

Conservative Research Department

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Director: ALAN HOWARTH

Mr Richard Ryder
10 Downing Street
London SW1

15th September 1980

Dear Richard,

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 33

I enclose a copy of my note giving details of the results from our latest Gallup 'Tracking' Survey. This survey was conducted from 2nd to 8th September and found almost no change in the position of the main parties when compared with the previous tracking study (conducted 27th August - 1st September). Labour's lead remained constant at 12%. This can be compared with the last published Gallup poll which was conducted from 14th to 18th August and found a Labour lead of 5½%.

D. K. Britto

Public Opinion Background Note 33

(produced 14 September 1980)

1. Introduction

Our latest Gallup tracking study conducted from 2nd to 8th September 1980 found almost no change in the position of the main parties compared with the previous tracking study (conducted 27th August - 1st September). Labour's lead remained constant at 12%.

2. Voting Intention

Details of the trend in support for the main parties from both published Gallup polls and our private Gallup surveys are shown in the table below and in the attached graphs.

	<u>VOTING INTENTION</u>				
	<u>Con</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>Lib</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	43.5	12	2.5	-1.5
<u>1980</u>					
4/9 June	39.5	43	15.5	2	-3.5
11/16 June	40.5	45	11.5	3	-4.5**
18/23 June	39	43	15	3	-4.0
25/30 June	37	45	15	3	-8.0
2/7 July	37.5	44.5	14.5	3.5	-7.0
10/14 July	40	43.5	14	2.5	-3.5**
16/21 July	37	44.5	15	3.5	-7.5
23/28 July	33.5	49	14	3.5	-15.5
30 July/4 August	38.5	42.5	16	3	-4.0
6/11 August	40	43.5	13.5	3	-3.5
14/18 August	38.5	44	14.5	3	-5.5**
20/26 August	37.5	45.5	13.0	4	-8.0
27 August/ 1 September	37	49	11.5	2.5	-12.0
2/8 September	36.5	48.5	12.5	2.5	-12.0

* First Gallup post-election survey

** Published polls

3. Government Record

No change in the proportion of the electorate approving of the Government's record to date in our latest study.

For full details please see table below and attached graph.

	<u>GOVERNMENT RECORD</u>		
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
	%	%	%
<u>1979</u>			
<u>13/18</u> June*	34	41	25
<u>1980</u>			
<u>4/9</u> June	35	54	11
11/16 June	35	52	13
18/24 June	33	55	12
25/30 June	31	56	13
2/7 July	31	56	13
10/14 July	33	54	13
16/21 July	35	52	13
23/28 July	31	58	12
30 July/ 4 August	34	53	13
6/11 August	34	55	11
14/18 August	35	53	12
20/26 August	35	53	12
27 August/1st September	31	56	13
2/8 September	31	58	11

* first Post Election Survey

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Our latest tracking study conducted in the week of the Liberal Party Conference found a sharp increase in the popularity of Mr Steel. We also found a further decline in Mrs Thatcher's popularity and a slight improvement in Mr Callaghan's.

Full details are given below

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Callaghan</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
4/9 June	40	55	5	50	38	12	59	19	22
11/16 June	43	52	5	48	37	15	57	18	25
18/23 June	40	55	6	44	42	13	57	20	23
25/30 June	39	55	5	45	41	13	55	20	25
2/7 July	38	56	6	45	42	13	61	19	20
10/14 July	41	51	7	46	41	13	53	24	23
16/21 July	39	54	7	49	35	16	55	18	27
23/28 July	35	57	8	52	35	13	55	55	27

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS (continued)

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Callaghan</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
30 July/									
4 August	40	54	6	47	38	15	55	20	25
6/11 August	39	55	6	47	38	15	54	20	25
14/18 August	41	54	5	52	34	14	58	18	24
20/26 August	41	53	6	47	38	15	52	21	28
27 Aug/1 Sept.	38	56	6	48	37	15	50	21	29
2/8 September	35	59	6	51	34	15	57	18	25

5. Issues

Detail of the answers we receive to our standard issue 'tracking' question are shown below. There are no significant changes in attitudes on the range of issues we included in the question.

ISSUES

	<u>10/14</u> <u>July</u>	<u>16/21</u> <u>July</u>	<u>23/28</u> <u>July</u>	<u>30 July</u> <u>-4 Aug</u>	<u>6/11</u> <u>Aug</u>	<u>14/18</u> <u>Aug</u>	<u>20/26</u> <u>Aug</u>	<u>27 Aug</u> <u>-1 Sep</u>	<u>2/8</u> <u>Sep</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister</u>									
More favourable	30	28	26	29	28	29	26	26	25
Less favourable	45	41	47	43	47	43	43	46	47
No difference	24	29	25	26	21	26	30	26	26
Don't Know	1	3	3	2	4	2	2	2	2
<u>The Government's Taxation Policy</u>									
More favourable	27	24	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
Less favourable	43	42	44	-	-	-	-	-	-
No difference	21	22	20	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't Know	9	12	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>The Government's Policy on Trade Union Reforms</u>									
More favourable	45	43	44	46	46	48	47	47	44
Less favourable	30	29	27	24	28	25	26	28	30
No difference	11	12	11	13	11	11	11	10	11
Don't Know	14	16	18	16	16	16	16	15	15
<u>Public Spending Cuts</u>									
More favourable	27	23	24	28	28	25	26	25	23
Less favourable	57	60	59	56	58	56	58	60	61
No difference	11	11	10	11	9	12	10	10	9
Don't Know	5	7	7	6	6	7	7	5	7

ISSUES (continued)

	<u>10/14</u> <u>July</u>	<u>16/21</u> <u>July</u>	<u>23/28</u> <u>July</u>	<u>30 July</u> <u>-4 Aug</u>	<u>6/11</u> <u>Aug</u>	<u>14/18</u> <u>Aug</u>	<u>20/26</u> <u>Aug</u>	<u>27 Aug</u> <u>-1 Sep</u>	<u>2/8</u> <u>Sep</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>The Cost of Living</u>									
More favourable	11	8	10	8	11	11	11	10	8
Less favourable	69	70	68	65	67	64	64	67	70
No difference	17	19	19	21	17	22	21	19	17
Don't Know	3	3	3	5	5	3	4	4	4
<u>The Level of Unemployment</u>									
More favourable	5	6	5	6	6	6	4	5	5
Less favourable	77	71	76	72	74	72	76	77	80
No difference	15	17	15	18	15	19	16	16	12
Don't Know	3	7	4	5	5	3	4	2	3
<u>The Government's Pay Policy</u>									
More favourable	27	29	25	30	32	31	31	32	29
Less favourable	41	38	42	39	42	38	40	37	41
No difference	17	18	17	16	11	16	14	15	15
Don't Know	15	16	16	15	15	15	15	16	15
<u>The Government's Policy on selling Council Houses</u>									
More favourable	-	-	-	51	52	52	53	51	54
Less favourable	-	-	-	23	26	26	24	27	24
No difference	-	-	-	19	14	15	15	16	14
Don't Know	-	-	-	7	8	6	8	7	8

6. Published Research

An Opinion Research and Communication poll conducted for the Times and the Committee for Research into Public Attitudes between 16th and 29th June 1980 looked at what the Times refers to as 'national morale'. They found widespread approval of the Monarchy and the police, but that when compared with other countries the British electorate think we have:-

- More strikes
- Unions which co-operate less with management
- The desire to work less hard
- Less pride in our work
- Poorer pay for comparable jobs
- Less efficient management
- Less modern equipment in our factories.

