

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 140

(produced 21st November 1982)

1. Introduction

The results of our latest Gallup tracking study are the same as those published in the Daily Telegraph (Manchester edition only) on Thursday 18th November. When compared with the results of the previously published Gallup poll (conducted 20/25 October) it found a slight fall in our lead over Labour - down from 11½% in October to 7% in the latest study. Compared with this published survey Conservative support had increased 1½ percentage points, Labour support 6 percentage points, Liberal support had fallen 3 percentage points and Social Democrat support had fallen 2 percentage points. Compared with our unpublished 'tracking' studies the latest survey confirms the slight downward drift in Conservative support, tendency to upward movement of Labour support and fairly stable level of support for the Alliance parties. Details of the trend of support for the main parties are shown in the table entitled 'Voting Intention' on the next page of this note.

It is worth comparing the results of this latest Gallup study with the findings of a MORI study published in the Evening Standard on 17th November - this poll was conducted 4/10 November.

	<u>MORI</u>	<u>Gallup</u>
	<u>4/10 November</u>	<u>10/15 November</u>
	%	%
Conservative	42	42
Labour	33	35
Liberal		8
Social Democrat	23	13 } 21
Other	2	2
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Conservative Lead	+9	+7

Although conducted by a different polling organization the MORI survey confirms the trend of support found in our Gallup tracking study.

VOTING INTENTION(unprompted question, excluding
don't knows)

	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>SOCIAL</u> <u>DEMOCRAT</u>	<u>OTH</u>	<u>LEAD</u> Con over Lab	<u>LIBERAL & SOCIAL</u> <u>DEMOCRAT</u>
<u>1979</u>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
May (GE)	43.9	36.9	13.3	-	5.5	+ 7.0	13.3
13/16 June*	42.0	43.5	13.0	-	5.0	+ 9.0	13.0
<u>1982</u>							
6/11 Jan	25.5	30.0	17.0	25.0	2.5	- 4.5	42.0
13/18 Jan	27.5	29.5	13.0	26.5	3.5	- 2.5**	39.5
20/25 Jan	30.0	27.0	14.0	26.5	2.5	+ 3.0	40.5
27 Jan/1 Feb	29.0	29.0	15.0	24.0	3.0	0.0	39.0
3/8 Feb	29.0	29.0	15.0	26.0	1.0	0.0	41.0
10/15 Feb	27.5	34.0	14.5	21.5	2.5	- 6.5**	35.0
17/22 Feb	26.5	33.5	14.0	22.0	4.0	- 7.0	36.0
24 Feb/1 March	31.0	32.5	11.0	22.5	3.0	- 1.5	33.5
3/8 March	30.0	33.5	11.5	21.0+	4.0	- 3.5	32.5
11/15 March	31.5	33.0	11.5	21.5-	2.5	- 1.5**	33.0
17/22 March	34.0	30.0	11.0	21.0+	4.0	+ 4.0	32.0
24/29 March	32.0	28.0	11.0	27.5+	1.5	+ 4.0	38.5
31 March/5 April	34.0	27.0	10.0	25.0-	3.0	+ 7.0	36.0
7/12 April	31.5	29.0	11.0	26.0+	2.5	+ 2.5**	37.0
13/19 April	31.0	30.0	10.0	26.0+	3.0	- 1.0	36.0
21/26 April	31.5	33.0	10.5	24.5+	0.5	- 1.5	35.0
28 April/3 May	37.0	30.5	11.0	20.0+	1.5	+ 5.5	31.0
5/10 May	41.5	28.0	9.5	19.5+	1.5	+ 13.5**	29.0
12/17 May	42.0	31.0	10.0	16.0+	1.0	+ 11.5	26.0
13/24 May	45.0	27.0	11.0	15.0+	2.0	+ 18.0	26.0
26/31 May	45.5	27.0	9.5	15.0+	2.0	+ 18.5	25.5
2/7 June	48.5	23.5	11.5	14.5+	2.0	+ 25.0	26.0
9/14 June	45.0	25.0	10.0	18.5+	1.5	+ 20.0**	28.5
16/21 June	49.0	24.0	10.0	15.5-	2.0	+ 25.0	25.5
23/28 June	45.5	29.0	10.0	13.0+	2.5	+ 16.5	23.0
30 June/5 July	45.0	25.5	12.5	15.0+	2.0	+ 19.5	27.5
7/12 July	46.5	27.5	7.5	16.5+	2.0	+ 19.0**	24.0
14/19 July	44.0	27.5	8.5	18.0+	2.0	+ 16.5	26.5
21/26 July	39.0	30.5	10.0	17.5+	3.0	+ 8.5	27.5
28 July/2 Aug	43.5	30.0	8.5	16.0+	2.0	+ 13.5	24.5
4/9 Aug	46.0	28.0	9.0	13.5+	3.5	- 18.0	22.5
11/16 Aug	44.5	26.5	10.5	17.0+	1.5	- 18.0**	27.5
18/23 Aug	45.5	27.0	9.0	16.5+	2.0	+ 18.5	25.5
25/30 Aug	40.0	32.0	11.5	15.0+	1.5	+ 8.0	26.5
1/6 Sept	43.5	28.5	8.0	17.0-	3.0	+ 15.0	25.0
8/13 Sept	44.0	30.5	8.5	14.5+	2.5	+ 13.5**	23.0
15/21 Sept	42.0	33.0	8.0	15.0+	2.0	+ 9.0	23.0
22/27 Sept	43.0	29.5	12.5	13.0+	2.0	+ 13.5	25.5
29 Sept/4 Oct	40.0	31.5	13.5	13.0+	2.0	+ 8.5	26.5
6/11 Oct	42.5	32.0	10.5	13.0+	2.0	+ 10.5	23.5
13/18 Oct	43.0	31.0	9.0	13.5+	3.5	+ 12.0	22.5
20/25 Oct	40.5	29.0	12.0	15.0+	3.5	+ 11.5**	27.0
27 Oct/1 Nov	48.0	31.0	8.5	11.0+	1.5	+ 17.0	19.5
3/10 Nov	44.0	33.0	9.0	12.0+	2.0	+ 11.0	21.0
10/15 Nov	42.0	35.0	8.0	13.0+	2.0	+ 7.0**	21.0

* First Gallup Post-Election Survey, ** Published Polls, + includes those saying they would vote for the Alliance.

2. Government Record

The latest 'tracking' study found a slight fall in Government popularity - 39% claimed to approve of the record of the Government to date, 48% disapproved and 13% did not have a view. This compares very favourably with the situation at the start of the year when Gallup found only 23% approving of our record in Government, 65% disapproving and 12% not having a view.

GOVERNMENT RECORD

	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>Don't Know</u> %
<u>1979</u>			
13/18 June	34	41	25
<u>1982</u>			
5/11 January	23	65	12
13/18 January	24	65	12
20/25 January	26	62	13
27 Jan/1 Feb	25	62	13
3/8 Feb	26	63	11
10/15 Feb	24	66	10
17/22 Feb	22	66	13
24 Feb/1 March	23	63	13
3/8 March	24	65	11
11/15 March	29	59	12
17/22 March	28	60	13
24/29 March	29	58	13
31 March/ 5 April	31	57	12
7/12 April	32	56	12
13/19 April	34	54	12
21/26 April	34	55	11
28 April/3 May	40	47	13
5/10 May	42	46	12
12/17 May	43	42	15
19/24 May	46	44	10
26/31 May	50	38	12
2/7 June	49	39	12
9/14 June	48	40	12
16/21 June	51	36	13
23/28 June	47	41	12
30 June/5 July	47	39	14
7/12 July	47	41	12
14/19 July	44	43	13
21/26 July	43	45	12
28 July/2 Aug	43	43	15
4/9 Aug	42	45	12
11/16 Aug	42	44	14
18/23 Aug	43	43	14
25/30 Aug	37	52	11
1/6 Sept	41	45	14
8/13 Sept	40	48	13
15/21 Sept	38	49	13
22/27 Sept	38	50	12
29 Sept/4 Oct	36	51	13
6/11 Oct	40	47	13
13/18 Oct	38	48	14
20/25 Oct	40	49	11
27/Oct/1 Nov	42	45	13
3/10 Nov	41	45	15
10/15 Nov	39	48	13

3. Popularity of Political Leaders

The latest study found a slight fall in Mrs Thatcher's popularity - down to 44% approving of her record as Prime Minister - 52% disapproving. It found almost no change in Mr Foot's popularity or that of Mr Steel. Details are shown in the table below:-

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat.</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is</u> <u>Not</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is</u> <u>Not</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1982</u>									
6/11 January	30	65	5	20	65	14	62	20	18
13/18 January	32	65	4	18	67	16	59	22	19
20/25 January	32	64	4	17	68	15	59	22	19
27 Jan/1 Feb	33	62	5	19	64	17	60	18	22
3/8 Feb	31	65	4	20	63	17	61	20	19
10/15 Feb	29	66	5	19	66	15	59	23	17
17/22 Feb	29	65	5	20	64	16	58	20	21
24 Feb/1 March	32	63	5	21	64	15	55	23	22
3/8 March	30	66	4	20	64	16	58	24	18
11/15 March	34	62	4	21	65	14	58	22	10
17/22 March	33	62	5	22	64	14	59	21	20
24/29 March	35	59	6	19	65	15	61	20	19
31 March/5 April	37	58	5	20	65	15	60	22	18
7/12 April	35	60	5	23	61	16	63	18	19
13/19 April	36	60	5	28	59	14	63	18	19
21/26 April	37	59	4	26	60	14	66	17	17
28 April/3 May	41	53	6	24	65	12	62	20	13
5/10 May	44	51	6	18	71	11	64	20	17
12/17 May	48	47	5	17	71	12	65	18	17
19/24 May	47	48	5	18	72	10	63	18	19
26/31 May	50	43	7	16	75	10	64	18	19
2/7 June	53	42	5	15	74	5	61	21	18
9/14 June	51	44	5	14	75	11	62	21	18
16/21 June	55	40	5	17	74	9	58	20	20
23/28 June	52	42	5	14	75	10	62	19	20
30 June/5 July	53	41	6	14	77	9	64	18	18
7/12 July	52	43	5	16	72	12	61	20	19
14/19 July	49	46	5	14	75	11	60	18	21
21/26 July	47	47	6	15	74	11	59	21	20
28 July/2 Aug	48	46	6	14	73	11	62	18	20
4/9 Aug	48	47	5	12	73	12	60	20	20
11/16 Aug	49	47	4	15	74	11	62	19	19
18/23 Aug	49	46	5	13	74	13	58	21	21
25/30 Aug	44	50	4	18	72	10	61	19	20
1/ Sept	49	45	6	14	74	12	59	20	21
8/13 Sept	48	47	5	16	74	10	59	21	20
15/21 Sept	46	49	6	14	73	12	62	19	19
22/27 Sept	46	50	4	16	74	11	64	20	16
29 Sept/4 Oct	44	51	5	27	60	13	64	19	17
6/11 Oct	46	48	6	25	62	13	62	22	17
13/18 Oct	45	50	5	23	66	11	56	25	19
20/25 Oct	46	50	4	20	69	12	60	22	18
27 Oct/1 Nov	48	48	4	20	66	14	57	24	18
3/10 Nov	48	48	5	23	65	11	58	24	18
10/15 Nov	44	52	5	22	67	12	59	22	19

4. Published Polls(a) Gallup (Daily Telegraph 18th November 1982)

In addition to the standard 'tracking' questions considered above the Gallup poll in the Daily Telegraph included a range of other questions. Gallup asked their standard question on what the electorate regard as the most urgent problems facing the country. They found:-

	<u>Most Urgent Problems Facing the Country</u>				
	<u>All</u>	<u>Con</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>Lib</u>	<u>SDP</u>
	%	%	%	%	%
Unemployment	89	89	86	92	92
Cost of Living	26	23	27	37	23
Defence/Nuclear weapons	9	7	11	7	11
Law and Order	8	10	7	1	9
Health/Hospitals	8	6	6	8	11
Housing/Rates	6	5	9	3	7
Pensions	5	5	6	11	3

Gallup also asked respondents whether they thought each of the political parties was united or divided at the present time. They found 12% saw Labour as being united, 82% divided and 6% did not have a view. 65% saw the Conservatives as being united, 26% divided and 9% did not have a view. 41% saw the Alliance as being united, 33% divided and 26% did not have a view.

They also asked which party was seen as having the best policies and the best leaders. They found:-

	<u>Best Policies</u>	<u>Best Leaders</u>
	%	%
Conservative	39	46
Labour	28	19
Liberal	6	8
Social Democrats	8	11
Other	0	0
Don't know	19	16

Gallup concluded the study with a number of questions on which party is seen as having the best policies in a number of key areas.

	<u>Best Policies</u>				
	<u>Conservative</u> <u>Party</u>	<u>Labour</u> <u>Party</u>	<u>Liberal/SDP</u> <u>Party</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Don't Know</u> <u>Party</u>
Inflation (%)	49	22	8	0	20
Unemployment (%)	24	41	12	0	24
Defence (%)	51	21	7	0	21
Common Market (%)	37	27	9	0	26
Strikes & Industrial Relations (%)	41	34	8	0	17
National Health Service (%)	24	44	10	0	22

The Conservatives have a lead on inflation, defence, the Common Market, and strikes and industrial relations. Labour have a lead on unemployment and the national health service.

(b) MORI (Evening Standard 17th November 1982)

The Evening Standard on 17th November included details of a MORI poll conducted between November 4th and 10th. We have considered the voting intention part of this survey in the introduction to this Background Note. The survey found an improvement in attitudes to the future of the economy. MORI found:-

Do you think that the general economic condition of the country will improve, stay the same or get worse over the next 12 months?

	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>
	<u>1982</u>	<u>1982</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Improve	23	32
Stay the same	28	28
Get worse	45	34

(c) Gallup (Sanity November 1982)

The CND magazine Sanity included in the November issue the results of a Gallup poll conducted from 13th to 18th October on attitudes to nuclear weapons.

The survey found only 32% approving of the purchase of Trident, 56% disapproving and 12% not having a view.

When asked about Polaris 51% wanted to keep it, 35% thought we should not keep it and 13% did not have a view.

Only 31% wanted cruise missiles to be based here, 58% did not want cruise missiles based here and 11% did not have a view.

On the question of American nuclear bases in Britain - 46% wanted them to remain, 44% be removed and 10% did not have a view.

(c) Marplan (Guardian 22nd November 1982)

The Guardian on 22nd November included details of a Marplan poll conducted between November 8th and 10th. The survey found 46% claiming they would vote Conservative, 34% Labour, 18% Liberal/SDP and 2% for 'other' parties.