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KB/sgc

Director: ALAN HOWARTH

Mr Derek Howe
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London SW1

CONFIDENTIAL

7th July 1981

Dear Derek,

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 71

The results from our latest Gallup 'tracking' study conducted from 24th to 30th June found no signs of an upsurge in support for the Social Democrats although support for the Conservative Party has drifted slightly downwards and support for Labour slightly upwards. Support for a hypothetical Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance remains high at around one in three of the electorate. This finding which was used as a 'headline' for an M.O.R.I. poll published in the Evening Standard on 2nd July 1981 is something that has been clear from both published and private Gallup polls since the emergence of the Social Democrats.

We have over the last week had two opinion polls conducted in Warrington, both of which showed a sizeable Labour lead and the Conservatives in a poor third place.

D. K. Britto

Enc.

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 71

(produced 6th July 1981)

1. Introduction

The interviewing for our latest Gallup 'tracking' study was conducted from June 24th to June 30th and they found an 11% Labour lead compared with 5% in the previous week (conducted 16/22 June) and 8% in the previous published poll (conducted 9/15 June) - these figures are calculated excluding don't knows. An M.O.R.I. poll published in the Evening Standard on 2nd July and conducted from June 18th to 22nd found an 8% Labour lead. The Gallup survey found 29% of the electorate claiming they would vote Conservative (31% claimed they would vote Conservative in the M.O.R.I. poll), 40% claimed they would vote Labour (39% in the M.O.R.I. poll), 17% Liberal (16% in the M.O.R.I. poll) and 12% Social Democrat (12% in M.O.R.I. poll). The level of support for the Social Democrats in answer to this unprompted voting intention question has remained stable at around 11/12 per cent since early May.

The M.O.R.I. poll published in the Standard also asked how electors would vote if a Liberal-Social Democrat candidate was standing in an election. They found 27% claiming they would vote Conservative (24% in our private Gallup study), 32% Labour (35% in our Gallup survey) and 39% Liberal-Social Democratic (39% in our Gallup survey) - these figures are calculated excluding don't knows. Although the Evening Standard used the fact that the Liberal-Social Democrats lead the other parties in terms of voting intention when respondents were asked how they would vote if a Liberal-Social Democratic candidate stood as a headline this finding has been shown by Gallup surveys (both published and our private studies) since we started asking these questions. It must be remembered that this particular question involves asking respondents how they would vote if a candidate for a hypothetical Liberal-Social Democratic party stood in a General Election, and as a result does not provide the unbiased measure of support that the open-ended standard voting intention question (considered above) provides.

The tables below show the level of support for the main parties since mid-March from the three standard voting intention questions we ask in our Gallup weekly tracking studies.

VOTING INTENTION (including don't knows)

	<u>25/30</u>	<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>	<u>24/30</u>
	Mar	6 Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	5 May	May	May	May	1 June	June	June	June	June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	27	26	27	26	27	29	29	31	28	28	28	27	29	26
Labour	27	29	31	34	32	31	32	33	35	33	36	34	33	35½
Liberal	16	15	13	16	13	15	16	16	14	17	13	16	14	15
Others	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2
Social Demo- cratic Party	17	17	17	16	14	12	10	10	11	12	11	11	11	10½
Don't know/ It depends	12	10	16	9	12	11	9	8	9	9	10	10	10	10

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE

	<u>25/30</u>	<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>	<u>24/30</u>
	Mar	6 Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	5 May	May	May	May	1 June	June	June	June	June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	21	21	22	22	23	25	23	25	23	21	22	23	23	21
Labour	20	21	24	25	24	25	24	27	26	27	27	28	28	31
Liberal	10	10	10	11	9	10	11	11	10	12	9	12	11	11
Others	1	2	1	1	2	4	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	1½
Social Demo- cratic Party	29	26	27	22	24	21	21	20	21	20	23	20	19	19
Social Democratic Liberal Alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/ It depends	20	20	17	19	18	15	18	15	18	17	17	16	16	16½

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC/LIBERAL CANDIDATE

	<u>25/30</u>	<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>	<u>24/30</u>
	Mar	6 Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	5 May	May	May	May	1 June	June	June	June	June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	20	20	21	21	22	21	22	24	23	20	21	22	24	20
Labour	19	20	23	24	24	24	22	25	25	25	27	27	27	29
Liberal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
Social Demo- cratic Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Democratic/ Liberal Alliance	37	35	37	34	33	32	32	32	31	33	32	30	28	32
Don't know/ It depends	22	23	17	20	18	20	22	16	19	19	18	19	19	18

2. Standard Voting Intention

The table on the following page shows on the basis used to present Gallup figures in the Daily Telegraph and by MORI in the Evening Standard the level of support for the main parties.

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>						
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
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

* First Gallup Post-Election survey

** Published Polls

3. Government Record

The latest study found a sharp fall in the level of approval for the record of the Government - it fell from 29% approving the record of the government to date in the week 9/15 June to 23% in the week 16/22 June.

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>			
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
9/15 June	26	63	11
16/22 June	29	59	12
24/30 June	23	67	10

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Our latest study found a fall in Mrs Thatcher's popularity and almost no change in the popularity of Mr Foot and no change in Mr Steel's popularity.

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>									
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
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

5. Published Pollsa) M.O.R.I. (Evening Standard 2nd July 1981)

As well as the voting intention questions (considered above) M.O.R.I. also asked a number of questions about the Labour leadership election. M.O.R.I. asked respondents which of the three candidates for Labour's deputy leadership they would back - Benn, Healey or Silkin - if they had a vote. They found:-

	<u>All</u> %	<u>Labour Voters</u> %	<u>Trade Unionists</u> %
Benn	14	24	18
Healey	58	57	59
Silkin	7	6	6
None	10	3	9
Don't know	10	10	7

M.O.R.I. also asked respondents about attitudes to the personal qualities of Mrs Thatcher, Mr Foot, Mr Healey and Mr Benn. Figures in brackets are comparable results from a survey conducted in Autumn 1980.

Attitudes to Leaders

	<u>Healey</u> %	<u>Benn</u> %	<u>Foot</u> %	<u>Thatcher</u> %
More honest than most politicians	30 (24)	16 (13)	22 (27)	24 (25)
Down to earth	35 (36)	14 (16)	23 (28)	15 (21)
Sometimes has rather extreme views	11 (12)	52 (51)	22 (43)	33 (34)
Will promise anything to win votes	17 (18)	27 (26)	20 (16)	30 (28)
Rather inexperienced	4 (7)	5 (9)	9 (17)	9 (10)
Has a lot of personality	19 (25)	18 (18)	11 (21)	24 (25)
Out of touch with ordinary people	12 (9)	22 (24)	12 (10)	43 (50)
Sincere	28 (29)	16 (13)	25 (30)	19 (22)
Understands Britain's problems	42 (42)	19 (18)	29 (35)	27 (31)
Capable leader	28 (32)	11 (10)	18 (31)	28 (32)

It is significant that only about half as many people regard Foot as having extremist views now when compared with Autumn 1980.

b) N.O.P. (Daily Mail 6th July 1981)

An N.O.P. poll conducted in Warrington on July 1st and 2nd found that 60% of electors claimed they would vote Labour, 29% Social Democrat, 10% Conservative and 1% for other parties.

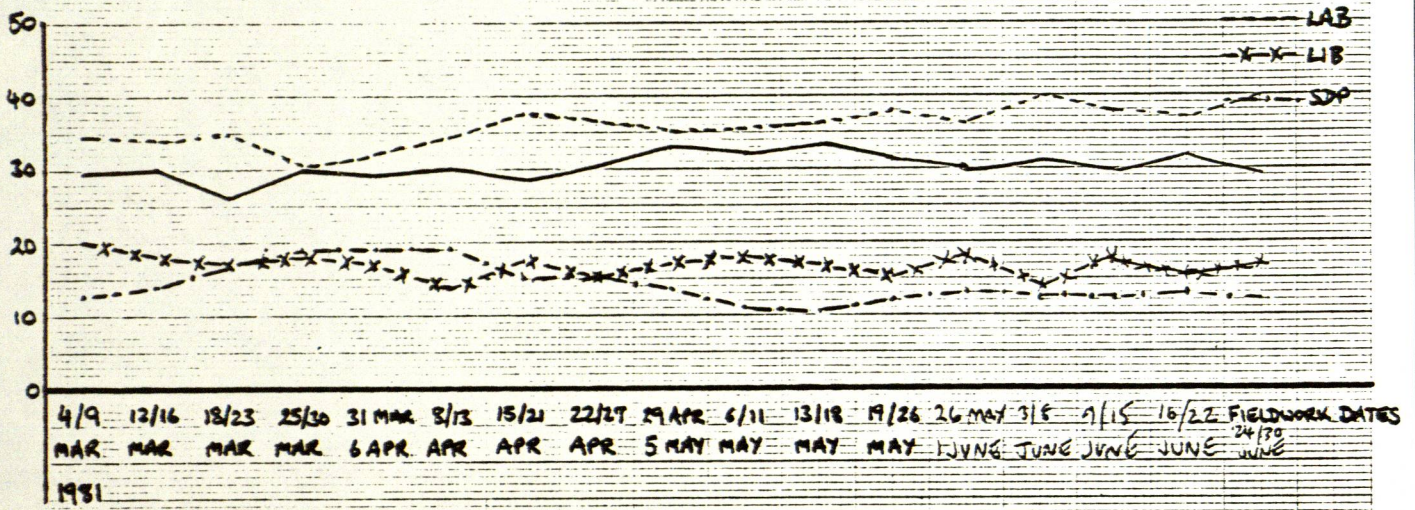
If Mrs Williams had been the Social Democratic candidate, 53% of electors claimed they would have voted Labour, 36% Social Democrats (Mrs Williams), 10% Conservative and 1% for other parties.

c) M.O.R.I. (Granada Television)

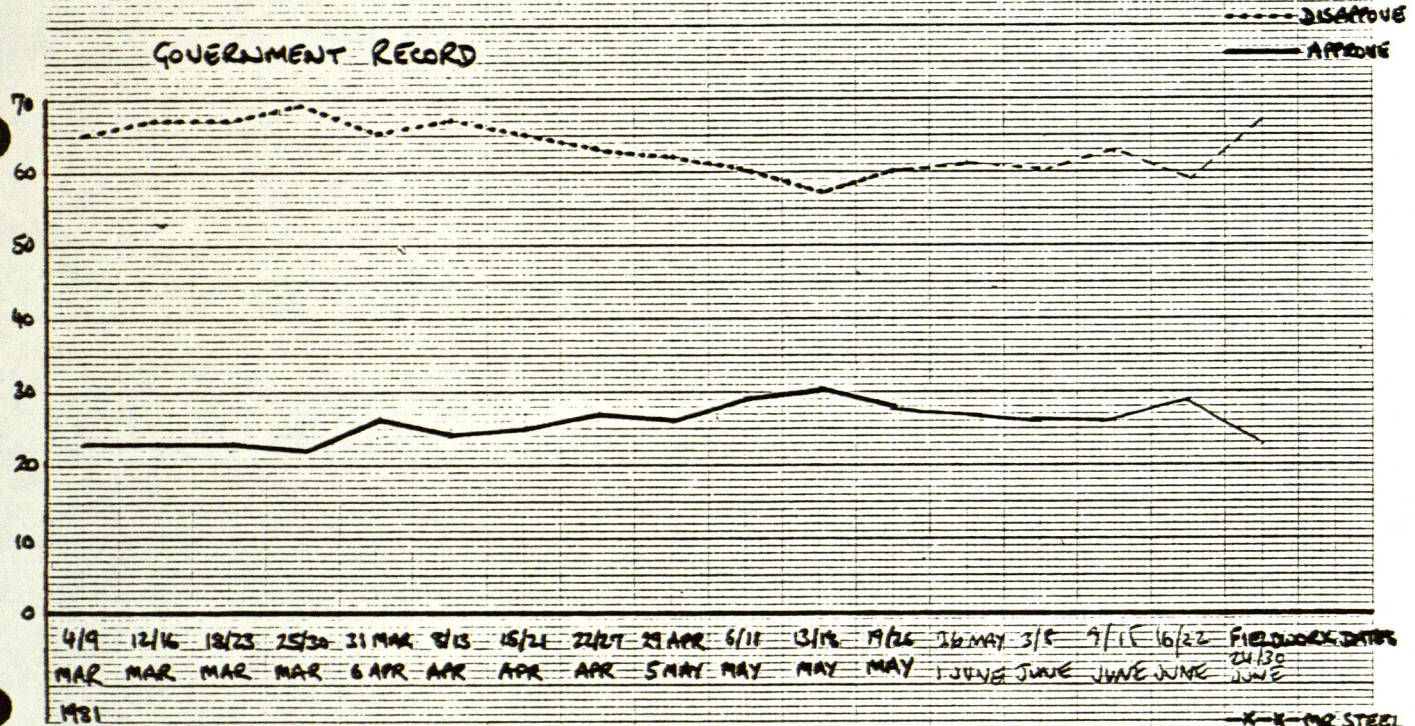
An M.O.R.I. poll conducted for Granada Television in Warrington in late June found 57% of electors claiming they would vote Labour, 27% Social Democrat, and 12% Conservative.

BACKGROUND GRAPHS

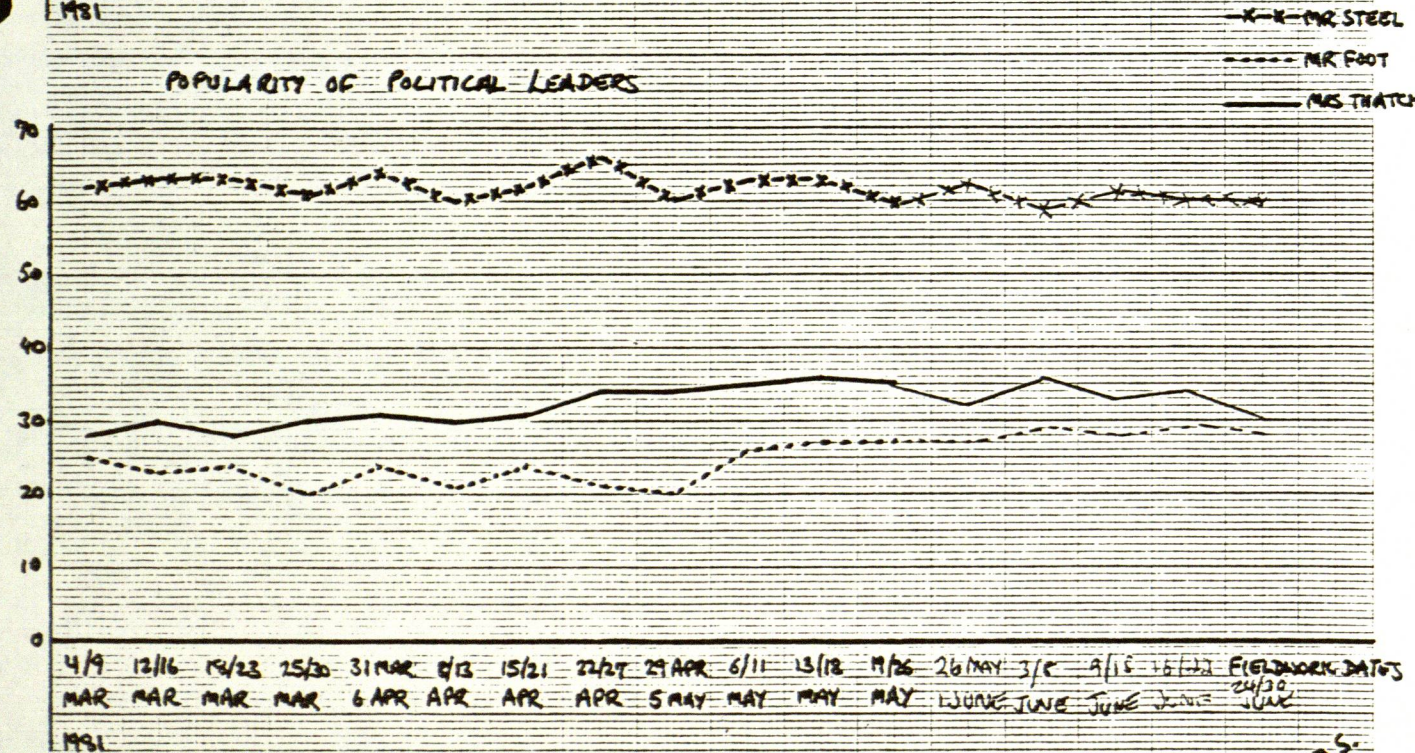
VOTING INTENTION (EXCLUDING DON'T KNOW)



GOVERNMENT RECORD



POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS



BACKGROUND GRAPHS

