

Public Opinion Background Note 82/83
(produced 14th April 1985)

1. Introduction

Gallup conducted the interviewing for our latest two 'tracking' studies from 27th March to 1st April and from 3rd to 9th April. The first of these studies found a 5% Conservative lead over Labour, whilst the second found a 3% Labour lead over the Conservatives. This second study is probably nearer the true picture - tracking studies since late February have shown a gradual movement towards a small Labour lead. The latest study found a very sharp drop in 'Alliance' support - it is too early to conclude whether this represents a permanent movement of support away from them. Gallup in this latest survey found 37% claiming they would vote Conservative - this compares with 36% at the start of the year, 40% Labour compared with 32% at the start of the year and 21% Alliance compared with 31% at the start of the year.

Full details of the trend of support for the main parties since early August 1984 showing voting intention when those respondents not giving details of voting intention are excluded and when they were included as a separate group are shown in the tables in section 2 below:

2. Voting Intention

(a) Voting Intention (excluding don't knows) - all figures are percentages

	<u>Con</u> %	<u>Lab</u> %	<u>Lib</u> %	<u>SDP</u> %	<u>Others</u> %	<u>Con lead Over Labour</u> %	<u>SDP & Liberal</u> %	<u>Con lead over Alliance Liberal & SDP</u> %
<u>1984</u>								
1-6 August	38.0	36.5	9.0	14.0	2.5	+1.5	23.0	+15.0
8-13 August	36.0	39.0	9.5	13.0	2.5	-3.0*	22.5	+13.5
15-20 August	38.5	37.5	9.5	12.0	2.5	+1.0	21.0	+17.5
22-27 August	35.5	38.0	11.0	14.0	1.5	-2.5	25.0	+11.5
29 Aug - 3 Sept	41.5	35.0	10.0	11.5	2.0	+6.5	21.5	+20.0
5-10 Sept	37.0	36.0	11.5	14.0	1.5	+1.0*	25.5	+11.5
12-17 Sept	35.5	38.0	9.5	15.0	2.0	-2.5	24.5	+11.0
19-24 Sept	36.5	34.0	11.0	16.0	2.5	+2.5	27.0	+9.5
26 Sept - 1 Oct	37.0	34.0	13.0	15.0	1.0	+3.0	28.0	+9.0
3-8 October	39.0	34.5	9.0	16.0	1.5	+4.5	25.0	+14.0
11-15 October	41.5	34.0	9.0	14.0	1.5	+7.5	23.0	+18.5
17-22 October	44.5	32.0	6.0	15.5	2.0	+12.5*	21.5	+23.0
24-29 October	42.0	32.0	9.0	15.0	2.0	+10.0	24.0	+18.0
31 Oct - 5 Nov	39.0	38.0	9.0	11.0	3.0	+1.0	20.0	+19.0
7-12 Nov	44.5	30.5	9.0	14.5	1.5	+14.0	23.5	+21.0
14-19 Nov	43.0	30.0	13.0	14.0	1.0	+13.0	27.0	+16.0
21-26 Nov	40.0	28.0	14.0	15.5	2.5	+12.0	29.5	+10.5
28 Nov - 3rd Dec	42.0	30.0	9.0	17.0	2.0	+12.0	26.0	+16.0
5-10 Dec	39.5	31.0	10.5	17.0	2.0	+8.5	27.5	+12.0*
12-17 Dec	38.5	31.5	11.0	17.0	2.0	+7.0	28.0	+9.5
<u>1985</u>								
3-8 Jan	35.0	35.0	11.0	17.0	2.0	0.0	28.0	+7.0
9-14 Jan	39.0	33.0	9.5	16.0	2.5	+6.0	25.5	+13.5*
16-21 Jan	39.0	34.0	10.0	16.0	1.0	+5.0	26.0	+13.0

(a) Voting Intention (excluding don't knows) - all figures are percentages (Cont.)

	Con	Lab	Lib	SDP	Others	Con lead Over Labour	SDP & Liberal	Con lead over Alliance Liberal & SDP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1985								
23-28 Jan	36.0	32.0	11.0	20.0	1.0	+4.0	31.0	+5.0
30 Jan-4 Feb	34.0	37.0	10.0	17.5	1.5	-3.0	27.5	+6.5
6-11 Feb	35.0	32.0	10.5	21.0	1.5	+3.0	31.5	+3.5*
13-18 Feb	38.0	33.0	10.0	16.5	2.5	+5.0	26.5	+11.5
20-25 Feb	33.5	38.0	10.0	17.0	1.5	-4.5	27.0	+6.5
27 Feb-4 March	35.0	35.0	10.0	18.0	2.0	0.0	28.0	+7.0
6-11 March	37.0	34.0	10.5	17.0	1.5	+3.0	27.5	+10.5
13-18 March	35.0	34.0	12.0	16.0	3.0	+1.0	28.0	+7.0
21-25 March	33.0	39.5	10.0	16.0	1.5	-6.5	26.0	+6.0
27 March - 1 April	38.0	33.0	13.0	15.0	1.0	+5.0	28.0	+10.0
3 - 9 April	37.0	40.0	7.5	13.5	2.0	-3.0	21.0	+16.0

(*published in the Daily Telegraph)

(b) Voting Intention (including don't knows)

	Conservative	Labour	Liberal	SDP	Others	Don't Know	Conservative lead over Labour
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1984							
1-6 August	34.5	33.5	8.0	12.0	2.0	10.0	+1.0
8-13 August	33.0	36.0	9.0	12.0	2.0	8.0	-3.0
15-20 August	35.0	34.0	9.0	11.0	2.0	10.0	+1.0
22-27 August	33.0	36.0	10.0	13.0	2.0	6.0	-3.0
29 Aug - 3 Sept	38.0	32.0	9.0	10.0	2.0	8.0	+6.0
5-10 Sept	34.0	33.0	10.0	13.0	1.0	9.0	+1.0
12-17 Sept	33.0	35.0	9.0	14.0	2.0	8.0	-2.0
19-24 Sept	33.0	31.0	10.0	15.0	2.0	9.0	+2.0
26 Sept - 1 Oct	33.0	30.0	12.0	13.0	2.0	10.0	+3.0
3-8 October	35.0	31.0	8.0	14.0	2.0	9.0	+4.0
11-15 October	38.0	32.0	9.0	12.0	2.0	7.0	+6.0
17-22 October	41.0	29.0	6.0	14.0	2.0	9.0	+12.0
24-29 October	38.0	29.0	9.0	14.0	1.0	8.0	+9.0
31 Oct - 5 Nov	36.0	35.0	9.0	10.0	2.0	9.0	+1.0
7-12 Nov	41.0	28.0	8.0	14.0	1.0	8.0	+13.0
14-19 Nov	39.0	27.0	12.0	12.0	1.0	9.0	+12.0
21-26 Nov	36.0	25.0	13.0	14.0	2.0	10.0	+11.0
28 Nov - 3 Dec	39.0	28.0	8.0	15.0	3.0	8.0	+11.0
5 - 10 Dec	36.0	29.0	10.0	15.0	2.0	8.0	+7.0
12-17 Dec	35.0	29.0	10.0	15.0	2.0	9.0	+6.0
1985							
3-8 Jan	33.0	32.0	10.0	16.0	2.0	7.0	+1.0
9-14 Jan	36.0	30.0	9.0	15.0	3.0	8.0	+6.0
16-21 Jan	35.0	31.0	9.0	14.0	1.0	9.0	+4.0
23-28 Jan	33.0	29.0	10.0	18.0	1.0	8.0	+4.0
30 Jan - 4 Feb	31.0	33.0	9.0	16.0	1.0	11.0	-2.0
6-11 Feb	32.0	29.0	9.0	19.0	1.0	9.0	+3.0
13-18 Feb	35.0	30.0	9.0	15.0	2.0	8.0	+5.0
20-25 Feb	31.0	35.0	9.0	15.0	1.0	9.0	-4.0
27 Feb-4 March	32.0	32.0	9.0	16.0	2.0	9.0	0.0
6 - 11 March	34.0	31.0	10.0	15.0	1.0	9.0	+3.0
13-18 March	33.0	32.0	11.0	15.0	3.0	7.0	+1.0
21-25 March	30.0	36.0	9.0	14.0	2.0	8.0	-6.0
27 March-1 April	35.0	30.0	13.0	12.0	1.0	8.0	+5.0
3 - 9 April	34.0	37.0	7.0	12.0	2.0	8.0	-3.0

3. Government Record

The latest study found 32% claiming they approved of the record of the government to date (32% at the start of the year), 57% disapproving (53% at the start of the year) and 11% had no view (14% at the start of the year). Details are shown in the table below:-

	GOVERNMENT RECORD		
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
<u>1984</u>			
1-6 August (%)	33	52	15
8-13 August (%)	34	54	13
15-20 August (%)	36	50	14
22-27 August (%)	36	54	10
29 Aug - 3 Sept (%)	37	57	12
5-10 Sept (%)	34	52	14
12-17 Sept (%)	34	52	14
19-24 Sept (%)	35	51	14
26 Sept - 1 Oct (%)	34	53	13
3 - 8 Oct (%)	36	51	13
11-15 Oct (%)	40	48	12
17-22 Oct (%)	43	43	14
24-29 Oct (%)	41	47	12
31 Oct - 5 Nov (%)	38	51	11
7-12 Nov (%)	41	46	13
14-19 Nov (%)	38	48	14
21-26 Nov (%)	36	47	16
28 Nov - 3 Dec (%)	38	51	11
5 - 10 Dec (%)	34	52	14
12-17 Dec (%)	34	54	12

1985

3-8 Jan (%)	32	53	14
9-14 Jan (%)	33	54	13
16-21 Jan (%)	35	48	16
23-28 Jan (%)	33	54	12
30 Jan - 4 Feb (%)	29	59	12
6-11 Feb (%)	31	55	13
13-18 Feb (%)	33	55	12
20-25 Feb (%)	29	58	13
27 Feb-4 March (%)	34	53	13
6 - 11 March (%)	32	55	13
13-18 March (%)	31	56	13
21-25 March (%)	30	58	12
27 March - 1 April (%)	34	55	11
3 - 9 April (%)	32	57	11

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Mrs. Thatcher's popularity, as measured by the standard Gallup 'tracking' question 'Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with Mrs. Thatcher as Prime Minister?', remains in the 37% to 40% band that it has been in since late January. Mr. Kinnock's popularity has drifted upwards and the results from the latest study with 43% regarding him as a good leader are the best in any survey since he became leader. His popularity has gradually drifted upwards since early March - it's too early to conclude whether the results of the latest survey represent a permanent improvement in his popularity.

4. Popularity of Political Leaders (cont.)

Mr. Steel's popularity fell by 6% and that of Dr. Owen by 2% in the latest study.

Full details of the trend of popularity for the leaders of the main parties, since August 1984, are shown in the tables below:-

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr. Kinnock</u>		
	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is Good Leader</u>	<u>Is Not Good Leader</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
<u>1984</u>						
1-6 August (%)	39	57	4	34	42	24
8-13 August (%)	39	56	5	37	44	19
15-20 August (%)	41	54	5	35	45	20
22-27 August (%)	40	55	5	38	42	19
29 Aug - 3 Sept (%)	42	52	6	38	44	18
5-10 Sept (%)	40	56	5	43	37	20
12-17 Sept (%)	40	54	6	38	40	22
19-24 Sept (%)	39	54	7	37	45	18
26 Sept - 1 Oct (%)	40	54	5	35	45	19
3 - 8 Oct (%)	42	52	6	36	48	16
11-15 Oct (%)	43	51	5	36	46	18
17-22 Oct (%)	50	44	6	35	48	17
24-29 Oct (%)	47	48	5	41	41	17
31 Oct - 5 Nov (%)	43	52	5	37	44	19
7-12 Nov (%)	48	48	4	39	44	17
14-19 Nov (%)	45	50	5	32	49	19
21-26 Nov (%)	42	52	6	31	50	19
28 Nov - 3 Dec (%)	44	51	5	33	51	16
5 - 10 Dec (%)	43	52	5	36	49	15
12 - 17 Dec (%)	40	53	7	36	50	14

<u>1985</u>						
3-8 Jan (%)	39	57	5	33	48	19
9-14 Jan (%)	40	54	6	36	49	15
16-21 Jan (%)	43	51	6	31	51	18
23-28 Jan (%)	40	56	5	33	52	15
30 Jan to 4 Feb (%)	38	56	6	36	49	15
6-11 Feb (%)	37	57	6	31	54	15
13-18 Feb (%)	40	55	5	31	57	12
20-25 Feb (%)	38	58	4	34	52	14
27 Feb-4 March (%)	40	54	5	31	53	16
6 - 11 March (%)	41	55	4	34	51	15
13-18 March (%)	40	55	5	32	52	16
21-25 March (%)	37	58	5	37	47	6
27 March - 1 April (%)	39	56	5	33	50	16
3 - 9 April (%)	37	59	4	43	44	13

	<u>Mr. Steel</u>			<u>Dr. Owen</u>		
	<u>Is Good Leader</u>	<u>Is Not Good Leader</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is Good Leader</u>	<u>Is Not Good Leader</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1984</u>						
1-6 August (%)	57	26	17	48	24	28
8-13 August (%)	55	23	21	50	23	28
15-20 August (%)	59	24	17	46	26	27
22-27 August (%)	59	24	18	51	24	25

	<u>Is Good</u> <u>Leader</u> %	<u>Mr. Steel</u> <u>Is Not Good</u> <u>Leader</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %	<u>Is Good</u> <u>Leader</u> %	<u>Dr. Owen</u> <u>Is Not Good</u> <u>Leader</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %
<u>1984 (Cont.)</u>						
29 Aug - 3 Sept (%)	58	25	16	50	24	26
5-10 Sept (%)	59	23	17	53	20	27
12-17 Sept (%)	60	23	18	55	22	23
19-24 Sept (%)	58	26	16	54	23	23
26 Sept - 1 Oct (%)	58	27	15	49	26	25
3- 8 Oct (%)	59	25	16	53	24	23
11-15 Oct (%)	54	29	17	55	22	22
17-22 Oct (%)	57	26	17	59	20	21
24-29 Oct (%)	61	22	17	57	21	22
31 Oct - 5 Nov (%)	56	28	16	54	24	22
7-12 Nov (%)	56	27	17	54	23	23
14-19 Nov (%)	61	21	17	54	24	22
21-26 Nov (%)	61	20	20	50	22	28
28 Nov - 3 Dec (%)	58	25	16	56	22	22
5 - 10 Dec (%)	57	27	16	55	25	20
12-17 Dec (%)	58	25	16	54	24	22
<u>1985</u>						
3-8 Jan (%)	56	24	20	50	25	25
9-14 Jan (%)	57	26	17	52	27	21
16-21 Jan (%)	60	24	16	52	22	26
23-28 Jan (%)	57	25	18	55	21	24
30 Jan - 4 Feb (%)	55	28	18	51	25	23
6-11 Feb (%)	57	24	18	55	21	24
13-18 Feb (%)	59	24	17	57	24	20
20-25 Feb (%)	61	23	16	57	22	21
27 Feb-4 March (%)	57	25	19	52	23	25
6 - 11 March (%)	56	27	17	52	25	23
13-18 March (%)	57	27	17	53	23	24
21-25 March (%)	60	23	17	53	21	25
27 March-1 April (%)	64	21	15	54	24	22
3 - 9 April (%)	58	25	17	52	26	22

5. Published Polls

(a) MORI (Sunday Times 7th April 1985)

The Sunday Times on 7th April included details of a MORI study conducted from 21st to 22nd March on attitudes to our local government legislation. MORI found among the electorate as a whole:-

- three out of five electors are opposed to rate-capping legislation to control local spending. 55% disapproved, 38% approved and 7% had no view.
- that a majority of two to one rejected the plans to abolish the Greater London Council and the Metropolitan counties.
- they gave electors three choices: reduce local services to keep down rates; increase local services even if this meant higher rates, or keep rates and services at present levels. Two thirds of those questioned wanted both rates and local services to remain unchanged.

5. Published Polls (cont.)

(b) Gallup (Sunday Telegraph, 7th April 1985)

The Sunday Telegraph on 7th April included details of a Gallup study conducted from 20th to 26th March on attitudes of Anglicans. They found:-

- 58% thought the Church should not get involved in political matters.
- 82% thought the Church should accept women priests.
- 52% claimed to be satisfied with Dr. Runcie's leadership, although 19% are not.