Liberal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
Social Democrat Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Democrat/Liberal Alliance	35	37	34	33	32	32	32	31	33	32	30
Don't know/it depends	23	17	20	18	20	22	16	19	19	18	19

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

2. Standard Voting Intention

The table below shows on the same basis as used for the presentation of Gallup figures in the Daily Telegraph, the level of support for the main parties. For a consideration of trends in these figures please see the introduction to this note.

VOTING INTENTION
(excluding don't knows)

	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>SOCIAL</u> <u>DEMOCRAT</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>LEAD</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1979</u>						
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
<u>1981</u>						
31 March/ 6 April	29.0	32.0	17.0	19.0	3.0	-3.0
8/13 April	30.0	34.5	14.0	19.0	2.5	-4.5**
15/21 April	28.5	37.5	17.5	15.0	1.5	-9.0
22/27 April	30.5	36.5	15.0	15.5	2.5	-6.0
29 April /5 May	33.0	35.0	17.0	13.5	1.5	-2.0
6/11 May	32.0	35.5	18.0	11.0	3.5	-3.5**
13/18 May	33.5	36.0	17.0	10.5	3.0	-2.5
19/26 May	31.0	38.0	15.5	12.0	3.5	-7.0
26 May/1 June	30.0	36.0	18.0	13.0	3.0	-6.0
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**

* First Gallup Post-Election Survey

** Published Polls

3. Government Record

Slight increase in the level of disapproval for the record of the Government in this latest study when compared with the results of our previous unpublished survey.

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GOVERNMENT RECORD

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
	%	%	%
<u>1979</u>			
13/18 June	34	41	25
<u>1981</u>			
31 March/ 6 April	26	65	9
8/13 April	24	67	9
15/21 April	25	65	10
22/27 April	27	63	10
29 April/5 May	26	62	12
6/11 May	29	60	11
13/18 May	30	57	13
19/26 May	28	60	12
26 May/1 June	27	61	12
3/8 June	26	60	14
9/15 June	26	63	11
16/22 June	29	59	12
24/30 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

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

When compared with the results of our previous unpublished study this latest survey found a drop in the popularity of all three main political leaders. Details below.

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat.</u>	<u>Dis-</u>	<u>Don't</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Don't</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Don't</u>
	%	sat.	Know	%	Not	Know	%	Not	Know
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1981</u>									
31 March/ 6 April	31	63	6	24	55	22	64	17	19
6/13 April	30	65	5	21	54	24	60	20	20
15/21 April	31	64	6	24	54	22	62	17	21
22/27 April	34	60	6	21	58	20	66	17	18
29 April /5 May	34	59	7	20	58	22	60	19	21
6/11 May	35	60	5	26	52	23	63	17	21
13/18 May	36	58	6	27	52	22	63	17	21
19/26 May	35	59	6	27	50	23	60	17	23
26 May/ 1 June	32	62	6	27	54	19	62	17	20
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