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SECRET

TRADE UNION SURVEY (2)

We have just received the rest of the "headline" results from the survey on national attitudes to the present industrial situation. A copy of the full "marked-up" questionnaire is attached. An O.R.C. report on the "headline" results will be available by close of play today. Some of the key conclusions emerging from the "headline" results that I did not cover in my earlier note are considered below:-

1. Blame for Steel Strike

39% of electors who are not Union members blamed the steel Trade Unions for the present dispute (27% of Union members also blamed them). Among non Trade Unionists 21% blamed Mrs. Thatcher and her Cabinet for the dispute (30% of Trade Union members blamed them).

2. What Should settle the Steel Dispute?

When asked which group should be doing most to try and settle the steel workers strike - 28% of non Trade Unionists selected Mrs. Thatcher and her Cabinet and 23% the steel Trade Union Leaders. The comparative figures for Trade Unionists are 35% Mrs. Thatcher and her Cabinet, 17% the steel Trade Union leaders. Full details are given below:-

Which of these groups do you think should be doing most to try to settle the steel workers strike?

	<u>Non Trade Union Members</u>	<u>Trade Unionists</u>
	%	%
The steel workers themselves	18	12
The steel Trades Union Leaders	23	17
Mrs. Thatcher and her Cabinet	28	35
British Steel Corporation management	16	18
The TUC	3	4
The Advisory, Conciliation & Arbitration Service (ACAS)	4	8
The CBI	2	1
None of these	1	2
Don't Know	4	2

3. Government Objectives in the Steel Strike

32% of non Trade Unionists and 47% of Trade Unionists believe that the Government is more interested in having a showdown with Trade Unions generally than they are in getting a fair settlement of the steel strike. As an alternative to this view we put the statement to our respondents that the Government are not getting involved because they believe that it is up to the management and Unions to solve industrial disputes - 58% of non-Trade Unionists took this view and 44% of Trade Unionists.

Clearly the Government's case for its non-involvement in the steel dispute is getting over to both Trade Unionists and others.

4. Motives of Trade Unions in the current Industrial Situation

We asked our respondents:-

"Which of these statements do you think best express the motives of the Trade Unions?"

	<u>Non Trade</u> <u>Unionists</u> %	<u>Trade</u> <u>Unionists</u> %
(a) The Trade Unions are fighting a battle against the Conservative Government and care more about this than they do about getting a fair settlement in the steel strike.	46	40
(b) The Trade Unions are trying to get a settlement in the steel strike and cares more about this than it does about the political situation.	40	47
(c) Don't Know	14	13

No consensus emerges among either Trade Unionists or non Trade Unionists on the motives of the Unions in the current industrial dispute.

5. Reform of Trade Union Law in Best Interests of Country?

61% of non Trade Unionists feel that new laws on Trade Unions will be in the best interests of the country but 28% of the same group feel that such laws will cause more problems than they are worth. Even among Union members a small majority (47% to 43%) feel new laws would be in the best interests of the country.

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6. Trouble if Trade Union Reform Laws passed

The electorate expects trouble with the Unions when we introduce Trade Union Reform and Trade Unionists think Union troubles will be greater if we introduce the legislation quicker than we originally planned.

7. Specific Trade Union Law Reforms

We asked our respondents for their views on a number of possible changes in Trade Union Law and how strongly they supported or did not support each proposal. The key results we obtained are given below:-

	Change <u>Strongly</u>	Change Not <u>Strong</u>	Not Change Not <u>Strong</u>	Not Change <u>Strongly</u>	Don't <u>Know</u>
A ban on secondary picketing:- i.e. picketing a place which is not directly involved in the strike.	70 ** 59 *	12 11	5 11	7 14	7 5
A ban on blacking, that is stopping goods moving so as to help the strikers.	59 ** 45 *	14 14	8 15	8 19	10 7
A ban on secondary strikes:- that is strikes by people in other firms and industries in order to support people who are on strike.	58 ** 42 * 56	15 14	10 16	17 20 36	10 9
Allowing firms who lose money because of union action in strikes which do not directly involve them, to take the Unions to court.	50 ** 38 *	15 17	11 13	9 21	14 10
Not allowing the families of strikers to get social security benefits.	36 ** 30 *	12 12	14 17	28 34	11 8

With the exception of stopping social security benefits for the families of strikers, all proposals are supported by both Trade Unionists and non Trade Unionists. Even on the question of stopping social security benefits for the families of strikers 48% of non Trade Unionists approved of the idea and 42% of Trade Unionists.

** - Non Trade Unionists
* - Trade Unionists

Continued.....

8. A Referendum on the present Industrial Situation?

No clear view among either Trade Unionists or non Trade Unionists on the use of referendums - although four out of ten electors (both Trade Unionists and non Trade Unionists) believe Governments should use referendums in a very few important situations. See below for details:-

Which of these is closest to your own view:

	<u>Non Trade Unionists</u> %	<u>Trade Unionists</u> %
(a) Governments are elected to govern and should not use referendums at all	22	25
(b) Governments should use referendums in a very few situations which they think are most important	40	41
(c) Governments should make much wider use of referendums	28	26
(d) None of these/Don't know	10	7

We asked those respondents who approved in principle of the idea of a referendum whether they thought that one should be held on the question of Trade Union Reform and found 66% of non Trade Unionists thinking that one should be held on the issue and 57% of Trade Unionists taking the same view.

We also asked all respondents, "If there were to be a referendum on Trade Union Reform would you be inclined to vote for or against the sort of Trade Union Reforms the Conservative Government have been suggesting?". An overwhelming majority of non Trade Unionists said they would vote in favour, however among Trade Unionists a very small majority (42% to 40%) said they would vote against.

NOTE

When we get the final results from the research the figures quoted above might need to be revised- however any revision is likely to be small.

D.K. Britto.