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CONFIDENTIAL

22nd May 1981

Derek Howe,

no

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 65

The interviewing for our latest 'tracking' study was from 13th until 18th May 1981. The research found no major change in the support for the Social Democrats - at present there is no sign of an upturn in support for them. Support for the Liberals also remains stable.

Y → review,

Kate Britto

D. K. Britto

Enc.

PUBLIC OPINION BACKGROUND NOTE 65

(produced 22nd May 1981)

1. Introduction

The interviewing for our latest Gallup 'tracking' study was conducted from 13th until 18th May. The survey found no major changes from the previous study, in particular it found no sign of an upturn in support for the Social Democrats after the downward trend in support for them in recent weeks. Support for the Liberals also remaining constant.

The tables below and attached graphs show the trend in support for the main parties from early March for:-

- (a) the standard voting intention question (the term Social Democrat is not mentioned in the question)
- (b) how the electorate said they would vote if a Social Democratic candidate was standing
- (c) how the electorate said they would vote if a candidate for a Social Democratic/Liberal alliance stood.

It should be noted that the published figures on voting intention exclude don't knows (the figures are re-calculated) the tables below do not.

VOTING INTENTION (including don't knows)

	<u>4/9</u> Mar	<u>12/16</u> Mar	<u>18/23</u> Mar	<u>25/30</u> Mar	<u>31 Mar</u> 6 Apr	<u>8/13</u> Apr	<u>15/21</u> Apr	<u>22/27</u> Apr	<u>29 Apr</u> 5 May	<u>6/11</u> May	<u>13/18</u> May
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	27	27	23	27	26	27	26	27	29	29	31
Labour	32	30	31	27	29	31	34	32	31	32	33
Liberal	18	16	15	16	15	13	16	13	15	16	16
Others	3	4	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2
Social Democratic Party	12	12	17	17	17	17	16	14	12	10	10
Don't know/ it depends	8	11	12	12	10	16	9	12	11	9	8

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE

	<u>4/9</u> Mar	<u>12/16</u> Mar	<u>18/23</u> Mar	<u>25/30</u> Mar	<u>31 Mar</u> 6 Apr	<u>8/13</u> Apr	<u>15/21</u> Apr	<u>22/27</u> Apr	<u>29 Apr</u> 5 May	<u>6/11</u> May	<u>13/18</u> May
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	22	21	18	21	21	22	22	23	25	23	25
Labour	25	22	22	20	21	24	25	24	25	24	27
Liberal	12	11	11	10	10	10	11	9	10	11	11
Others	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	4	3	2
Social Democratic Party	25	25	27	29	26	27	22	24	21	21	20
Social Democratic/Liberal alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/ it depends	16	17	20	20	20	17	19	18	15	18	15

VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC/LIBERAL CANDIDATE

	<u>4/9</u>	<u>12/16</u>	<u>18/23</u>	<u>25/30</u>	<u>31 Mar</u>	<u>8/13</u>	<u>15/21</u>	<u>22/27</u>	<u>29 Apr</u>	<u>6/11</u>	<u>13/18</u>
	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	6 Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	5 May	May	May
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	22	20	27	20	20	21	21	22	21	22	24
Labour	24	21	22	19	20	23	24	24	24	22	25
Liberal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2
Social Demo- cratic Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Demo- cratic/Liberal alliance	36	37	38	37	35	37	34	33	32	32	32
Don't know/ it depends	17	21	22	22	23	17	20	18	20	22	16

2. Standard Voting Intention

The standard Gallup voting intention question (excluding don't knows) found a marginal improvement in the position of the Conservative and Labour parties and a very slight fall in support for the Liberals and Social Democrats.

Labour lead us by 2½% (13/18 May) compared with 3½% in the previous published poll conducted 6/11 May.

VOTING INTENTION

	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>SOCIAL</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>LEAD</u>
	%	%	%	<u>DEMOCRAT</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	-	2.5	-1.5*
<u>1981</u>						
4/9 March	29.5	34.5	20.0	12.5	3.5	-5.0
12/16 March	30.0	34.0	18.0	14.0	4.0	-4.0
18/23 March	26.0	35.0	17.0	17.0	5.0	-9.0
25/30 March	30.0	30.5	18.0	19.0	2.5	-0.5**
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

* First Gallup Post-election survey

** Published polls

3. Government Record

The latest survey found a further improvement in the popularity of the Government - it is now (by a small margin) at its highest level since last year.

GOVERNMENT RECORD

	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>Don't know</u> %
<u>1979</u>			
13/18 June	34	41	25
<u>1981</u>			
4/9 March	23	65	12
12/16 March	23	67	9
25/30 March	22	69	9
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

4. Popularity of Political Leaders

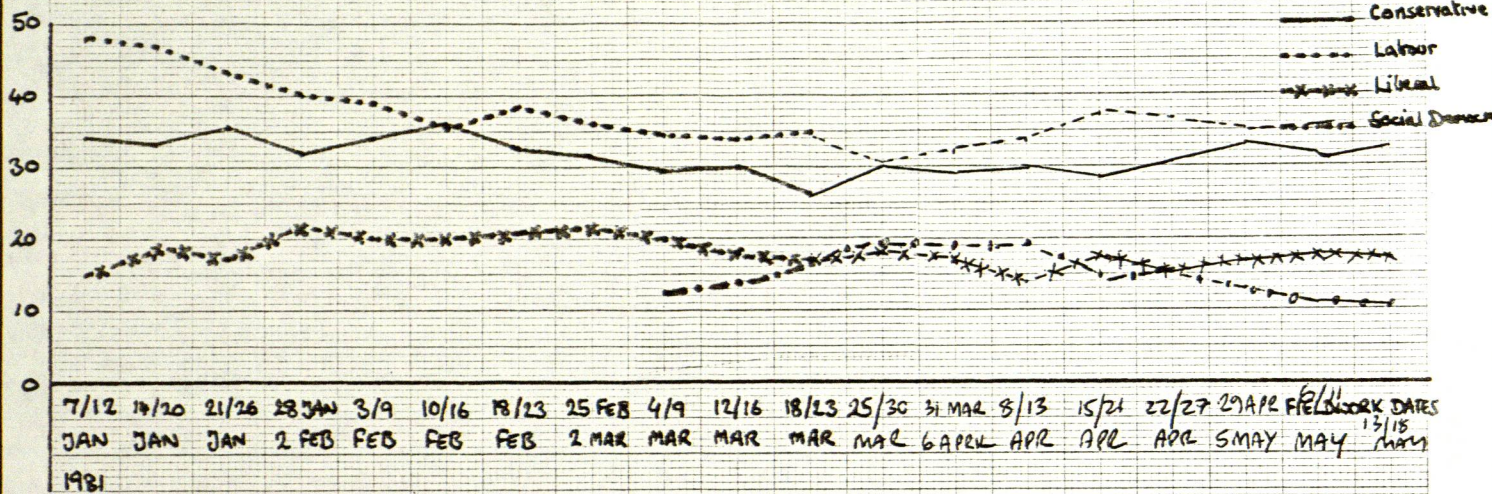
Mrs Thatcher's popularity improved yet again (by a small amount) in the latest study - it is now at its highest level since last year.

POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

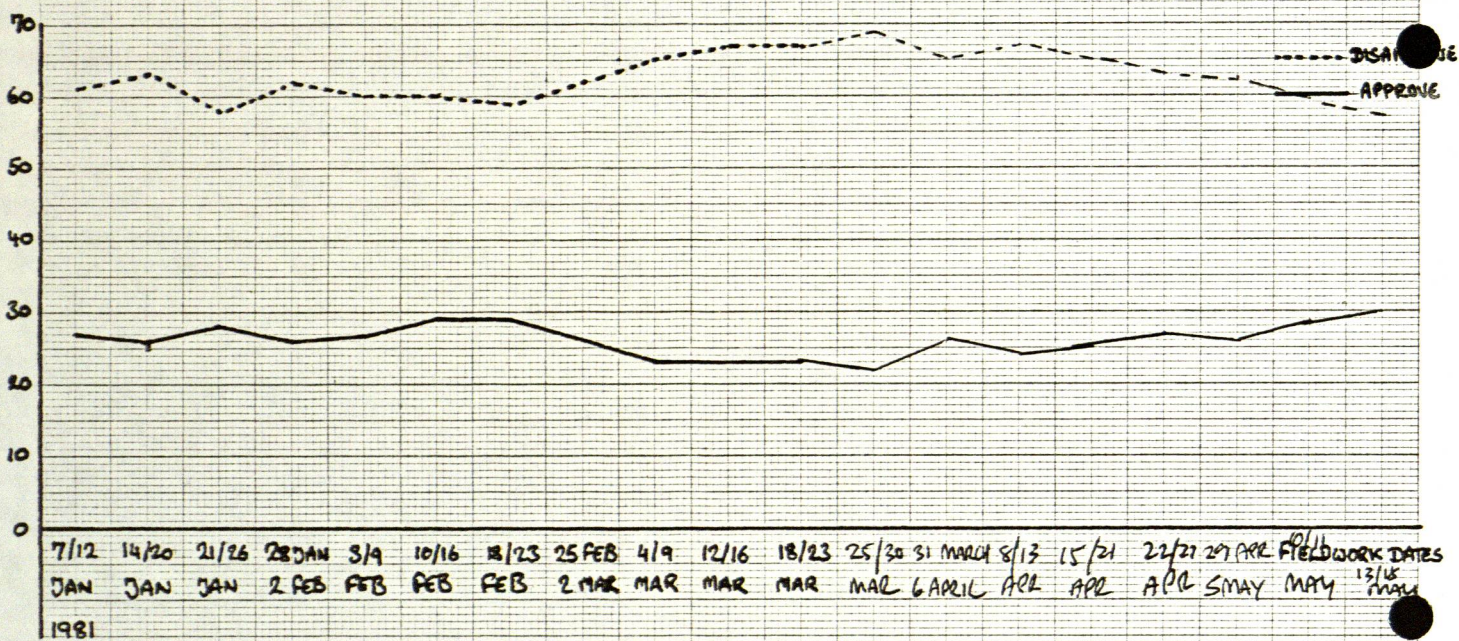
	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat.</u>	<u>Dis-</u> <u>sat.</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is</u> <u>Not</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is</u> <u>Not</u>	<u>Don't</u> <u>Know</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1981</u>									
4/9 March	28	66	6	25	52	23	62	18	20
12/16 March	30	64	6	23	52	26	63	15	22
18/23 March	28	67	5	24	55	24	63	18	19
25/ 30 March	30	66	4	20	55	25	61	19	19
31 March/6 April	31	63	6	24	55	22	64	17	19
8/13 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

BACKGROUND GRAPHS

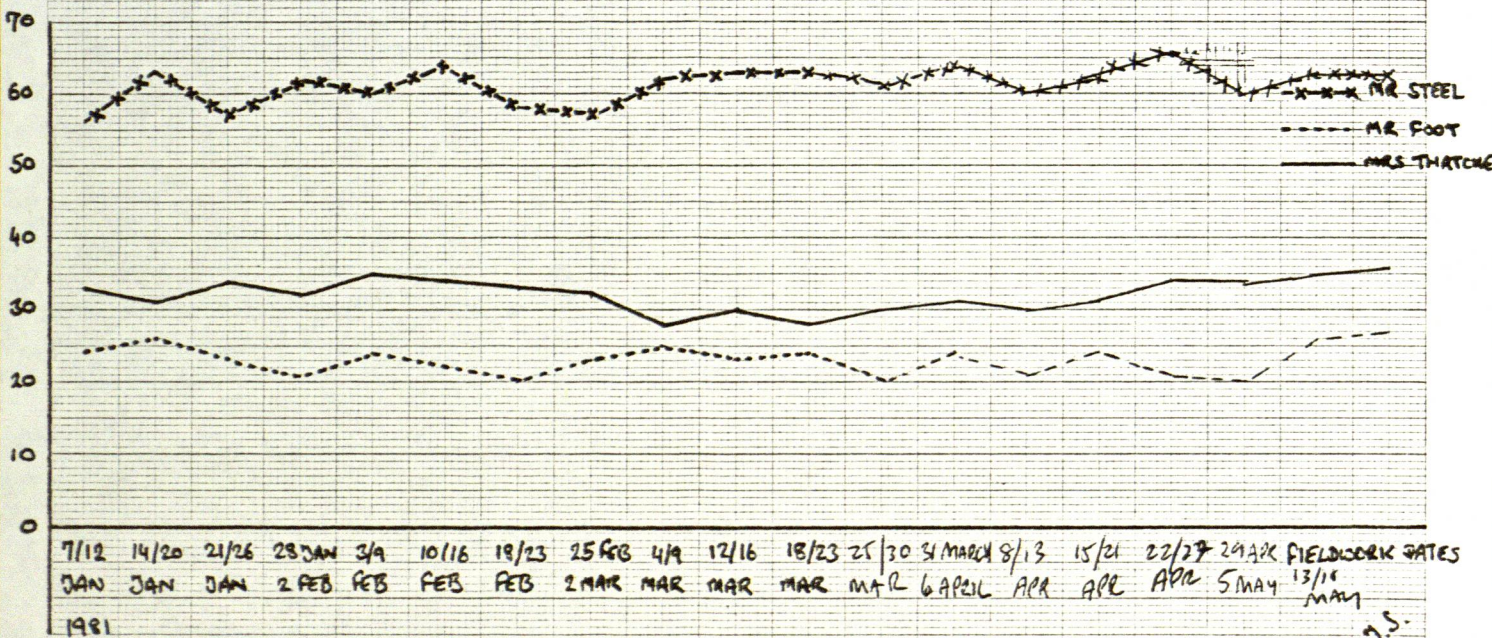
VOTING INTENTION (excluding don't know)



GOVERNMENT RECORD

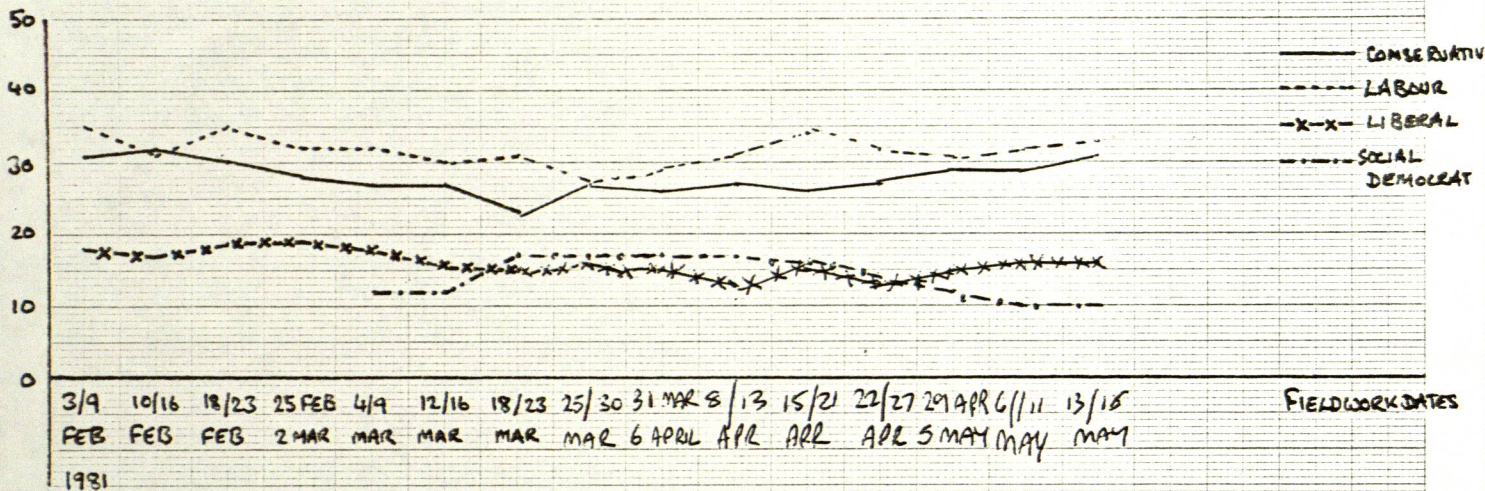


POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

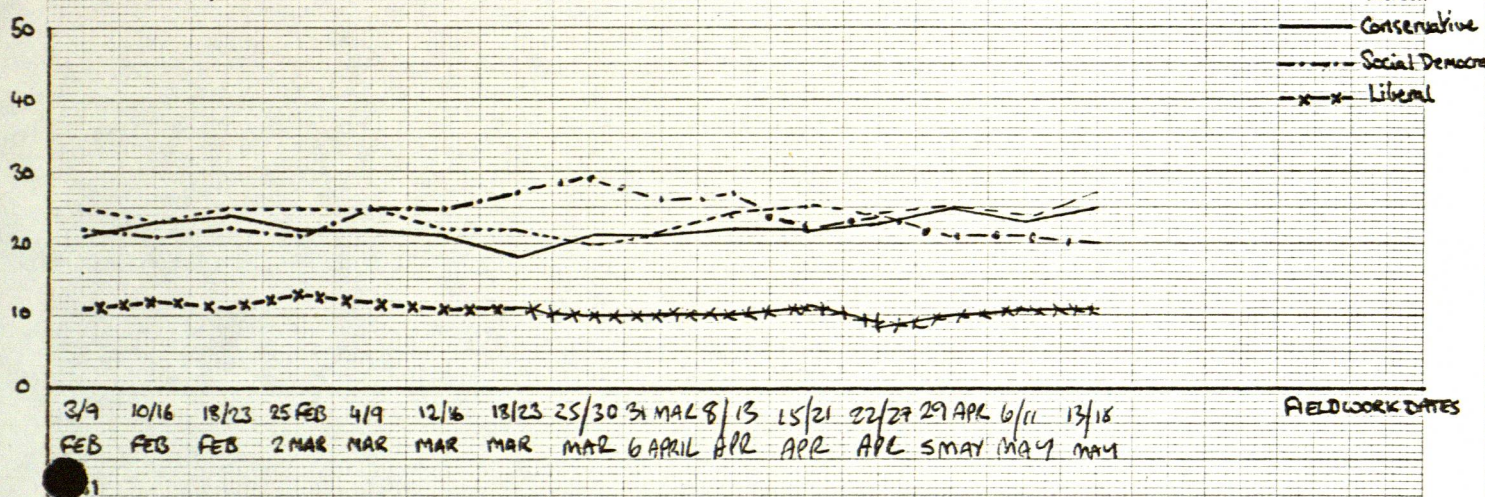


BACKGROUND GRAPHS

STANDARD VOTING INTENTION



VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE



VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC / LIBERAL CANDIDATE

