

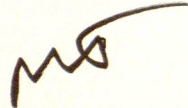
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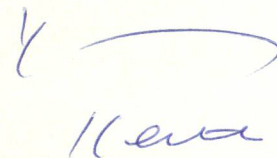
17th March 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Derek,

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 56

Our latest Gallup tracking study was conducted before the Budget and found a 5% Labour lead. Support for the Social Democrats remains high - on a standard voting intention 12½% of the electorate claimed they would vote Social Democrat (without prompting). When the idea of a Social Democratic Party was put to them, one quarter of the electorate claimed they would support it. When the idea of a Social Democratic/Liberal alliance was put to them, one third of the electorate claimed they would vote for candidates from such an alliance.



D. K. Britto

Enc.

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 56
(produced 14th March 1981)

1. Introduction

Our latest 'tracking' study was conducted from 4th March until 9th March and found a 5% Labour lead which represents almost no change from the result of our previous tracking study (conducted 18/23 February - 4½% Labour lead). It should be noted that the interviewing for this survey was conducted before the Budget - the survey that will be available next week will have been conducted after the Budget. For the first time, Gallup have included in their analysis a separate category for those who totally unprompted said they would vote for a Social Democratic Party at a General Election - 12% of those interviewed said they would do this (18% said they would vote Liberal). Details of these answers are given below - it should be noted that this table includes don't knows as a separate category. When Gallup presented the option of a Social Democratic candidate to these people being interviewed, one in four (25%) said they would vote for such a candidate. (22% said they would vote Conservative, 25% Labour and 12% Liberal). When the idea of a Liberal/Social Democratic candidate was put to respondents 36% said they would vote for such a candidate (22% said they would vote Conservative and 24% Labour). Full details of the answers given to both these questions are shown in the table below:-

VOTING INTENTION
(including don't knows)

	<u>Standard Voting Intention</u>					<u>Voting Intention if Social Democratic Candidate</u>					<u>Voting Intention if Social Democratic/ Liberal Candidate</u>				
	3/9 Feb	10/16 Feb	18/23 Feb	25 Feb 2 March	4/9 March	3/9 Feb	10/16 Feb	18/23 Feb	25 Feb 2 March	4/9 March	3/9 Feb	10/16 Feb	18/23 Feb	25 Feb 2 March	4/9 March
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	31	32	30	28	27	21	23	24	22	22	21	22	23	20	22
Labour	35	31	35	32	32	25	23	25	25	25	24	22	23	24	24
Liberal	18	17	19	19	18	11	12	11	13	12	-	-	-	-	-
Others	7	8	8	9	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2
Social Democratic Party *	-	-	-	-	12	22	21	22	21	25	-	-	-	-	-
Social Democratic/ Liberal alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	36	34	35	36
Don't know/it depends	9	12	9	12	8	19	16	17	14	16	19	18	20	20	17

N.B. This note normally excludes don't knows (figures are recalculated). It should be note that this table includes don't knows as a separate category.

*Social Democratic Party under standard voting intention is based on those respondents claiming they would vote Social Democratic at a General Election. No mention was made of the term in the voting intention question.

2. Voting Intention

Details of the trend in support for the main parties since early October 1980 are shown below - support for the Conservative Party has fallen from 40 % (1/6 Oct) to 29½% (4/9 March) and for Labour from 43% (1/6 Oct) to 34½% (4/9 March). Over the same period support for the Liberals has increased from 13½% (1/6 Oct) to 20% (4/9 March).

VOTING INTENTION (excluding don't knows)

	<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*	42.0	43.5	13.0	2.5	-1.5
<u>1980</u>					
1/6 Oct	40.0	43.0	13.5	3.5	-3.0**
8/14 Oct	35.5	41.5	20.0	3.0	-6.0
15/20 Oct	40.5	43.0	14.0	2.5	-2.5**
22/27 Oct	37.5	42.0	18.0	2.5	-4.5
29 Oct/3 Nov	34.5	47.5	16.0	2.0	-13.0
5/10 Nov	41.5	40.5	14.0	4.0	+1.0
12/17 Nov	36.5	47.0	15.0	1.5	-10.5**
19/24 Nov	35.0	48.0	14.0	2.0	-13.0
26 Nov/1 Dec	35.0	49.5	13.0	2.5	-14.5
3/8 Dec	35.0	47.0	14.5	3.5	-12.0
10/15 Dec	35.0	47.5	14.5	3.0	-12.5**
<u>1981</u>					
7/12 Jan	34.0	48.0	15.0	3.0	-14.0
14/20 Jan	33.0	46.5	18.5	2.0	-13.5**
21/26 Jan	35.5	43.0	17.0	4.5	-7.5**
28 Jan/2 Feb	32.0	40.0	21.5	6.5	-8.0
3/9 Feb	34.0	39.0	20.0	7.0	-5.0
10/16 Feb	36.0	35.5	20.0	8.5	+0.5**
18/23 Feb	32.5	38.5	21.0	8.0	-6.0
25 Feb/ 2 March	31.5	36.0	21.5	11.0	-4.5
4/9 March	29.5	34.5	20.0	16.0+	-5.0

* First Gallup post-election survey

** Published polls

+ includes 12½% who said they would vote Social Democrat

3. Government Record

The popularity of the Government continued to fall in our latest study - before the Budget only 23% of electors approved of the Government's record to date (65% disapproved).

Please see following page and graph for details.

GOVERNMENT RECORD

	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %
<u>1979</u>			
13/18 June	34	41	25
<u>1980</u>			
1/6 Oct	30	57	13
8/14 Oct	32	55	13
15/20 Oct	34	54	12
22/27 Oct	29	60	11
29 Oct/ 3 Nov	30	59	12
5/10 Nov	32	54	14
12/17 Nov	29	60	11
19/24 Nov	27	60	13
26 Nov /1 Dec	27	62	11
3/8 Dec	26	64	11
10/15 Dec	29	59	12
<u>1981</u>			
7/12 Jan	27	61	12
14/20 Jan	26	63	11
21/26 Jan	28	58	14
28 Jan /2 Feb	26	62	12
3/9 Feb	27	60	13
10/16 Feb	29	60	11
18/23 Feb	29	59	12
25 Feb/ 2 March	26	62	12
4/9 March	23	65	12

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Mrs Thatcher's popularity has fallen consistently since early February (3/9 February 35% satisfied with Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister, 4/9 March 28% satisfied with Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister). Mr Foot's popularity remains extremely low but Mr Steel's popularity has improved.

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat.</u> %	<u>Dis-sat.</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %	<u>Is</u> %	<u>Is Not</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %	<u>Is</u> %	<u>Is Not</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %
<u>1980</u>									
1/6 Oct	38	66	5	-	-	-	56	20	25
8/14 Oct	37	58	5	-	-	-	60	16	24
15/20 Oct	38	56	6	-	-	-	57	20	24
22/27 Oct	37	57	6	-	-	-	50	34	16
29 Oct/3 Nov	35	58	7	-	-	-	55	18	26
5/10 Nov	39	53	8	-	-	-	49	17	34
12/17 Nov	34	60	6	38	38	24	54	22	23
19/24 Nov	32	63	5	41	37	22	58	20	22
26 Nov/1 Dec	32	63	5	38	39	23	54	18	27
3/8 Dec	33	62	5	28	33	39	58	18	24
10/15 Dec	35	59	6	30	35	35	59	17	24

Popularity of Political Leaders (continued)

	<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>
	%	<u>sat.</u>	<u>Know</u>	%	<u>Not</u>	<u>Know</u>	%	<u>Not</u>	<u>Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1981</u>									
7/12 Jan	33	61	6	24	39	36	56	21	23
14/20 Jan	31	63	5	26	42	32	63	19	18
21/26 Jan	34	61	5	23	43	34	57	19	21
28 Jan /2 Feb	32	63	6	21	46	33	62	17	21
3/9 Feb	35	60	6	24	49	27	60	19	21
10/16 Feb	34	60	6	22	49	30	64	16	20
18/23 Feb	33	62	5	20	52	28	58	18	24
25 Feb/2 March	32	62	6	23	50	27	57	22	20
4/9 March	28	66	6	25	52	23	62	18	20

5. Published Polls

(a) M.O.R.I. (Sunday Times 8th March 1981)

An M.O.R.I. poll published in the Sunday Times conducted (19/23 February 1981) and published on 8th March 1981 looked at what electors inclined to support a new Social Democrat Party want in terms of policies. Details are given below:-

WHAT THE MODERATES WANT

	<u>FOR</u>	<u>AGAINST</u>
	%	%
Worker representation on boards	68	18
Bring back grammar schools	61	27
Proportional representation for elections	55	16
Take Britain out of the Common Market	54	37
Introduce a wealth tax	49	38
Introduce an incomes policy	46	23
Replace rates with local incomes tax	42	32
Abolish pay beds in NHS hospitals	35	57
Favour unilateral disarmament	30	60
Abolish public schools	25	67
Abolish House of Lords	23	60
Nationalise more industries	21	70

Those electors inclined to support the Social Democrats tend to want:

- worker representation on boards
- to bring back grammar schools
- Proportional Representation
- to take Britain out of the Common Market
- a wealth tax
- an incomes policy
- to replace rates with local income tax
- not to abolish paying beds in NHS hospitals
- to be against unilateral disarmament
- to be against abolishing public schools
- to be against abolishing the House of Lords
- to be against nationalising more industries

(b) Gallup (Daily Telegraph 9th March 1981)

A Gallup survey (conducted 18/24 February) published in the Daily Telegraph on 9th March 1981 looked at attitudes of those electors who claim to be supporters of the Social Democrats. Gallup found:-

ATTITUDES

(figures are 'scores' calculated by subtracting the percentage disapproving of policy from the percentage approving)

	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>SAMPLE</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>SOC</u> <u>DEM</u>	<u>LIB</u>
<u>Putting more money in the Health Service</u>	78	66	88	84	84
<u>Making more efforts to protect the countryside and our finest buildings</u>	77	83	74	76	74
<u>Giving stiffer sentences to those who break the law</u>	77	86	76	71	84
<u>Spending more money to get rid of poverty in Britain</u>	76	62	84	84	75
<u>Spending more money to tackle pollution of the airs and rivers</u>	74	71	72	74	75
<u>Taking tougher measures to prevent Communist influence in Britain</u>	68	80	54	64	79
<u>Give council tenants the right to buy their houses</u>	67	81	65	52	72
<u>Bringing back the death penalty</u>	47	64	42	32	47
<u>Redistributing income and wealth in favour of ordinary people</u>	37	-4	69	42	38
<u>Shifting power from London to the regions and local authorities</u>	34	14	46	46	27
<u>Giving workers more say in the running of the place where they work</u>	27	-1	45	29	30
<u>Withdrawing British troops from Northern Ireland immediately</u>	26	1	41	21	35
<u>Going ahead with further expansion of the nuclear power industry</u>	8	35	-11	4	9
<u>Sending coloured immigrants back to their own country</u>	6	12	7	-6	16
<u>Increasing state control of land for building</u>	1	-23	-34	-6	-2
<u>Reducing the power of the House of Lords</u>	-3	-42	29	-5	-8
<u>Giving more aid to poorer countries in Africa & Asia</u>	-7	-10	-7	-1	-13
<u>Establishing comprehensive schools in place of grammar schools throughout the country</u>	-8	-50	34	-11	-12

The table shows that on many issues Social Democrat supporters are truly middle of the road.

(c) System Three (Glasgow Herald 6th March 1981)

A System Three poll published in the Glasgow Herald on 6th March 1981 and conducted in Scotland between January 29th and February 10th found 47% saying they would vote Labour, 19% Conservative, 18% SNP and 13% Liberal. At the General Election 42% voted Labour, 31% Conservative, 17% SNP and 9% Liberal.

(d) M.O.R.I. (Scotsman 6th March 1981)

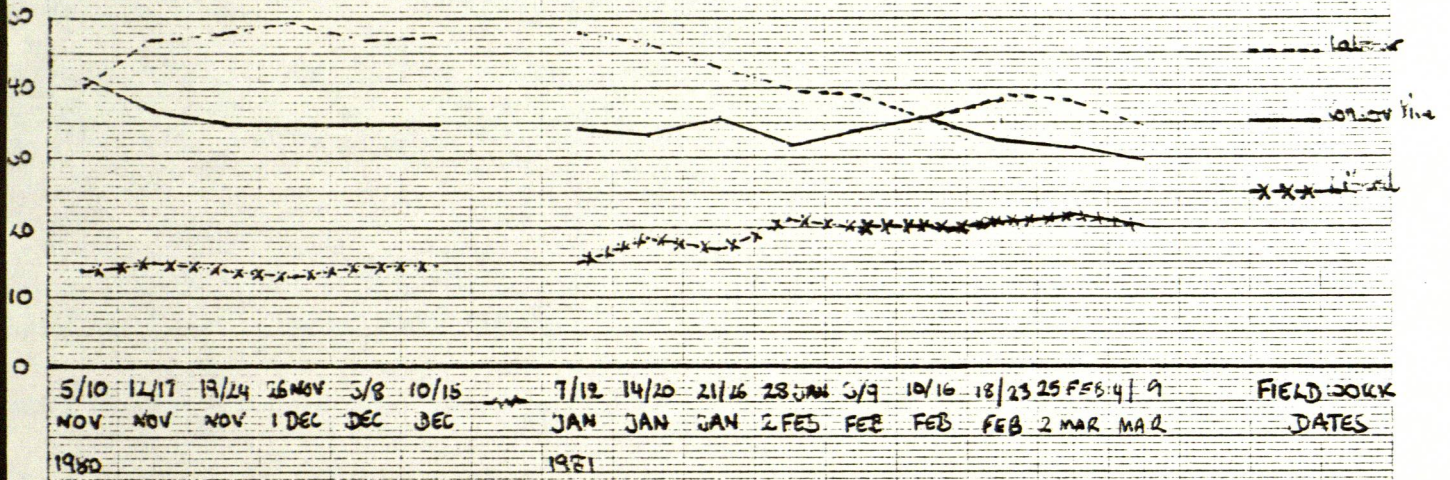
An M.O.R.I. poll published in the Scotsman on 6th March 1981 and conducted between February 19th and 23rd found a lower level of support for the Social Democrats in Scotland than in the rest of the country. M.O.R.I. found (in Scotland only) the following pattern of voting intention:-

	<u>Voting Intention - Scotland</u>		
	<u>Traditional Voting Intention</u>	<u>Voting Intention if Social Demo- crat stood</u>	<u>Voting Intention if Social Democrat stood but no Liberal</u>
	%	%	%
Conservative	20	18	20
Labour	44	38	41
Liberal	14	12	-
SNP	16	18	19
Social Democrat	5	14	19
Other Party	1	-	1

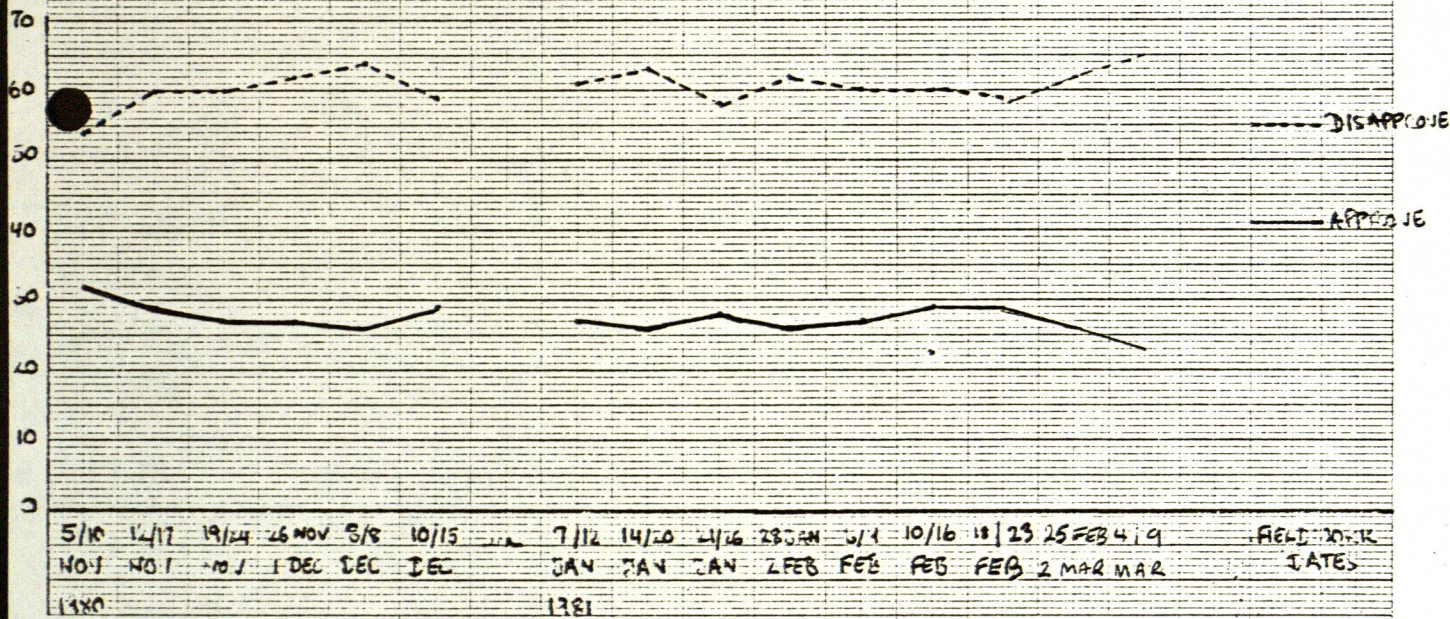
When presented with three options for changing the way Scotland is governed, 25% of the Scottish electorate opted for 'a completely independent Scottish Assembly separate from England', 45% for 'A Scottish Assembly as part of Britain but with substantial powers' and 30% for 'no change from the present system'.

1 Aug 1980 4:15 PM

VOTING INTENTION



GOVERNMENT RECORD



POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

