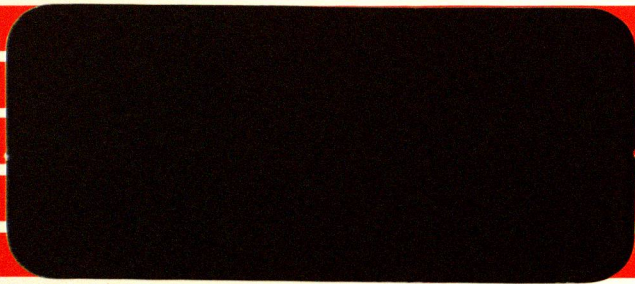




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**The Harris Research Centre**

A REPORT ON A SURVEY  
OF THE  
SCOTTISH POLITICAL SCENE

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SEPTEMBER 1987

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## INTRODUCTION

The Harris Research Centre was invited by the Conservative Party to conduct research in Scotland.

The brief was to diagnose why the party has done less well in Scotland than in other parts of Great Britain in the 1987 General Election, and to address the Party's attention to any particular areas of policy or image which might be problematic in the future.

Six group discussions were conducted between 6th and 13th July in areas where the Conservatives had lost ground particularly heavily: Edinburgh (Central and South), Ayr and Angus East. In each location one group was carried out amongst voters who had voted Conservative in 1983 but had voted for another party or not voted in 1987, while the other group consisted of voters who had remained loyal to the Conservative Party in both elections.

Following a verbal and written debrief on these groups a questionnaire was prepared for the quantitative stage of the survey.

This was conducted among a representative sample of 1006 respondents in 50 sampling points throughout Scotland between 30th July and 10th August 1987. The sample was a quota sample controlled by sex, age and social class.

The summary of this report draws on evidence from both the qualitative and quantitative research while the main body of the report is exclusively concerned with the quantitative survey.

Summary

i) Neglect/forgottenness

One of the over-riding hypotheses which emerged from the qualitative research was that one of the main reasons for Scottish voters wishing to protest against the Government was that they felt neglected and forgotten by the Government.

"We're sort of forgotten about - nobody's interested in us, here, she's more or less looking after her own down there" (Angus East Switchers)

"Nobody seemed to be paying attention to us as far as I was concerned. I thought that we were forgotten about. I thought that at least if the Nationalists were in we'd have a spokesman for Scotland" (Angus East Switchers)

"I think Scotland's forgotten about on the whole" (Ayr Switchers)

"There was a general feeling that she didn't care about Scotland" (Edinburgh loyal)

"The Government's down South - they're not for up here. They don't bother about us" (Edinburgh Switchers)

Some participants put this more directly and associated neglect with the Prime Minister's lack of visibility in Scotland.

"She never comes to Scotland, I think she's been up here, what, once or twice for a day and straight out again" (Edinburgh Switchers")

"She won't face the Scottish people" (Edinburgh Switchers)

"Mrs Thatcher did come up to Perth before the Election - just to make a token show - it was a token show I think - she doesn't seem interested. (Angus East Switchers)

(III)

This was born out by the quantitative research.

Only 4% of voters believe that the Conservatives put the good of Scotland before the good of the party.

3% see the Conservatives as "The traditional Scottish Party"

6% believe the Conservatives "have Scotland's interests at heart"

Conversely:-

79% identify the Conservatives as the party who "don't understand the problems of Scotland".

84% see the Conservatives as "the party of the landowners".

59% see them as the party which has "very few Scots in its top ranks".

92% think that Scottish people should have more say in how Scotland is run.

This suggests that a greater visibility by leaders of the party would be desirable.

ii) Unemployment

The qualitative research suggested that unemployment was very much the yardstick against which the Governments's performance (or neglect) was measured.

There was no sense that the improving unemployment situation in England had yet reached Scotland.

"In some areas of South East England unemployment is less than 1% but in Arbroath for example it's 20% (Angus East Switchers).

"One thing which really annoys me with the Conservative Party is the manipulation of employment figures purely for political purposes" (Ayr Switchers).

"If Labour gets in they're going to make things happen. I think they'd cut unemployment anyway" (Edinburgh Switchers).

"He (Peter Fraser) has closed a lot of places down in this area. I feel that the Conservatives haven't done enough to promote jobs to come back into this area. It's just forgotten now" (Angus East Switchers).

In the quantitative survey these fears were borne out:-

13% felt that the Government had done a good job in 'reducing the number of people out of work'

16% thought that the Government had done a good job in "creating new jobs".

Rather more voters - 22% felt that they had done a good job in 'helping older unemployed people learn new skills' and more still 38% felt that they were 'providing a useful training for the young unemployed'.

### iii) Spending in Scotland

In the qualitative research there was much and lengthy anecdotal evidence of cuts in the health service and education particularly.

In virtually every area of Government spending - housing, education, roads, measures to help the unemployed, health and law and order between half and two thirds of the Scottish population believe that the Government spends less per head of population in Scotland than in England while only one in ten voters believe that more is spent per head.

Since this is clearly an important symptom of the feeling of neglect it is an area which needs to be addressed and the facts made public.



iv) Perception of the Government's performance

On only two items - inflation and defence - did a majority of voters believe the Government had done a good job for Scotland.

Just over a third thought the Government had done a good job in helping farmers and providing useful training for the young unemployed.

Fewer than a quarter credit the Government with having done a good job on a wide range of issues.

	% saying very/fairly good job
Developing road and rail links to help Scottish industry	24%
Improving housing in Scotland	23%
Improving Scottish inner cities	20%
Improving hospitals and health care generally	20%
Using North Sea oil revenues wisely	15%
Improving local Government in Scotland	12%

v) Performance of Conservative MP's in Scotland

The qualitative research indicated that Conservative MP's tended to be out of touch, to put party before constituency, and to be 'under the thumb' of the Government and not to be effective.

"You have to select someone who represents your area, and obviously people feel more strongly about that in Scotland - they don't want an outsider or landowner coming in" (Arbroath loyal).

"The only person I know is Malcolm Rifkind and again he's more or less a puppet of the Conservative Government for keeping MP's in line" (Arbroath Switchers).

(VI)

"We had a Conservative MP - he never got anything done for us - there was always people complaining to him" (Edinburgh Switchers).

"You never hear about him (the Secretary of State) talking about going to the Government to fight for anything" (Edinburgh Switchers).

"John Smith and Donald Dewar are both plain speakers but they are both Scots and are bound to be understood by Scots. We don't like flowery speakers. The Scots basically mistrust 'savoir faire' - people who dress too well - you need somebody like Teddy Taylor - he was marvellous" (Ayr Loyal).

84% identified the Conservative Party as the party of the landowners.

6% of voters believe that Conservative MP's look after Scottish interests best compared with 34% saying Labour and 25% SNP.

vi) The Government in Scotland

There was a strong sense of resentment at Government by the English and for the English.

"To be perfectly honest the Conservatives don't need Scotland. They have enough in the way of power at the moment" (Ayr Loyal)

"Conservative is an English party and it's (the election result) just the Scottish way of saying we've had enough" (Edinburgh Switchers).

"She knew the South of England was going to vote her in" (Edinburgh Switchers).

"We need our own Government in Edinburgh and not rule from England" (Edinburgh Switchers).

Currently 46% believe Mrs Thatcher's is the single most important voice in deciding how Scotland is Governed with 22% nominating the Parliament at Westminster.

The preferred options were the Scottish office in Edinburgh and the Secretary of State for Scotland 22%.

Only 11% of voters want to see no change in the current constitutional arrangements for Scotland - 44% opt for an executive assembly, 22% for an advisory assembly and 19% for complete independence.

The 'pro assembly' argument clearly has a great deal of sympathy.

vii) The community charge

Although many people do not clearly understand how the change will work, or how it will impact on them there is an instinctive hostility on two counts.

Firstly that Scotland is being treated differently:-

"This new way of paying rates - its not happening in England yet, but she's doing it in Scotland first - you know scapegoats - try them out first before she'll do it to the people in England" (Edinburgh Switchers)

"The thing that really annoyed me was that Conservative thing they introduced about changing the rating system in Scotland to a poll tax which was really decided by the Houses of Parliament as an experiment to be held in Scotland only - it thought it was unfair" (Angus East Switchers).

"The main thing that affects me was the poll tax it was all rushed through in a matter of days - it didn't seem to open to question" (Angus East Loyal).

Secondly a sense that it was likely to be 'unfair' in its operation:-

"I feel the poll tax had a lot to do with it (the poor Conservative showing) people with teenagers coming up to 18 were bound to take that into account" (Ayr loyal).

"It's very unfair that Lords and Ladies living in castles should have to pay the same as people living in a council flat" (Angus East loyal).

The quantitative survey demonstrated that amongst the 82% of the population who had heard about the community charge/poll tax more than twice as many (59%) thought it a bad thing' as thought it 'a good thing' (26%). 72% of them were aware that Scotland was being treated differently and of these more than eight out of ten felt Scotland was being treated worse than the rest of the UK.

#### viii) Conservative Strengths

There are a few areas in which the Conservatives have a positive image

- o keeping inflation under control
- o maintaining Britain's defences
- o being respected abroad
- o standing up to trade unions
- o having competent, intelligent leaders

#### ix Media

In terms of print media the commanding position of the Daily Record, the Sunday Post and Sunday Mail should be noted.

## 1. VOTING MOTIVATION

### (a) Conservative

Among those who voted Conservative in the June 1987 General Election, the most frequently quoted motivation was that of party loyalty, "I've always been a Conservative" (20%). Nearly as frequently reported were approval of Mrs Thatcher's leadership qualities (19%), a negative vote to stop Labour getting in (17%), personal advantage (15%) and an approval of the party's policies or in general (15%).

It is important to note however that only 44% of Conservative supporters believe the Government has done a good job for Scotland since 1979 compared with 86% who believe they have done a good job for Britain as a whole.

### (b) Labour

As in the case of the Conservatives, the most commonly mentioned reason for voting Labour was traditional loyalty: "I've always voted Labour" (30%). Nearly a quarter of the respondents (24%) thought that "Labour is the party of the working man". 14% felt that Labour will create jobs, and 12% quoted a dislike of Mrs Thatcher as a main reason for voting Labour.

Only 8% said that a chief reason was that Labour was the best party for Scotland, and 6% that the Conservatives are no good for Scotland.

### (c) Alliance

The motivation of Alliance supporters proved very different from that of Labour and Conservative voters. Only 7% said that they were diehard party loyalists. However 25% felt that it was "time for a change", time to give the Alliance a chance. Nearly as many, 24%, objected to Conservative policy. This was a higher number than those voting because they liked Alliance policies (20%). 18% said that they disliked Labour Party policy, 16% nominated local candidates or other local reasons for voting Alliance, and 15% did so because they wanted moderation and stability.

(d) Scottish National Party

Nearly half (45%) of all SNP voters said that a main reason for voting for that party was that it would do the most for Scotland, and a quarter (25%) said that it would support Scottish Independence. These two factors were much more important than any other; 10% said they voted SNP because they dislike Conservative policies and 9% that they had always voted SNP.

Tactical Voting

69% of all respondents who voted in the June 1987 General Election said that they had voted for the party they wanted to win. 11% said they had voted for the party which had the best chance of defeating the party that they didn't want to win - the so called tactical voters. A further 11% said that they could not bring themselves to vote for any of the other parties, but chose the least of evils.

Table 1.1                      "TACTICAL VOTING"

	ALL	CON	LAB	ALLIANCE	SNP
1st choice party	69	75	76	60	57
Tactical vote	11	7	12	6	15
Least evil	14	15	9	21	19
Other reason	7	4	3	12	9

There were no significant variations in the proportion of 'tactical voters' among the various social and age groups.

2.     SWITCHERS

Respondents were asked how they had voted in the previous (1983) General Election, an analysis made of those who remembered that they had switched party preference between 1983 and 1987.

It should be noted, though, that the numbers contained in the analysis are relatively small. Only 48 respondents recalled switching away from the Conservatives between 1983 and 1987. Of those 48, 16 switched to Labour, 18 to the Alliance and 8 to the SNP; the other 6 did not vote this time. This is entirely consistent with the 4%+ drop in the Conservative vote.

When asked the reasons for switching these voters named most often "time for a change of direction or Government", "Scotland, a forgotten region/being treated badly", and a dislike of Conservative policy.

The size of this sample is too small to draw any more elaborate conclusions from, and it would indeed be misleading and wrong to attempt to do so.

3. THE CAMPAIGN IN SCOTLAND

There is no doubt at all that it was generally felt that Labour fought the best campaign in Scotland in the 1987 General Election.

Table 3.1                      PARTY FIGHTING BEST CAMPAIGN IN SCOTLAND  
JUNE 1987

	% ALL	% CONSERVATIVE	NATIONAL GB SURVEY 16 JUNE % ALL
Labour	56	40	38
L/SDP Alliance	8	10	11
SNP/other party	6	4	*
Conservative	5	12	23
All equal	3	4	14
No campaign was good	5	6	
Don't know/not state	16	23	14

More than half of the respondents in every social category thought Labour had run the best campaign. Even among Conservative supporters, 40% agreed with this and only 12% felt that the Conservatives had fought the best campaign.

It is true that survey evidence in other parts of Britain suggests that Labour's national election campaign was generally well received, but by nowhere near such an emphatic margin as indicated here in Scotland. Some comparative figures are included in the above table.

When asked which party had campaigned most actively in the respondents own localities in May/June 1987, Labour once again emerged at the top of the list by a very large margin, with the Conservatives fourth and bottom in Scotland as a whole. 34% named Labour, 10% the SNP, 7% the Alliance and only 6% the Conservatives. 6% said all were active locally and 26% that none were. The remaining 11% were 'don't knows' or 'not stated'.



It is true that this may well reflect Labour's long-standing political strength in Scotland, but the Conservatives were not judged to have campaigned most strongly locally by their own supporters or in any of the regions of Scotland, lagging well behind the Nationalists in the Highlands/Grampian and Border/Galloway regions, and behind Labour elsewhere.

4. CURRENT VOTING INTENTION AND STRENGTH OF SUPPORT

By the time of this survey (fieldwork 30 July - 10 August 1987), the Labour lead had grown even since the General Election in June. Clearly the post-Election schisms in the Alliance had damaged their position, while the level of Conservative support had remained constant. In Britain as a whole the Conservative support has increased slightly since the Election.

Table 4.1

	<u>Scotland</u>		<u>Great Britain</u>	
	% June General Election	% in Survey	% June General Election	NATIONAL POLL 16/17 July
Labour	42	45	32	33
Conservative	24	24	43	48
SNP	14	17 (other)	2	2
L/SDP Alliance	19	13	23	17

In the survey the Conservatives did especially badly among men (20%, compared with 29% among women), among the under 35's (20% compared with 29% among the over 55's), the C2DE social grades (16%, compared with 40% among the ABC1's) and council tenants (15% compared with 38% among owner occupiers).

Table 4.2

		% Labour	Conservative
ALL		45	24
Sex	Men	49	20
	Women	42	29
Age	18-34	47	20
	35-54	45	24
	55+	43	29
Class	ABC1	27	40
	C2DE	54	16
Tenure	O/O	29	38
	Council	58	15

What is more, the strength of Labour support was notably more firm than the strength of Conservative support. Only 36% of Conservatives described their commitment as very strong compared with just over a half of Labour voters.

Table 4.3

	% Very Strong	Fairly Strong	Not very Strong	Not at all strong
Conservative	36	43	16	4
Labour	51	38	9	2
L/SDP Alliance	18	49	19	7
SNP	39	45	12	2

The potentially fragile nature of the Conservative support was particularly notable among the under 35 year olds - only 22% of these said their Conservative preference was "Very strong", compared with 47% of Labour supporters of the same age group.

5. PERFORMANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT SINCE 1979

(i) Scotland's economic problems

When asked which were the 'two most important factors' to blame for Scotland's economic problems, the respondents overwhelmingly chose "the Government in London" (61%), far ahead of "world - economic conditions" (26%), "the Common Market" (24%), trade unions (20%) and other explanations.

Men, the young under 35, and the unemployed were particularly inclined to blame the government in London, while Conservative voters thought the unions and the world economic conditions were more to blame.

When asked whether the government in London was to blame more because it is a Conservative government or more because it is situated in London, those who blamed it were almost equally divided (39% because Conservative, 44% because in London).

(ii) The Government's performance in Scotland since 1979

Only 1% of the sample thought that the Government had done 'a very good job' in Scotland over the last eight years. Only 6% of Conservative voters thought that its performance was 'very good'.

Only 14% of all respondents felt the Government had done a 'fairly good job' in Scotland, but 27% thought they had done a 'fairly bad job' and 39% 'a very bad job'. 50% of council tenants and 57% of the unemployed thought the government had done very badly.

Table 5.1                      How good or bad a job has the government done for Scotland since 1979

	% All	% Conservative voters
Very good	1	6
Fairly good	14	38
Neither good nor bad	18	27
Fairly bad	27	24
Very bad	39	2

This stands in some contrast to the opinions about how the government had done for Britain as a whole in the same period. 7% of the sample thought the government had done a very good job for the nation as a whole, 40% a fairly good job, and only 17% a fairly bad job and 12% a very bad job.

The government also suffered from very low ratings on a series of more specific criteria:

Table 5.2                      GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE: SPECIFIC VIEWS

	Very Good/fairly good job	Very Bad/fairly bad job
Keeping inflation under control	66	22
Maintaining Britain's defences	65	14
Providing useful training for the young unemployed	38	47
Helping farmers	36	26
Developing rail and road links to help Scottish industry	24	45
Improving housing in Scotland	23	52
Helping older unemployed people learn new skills	22	51
Improving Scottish inner cities	20	50
Improving hospitals and health generally	20	61
Protecting the fishing industry	18	33
Creating new jobs	16	72
Using North Sea resources wisely	15	63
Reducing the number of people out of work	13	74
Improving local government in Scotland	12	54
Taking the wishes of the Scottish people into account	7	79

As will be seen, apart from the defence, inflation and agricultural policies, the government's record was judged unsatisfactory.

The greatest criticism concerned unemployment/job creation, health, local government, North Sea oil, and, most of all 'Taking the wishes of the Scottish people into account'.

For all of these policies, the criticism was sweeping across the social and even political spectrum. For example, among Conservative supporters, only 2% thought the Westminster government is 'very good' at taking the wishes of the Scottish people into account; over half (52%) thought they were 'fairly bad' or 'very bad' at it.

It was also quite widely felt that other parties could perform better than the Conservatives with regard to many of these issues: 48% of all respondents who thought the Conservative performance could be improved on, believed that one party or other could do better on using North Sea oil revenues wisely; 51% on creating new jobs, 48% on improving housing in Scotland and 56% on taking the wishes of the Scottish people into account.

Table 5.3 gives the details

Table 5.3

WHETHER OTHER PARTIES WOULD HAVE DONE  
BETTER THAN THE GOVERNMENT ON ...

	None	Labour	Allnc	SNP	Total other	D/K
Road and rail links	31	24	3	9	36	32
Using North Sea oil revenues	25	25	5	18	48	26
Improving Scottish inner cities	26	28	5	9	42	32
Protecting fishing industry	23	15	4	12	31	45
Helping farmers	34	13	4	8	25	41
Creating new jobs	27	38	5	8	51	22
Providing useful training for young unemployed	33	31	5	6	42	25
Helping older unemployed people learn new skills	29	30	4	6	40	32
Improving housing in Scotland	27	35	5	8	48	25
Taking the wishes of Scottish people into account	17	32	5	19	56	27
Improving local government in Scotland	25	27	4	12	43	31
Keeping inflation under control	47	18	3	5	26	28
Reducing the number of people out of work	29	37	4	6	47	24
Improving hospitals and health care	26	38	4	5	47	26
Maintaining Britain's defences	44	17	4	4	25	31

The Scottish National Party would therefore seem to be a threat on more specifically "Scottish" issues including local government, fishing and North Sea oil, Labour as offering strong policies on jobs and health in addition to being seen as having more concern for the Scots.



6. PARTY IMAGE IN SCOTLAND

A series of statements were put to the respondents, who were asked whether they thought they applied to each of the political parties.

There were some fields where the image of the Conservative Party poses relatively few problems;

- (a) 55% thought the Conservative Party has competent, intelligent leaders (well ahead of any other party).
- (b) Labour was felt to spend more time attacking other parties than the Conservatives do.
- (c) Labour was still believed to be influenced too much by the trade unions - 63% of the whole sample and 42% of Labour voters, believed this.
- (d) Fully 71% of the sample, including two thirds of Labour voters, felt that the Conservatives were "respected abroad" - only 14% thought that Labour were, only 3% the Alliance, and only 2% the SNP.
- (e) 31% said that Labour was disunited and 59% that the Liberal-SDP Alliance were. (The survey took place during the debate about the merger or break up of the Alliance parties).
- (f) Also, only 8% thought that the Conservatives have 'no clear policies', whereas 47% believed that the Alliance does not.
- (g) 71% believed that the Conservatives 'stand up to the trade unions', whereas 17% thought Labour would, 5% the Alliance, and 3% the SNP.
- (h) The Conservatives also led all other parties on the dimension of "putting the good of the United Kingdom before the good of the party", though 32% of the respondents did not think any party did this.

However, there were a number of other major image questions from which the Conservative Party did not emerge so favourably. These were concentrated in the field of the party's concern for Scotland.

- (a) Only 4% of the respondents (and only 14% of Conservative voters) believed that the Conservatives put the good of Scotland before the good of the party. Labour rating was 17% and the SNP's 41%.
- (b) Over three quarters of the respondents (79%) said that the Conservatives "don't understand the problems of Scotland". Only 19% said the same of Labour, 16% of the Alliance, and 7% of the SNP. Over half of the Conservative supporters themselves agreed with the statement.
- (c) Only 3% of the respondents thought that the Conservatives are "the traditional Scottish party". This title was felt about equally to be shared between Labour (42%) and the SNP (49%).
- (d) 84% of the sample believed that the Conservatives are still the "party of the landowners". This did not vary significantly by age or class.
- (e) 77% felt that the Conservatives "care too much about big business"; no other party recorded any significant response on this question.
- (f) More than half of the sample (59%) believed that the Conservative Party "has very few Scots in its top ranks", whereas the Labour Party and the Alliance only scored 12% a piece.
- (g) Only 6% of respondents agreed that the Conservatives "have Scotland's interests at heart" - 10% thought the Alliance had, 31% that Labour had, and 58% that the SNP had.
- (h) Labour was still overwhelmingly felt to be "the party for the working man" (79% compared with 8% SNP, 7% Conservative and 6% the Alliance).
- (i) When asked which party's MP's look after Scottish interests best, Labour came out top: 34% of respondents nominated Labour, 25% the SNP, and 6% the Alliance and 6% the Conservatives.

7. CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCOTLAND

When asked who actually has most say in how Scotland is governed, the respondents were most likely to name Mrs Thatcher (46%) and the Westminster parliament (21%). When asked who they'd prefer to have the most say in how Scotland is governed, a very different picture emerged: the Scottish Office in Edinburgh was preferred by 51%, and the Secretary of State for Scotland by 22% - only 1% would prefer the British Prime Minister to have most say.

Table 7.1 WHO HAS SAY IN HOW SCOTLAND IS GOVERNED

	HAS SAY					WOULD PREFER TO HAVE SAY				
	VOTING INTENTION									
	ALL %	CON %	LAB %	ALLN %	SNP %	ALL %	CON %	LAB %	ALLN %	SNP %
Prime Minister/ Mrs Thatcher	46	24	57	35	51	1	5	1	-	-
Parliament at Westminster	22	30	15	29	25	5	11	3	7	-
Secretary of State for Scotland	14	26	12	12	10	22	35	20	20	16
English Civil Service/ Whitehall	7	5	6	14	10	*	-	*	-	-
Scottish Office Edinburgh	6	8	4	4	3	51	39	53	52	64
Don't Know	6	7	6	6	1	8	7	9	6	1
Other/None of these	*	*	*	-	-	12	2	14	15	18

Even amongst existing Conservative voters - a majority, 54%, see power in the hands of the Prime Minister and the Westminster Parliament, while an even larger majority - 74% would prefer to see this power vested in the Secretary of State or the Scottish Office.

When asked about their preferred constitutional arrangement for Scotland, only 11% wanted no change in the current position. 19% wanted complete independence for Scotland. 22% preferred an elected Scottish Assembly advising the UK government of Scottish affairs but not making any decisions. The most popular option (44%) was of "an elected Scottish Assembly deciding on Scotland's internal affairs, setting the level of taxes, with the UK government being responsible for defence and foreign affairs".

Table 7.2      PREFERRED CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT FOR  
SCOTLAND

	%ALL	CON	LAB	ALLIANCE	SNP
Executive Scottish Assembly	44	32	50	48	43
Advising Scottish Assembly	22	32	17	33	6
Independence	19	5	21	7	51
No change	11	28	5	9	0

The minority of about one fifth who preferred complete independence were asked if they'd change their mind if this meant higher taxes in Scotland; 74% said they would not change their mind, 12% said they would, and the others were not sure or had no opinion.

The same question was asked of those who preferred an elected decision-making assembly. Just over half (55%) maintained their position, but nearly a quarter (24%) said they would change their mind if this meant higher taxes in Scotland.

The strong demand for constitutional change registered in the survey may stem in large part from a feeling that England is treated better than Scotland by the Westminster-based government.

It was widely believed, for example, that the government spends less per head in Scotland on a number of important services: housing, education, roads, special measures to help the unemployed, health and law and order.

Table 7.3      WHETHER GOVERNMENT SPENDS MORE OR LESS PER HEAD  
IN SCOTLAND THAN IN ENGLAND ON VARIOUS SERVICES

	ALL VOTERS		
	More %	Less %	Same/Don't Know %
Housing	11	60	29
Education	8	54	38
Roads	8	64	28
Special measures to help the unemployed	10	54	37
Health	10	53	37
Law and order	10	46	44

Those negative impressions of the treatment of Scotland were particularly strong among the young under 35. All in all they indicate that the government has a serious problem regarding its image north of the border, and difficulties in getting its policies across to the public.

Although Conservative voters are more likely to believe that the Government spends the same per head on these items, where there is seen to be a difference, the belief is that the Government spends less per head.

Table 7.4

	<u>Conservative voters</u>		
	More %	Less %	Same/Don't Know %
Housing	23	36	41
Education	12	28	60
Roads	15	44	40
Special measures to help the unemployed	20	29	51
Health	15	26	59
Law & Order	13	27	60

8. AGREEMENT/DISAGREEMENT WITH POLICY STATEMENTS

(a) Fewer than 10% disagreed with the proposition that "Council tenants should have the right to buy their own homes". 29% of voters agreed strongly and 57% agreed. The figures amongst council tenants were exactly the same as for all voters.

(b) 61% endorsed the view (14%) agreeing strongly that "I would prefer to pay more income tax in order to have more money spend on health, education etc." while 25% disagreed.

Conservative supporters were equally divided while voters of other parties endorsed the statement with much more conviction.

(c) An overwhelming majority - 92% agreed that "The Scottish people ought to have more say in how Scotland is run".

More than three quarters of Conservatives held this view, as did 100% of those leaving the Conservatives and 100% of those switching to the SNP.

(d) The proposition that "The Election result in Scotland must have given the Conservatives a real fright and they will take more notice of Scotland in the future" was widely accepted with 72% of Conservatives and 54% of all voters agreeing with it. Labour voters were equally divided in agreeing and disagreeing.

(e) On defence policy there was widespread agreement with the view that "Britain should keep its own nuclear weapons until everybody can agree to get rid of all nuclear weapons at the same time". 71% of all voters took this attitude including 89% of Conservatives, 62% of Labour voters, 74% of Alliance voters and 64% of SNP supporters.

(f) The proposition was put that "Whatever they do the Conservatives are finished as a political force in Scotland". 44% of voters agreed and 41% disagreed. Labour voters, the unemployed and council tenants were more likely to agree. Middle class, owner occupiers and Lothian residents tended to disagree - as did 81% of Conservative voters.

- (g) Only 13% of the electorate including only 20% of Conservative voters accepted the view that "It is better to have lower income tax even if it means there is less money available for things such as education and health".
- (h) 49% agreed with the next proposition put while 37% disagreed:- "The Conservatives have got almost nothing left to lose in Scotland so they will take less notice of it than ever".

Predictably Labour voters agreed with this and Conservatives disagreed, though significant minorities of supporters of all other parties did not accept the argument.

- (i) 63% agreed that "Parents should have more say in how schools are run in Scotland" while only 22% disagreed. This level of response was common amongst all demographic and political groups.
- (j) Only 22% of voters are in agreement with the idea that "Britain should get rid of nuclear weapons straight away then persuade other countries to do the same" while 65% disagree.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

There was a very considerable swell of opposition to the introduction of the new community charge system in Scotland.

When asked what the best way of raising money for local government is, just over half of the respondents opted for "rates based on the kind of home people live in, regardless of how many people live there" (52%). About a third preferred "local tax paid by all adults" (32%). 16% did not know.

When the attention was focused specifically on the community charge or poll tax, 82% said they have heard of it, 15% that they had not.

Of those who had heard of the charge from rates to the community charge, only 26% thought that it is a good thing, and 59% thought it a bad thing. 15% expressed no opinion.

Table 9.1. OPINION OF CHANGE FROM RATES TO COMMUNITY CHARGE

	Good	Bad	Don't Know
ALL	26	59	15
Conservative	60	25	15
Labour	10	78	12
Liberal/SDP Alliance	29	53	18
SNP	15	73	12

Clearly diehard Conservative voters support the Government's suggestions for change in the method of local Government finance, but 'weak' Conservative supporters were clearly divided, and there is little evidence of favourable attitudes among 'weak' supporters of other parties.



The minority who were in favour of the community charge were asked why they thought it would be a good thing. The most common response was that now everyone would have to pay (32%). 27% thought the new system would be fairer. 15% said that they personally would be better off under a community charge, and 14% that people living alone wouldn't have to pay as much as a family all working.

The majority who thought the introduction of a community charge would be a bad thing were asked for reasons for their opposition they gave a wide variety of reasons. 25% felt that it would benefit the rich at the expense of the poor. 23% thought it wrong that people living in small house should pay as much as people in large houses. 21% believed it would adversely affect people with large families. 17% said the new system would be less fair than the present arrangements. 16% were concerned that poor people would be unable to pay or would need help to do so. 10% felt they personally would be worse off (these were evenly divided by age, sex and class).

When asked about the effect of the new community charge system upon themselves and their families, 39% of the respondents said they would have to pay more and only 24% that they would have to pay less. 36% were not sure or offered no answer. 40% of Conservative voters were not sure whether they would pay more or less.

Those who were most convinced that they would do badly included the C2DE (working) classes, council tenants, the unemployed, and Labour and SNP voters. More owner occupiers felt they would pay less than more, as did both 'weak' and 'strong' Conservative voters.

Of those who believed they would pay more, 58% thought it would be "much more" and only 28% just "a little more". However of those who thought they would pay less, only 43% believed it would be "much less" and 49% felt it would be only a little less.

Only 14% of all who had heard of the community charge thought that Scotland is being treated the same as the rest of the UK on this matter, and 72% believed Scotland is being treated differently.

More strikingly still, of those saying Scotland had been treated differently from the rest of the UK, only 7% thought that this was better for Scotland, while 81% thought it was worse. This pattern was to be found among all categories including Conservative voters.

When asked to give reasons for thinking that Scotland was being treated worse than the rest of the UK, the most frequently recorded answer was that "Scotland is being used as an experiment/guinea pig" for the rest of the country (47%). 23% pointed out that the system will be phased in gradually in England, and 12% said that the system should be started throughout the country at the same time. There was also a considerable amount of less specific and less articulated sentiment that Scotland was always being treated badly, and that this was just one more example thereof.

10. THE MEDIA

A considerable bias against the Conservatives was discovered to exist in newspaper coverage in Scotland, a situation very different from that pertaining in England.

The most commonly read daily newspaper by far was the Daily Record (53% of all respondents) which was seen by 68% of its readers as a Labour paper, and by only 3% of its readers as a Conservative paper. (Nevertheless, 28% of all Conservatives in the survey read the Daily Record).

No other daily newspaper exceeded the 13% of readers commanded by The Sun.

Table 10.1                    DAILY NEWSPAPER READERSHIP AND  
PERCEIVED POLITICAL STANCE

	% Readership	Perceived stance among readers					
		C	Lab	Alln	SNP	None	D/K
Daily Record	53	3	68	*	1	12	30
The Sun	13	51	8	0	0	1	40
Glasgow Herald	9	35	2	5	0	34	23
Daily Express	9	76	1	0	0	1	22
Aberdeen Press and Journal	8	37	4	4	4	9	42
Dundee Courier and Advertiser	7	49	4	1	3	12	30
The Scotsman	6	17	3	17	11	31	20

Sunday newspaper readership was largely divided between the Sunday Post (56%) and the Sunday Mail (48%). The Sunday Post was seen as apolitical by its readers, most of whom could detect no bias or hold no opinion, but the Sunday Mail was seen as a Labour paper by 59% of its readers.

The most commonly watched TV channel was BBC1 (44%), though the three ITV channels (Border, Grampian and Scotland) between them commanded more (49%). 17% mainly watched BBC2, 12% Channel 4, and 2% said "all equally" or made no distinction. Only 2% said they did not watch TV.

BBC Radio 1 was the most listened-to station (30%), ahead of BBC Radio Scotland and the independent Radio Clyde, both with 15%.

London Paris New York Washington DC.