

Public Opinion Background Note 143

(produced 12th December 1982)

1. Introduction

The results from the latest 'tracking' study conducted from 1st to 6th December do not fully confirm the results of the previous study conducted from 24th to 29th November which found a 5% jump in the level of Conservative support. This latest study found 43% claiming they would vote Conservative (46½% in the previous study), 35% Labour (32% in the previous study), 9% Liberal (7½% in the previous study) and 11% Social Democrat (11½% in the previous study). The Conservative lead over Labour fell from 14½% to 8%. The combined level of Liberal and Social Democrat support stands at 20% - a similar level to that found in tracking studies since early November. The current level of Alliance support of 20% compares with 42% at the start of the year.

Details of the trend of support for the main parties since the start of the year are shown overleaf and in the attached graph.

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

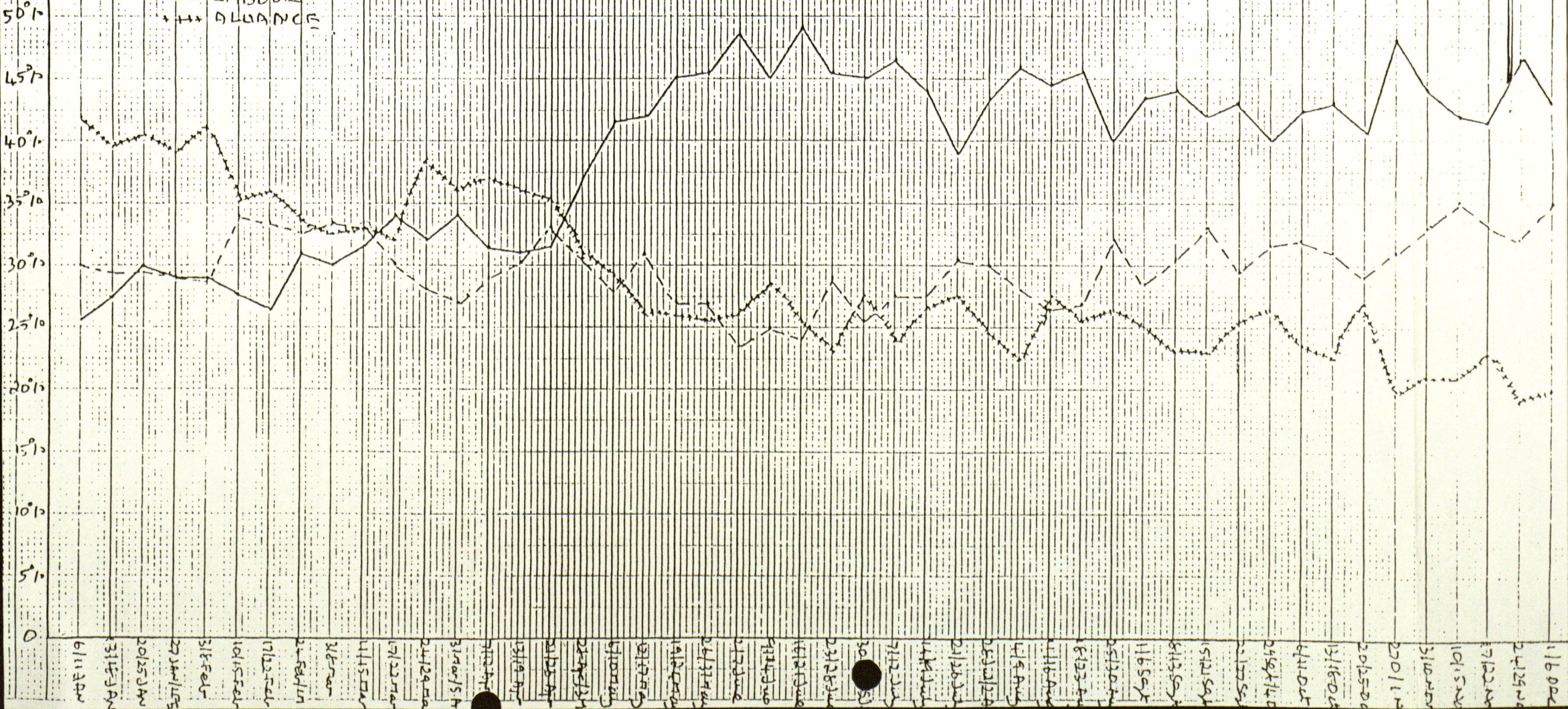
	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>SOCIAL</u> <u>DEMOCRAT</u>	<u>OTH</u>	<u>LEAD</u> Con over Lab	<u>LIBERAL & SOCIAL</u> <u>DEMOCRAT</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>1979</u>							
May (GE)	43.9	36.9	13.8	-	5.5	+ 7.0	13.8
13/16 June*	42.0	43.5	13.0	-	5.0	- 9.0	13.0
<u>1982</u>							
6/11 Jan	25.5	30.0	17.0	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
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
17/22 Nov	41.5	33.0	9.0	14.0+	2.5	+8.5	23.0
24/29 Nov	46.5	32.0	7.5	11.5+	2.5	+14.5	19.0
1/6 Dec	43.0	35.0	9.0	11.0+	2.0	+8.0	20.0

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

JAN 1982 FEB 1982 MARCH 1982 APRIL 1982 MAY 1982 JUNE 1982 JULY 1982 AUGUST 1982 SEPT 1982 OCT 1982 NOV 1982 DEC 1982

VOTING INTENTION (EXCLUDING DON'T KNOWS)

— CONSERVATIVE
 - - - LABOUR
 + + + ALLIANCE



2. Government Record

The latest study found 42% approving of our record in government (23% in early January) and 47% disapproving (65% in early January) and 11% with no view (12% in early January).

Details of the trend from the standard government record is shown 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
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
17/22 Nov	39	47	13
24/29 Nov	44	44	13
1/6 Dec	42	47	11

3. Popularity of Political Leaders

This latest study found a slight fall in Mrs Thatcher's popularity and an increase in Mr Foot's popularity and in that of Mr Steel. Gallup found 45% claiming to be satisfied with Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister, 23% claiming to be satisfied with Mr Foot as Leader of the Opposition, 62% satisfied with Mr Steel as Leader of the Liberals and 35% satisfied with Mr Jenkins as Leader of the Social Democrats.

Details of the trend of popularity for Mrs Thatcher, Mr Foot and Mr Steel are shown below:-

	<u>POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS</u>								
	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	<u>Sat.</u>	<u>Dis-sat.</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is Not</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Is</u>	<u>Is Not</u>	<u>Don't 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	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	6	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	18
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
17/22 Nov	44	51	5	25	63	11	59	20	20
24/29 Nov	48	47	5	18	68	14	57	22	20
1/6 Dec	45	51	5	23	67	10	62	18	19

4. Published Polls

(a) MORI (Sunday Times Magazine 12th December 1982)

The Sunday Times Magazine on 12th December included details of a MORI survey on attitudes to Channel 4 conducted in late November. The survey found 25% taking the view that the arrival of Channel 4 has raised the quality of the material they see on TV, 58% think it has made no difference and 15% think the change has been for the worse.