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CONFIDENTIAL

17th June 1981

Dear Derek,

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PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 68

The interviewing for our latest Gallup 'tracking' study was conducted from 3rd until 8th June and found for the sixth week in succession almost no change in the level of unprompted support for the Social Democrats.

The standard voting intention question (excluding don't knows) indicates a widening of Labour's lead to 9% - support for the Conservative Party has, however, remained almost stable.

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PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 68

(produced 14th June 1981)

1. Introduction

The interviewing for our latest 'tracking' study was conducted from 3rd until 8th June and, for the sixth week in succession, Gallup found no significant change in the level of unprompted support for the Social Democrats. Support for the Liberals has fallen slightly, support for the Conservatives has remained stable and support for Labour has increased slightly. When Don't knows are excluded, the net effect of these changes was to increase Labour's lead over the Conservatives to 9%.

VOTING INTENTION (including don't knows)

| | 4/9 Mar % | 12/16 Mar % | 18/23 Mar % | 25/30 Mar % | 31 Mar 6 Apr % | 8/13 Apr % | 15/21 Apr % | 22/27 Apr % | 29 Apr 5 May % | 6/11 May % | 13/18 May % | 19/26 May % | 26 May 1 June % | 3/8 June % |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Conservative | 27 | 27 | 23 | 27 | 26 | 27 | 26 | 27 | 29 | 29 | 31 | 28 | 28 | 28 |
| Labour | 32 | 30 | 31 | 27 | 29 | 31 | 34 | 32 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 35 | 33 | 36 |
| Liberal | 18 | 16 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 13 | 16 | 13 | 15 | 16 | 16 | 14 | 17 | 13 |
| Others | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Social Democratic Party | 12 | 12 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 14 | 12 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 11 |
| Don't know/ it depends | 8 | 11 | 12 | 12 | 10 | 16 | 9 | 12 | 11 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 10 |

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE

| | 4/9 Mar % | 12/16 Mar % | 18/23 Mar % | 25/30 Mar % | 31 Mar 6 Apr % | 8/13 Apr % | 15/21 Apr % | 22/27 Apr % | 29 Apr 5 May % | 6/11 May % | 13/18 May % | 19/26 May % | 26 May 1 June % | 3/8 June % |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Conservative | 22 | 21 | 18 | 21 | 21 | 22 | 22 | 23 | 25 | 23 | 25 | 23 | 21 | 22 |
| Labour | 25 | 22 | 22 | 20 | 21 | 24 | 25 | 24 | 25 | 24 | 27 | 26 | 27 | 27 |
| Liberal | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 12 | 9 |
| Others | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Social Democratic Party | 25 | 25 | 27 | 29 | 26 | 27 | 22 | 24 | 21 | 21 | 20 | 21 | 20 | 23 |
| Social Democratic Liberal Alliance | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Don't know/ it depends | 16 | 17 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 17 | 19 | 18 | 15 | 18 | 15 | 18 | 17 | 17 |

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC/LIBERAL CANDIDATE

| | 4/9 Mar % | 12/16 Mar % | 18/23 Mar % | 25/30 Mar % | 31 Mar 6 Apr % | 8/13 Apr % | 15/21 Apr % | 22/27 Apr % | 29 Apr 5 May % | 6/11 May % | 13/18 May % | 19/26 May % | 26 May 1 June % | 3/8 June % |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Conservative | 22 | 20 | 17 | 20 | 20 | 21 | 21 | 22 | 21 | 22 | 24 | 23 | 20 | 21 |
| Labour | 24 | 21 | 22 | 19 | 20 | 23 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 22 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 27 |
| Liberal | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Others | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Social Democratic Party | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Social Democratic Liberal Alliance | 36 | 37 | 38 | 37 | 35 | 37 | 34 | 33 | 32 | 32 | 32 | 31 | 33 | 32 |
| Don't know/ it depends | 17 | 21 | 22 | 22 | 23 | 17 | 20 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 16 | 19 | 19 | 18 |

When the electorate was specifically presented with the possibility of voting for a Social Democrat candidate, the results of the latest Gallup study found no significant improvement in the level of support. A second standard Gallup question presented the possibility of electors voting for a candidate standing as a Social Democratic-Liberal. The results for this question, although showing a fall in the level of support since late March/ early April for candidates standing for such an alliance, still found almost one in three electors claiming they would vote for a candidate standing as a Liberal-Social Democrat.

There is of course a huge gap between electors claiming they will vote for a candidate for a hypothetical alliance at a hypothetical election and actual votes in the ballot box at a General Election.

2. Standard Voting Intention

The table below shows on the same basis as the Gallup figures published in the Daily Telegraph (excluding don't knows) what has happened to support for the main parties since early March 1981. It is clear from the table that support for the Social Democrats shows no sign of an upward turn - however, we still have a situation in which more than one in ten electors (when those are those who claim they do not know how they will vote are excluded) say even without prompting they will vote Social Democrat.

VOTING INTENTION

| | <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 | - | 2.5 | -1.5* |
| <u>1981</u> | | | | | | |
| 4/9 March | 29.5 | 34.5 | 20.0 | 12.5 | 3.5 | -5.0 |
| 12/16 March | 30.0 | 34.0 | 18.0 | 14.0 | 4.0 | -4.0 |
| 18/23 March | 26.0 | 35.0 | 17.0 | 17.0 | 5.0 | -9.0 |
| 25/30 March | 30.0 | 30.5 | 18.0 | 19.0 | 2.5 | -0.5** |
| 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 |

* First Gallup Post-election survey

** Published polls

3. Government Record

The latest tracking study found a continuation in the slight downward slope of government popularity that we have found in recent weeks. Our survey conducted 13/18 May found 30% of the electorate approving of our record to date, in our latest survey (conducted 3/8 June) this had fallen to 26% 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> | | | |
| 4/9 March | 23 | 65 | 12 |
| 12/16 March | 23 | 67 | 9 |
| 25/30 March | 22 | 69 | 9 |
| 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 |

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Mrs Thatcher's popularity improved slightly in the latest 'tracking' study. Our latest study found Mr Foot's popularity at its highest level since before March this year.

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

| | Mrs Thatcher | | | Mr Foot | | | Mr Steel | | |
|------------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | <u>Sat.</u> | <u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u> | <u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u> | <u>Is</u> | <u>Is</u> <u>Not</u> | <u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u> | <u>Is</u> | <u>Is</u> <u>Not</u> | <u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u> |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| <u>1981</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| 4/9 March | 28 | 66 | 6 | 25 | 52 | 23 | 62 | 18 | 20 |
| 12/16 March | 30 | 64 | 6 | 23 | 52 | 26 | 63 | 15 | 22 |
| 18/23 March | 28 | 67 | 5 | 24 | 55 | 24 | 63 | 18 | 19 |
| 25/ 30 March | 30 | 66 | 4 | 20 | 55 | 25 | 61 | 19 | 19 |
| 31 March/6 April | 31 | 63 | 6 | 24 | 55 | 22 | 64 | 17 | 19 |
| 8/13 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 | 51 | 21 | 59 | 19 | 22 |

5. Published Polls

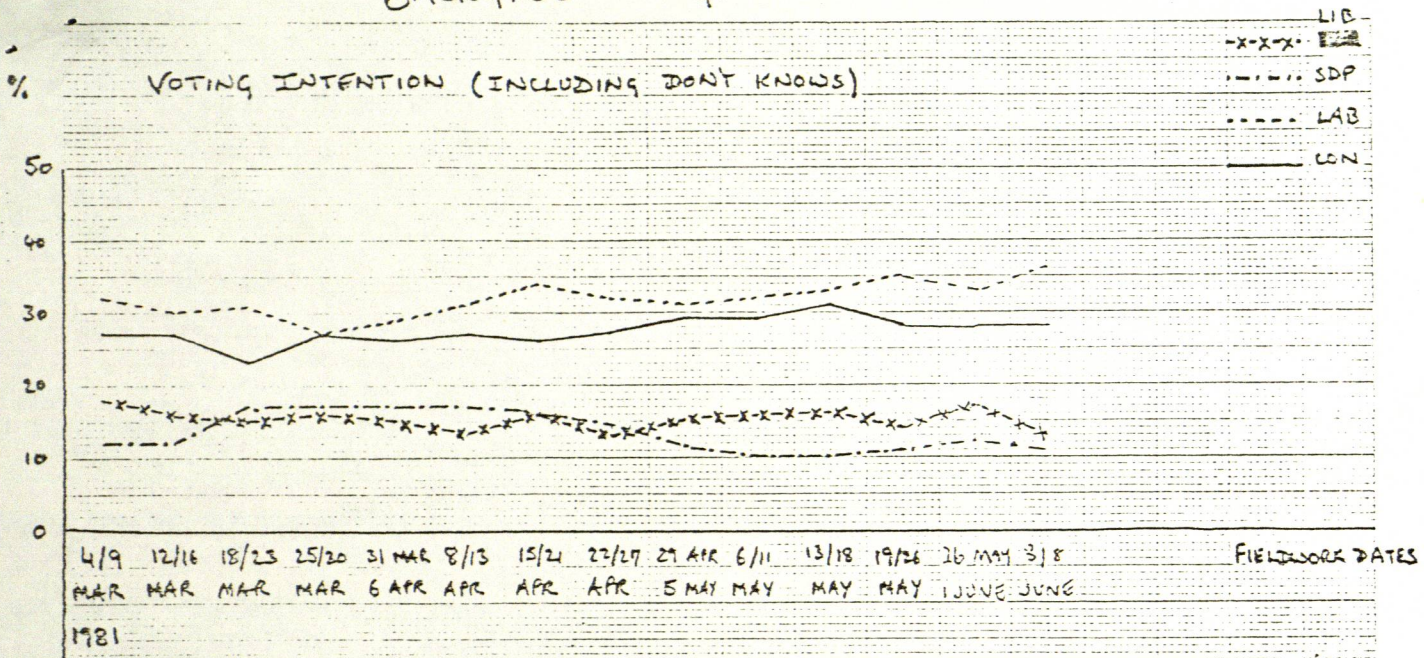
An M.O.R.I. poll published in the Sunday Times on 14th June 1981 looked at the level of support for the various parties. It found in line with the results of our unpublished Gallup 'tracking' studies a significant fall in the level of support for the Social Democrats. The M.O.R.I. study was conducted on May 29/30 whilst our latest Gallup tracking study was conducted 3/8 June. The M.O.R.I. poll found:-

VOTING INTENTION - M.O.R.I.

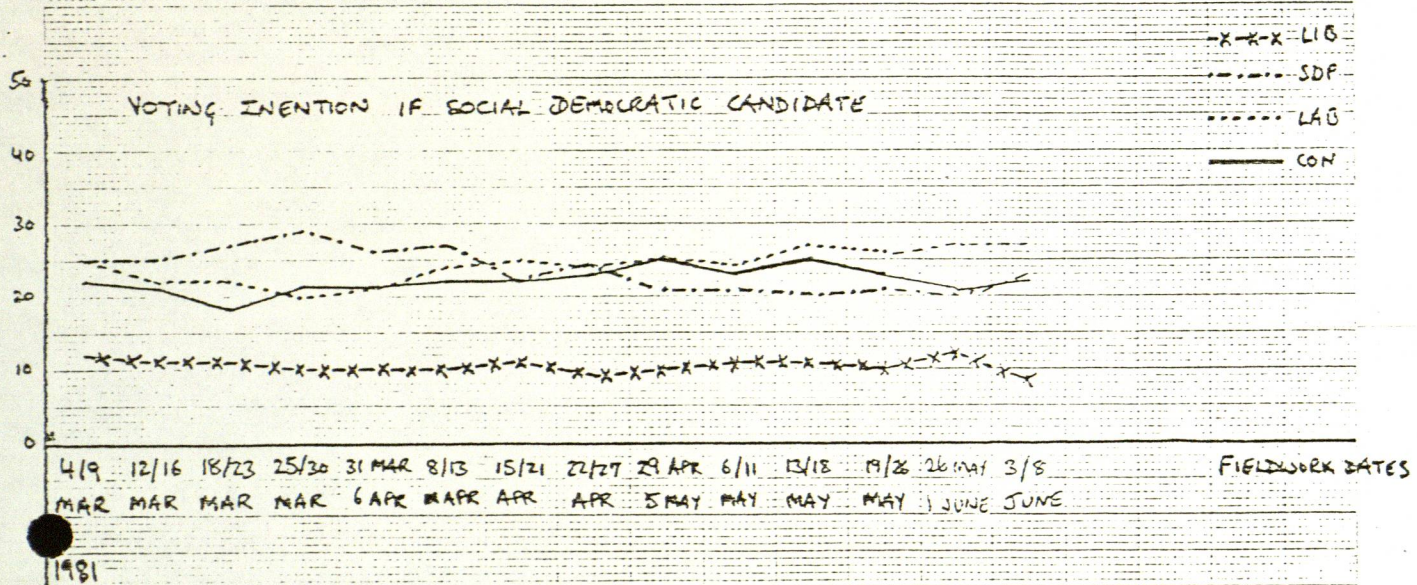
| | <u>March 1981</u> | <u>May 1981</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| | % | % |
| Labour | 38 | 39 |
| Conservative | 28 | 35 |
| Liberal | 17 | 14 |
| Social Democrats | 15 | 10 |
| Other | 2 | 2 |

BACKGROUND GRAPHS

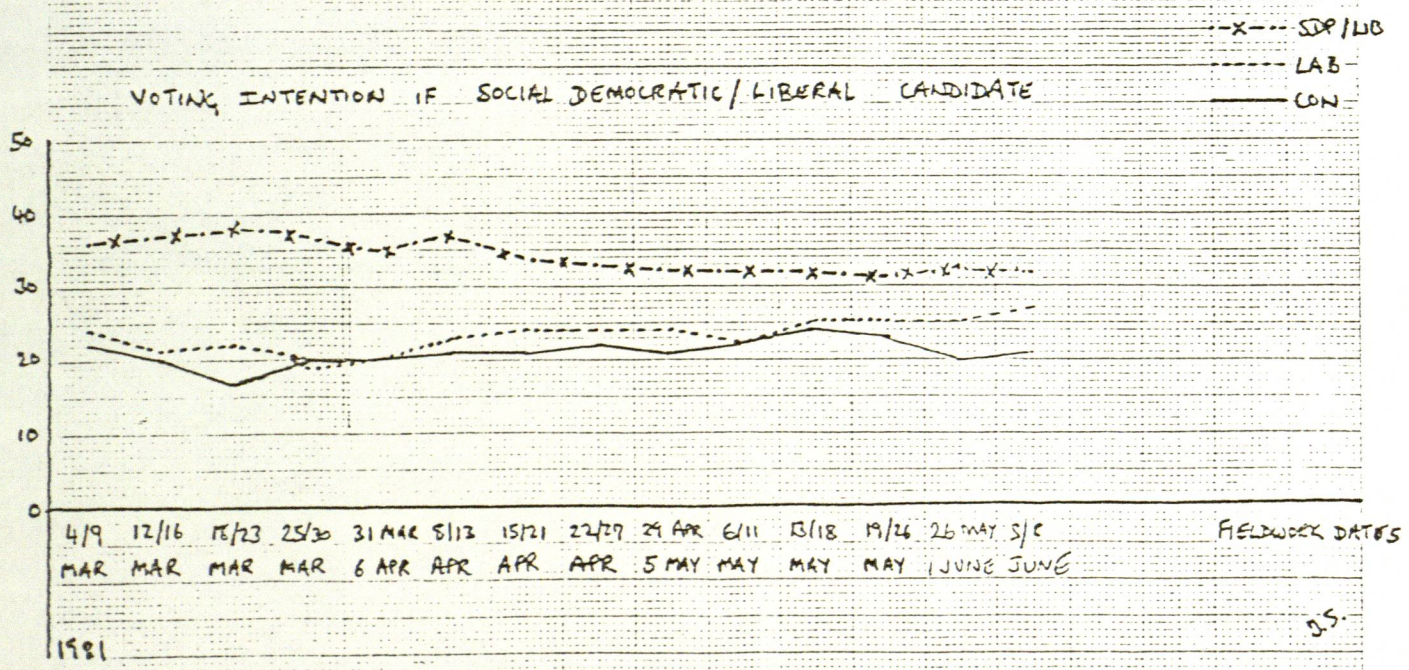
VOTING INTENTION (INCLUDING DONT KNOWS)



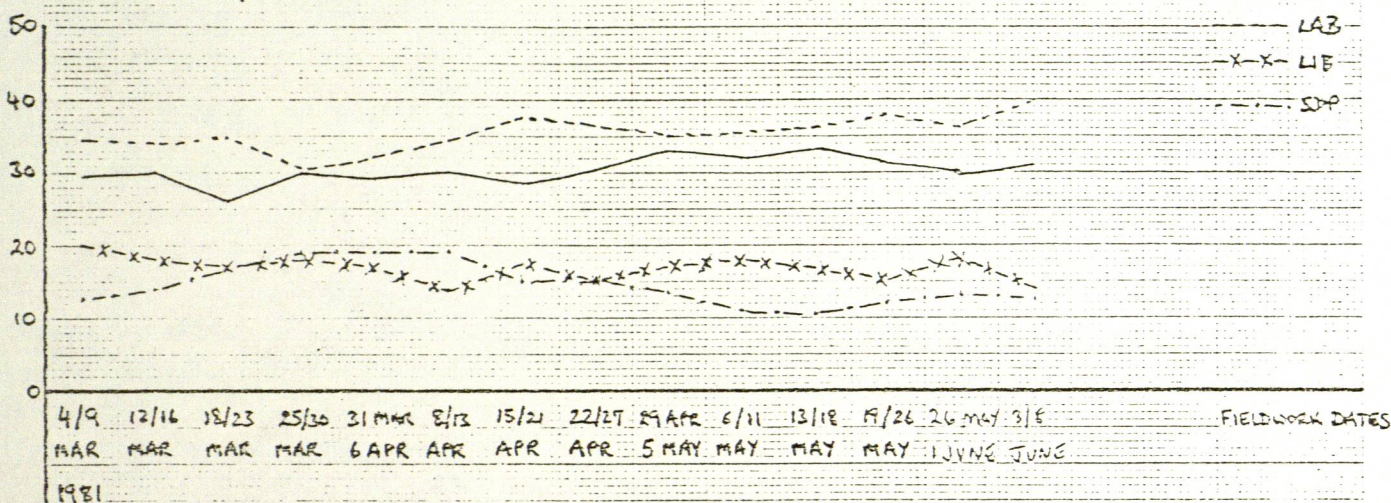
VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE



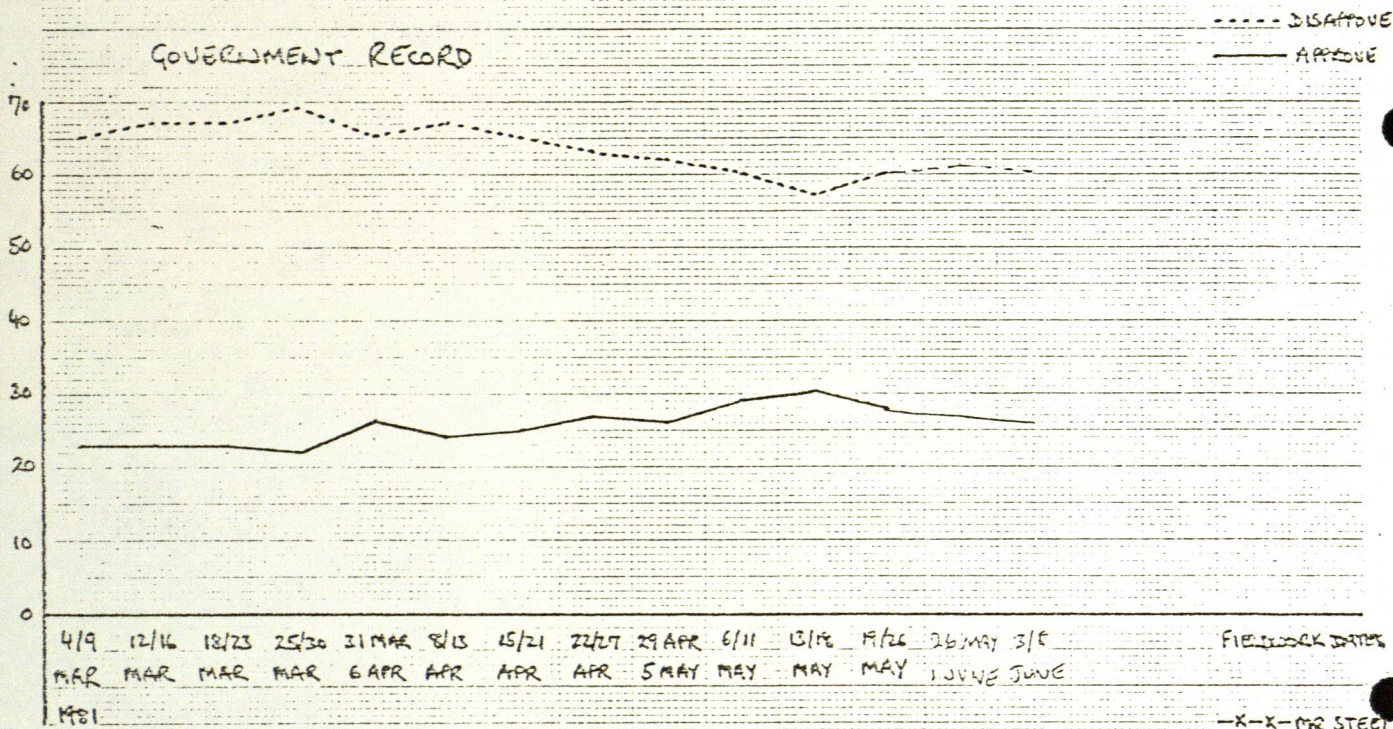
VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC / LIBERAL CANDIDATE



VOTING INTENTION (EXCLUDING DONT KNOW)



GOVERNMENT RECORD



POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

