

Public Opinion Background Note 98

(produced 28th July 1985)

1. Introduction

The interviewing for the latest Gallup 'tracking' study was conducted partly before the announcement of the top salary review. The survey (conducted from 17th to 22nd July) found for the first time since 1982 the so-called 'Alliance' leading both the Conservative and Labour parties. Gallup found 36.5% claiming they would vote 'Alliance'. 30% Conservative and 30% Labour. It must of course be remembered that this result has only been found by one poll and should be treated with caution at this stage. In terms of the 1979-1983 Parliament, it is perhaps worth remembering that 'Alliance' support peaked at 52.5% in December 1981.

Full details of the trend of support for the main parties since January 1985 showing voting intentions 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

	Con %	Lab %	Lib %	SDP %	Others %	Con lead Over Labour %	SDP & Liberal %	Con lead over Allian Liberal & S %
<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
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
10 - 15 April	36.5	35.5	13.0	13.0	2.0	+1.0	26.0	+11.5
17-22 April	34.0	37.5	12.0	14.0	2.0	-3.5	26.5	+7.5*
24-29 April	33.5	38.0	10.0	16.5	2.0	-4.5	26.5	+7.0
1 - 6 May	31.5	36.0	11.5	18.5	2.5	-4.5	30.0	+1.5
6-13 May	30.5	34.0	11.5	22.0	2.0	-3.5	33.5	-3.0*
15-20 May	31.0	36.5	10.0	21.0	1.5	-5.5	31.0	0.0
23-28 May	29.0	35.0	12.0	21.0	3.0	-6.0	33.0	-4.0
29 May - 3 June	31.0	37.0	13.0	17.0	2.0	-6.0	30.0	+1.0
5-10 June	28.0	36.0	12.0	21.5	2.5	-8.0	33.5	-5.5
12-17 June	34.5	34.5	12.0	18.0	1.0	0.0	30.0	+4.5*
19-24 June	31.0	35.0	13.0	19.0	2.0	-4.0	32.0	-1.0
26 June-1 July	35.0	34.0	12.0	17.0	2.0	+1.0	29.0	+6.0
3-8 July	30.5	36.5	12.0	19.0	2.0	-6.0	31.0	+0.5
10-15 July	27.5	38.0	12.5	20.0	2.0	-10.5	32.5	-5.0
17-22 July	30.0	30.0	12.5	24.0	3.5	0.0	36.5	-6.5

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

	<u>Conservative</u>	<u>Labour</u>	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>SDP</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Conservative lead over Labour</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1985</u>							
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
10 - 15 April	33.0	32.0	12.0	12.0	3.0	9.0	+1.0
17-22 April	31.0	34.0	12.0	13.0	2.0	9.0	-3.0
24-29 April	31.0	35.0	9.0	15.0	2.0	8.0	-4.0
1 - 6 May	29.0	33.0	11.0	17.0	2.0	9.0	-4.0
6-13 May	28.0	31.0	11.0	20.0	2.0	8.0	-3.0
15-20 May	28.0	34.0	9.0	19.0	2.0	8.0	-6.0
23-28 May	27.0	33.0	12.0	19.0	2.0	7.0	-6.0
29 May-3rd June	28.0	33.0	11.0	15.0	2.0	11.0	-5.0
5 - 10 June	26.0	33.0	11.0	20.0	2.0	8.0	-7.0
12 - 17 June	32.0	32.0	11.0	17.0	1.0	7.0	0.0
19-24 June	29.0	32.0	12.0	17.0	3.0	7.0	-3.0
26 June-1 July	32.0	31.0	11.0	16.0	1.0	8.0	+1.0
3-8 July	28.0	33.0	11.0	17.0	1.0	9.0	-5.0
10-15 July	26.0	35.0	12.0	19.0	2.0	6.0	-9.0
17-22 July	27.0	28.0	11.0	22.0	3.0	8.0	-1.0

3. Government Record

Despite the sharp upward movement in 'Alliance' support in the latest study, it found no change in the popularity of the Government. 28% claimed to approve of our record to date (32% at the start of the year), 60% disapproved (53% at the start of the year) and 12% did not have a view (14% at the start of the year).

<u>1985</u>	<u>GOVERNMENT RECORD</u>		
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
3-8 Jan(%)	32	53	14
9-14Jan(%)	33	54	13
16-21 Jan(%)	35	48	16
23-28 Jan(%)	33	54	12
30 Jan-4 Feb(%)	29	59	12
6-11Feb (%)	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
10-15 April (%)	32	54	14
17-22 April (%)	32	57	11

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
24-29 April (%)	31	55	14
1 - 6 May (%)	31	56	13
6-13 May (%)	28	58	14
15-20 May (%)	27	60	13
23-28 May (%)	28	60	12
29 May-3 June (%)	27	59	14
5 - 10 June (%)	26	61	13
12-17 June (%)	31	59	9
19-24 June (%)	28	60	12
26 June-1 July (%)	30	57	12
3-8 July (%)	29	58	12
10-15 July (%)	28	59	13
17 - 22 July (%)	28	60	12

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

Gallup found no change in Mrs. Thatcher's popularity - 34% claimed to be satisfied with Mrs. Thatcher as Prime Minister (34% in previous study), 61% dissatisfied (60% in previous study) and 6% had no view (5% in previous study). The proportion regarding Mr. Kinnock as a good leader of the Labour Party fell to 32%, not far short of the all time record for him (31% in late February/early March). Mr. Steel's popularity remained almost unchanged whilst that of Dr. Owen fell slightly. Details are shown in the table below:-

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Is Good Leader</u>	<u>Mr. Kinnock</u>	
	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>		<u>Is Not Good Leader</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
<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
10-15 April (%)	38	57	6	35	47	18
17-22 April (%)	38	57	5	36	48	16
24-29 April (%)	37	57	6	35	48	16
1 - 6 May (%)	37	58	5	36	49	16
6 - 13 May (%)	36	59	5	38	45	17
15-20 May (%)	32	63	5	36	47	18
23-28 May (%)	35	60	5	35	49	16
29 May-3 June (%)	34	61	5	34	50	16
5 - 10 June (%)	34	61	6	33	49	17
12-17 June (%)	38	56	8	37	51	12
19-24 June (%)	36	59	5	34	51	15
26 June-1 July (%)	40	56	5	37	46	17
3-8 July (%)	36	58	6	37	48	16
10-15 July (%)	34	60	5	38	47	15
17 - 22 July (%)	34	61	6	32	52	15

	<u>Mr Steel</u>			<u>Dr Owen</u>		
	<u>Is Good</u> <u>Leader</u> %	<u>Is Not Good</u> <u>Leader</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %	<u>Is Good</u> <u>Leader</u> %	<u>Is Not Good</u> <u>Leader</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %
<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
10-15 April (%)	58	24	18	49	26	25
17-22 April (%)	60	24	17	52	26	22
24-29 April (%)	60	22	18	51	24	25
1 - 6 May (%)	65	20	15	54	22	24
6 - 13 May (%)	64	19	16	56	21	23
15-20 May (%)	60	24	16	51	23	25
23-28 May (%)	65	20	15	52	26	21
29 May-3 June (%)	61	22	17	49	27	24
5 - 10 June (%)	62	22	16	53	25	22
12-17 June (%)	63	22	15	56	23	21
19-24 June (%)	63	21	16	51	25	23
26-June-1 July (%)	62	20	18	52	24	25
3-8 July (%)	64	20	16	50	25	25
10-15 July(%)	65	20	15	54	24	22
17-22 July (%)	64	21	15	51	26	23

5. Published Polls

(a) Daily Telegraph (23rd July 1985)

The Daily Telegraph on 23rd July included details of a Gallup poll taken among 15/16 year-olds between 6th and 15th July.

The survey found that:-

Though school leavers narrowly favour Mrs. Thatcher as the best party leader to be Prime Minister, they are generally more to the Left than their elders, almost half saying they would vote for Labour.

Among a number of more political questions, Gallup asked its sample of 15 and 16 year olds which of the four main party leaders would make the best Prime Minister, and compared the results with replies from the general public.

Apart from more uncertainty about these political figures, the 15 and 16 year olds rate the leaders in much the same order as the public as a whole:

	<u>Young Persons</u>	<u>General Public</u>
Thatcher	26	27
Kinnock	24	24
Steel	10	21
Owen	8	19
Don't Know	32	9

Asked which party they would vote for, however, they confirmed analyses of the pattern among adults aged 18 to 24, who tend to give more than average support to Labour and less than than average to the Alliance. The results were:

	<u>Young Persons</u>	<u>General Public</u>
Conservative	31	27.5
Labour	44	38
Liberal/SDP	22	32.5
Other	3	2

The 15- and 16-year olds were then asked whether they agreed or disagreed with seven statements, and the replies were:-

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither Don't Know</u>
Everybody should have the right to a job.	93	3	4
The pressures of life on young people are much greater today than they were for their parents.	73	14	14
People will have to get used to living without working a full week.	50	30	19
Taxes should be raised to provide money to help the jobless.	42	36	22
The use of violence is sometimes justified in bring about political change.	32	47	20
The young are too pampered and have things too easy these days.	30	58	11
It will be easier for me to have a successful career than it was for my father.	23	63	14

In terms of general attitudes, Gallup found:-

- Eight out of 10 young people about to leave school would rather take a low-paid job than be on the dole.
- 83% thought that it would be better for young people unable to get a job to go on a training course rather than the dole
- that one in two of 15/16 year olds want to be in a job in a year's time and one in three 'expect to be'.