

PRIME MINISTER

Tommy Thompson has sent the attached copy of a poll which is appearing in the Standard tomorrow. Particular points from the poll include the following:

- (i) 35 per cent of respondents were either completely or partially in sympathy with the miners and 53 per cent completely or partially opposed.
- (ii) 21 per cent thought the strike was to safeguard jobs; 72 per cent thought it was political.
- (iii) 18 per cent approved of mass picketting; 81 per cent opposed.
- (iv) 3 per cent approved of intimidation; 97 per cent were opposed.
- (v) 19 per cent said their main sympathy lay with the striking miners; 74 per cent with the working miners.
- (vi) 75 per cent said the Police had handled mass pickets well; 21 per cent badly.
- (vii) 50 per cent thought the Government should have taken tougher action in respect of mass picketting; 24 per cent thought the action was about right; 15 per cent said less tough.
- (viii) 7 per cent thought the NUM were right not to have a ballot; 89 per cent said they were wrong.
- (ix) 22 per cent thought that miners were still on strike because they supported it; 72 per cent because they are afraid to go back.
- (x) About 75 per cent consistently opposed action by other groups of workers in support of the miners compared with about 17 per cent who favour it.

/(xi)



(xi) 70 per cent thought the Coal Board had gone as far as it could in meeting the NUM demands.

Another interesting point about all these figures is that they are modified only slightly when the sample is limited to trade union members. I am sending copies of the poll to Giles Shaw and the Home Secretary in time for MISC 101.

29 August, 1984



X8443

August 1984

LIFE IN BRITAIN

Based on 1074

Fieldwork 22/33 August 1984

Interviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

Constituency \_\_\_\_\_ No: 

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Classification: Sex

- Male
- Female

Age

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55+

Social Class

- ABC1
- C2DE

Trade Union Member

- Member
- Non member

Working Status

- Working full time/part time
- Unemployed, seeking work
- other

Good morning/afternoon/evening. I am \_\_\_\_\_ (SHOW ICS CARD) FROM the Harris Research Centre. We are carrying out a large survey of public attitudes towards some of the problems the country is facing in the nationalised industries. I would like your views on these matters--who you think is responsible, how well the problems are being handled, and what ought to be done about them.



Q.1 First of all I would like to ask you how well you think nationalisation has worked in this country. Do you think it has been successful or unsuccessful? *ALL*

	<i>ALL</i>	<i>TRADE UNION MEMBERS</i>
Successful	26	32
Unsuccessful	56	54
Don't know	18	14

Q.2 Here is a list of the most important nationalised industries  
SHOWCARD A

Q.2a Which two do you think are the best run and most efficient?

National Bus Company	22	20
British Steel Corporation	11	7
National coal Board	7	7
Central Electricity Generating Board	68	69
British Rail	11	9
British Gas	69	72
British Leyland	8	12

Q.2b And which two do you think are the most profitable?

National Bus Company	4	7
British Steel Corporation	5	3
National coal Board	6	6
Central Electricity Generating Board	82	83
British Rail	7	4
British Gas	84	88
British Leyland	4	4



Q.3 I would now like to ask you about one of the most serious problems faced by a nationalised industry for many years. The miners strike which has been going on now for nearly six months.

ALL  
20

TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS  
20

How much in sympathy are you with the miners who are on strike? Would you say that you are (read out)

completely in sympathy  
in sympathy to some extent  
neither for them nor against them  
opposed to the miners on strike to some extent  
completely opposed to the miners  
don't know

13  
22  
10  
13  
40  
2

17  
31  
7  
12  
32  
1

Q.4 Some people think that Mr Scargill has brought the miners out on strike to safeguard miners jobs. Others think that he is using the miners to change Society in Britain. Which of these views do you think is nearest the truth?

To safeguard jobs  
Reason is political  
Don't know

21  
72  
7

25  
67  
8

Q.5 Mr Scargill and his colleagues are using mass pickets to try to persuade those miners still working to join the strike. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of these methods?

strongly approve  
approve to some extent  
disapprove to some extent  
strongly disapprove  
Don't know

7  
11  
13  
68  
2

10  
13  
15  
61  
1



Q.6 Do you think the miners are within their rights in trying to bring other miners out by mass picketing tactics?

Are  
Are not  
Don't know

ALL  
90  
19  
77  
3

TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS

90  
22  
73  
5

Q.7 And do you approve or disapprove of striking miners smashing car windows, setting fire to buses used to carry working miners, and intimidating working miners in order to make them support the strike?

strongly approve  
approve to some extent  
disapprove to some extent  
strongly disapprove  
Don't know

1  
2  
3  
94  
1

1  
1  
5  
91  
1

Q.8 In general terms where do your main sympathies lie, with those miners on strike who are trying to bring working miners out or with those miners who want to work and are being threatened and intimidated to get them to join the strike?

With Striking miners  
With working miners  
Don't know

19  
74  
7

24  
67  
9

Q.9 I would now like to ask you one or two questions about the Police. In general do you think the police in Britain do a good job or a bad job of maintaining law and order?

Very good  
Quite good  
not very good  
bad job  
Don't know

52  
37  
6  
4  
1

50  
37  
6  
4  
2



Q.10 And the control of the mass pickets.  
Do you think the police have handled  
the mass pickets in Nottinghamshire  
and other mining areas well or badly?  
Would you say (read out)

- very well
- fairly well
- fairly badly
- very badly
- Don't know

ALL  
20  
36  
39  
11  
10  
4

TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS  
20  
34  
38  
14  
10  
4

Q.11 And who would you say is responsible  
for the violence at collieries when  
police and mass pickets have clashed?

- The police
- mass picketing miners
- Both equally
- Don't know

6  
61  
28  
5

7  
55  
31  
7

Q.12 Under recent legislation mass  
picketing of places other than  
your own place of work is illegal.  
would you say that in respect of  
recent mass picketing.....

- The Government should have taken tougher  
action
- The Government were right to take the  
attitude they did
- The Government should have taken less  
tough action than they did
- don't know

50  
24  
15  
11

43  
29  
18  
9

Q.13 Do you think the NUM leadership is right  
or wrong to keep the strike going for  
nearly six months without having a  
national secret ballot to find out what  
miners want to do?

- Right
- Wrong
- Don't know

7  
89  
3

10  
86  
3



Q.14 And if the National Union of Miners did hold a secret ballot of its members do you think that the majority of miners would be in favour of continuing the strike or of going back to work?

All No

TRADE UNION MEMBERS 20

continuing 17  
going back to work 73  
don't know 10

21  
69  
11

Q.15 Why do you think after more than twenty weeks of being on strike the majority of miners are still out on strike. Do you think it is because most of them support the strike or because they are afraid to go back because of intimidation and threats?

support the strike 22  
afraid to go back 72  
don't know 6

28  
65  
7

Q.16 Do you believe that the situation in working coalfields would have been better, and the rights of individual miners would have been better upheld if the police had not been present to match the strength of the pickets?

better if police had not been present 21  
not better if police had not been present 67  
don't know 13

23  
66  
11

Q.17 Would you say that Mr Scargill and other leaders of the NUM are right or wrong to do the following things.....

a) Use mass pickets in Nottinghamshire and Lancashire to persuade those miners still working to join the strike

right 16  
wrong 80  
don't know 4

22  
75  
3

b) Use mass pickets to stop production at British Steel works at Ravenscraig, Scunthorop, and Llandwern steel works

right 9  
wrong 86  
don't know 5

11  
82  
7



c) Use mass pickets to stop coal reaching the Central Electricity Generating Board's power stations

ALL  
no

TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS  
no

right  
wrong  
don't know

12  
85  
3

18  
78  
4

Q.18 Some people think that as a result of the mass pickets by miners in the present dispute the Government will bring in tougher laws to limit picketing. Would you be in favour or opposed to such a law?

favour  
opposed  
don't know

59  
31  
10

51  
39  
10

Q.19 Who do you think is going to win the miners strike-- Mr Scargill and the NUM leadership or the National Coal Board and the Government?

Scargill  
NCB  
don't know/neither

11  
53  
36

12  
49  
39

Q.20 Which of them do you want to win?

Scargill  
NCB  
don't know/neither

21  
58  
21

29  
48  
23

Q.21. Would you say that the miners strike is going to help or harm the reputation of the trade union movement with ordinary people and with voters?

help  
harm  
have no effect  
don't know

5  
80  
10  
6

8  
77  
12  
3



Q.22 Some unions who have leadership who admit to being on the left politically are trying to widen the miners strike by getting their membership to help the miners in various ways. I would like you to tell me whether you approve or disapprove of these activities by other unions.

All  
No

TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS

No

approve  
disapprove  
don't know

17  
73  
10

25  
68  
7

Q.23 Thinking of the groups on this list would you say whether in your opinion, each of these groups of workers should or should not support the miners' strike?  
SHOWCARD B

Q23a The dockers

should  
should not  
don't know

19  
75  
6

28  
67  
6

b The steel workers

should  
should not  
don't know

18  
77  
5

26  
69  
4

c Railwaymen

should  
should not  
don't know

19  
76  
6

27  
69  
5

d Electricity supply workers

should  
should not  
don't know

17  
78  
5

24  
72  
4

e The seamen

should  
should not  
don't know

16  
78  
5

24  
70  
6

f Lorry drivers and haulage

should  
should not  
don't know

19  
76  
5

28  
67  
4



Q.24 The trade unions are holding their annual TUC conference at the beginning of September. A number of left wing trade union leaders have said that they are going to try to make the TUC give much stronger support, both in terms of financial help and actual physical support for the miners.

ALL  
%o

TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS  
%o

Do you (a)  
approve or disapprove of this aim

approve	21
disapprove	70
don't know	9

27  
65  
8

(b) think it would be in the country's interest or against the country's interests for the TUC to give much stronger support to the striking miners:

in country's interest	21
not in country's interest	71
don't know	8

29  
63  
8

(c) think it would help or damage the reputation of the unions with the general public and the mass of ordinary workers to give much stronger support to the miners?

help reputation	16
damage reputation	72
don't know	12

21  
64  
15

(d) think it would help or harm the reputation of the Labour Party with ordinary voters or have no effect on its reputation?

help reputation of labour party	9
harm reputation of labour party	50
Have no effect	32
Don't know	9

12  
46  
35  
7



25  
 Q.25 Some people have said that the TUC conference should only give help to the striking miners if Mr Scargill and his colleagues first held a national secret ballot to show whether a majority of miners supported the strike or not. Do you think this would or would not be sensible attitude for the TUC conference to take?

All  
 no

TRADE UNION  
 MEMBERS  
 20

sensible 82  
 not sensible 11  
 don't know 6

80  
 14  
 6

Q.26 Welsh miners were recently fined £50,000 for defying the law. Do you think they are justified in defying it to try to win the strike?

should stay within the law  
 are justified in breaking it  
 don't know

76  
 18  
 7

73  
 21  
 5

Q.27 The Steel unions are worried that if the miners pickets stop coal going into the huge Ravenscraig Steel complex and Scunthorpe the end result will be that the Ravenscraig already in serious trouble, will close with the loss of some thousands of jobs. Do you think this is a serious possibility or not?

serious possibility  
 not serious  
 don't know

86  
 9  
 4

88  
 10  
 2

Q.28 Do you think that the miners should ignore this possible threat to Ravenscraig in the interests of winning their own fight or do you think it is right for them to let coal trains into Ravenscraig and Scunthorpe to safeguard steelworkers' jobs?

should ignore threat  
 let coal trains in  
 don't know

8  
 86  
 5

10  
 86  
 4



Q.29 Another possibility is that miners pickets will try to bring the Power stations to a halt by blockading their supplies of coal and oil. Do you think it right for miners to do this?

All  
90

TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS  
20

right  
wrong  
don't know

12  
85  
3

17  
79  
4

Q.30 And what effect do you think such blockading would have on jobs in the electricity supply industry? Do you think it will put a lot of jobs at risk a certain number, or only a few or none

a lot  
a certain number  
a few  
None  
Don't know

40  
30  
15  
11  
4

37  
30  
13  
16  
5

Q.31 And what about the railways? If the railway workers refuse to let coal trains operate do you think that the loss of freight business involved will or will not put railwayworkers jobs at risk?

Will  
Will not  
don't know

75  
18  
7

69  
24  
7

Q.32 Some railwaymen have been taking sympathetic action to support the miners strike. Do you think they should or should not do this?

Should  
Should not  
don't know

22  
69  
9

31  
60  
10

Q.33 The railway unions are threatening to start a national work to rule shortly. The chairman of the British Rail has said that there is no real reason for this and has indicated that the whole aim is to support the miners' strike.

Cont'd



TRADE UNION MEMBERS %

Which do you think is nearest the truth.. All %

that the railway unions have a genuine grievance which justifies a work to rule or ..... 17

that there is no real grievance and it is just a cover by their left wing leadership to give support to the miners? 63

Don't know 20

25

57

18

Q.34 The chairman of British Rail has also said that an unjustified work to rule will damage their business and put a lot of railway workers jobs at risk. Do you think this is true or untrue?

true 74  
untrue 19  
don't know 7

69  
25  
6

Q.35 Do you approve or disapprove of a railway work to rule at this time?

approve 14  
disapprove 72  
don't know 14

21  
65  
13

Q.36 There is also a threat of another national dock strike of British Steel go ahead with unloading a ship bringing vitally needed supplies of coal. Would you say that the dockers threatening a national strike have a genuine grievance or do you think this also is just a move to help the miners strike?

genuine grievance 14  
move to help miners 76  
don't know 10

19  
71  
10



Q.37 At the recent talks the National Coal Board offered Mr Scargill and his colleagues a number of concessions including withdrawing the threat of closure from five collieries. Would you say that the Coal Board has gone as far as it could and should to try to end the strike or do you think it should have met Mr Scargill's full demands for no colliery to close whether it was making heavy losses or not?

All  
No

TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS  
No

Coal Board went as far as it could	70
Coal Board should have met Mr Scargill's full demands	16
don't know	15

63  
19  
18

Q.38 And do you think Mr Scargill and his colleagues were right to refuse the deal offered and break off the talks or do you think they made a mistake and lost a good chance to end the strike?

right	14
made a mistake	78
don't know	8

19  
71  
9

Q.39 Would you say that if the strike goes on long enough the Government and the National Coal Board will offer more concessions to Mr Scargill or do you think as time goes on the attitude of the government and the Coal Board will harden?

Govt. and Coal Board will make more concessions	15
As time goes on their position will harden	77
don't know	9

20  
70  
9

Q.40 Do you think Mr Scargill has handled this strike well or badly?

well	13
badly	80
don't know	7

18  
75  
7



TRADE UNION  
MEMBERS  
20

Q.41 How much do you think the miners have to gain or lose by keeping the strike going now?

All  
no

would you say  
REMOVED

- a great deal to gain
- a certain amount to gain
- a certain amount to lose
- a great deal to lose
- Don't know

9  
9  
14  
62  
6

15  
12  
13  
55  
5

Q.42 And, finally, one more question, Do you think the other unions at the TUC conference should or should not now start to look seriously for ways to bring the strike to and end?

- should
- should not
- don't know

95  
3  
3

93  
2  
4