

Public Opinion Background Note 137
(Produced 31st October 1982)

1. Introduction

The results from our latest Gallup 'tracking' study are the same as those published in the Daily Telegraph on Thursday 28th October. The survey found 40½% claiming they would vote Conservative, 29% Labour, 15% Social Democrat and 12% Liberal. The interviewing for this survey was conducted from 20th to 25th October. A comparison of this latest published poll with previous published Gallup studies is shown below:-

Gallup - Published Polls 1982

	<u>Con</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>Lib</u>	<u>Social</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Con Lead</u>
				<u>Democrat</u>		<u>over Lab</u>
<u>1982</u>	%	%	%	%	%	%
January	27.5	29.5	13.0	26.5	3.5	-2.5
February	27.5	34.0	14.5	21.5	2.5	-6.5
March	31.5	33.0	11.5	21.5	2.5	-1.5
April	31.5	29.0	11.0	26.0	2.5	+2.5
May	41.5	28.0	9.5	19.5	1.5	+13.5
June	45.0	25.0	10.0	18.5	1.5	+20.0
July	46.5	27.5	7.5	16.5	2.0	+19.0
August	44.5	26.5	10.5	17.0	1.5	+18.0
September	44.0	30.5	8.5	14.5	2.5	+13.5
October	40.5	29.0	12.0	15.0	3.5	+11.5

Looking at published polls we find that Conservative support has fallen from 46½% in July to 40.5% in October. Labour support has increased from 25% to 29% over the same period. Liberal support has increased from 10% to 12% and Social Democrat support has fallen from 18½% to 15%.

Details of the trend in our weekly 'tracking' studies are shown in the table on the next page.

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

	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>SOCIAL</u> DEMOCRAT	<u>OTH</u>	<u>LEAD</u> Con over Lab	<u>LIBERAL & SOCIAL</u> DEMOCRAT
1979	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
May (GE)	43.9	36.9	13.8	-	5.5	+ 7.0	13.8
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	26.0+	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	+ 6.5	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
19/24 May	45.0	27.0	11.0	15.0+	2.0	+ 18.0	26.0
26/31 May	45.5	27.0	9.5	16.0+	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

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

2. Government Record

Our latest study found almost no change in the popularity of the Government - 40% approved, 49% disapproved and 11% had no view. Details are shown in the table below.

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>			
6/11 January	23	65	12
13/18 January	24	65	12
20/25 January	26	62	13
27 Jan/1 Feb	25	62	13
2/8 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

3. Popularity of Political Leaders

The latest published Gallup study found almost no change in Mrs Thatcher's popularity when compared with the results of our previous unpublished study. The study found a continued drop in Mr Foot's popularity from the sharp improvement after the Labour Party Conference. Mr Steel's popularity shows no sign of a significant upturn. Details of the trend of popularity for the leaders of the three main parties since the start of the year 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	18
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	75	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	5	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

4. Published Polls(a) Gallup (Daily Telegraph 28th October 1982)

In addition to the standard Gallup 'tracking' questions the Daily Telegraph also included a range of other questions.

Gallup included the results from their standard issues questions - as to what the electorate regard as the most important issues facing the country. They found:-

	<u>Issues Facing the Country</u>				
	<u>All</u>	<u>Conservative</u> <u>Supporters</u>	<u>Labour</u> <u>Supporters</u>	<u>Liberal</u> <u>Supporters</u>	<u>SDP</u> <u>Supporters</u>
	%	%	%	%	%
Unemployment	88	86	90	91	93
Prices	26	28	30	30	19
Health/hospitals	10	9	12	7	13
Economic Problems	9	11	7	9	11
Defence/Nuclear Weapons	7	6	7	4	12
Housing/Rates/Mortgages	7	6	8	8	5
Strikes/Trade unions	6	10	2	5	4
Law and Order	6	6	4	8	6

Gallup asked respondents whether they saw each of the main parties as being united or divided. The survey found 12% of the electorate saw the Labour Party as being united, and 82% saw it as divided (6% did not have a view). 67% saw the Conservative Party as being united and 25% divided (8% did not have a view). 34% saw the Alliance as being united and 39% divided (26% did not have a view).

Gallup asked respondents which Party they saw as having the best policies and best leaders. They found:-

	<u>Best Policies</u>	<u>Best Leaders</u>
	%	%
Conservative	39	48
Labour	23	13
Liberal	8	11
Social Democrats	11	12
Other	0	0
Don't know	19	15

Gallup also asked who the electorate thought would make the best leader of the Alliance - 35% selected David Steel, 20% Shirley Williams, 17% Roy Jenkins, 15% David Owen and 1% William Rodgers.

(b) Marplan (Guardian 25th October 1982)

The Guardian on 25th October included details of a Marplan poll conducted from 11th to 13th October. The survey found 44½% claiming they would vote Conservative, 34% Labour, 19% Alliance and 2% for 'other' parties.