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New News

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 74

I attach a note setting out the main results from our latest Gallup 'tracking' study. The interviewing for this survey was conducted from 15th until 20th July and found a sizeable jump in the level of support for the Social Democrats. We will be watching closely to see whether this marks the start of a major movement of support to them.

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D. K. Britto

Atc.

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 74

(produced 24th July 1981)

1. Introduction

Gallup conducted the interviewing for our latest 'tracking' study from 15th until 20th July - mostly after the result of the Warrington by-election was known. The survey found an increase in the level of unprompted support for the Social Democrats - it increased from 12% in the week 8/13 July to 17% in the latest study. The survey found almost no change in the level of support for the Conservative Party but a drop from 40½% to 36% in the level of support for Labour. The next effect of these changes was to reduce Labour's lead over the Conservatives from 10½% in the week 8/13 July to 7% in the week 15/20 July. It should be noted that these figures have been calculated on the same basis as the Gallup figures published in the Daily Telegraph - they exclude electors who claim they did not know how they would vote.

The tables below show the level of support (including don't knows as a separate category) Gallup found in response to our three standard voting intention questions:-

- (a) the standard voting intention question
- (b) how electors claimed they would vote when the idea of a Social Democrat candidate was specifically mentioned.
- (c) how electors claimed they would vote when the idea of a Social Democrat-Liberal Alliance candidate was specifically mentioned.

VOTING INTENTION
(including don't knows)

	<u>31 Mar</u> <u>6 Apr</u> %	<u>8/13</u> <u>Apr</u> %	<u>15/21</u> <u>Apr</u> %	<u>22/27</u> <u>Apr</u> %	<u>29 Apr</u> <u>5 May</u> %	<u>6/11</u> <u>May</u> %	<u>13/18</u> <u>May</u> %	<u>19/26</u> <u>May</u> %	<u>26 May</u> <u>1 June</u> %	<u>3/8</u> <u>June</u> %	<u>9/15</u> <u>June</u> %	<u>16/22</u> <u>June</u> %	<u>24/30</u> <u>June</u> %	<u>1/6 July</u> %	<u>8/13</u> <u>July</u> %	<u>15/20</u> <u>July</u> %
Conservative	26	27	26	27	29	29	31	28	28	28	27	29	26	27	27	26
Labour	29	31	34	32	31	32	33	35	33	36	34	33	35½	35	36	32
Liberal	15	13	16	13	15	16	16	14	17	13	16	14	15	12	13	14
Others	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	3
Social Democratic Party	17	17	16	14	12	10	10	11	12	11	11	11	10½	11	11	15
Don't know/ it depends	10	16	9	12	11	9	8	9	9	10	10	10	10	11	11	10

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE

Conservative	21	22	22	23	25	23	25	23	21	22	23	23	21	22	21	21
Labour	21	24	25	24	25	24	27	26	27	27	28	28	31	29	29	28
Liberal	10	10	11	9	10	11	11	10	12	9	12	11	11	8	9	11
Others	2	1	1	2	4	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	1½	2	2	2
Social Democratic Party	26	27	22	24	21	21	20	21	20	23	20	19	19	20	20	23
Social-Democratic/ Liberal Alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/ it depends	20	17	19	18	15	18	15	18	17	17	16	16	16½	16	18	16

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC/LIBERAL CANDIDATE

	<u>31 Mar</u> <u>6 Apr</u> %	<u>8/13</u> <u>Apr</u> %	<u>15/21</u> <u>Apr</u> %	<u>22/27</u> <u>Apr</u> %	<u>29 Apr</u> <u>5 May</u> %	<u>6/11</u> <u>May</u> %	<u>13/18</u> <u>May</u> %	<u>19/26</u> <u>May</u> %	<u>26 May</u> <u>1 June</u> %	<u>3/8</u> <u>June</u> %	<u>9/15</u> <u>June</u> %	<u>16/22</u> <u>June</u> %	<u>24/30</u> <u>June</u> %	<u>1/6 July</u> %	<u>8/13</u> <u>July</u> %	<u>15/20</u> <u>July</u> %
Conservative	20	21	21	22	21	22	24	23	20	21	22	24	20	22	20	21
Labour	20	23	24	24	24	22	25	25	25	27	27	27	29	28	27	27
Liberal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
Social Democratic Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Democratic/ Liberal Alliance	35	37	34	33	32	32	32	31	33	32	30	28	32	28	31	33
Don't know/ it depends	23	17	20	18	20	22	16	19	19	18	19	19	18	19	19	18

2. Standard Voting Intention

The table below shows the level of support for the main parties when don't knows are excluded. We will be monitoring very closely whether the upsurge of support for the Social Democrats Gallup found in the latest study is maintained.

<u>VOTING INTENTION</u>						
(excluding don't knows)						
	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>SOCIAL</u> <u>DEMOCRAT</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>LEAD</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1979</u>						
May (GE)	43.9	36.9	13.8	-	5.5	+ 7.0
13/18 June*	42.0	43.5	13.0	-	5.0	- 9.0
<u>1981</u>						
31 March/6 April	29.0	32.0	17.0	19.0	3.0	- 3.0
8/13 April	30.0	34.5	14.0	19.0	2.5	- 4.5**
15/21 April	28.5	37.5	17.5	15.0	1.5	- 9.0
22/27 April	30.5	36.5	15.0	15.5	2.5	- 6.0
29 April/5 May	33.0	35.0	17.0	13.5	1.5	- 2.0
6/11 May	32.0	35.5	18.0	11.0	3.5	- 3.5**
13/18 May	33.5	36.0	17.0	10.5	3.0	- 2.5
19/26 May	31.0	38.0	15.5	12.0	3.5	- 7.0
26 May/1 June	30.0	36.0	18.0	13.0	3.0	- 6.0
3/8 June	31.0	40.0	14.0	12.5	2.5	- 9.0
9/15 June	29.5	37.5	18.0	12.5	2.5	- 8.0**
16/22 June	32.0	37.0	15.5	13.0	2.5	- 5.0
24/30 June	29.0	40.0	17.0	12.0	2.0	-11.0
1/6 July	30.5	39.5	14.0	13.0	3.0	- 9.0
8/13 July	30.0	40.5	14.5	12.0	3.0	-10.5**
15/20 July	29.0	36.0	16.0	17.0	2.0	- 7.0

* First Gallup Post-Election survey

** Published Polls

3. Government Record

The latest Gallup study found no change in the level of approval of the Government's record to date when compared with the previous weeks study - only 23% of the electorate approved of our record.

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GOVERNMENT RECORD

Approve
%

Disapprove
%

Don't Know
%

1979

13/18 June 34 41 25

1981

31 March/6 April 26 65 9

8/13 April 24 67 9

15/21 April 25 65 10

22/27 April 27 63 10

29 April/5 May 26 62 12

6/11 May 29 60 11

13/18 May 30 57 13

19/26 May 28 60 12

26 May/ 1 June 27 61 12

3/8 June 26 60 14

9/15 June 26 63 11

16/22 June 29 59 12

24/30 June 23 67 10

1/6 July 24 63 13

8/13 July 23 66 11

15/20 July 23 66 11

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

The latest study found no change in Mrs Thatcher's popularity, a slight fall in Mr Foot's and a slight improvement in Mr Steel's popularity. Details below:

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat.</u>	<u>Dis-</u>	<u>Don't</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Don't</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Don't</u>
	%	sat.	Know	%	Not	Know	%	Not	Know
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1981</u>									
31 March/ 6 April	31	63	6	24	55	22	64	17	19
6/13 April	30	65	5	21	54	24	60	20	20
15/21 April	31	64	6	24	54	22	62	17	21
22/27 April	34	60	6	21	58	20	66	17	18
29 April/5 May	34	59	7	20	58	22	60	19	21
6/11 May	35	60	5	26	52	23	63	17	21
13/18 May	36	58	6	27	52	22	63	17	21
19/26 May	35	59	6	27	50	23	60	17	23
26 May/ 1 June	32	62	6	27	54	19	62	17	20
3/8 June	36	58	6	29	51	21	59	19	22
9/15 June	33	61	6	28	48	24	61	18	21
16/ 22 June	34	60	6	29	50	21	60	20	21
24/30 June	30	65	5	28	52	21	60	19	21
1/6 July	31	62	7	25	54	21	60	17	23
8/13 July	30	65	5	25	52	23	56	20	24
15/20 July	31	65	4	22	59	19	59	19	22