

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 116
(produced 5th June 1982)

1. Introduction

The interviewing for our latest 'tracking' study were conducted from 26th to 31st May throughout Great Britain. Gallup found almost no change in the level of support for the Parties compared with our previous study (conducted 19/24 May). Conservative support was 45½% (compared with 45% 19/24 May), Labour 27% (27% 19/24 May), Liberal 9½% (11% 19/24 May) and Social Democrat support 16% (15% 19/24 May). The original level of Liberal/Social Democrat support was 25½% in our latest study compared with 26% (19/24 May). Details of the trend in our weekly voting intention 'tracking' questions are shown in the table below:-

	VOTING INTENTION						
	(unprompted question, excluding don't knows)						
	CON	LAB	LIB	SOCIAL DEMOCRAT	OTHER	LEAD (CON over % LAB)	LIBERAL AND SOCIAL DEMOCRAT
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
<u>1979</u>							
May (GE)	43.9	36.9	13.8	-	5.5	+7.0	13.8
13/16 June*	42.0	43.5	13.0	-	5.0	-9.0	13.0
<u>1982</u>							
6/11 Jan	25.5	30.0	17.0	25.0	2.5	-4.5	42.0
13/18 Jan	27.5	29.5	13.0	26.5	3.5	-2.5**	39.5
20/25 Jan	30.0	27.0	14.0	26.5	2.5	+3.0	40.5
27 Jan/1 Feb	29.0	29.0	15.0	24.0	3.0	0.0	39.0
3/8 Feb	29.0	29.0	15.0	26.0	1.0	0.0	41.0
10/15 Feb	27.5	34.0	14.5	21.5	2.5	-6.5**	35.0
17/22 Feb	26.5	33.5	14.0	22.0	4.0	-7.0	36.0
24 Feb/1 March	31.0	32.5	11.0	22.5	3.0	-1.5	33.5
3/8 March	30.0	33.5	11.5	21.0+	4.0	-3.5	32.5
11/15 March	31.5	33.0	11.5	21.5+	2.5	-1.5**	33.0
17/22 March	34.0	30.0	11.0	21.0+	4.0	+4.0	32.0
24 March	32.0	28.0	11.0	27.5+	1.5	+4.0	38.5
31 March/5 April	34.0	27.0	10.0	26.0+	3.0	+7.0	36.0
7/12 April	31.5	29.0	11.0	26.0+	2.5	+2.5**	37.0
13/19 April	31.0	30.0	10.0	26.0+	3.0	+1.0	36.0
21/26 April	31.5	33.0	10.5	24.5+	0.5	-1.5	35.0
28 April/ 3 May	37.0	30.5	11.0	20.0+	1.5	+6.5	31.0
5/10 May	41.5	28.0	9.5	19.5+	1.5	+13.5**	29.0
12/17 May	42.0	31.0	10.0	16.0+	1.0	+11.0	26.0
19/24 May	45.0	27.0	11.0	15.0+	2.0	+18.0	26.0
26/31 May	45.5	27.0	9.5	16.0+	2.0	+18.5	25.5

* First Gallup post-Election survey

** Published Polls

+ Includes those saying they would vote for the Alliance

2/116/KB

Our Gallup 'tracking' study allows us to look at the trend of support for the Parties on a monthly basis. This method involving an aggregation of weekly surveys gives us an analysis based on almost 9,000 interviews and smooths out the violent fluctuation we sometimes find in our weekly 'tracking' studies. The trend of support for the main parties since November 1981 taken from the monthly analysis is shown below:-

MONTHLY ANALYSIS VOTING INTENTION

(Unprompted questions, excluding don't knows)

	CON	LAB	LIB	SOCIAL DEMOCRAT	OTHER	LIBERAL & SOCIAL DEMOCRAT
	%	%	%	%	%	%
NOVEMBER 1981	26.3	28.4	14.1	29.0	2.3	43.1
DECEMBER 1981	24.1	25.5	13.3	34.9	2.3	48.2
JANUARY 1982	27.4	30.1	13.9	25.9	2.7	39.8
FEBRUARY 1982	27.8	32.8	13.4	23.1	2.9	36.5
MARCH 1982	30.3	32.7	11.8	21.7	2.6	33.5
APRIL 1982	33.2	29.4	10.6	24.6	2.2	35.2
MAY 1982	43.3	28.3	10.5	16.2	1.8	26.7

The fall in Liberal/Social Democrat support in the period since December 1981 can be clearly seen - down from 48.2% in December 1981 to 26.7% in May, 1982. Conservative support has increased from 24.1% to 43.3% over the same period and Labour support increased slightly from 25.5% to 28.3%

2. Government Record

For only the second time since May 1979 more electors approved of the record of the Government than disapproved - 50% approved, 38% disapproved and 12% did not have a view. Details of the trend are shown below:-

GOVERNMENT RECORD

	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>Don't know</u> %
1981			
13/18 June	34	41	25
1982			
6/11 January	23	65	12
13/18 January	24	65	12
20/25 January	26	62	13
27 Jan/1 Feb	25	62	13
3/8 Feb	26	63	11
10/15 Feb	24	66	10
17/22 Feb	22	66	13
24 Feb/1 March	23	63	13
3/8 March	24	65	11
11/15 March	29	59	12
17/22 March	28	60	13
24/29 March	29	58	13
31 March/ 5 April	31	57	12
7/12 April	32	56	12
13/19 April	34	54	12
21/26 April	34	55	11
28 April/ 3 May	40	47	13
5/10 May	42	46	12
12/17 May	43	42	15
19/24 May	46	44	10
26/31 May	50	38	12

3. Popularity of Political Leaders

For only the second time since May 1974 more electors are satisfied with Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister than are dissatisfied. Our latest 'tracking' study found 50% satisfied with Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister, 43% dissatisfied and 7% with no view. Mr Foot's popularity has reached an all time low with only 16% of the electorate regarding him as a good leader of the opposition. Mr Steel's popularity remains almost unchanged. Details are shown below:-

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<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>1982</u>									
6/11 January	30	65	5	20	65	14	62	20	18
13/18 January	32	65	4	18	67	16	59	22	19
20/25 January	32	64	4	17	68	15	59	22	19
27 Jan/1 Feb	33	62	5	19	64	17	60	18	22
3/8 Feb	31	65	4	20	63	17	61	20	19
10/15 Feb	29	66	5	19	66	15	59	23	17
17/22 Feb	29	65	5	20	64	16	58	20	21
24 Feb/ 1st March	32	63	5	21	64	15	55	23	22
3/8 March	30	66	4	20	64	16	58	24	18
11/15 March	34	62	4	21	65	14	58	22	10
17/22 March	33	62	5	22	64	14	59	21	20
24/29 March	35	59	6	19	65	15	61	20	19
31 March/ 5 April	37	58	5	20	65	15	60	22	18
7/12 April	35	60	5	23	61	16	63	18	19
13/19 April	36	60	5	28	59	14	63	18	19
21/26 April	37	59	4	26	60	14	66	17	17
28 April/ 3 May	41	53	6	24	65	12	62	20	18
5/10 May	44	51	6	18	71	11	64	20	17
12/17 May	48	47	5	17	71	12	65	18	17
19/24 May	47	48	5	18	72	10	63	18	19
26/31 May	50	43	7	16	75	10	64	18	19

4. Published Polls(a) MORI (Daily Express 3rd June 1982)

The Daily Express on 3rd June included the results of a MORI poll conducted between May 20th and 24th on attitudes to the main political leaders in this country and Mr Reagan. Mrs Thatcher leads them all in most areas. Details are shown below:-

WHAT PEOPLE THINK OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	Mrs Thatcher	Mr Pym	Mr Owen	Mr Foot	Mr Jenkins	Mr Reagan
Capable leader (%)	44	14	18	9	13	10
Good in crisis (%)	47	29	8	4	5	4
Grasps problems (%)	28	24	21	17	21	13
Talks down (%)	39	12	10	8	11	16
Narrowminded (%)	17	9	5	24	8	17
Inflexible (%)	22	7	6	13	6	15
Sound judgement (%)	25	21	18	9	16	4
More honest (%)	29	17	19	17	13	7
Trustworthy (%)	19	17	12	9	10	8
Grasps most problems (%)	38	35	22	19	16	12
Down to earth (%)	18	16	11	16	9	6
Good personality (%)	24	8	19	9	13	22
Inexperienced (%)	7	12	11	17	8	36
Out of touch (%)	42	17	9	22	17	28

(b) ORC (Weekend World 4th June 1982)

Weekend World on Friday 4th June included the results of an ORC survey on attitudes to the Falkland Islands dispute. On the key question of attitudes to the Government policy, 76% claimed to strongly or quite strongly support the Government's present policies in the Falkland Islands.

ORC asked respondents for their views on what should happen when we gain the Falkland Islands. They found:-

Q.1 If British forces succeed in retaking the Falklands what should the British Government do next:-

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB/SDP</u>
...Hold on to the Falklands indefinitely and keep a large enough British force there to deter a new Argentinian invasion... ..	1047 %	480 %	266 %	143 %
...Eventually offer the Islanders their independence, with international guarantees for their security	42	46	30	49
...Hand the Islands over to the United Nations to administer and to defend	21	17	25	23
...Hand sovereignty over the Falklands over to Argentinians at some point in the future, with safeguards for the Islanders	3	2	6	2

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB/SDP</u>
	1047	480	266	143
<p>Q.2 Following the successful British repossession of the Islands, should the eighteen hundred British inhabitants of the Falklands have the final say over the British Government's decision concerning the future of the Islands?</p>				
Yes	72	78	67	66
No	23	18	27	29
(Don't Know)	5	4	6	4