

Conservative Research Department

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Director: ALAN HOWARTH

Mr Richard Ryder
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CONFIDENTIAL

14th October 1980

Dear Richard,

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 37

I enclose a copy of the results from our latest Gallup tracking study. The results of this survey are the same as those published in the Daily Telegraph on October 9th and show a dramatic narrowing of Labour's lead to 3%. The research for this survey was conducted largely during the Labour Party Conference and it will be interesting to see whether this sharp reversal of Labour's fortunes continues.

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PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 37

(produced 12th October 1980)

1. Introduction

The results from our latest Gallup tracking study are the same as the results of the Gallup poll published in the Daily Telegraph on 9th October and show a narrowing of Labour's lead to 3% - compared with 9½% in the previous published Gallup poll and 11½% in our unpublished tracking study conducted 25/29 September. This is the smallest Labour lead we have found since early May.

The interviewing for the survey was conducted during the week of the Labour Party Conference - interviewing for the next tracking study (the results of which will be circulated early in the week starting October 20th) took place during our Party Conference. It will be interesting to see whether the decline in Labour's support as a result of their Conference is maintained.

2. Voting IntentionVOTING INTENTION

	<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
10/15 September	35.5	45	16.5	3	-9.5**
17/22 September	35	47	14	4	-12.0
25/29 September	35.5	47	15	2.5	-11.5
1/6 October	40	43	13.5	3.5	-3.0

* First Gallup post-election survey

** Published polls

3. Government Record

We found a slight improvement in the level of approval for the Government's record in our latest tracking study - we will need to await the results from our next tracking study before attempting to draw any major conclusions from this change.

For full details of the results from the question please see below and attached graph.

	<u>GOVERNMENT RECORD</u>		
	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %
<u>1979</u>			
13/18 June*	34	41	25
<u>1980</u>			
4/9 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
10/15 September	29	57	13
17/22 September	30	59	12
25/29 September	27	60	13
1/6 October	30	57	13

* first Post Election survey

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Our latest unpublished tracking study showed a sharp increase in Mrs Thatcher's personal popularity - up to 38% being satisfied with Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister, compared with 33% in the week 25/29 September. It is interesting to note that Mr Callaghan's popularity also improved - although not as much as Mrs Thatcher's.

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4. Popularity of Political Leaders (continued)

For full details please see table below and attached graph:-

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Callaghan</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u>	<u>Don't</u>	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u>	<u>Don't</u>	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Dis-</u>	<u>Don't</u>
	%	sat	Know	%	sat	Know	%	sat	Know
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	18	27
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 Sept	35	59	6	51	34	15	57	18	25
10/15 Sept	37	58	5	48	39	13	59	19	22
17/22 Sept	35	59	5	50	36	14	59	17	25
25/29 Sept	33	60	6	45	40	16	60	18	22
1/6 October	38	56	5	48	39	13	56	20	25

5. Issues

Apart from a further improvement in the level of approval for the Government's policies in the sale of council houses our tracking study found no significant changes in approval/disapproval on the range of issues we included in our standard tracking question.

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ISSUES

	<u>10/14</u> July	<u>16/21</u> July	<u>23/28</u> July	<u>30 July</u> - 4 Aug	<u>6/11</u> Aug	<u>14/18</u> Aug	<u>20/26</u> Aug	<u>27 Aug</u> -1 Sep	<u>2/8</u> Sep	<u>10/15</u> Sep	<u>17/22</u> Sep	<u>25/29</u> Sep	<u>1/6</u> Oct
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister</u>													
More favourable	30	28	26	29	28	29	26	26	25	25	23	24	26
Less favourable	45	41	47	43	47	43	43	46	47	48	47	47	47
No difference	24	29	25	26	21	26	30	26	26	26	28	28	26
Don't Know	1	3	3	2	4	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
<u>The Government's Taxation Policy</u>													
More favourable	27	24	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	31	27	25
Less favourable	43	42	44	-	-	-	-	-	-	43	36	40	43
No difference	21	22	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	17	19	18
Don't Know	9	12	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	16	14	14
<u>The Government's Policy on Trade Union Reforms</u>													
More favourable	45	43	44	46	46	48	47	47	44	47	45	45	45
Less favourable	30	29	27	24	28	25	26	28	30	27	26	29	27
No difference	11	12	11	13	11	11	11	10	11	11	14	11	12
Don't Know	14	16	18	16	16	16	16	15	15	15	15	15	16
<u>Public Spending Cuts</u>													
More favourable	27	23	24	28	28	25	26	25	23	27	24	23	23
Less favourable	57	60	59	56	58	56	58	60	61	55	57	61	61
No difference	11	11	10	11	9	12	10	10	9	12	11	9	11
Don't Know	5	7	7	6	6	7	7	5	7	6	8	7	6
<u>The Cost of Living</u>													
More favourable	11	8	10	8	11	11	11	10	8	10	10	6	9
Less favourable	69	70	68	65	67	64	64	67	70	69	66	66	67
No difference	17	19	19	21	17	22	21	19	17	17	21	25	21
Don't Know	3	3	3	5	5	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3

ISSUES (continued)

	<u>10/14</u> July	<u>16/21</u> July	<u>23/28</u> July	<u>30</u> July - Aug	<u>6/11</u> Aug	<u>14/18</u> Aug	<u>20/26</u> Aug	<u>27</u> Aug -1 Sep	<u>2/8</u> Sep	<u>10/15</u> Sep	<u>17/22</u> Sep	<u>25/29</u> Sep	<u>1/6</u> Oct
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>The Level of Unemployment</u>													
More favourable	5	6	5	6	6	6	4	5	5	4	6	5	4
Less favourable	77	71	46	72	74	72	76	77	80	82	76	78	78
No difference	15	17	15	18	15	19	16	16	12	12	15	14	14
Don't Know	3	7	4	5	5	3	4	2	3	2	4	2	3
<u>The Government's Pay Policy</u>													
More favourable	27	29	25	30	32	31	31	32	29	33	31	29	29
Less favourable	41	38	42	39	42	38	40	37	41	37	36	37	36
No difference	17	18	17	16	11	16	14	15	15	14	17	17	17
Don't Know	15	16	16	15	15	15	15	16	15	16	16	17	18
<u>The Government's Policy on selling Council Houses</u>													
More favourable	-	-	-	51	52	52	53	51	54	51	51	48	54
Less favourable	-	-	-	23	26	26	24	27	24	27	23	25	23
No difference	-	-	-	19	14	15	15	16	14	11	20	19	16
Don't Know	-	-	-	7	8	6	8	7	8	15	6	8	6

6. Published Polls

MORI (published Evening Standard October 7th 1980)

The MORI poll published in the Evening Standard on 7th October (conducted 25/29 September) found an 11% Labour lead - in line with our private tracking study conducted at the same time.

