

REFERENCE SECTION

SECTION 1

SUMMARY OF SCOTTISH OPINION POLLS RELATING TO VOTING INTENTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

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Those readers expecting a feast of polls on a par with the past two Yearbooks will I fear be disappointed. There seem to be two reasons for this: one is that the previous two years were dealing with what appeared to be, and then was, the run-up to a General Election (and, before that, a Referendum). The other is that the views of Scotland's electorate have become of less interest to those who commission opinion polls. This does not mean that UK-wide polls do not include Scots, just that the Scottish sample is too small to be statistically reliable. There have also been polls on social attitudes, but these did not seem to merit reproduction in a Yearbook focussing on government.

As a result, there is this year little challenge to System Three's status as Scotland's chief political pollsters. Table 1 accordingly gives the monthly voting intention figures over the year under review. These polls appear regularly in the Glasgow Herald.

Table 2 gives the results of a further and equally fascinating System Three survey, commissioned by the BBC. This concerned itself with the constitutional issue, and attempted to test two questions: what sort of constitutional option is preferred by Scots, and how do people now view the Assembly as envisaged by the Scotland Act? Further, by weighting the responses to take account of the actual result of the Referendum, an estimate was made of how the referendum would have gone had it been held eleven months later (1-4 February 1980). The views of those who did not vote in March 1979 (over half of whom indicated a voting intention) were also tabulated. The results of this poll were reported in the BBC-Scotland programme "Current Account" on 12 February 1980.

Two other polls have been included. The first forms part of a wide-ranging poll carried out by the Opinion Research Centre (ORC) for The Scotsman. The voting intentions given as at 16-22 November 1979, and published on 30 November 1979, were: Labour 51%, Conservative 29%, Scottish National Party 10% and Liberal 9%. The second, confined to the views of young people aged 15-20 (in October 1979) was commissioned by the Sunday Mail and carried out by Survey Research Associates (SRA). Youthful voting intentions were: Labour 48%, Conservative 23%, Scottish National Party 19%, Liberal 8% and Others 1%.

Acknowledgements

To all the above-mentioned, grateful acknowledgement is made of permission to publish data appearing in this Appendix. The compiler would like to add a sincere personal word of thanks to all the individuals in the various polling organisations who so readily gave information - including those which had not carried out polls specifically on Scotland.

Technical Notes

As usual, all percentages have been rounded and (unless indicated otherwise) "don't knows" etc. disregarded. In Table 2 the questions have been summarised along conventional lines. The full wording of the options given was as follows:

a) Things to remain as they are now; (b) Scottish affairs to be discussed more fully in Scotland, but final decisions still left with Westminster; (c) an elected Scottish Assembly with the power to make decisions on Scottish affairs (though leaving Westminster responsible for U.K. matters like Defence and Foreign Affairs); (d) Complete independence for Scotland.

TABLE 1: VOTING INTENTION
(Source: System Three Scotland)

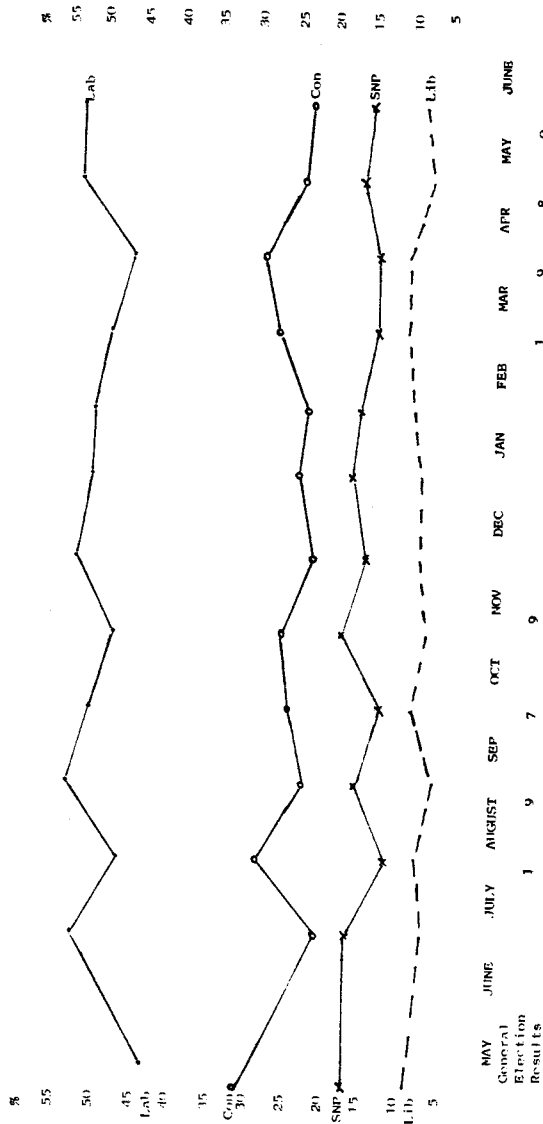


TABLE 2: THE CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE

(Source: System Three, for "Current Account")

Table 2A: Preferred Constitutional Options

Option	%
Status Quo	16
More say in Scottish affairs	27
Full Internal Self-Government	41
Independence	17

68 (Devolution: 2 options)

Table 2B: Voting Intention if Referendum Held Again

	%
Yes	64
No	36

Table 2C: Weighted Voting Intention if Referendum Held Again

	(Actual Result)	March 1979	Feb. 1980
Yes	52	56	56
No	48	44	44

Table 2D: Voting Intention of Those Who Did Not Vote in March 1979 but who Would Vote if Referendum held again

	%
Yes	68
No	32

Table 2E: Voting Intention of Those Who Did Not Vote in March 1979 (including "Don't Knows" and "Wouldn't Votes")

	%
Yes	37
No	17
Wouldn't vote	28
Don't know	17

Table 2F: Constitutional options preferred by those who would vote if Referendum held again

	Referendum Voting Intention	
	Yes	No
Status Quo	2	31
More say	14	47
Internal Self-government	58	18
Independence	26	3

65 (Devolution: 2 options)