



Conservative Central Office

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STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Private Opinion Research

We have just received the results of our latest private survey conducted on 2nd June. A copy of the findings are enclosed - the key findings from the survey are:-

- the Conservative vote is holding firm in line with the published opinion polls at 44%. Labour stood at 29% and the Alliance 24%. The modest Alliance improvement found in the polls at the start of the week has been maintained, but the latest polls found no signs of it turning into a bandwagon.
- most of the interviewing for this survey had been completed before coverage of Mr Healey's attack on the Prime Minister had appeared on TV. Nevertheless his appeal over the last week had deteriorated rather than improved (35% to 18%) mostly among Conservative and Alliance voters.
- 38% of Conservative voters and 43% of Labour voters agreed with the view that 'I would be more likely to vote for the Liberal/SDP Alliance if they overtook Labour and came second in the opinion polls'. This underlines the fertile ground for a bandwagon effect to the Alliance if it ever started - we have no evidence that it has started.

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Midweek Quickie No. 5

Sample 1049

**Fieldwork date 2/6/83
in 50 sampling points.**

London Paris New York Washington DC.

Summary of Main Points

- i. Voting intention: The Conservative vote is holding firm in line with the published opinion polls at 44%. Labour were 29% and the Alliance 24%. The modest Alliance improvement observed at the beginning of the week has been maintained but as yet shows no sign of turning into a bandwagon.
- ii. There is some evidence that this Alliance improvement is concentrated on the South East, the East Midlands, East Anglia and the South West.
- iii. In order to check out a report on the 'Newsnight' voters panel that many more people (75%) were voting Conservative to keep Labour out than were voting to ensure the election of a Conservative Government (25%) a similar question was asked. This revealed that 56% of the Conservative vote was a positive pro-Conservative vote, while 41% - still a substantial minority - was primarily anti-Labour. This probably underlines the need to point out that 'tactical voting' could still result in Labour winning.
- iv. The potential for an Alliance bandwagon still exists amongst both Conservatives (about 1 in 5) of whose supporters say they would be likely to vote for the Alliance if they thought they would win) and amongst Labour voters (1 in 3 of whom said this). The very slight increase in Alliance potential has been at Labour's expense.
- v. Up to 17% of Conservative voters believe that too big a Conservative majority would be "bad for Britain".
- vi. Most of the fieldwork on the survey had been completed before the full weight of exposure of Denis Healey's attack on the Prime Minister had been on television. Nevertheless his appeal over the last week had deteriorated rather than improved (35% to 18%) mostly amongst Conservative and Alliance voters.

David Steel's image had improved amongst people of all Parties while Roy Jenkins' appeal had deteriorated across all Parties.
- vii. More than half the electorate believes (a) that the Liberals and SDP are "not as united as they seem" - including 61% of Conservatives, but conversely that it would be good for the country if the Alliance were to hold the balance of power between the Conservatives and Labour (including 40% of Conservatives.

They (the Alliance) are thought to have improved their standing since the start of the campaign by 71% of all voters and 71% of Conservatives.

38% of Conservative voters and 43% of Labour voters agree that "I would be more likely to vote for the Liberal/SDP Alliance if they overtook Labour and came second in the opinion polls."

All this underlines the fertile ground for a bandwagon effect to the Alliance if it ever started - we have no evidence that it has started.

viii. Of those 45% of voters who would seriously consider voting for the Alliance (a quarter of Conservatives and a third of Labour supporters) a majority, 53% do so because they 'do not have positive confidence in them but feel they would be better in Government than Labour or the Conservatives'. Only 32% would do so because they had positive confidence in them as a Government.

Q.1. If the General Election was today, which party would you support?
(If undecided or refused, which party would you be most likely to support?)

		All %	
Conservative	1	39	44
Labour	2	25	29
Liberal/SDP/Alliance	3	21	24
Other	4	3	3
Don't know/undecided	5	8	
Refused/won't vote	6	5	

ASK ALL WHO SAY 'CONSERVATIVE' (Code 1 01) only

Q.2. Which is most important to you, making sure that a Conservative Government is elected or keeping Labour out?

		405 Con %
Making sure a Conservative Government is elected	1	56
Keeping a Labour Government out	2	41
Neither/don't know	3	3

ASK ALL

Q.3. Would you be likely to vote for the Alliance between the Liberals and Social Democrats if you thought:

			All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
a. They would get a majority	Yes	1	43	23	32	94
	No	2	51	74	62	6
	Don't know	3	6	3	6	*
b. They were likely to hold the balance of power	Yes	1	40	20	32	92
	No	2	53	75	62	5
	Don't know	3	7	5	6	3
c. They would win only a few seats	Yes	1	25	6	7	82
	No	2	68	90	87	13
	Don't know	3	7	4	6	5

Q.4. Some people are saying that it would be bad for Britain if there were to be a very big Conservative majority in the next Parliament. Do you agree or disagree?

			All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
Agree	1		49	17	82	74
Disagree	2		41	76	12	19
Don't know	3		10	7	6	7

Q.5. Has your opinion of the following people got better or worse over the last week or so?			All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
<u>Dennis Healey</u>	Better	1	18	6	37	18
	Worse	2	36	58	9	32
	No different/don't know	3	46	36	54	50
<u>David Steel</u>	Better	1	49	47	40	76
	Worse	2	10	11	12	2
	No different/don't know	3	41	42	48	22
<u>Roy Jenkins</u>	Better	1	15	13	11	25
	Worse	2	30	34	31	25
	No different/don't know	3	55	53	58	50

Q.6. I would now like to read you 3 or 4 statements which have been made about the Liberal/SDP Alliance and would like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree.

The Liberals and SDP have differences on policy and are not as united as they appear

		All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
Agree	1	53	61	60	36
Disagree	2	31	24	24	56
Don't know	3	16	15	16	8

I would be more likely to vote for the Liberal/SDP Alliance if they overtook Labour and came second in the Opinion Polls

		All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
Agree	1	46	38	43	71
Disagree	2	46	59	51	23
Don't know	3	8	3	6	6

The Liberal/SDP Alliance is doing a lot better now than they were at the start of the Election

		All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
Agree	1	71	71	62	91
Disagree	2	14	16	21	3
Don't know	3	15	13	17	6

It would be good for the country if the Liberal/SDP Alliance got enough seats in Parliament to hold the balance between the Conservatives and Labour

		All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
Agree	1	54	40	53	89
Disagree	2	32	49	33	5
Don't know	3	14	11	14	6

Q.7.a. Would you yourself seriously consider voting for the Liberal /SDP Alliance?

Yes 1 - 7b
No/Don't know 2 - Close

All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
45	26	34	96
55	74	66	4

IF YES at 7.a. only

472	104	89
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Q.7.b. Is this (READ OUT)

- a. Because you have positive confidence in them as a government 1
- or b. Because you do not have positive confidence in them but feel they would be better in government than Labour or Conservatives 2
- Neither/don't know 3

All %	Con %	Lab %	Alliance %
32	26	22	40
53	45	56	55
15	29	22	5