

SUMMARY OF OPINION POLLS 1984/85

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The Opinion Polls appendix has a familiar format. Table 1 (System Three (Scotland), published in the *Glasgow Herald*) illustrates the movements of public opinion over the period mid-1984 to mid-1985, with the General Election result a year before that as a yardstick. Table 2 gives, by comparison, the MORI figures of voting intention published in *The Scotsman*. As before, the Conservative and Alliance result in June 1983 still appears as a peak to which they have not returned whereas for the SNP (marginally) and for Labour (more dramatically), their standing has been better in the opinion polls than in the preceding General Election.

Only one question on Scotland's constitutional future was asked during the year and arguably makes a somewhat depressing backdrop to the Scottish Office's centenary year: many respondents could not identify the Scottish Office, and, once it was explained, a majority of all responding preferred independence to the status quo (Table 2). Other interesting questions concerned the Liberal/Social Democratic Alliance. On merging, half the respondents in May 1985 wanted the two parties to merge; a quarter did not; a quarter did not know. Of Liberal supporters, 56% said Yes to a merger, whereas 80% of SDP supporters said Yes. Respondents generally (two-thirds) thought it would not affect their voting intention but over a quarter said it would make the Alliance a more attractive prospect.

But what is the Alliance? Consistently, some respondents in the MORI polls say they will vote SDP (4% on average) and others Liberal (6%) but a third category say they will vote "Alliance" (5%). Accordingly in the two tables I have amalgamated the three categories into one Liberal/Social Democratic/Alliance (LSA for short). The LSA average according to MORI was 15%, while System Three (Scotland) put it at 17%.

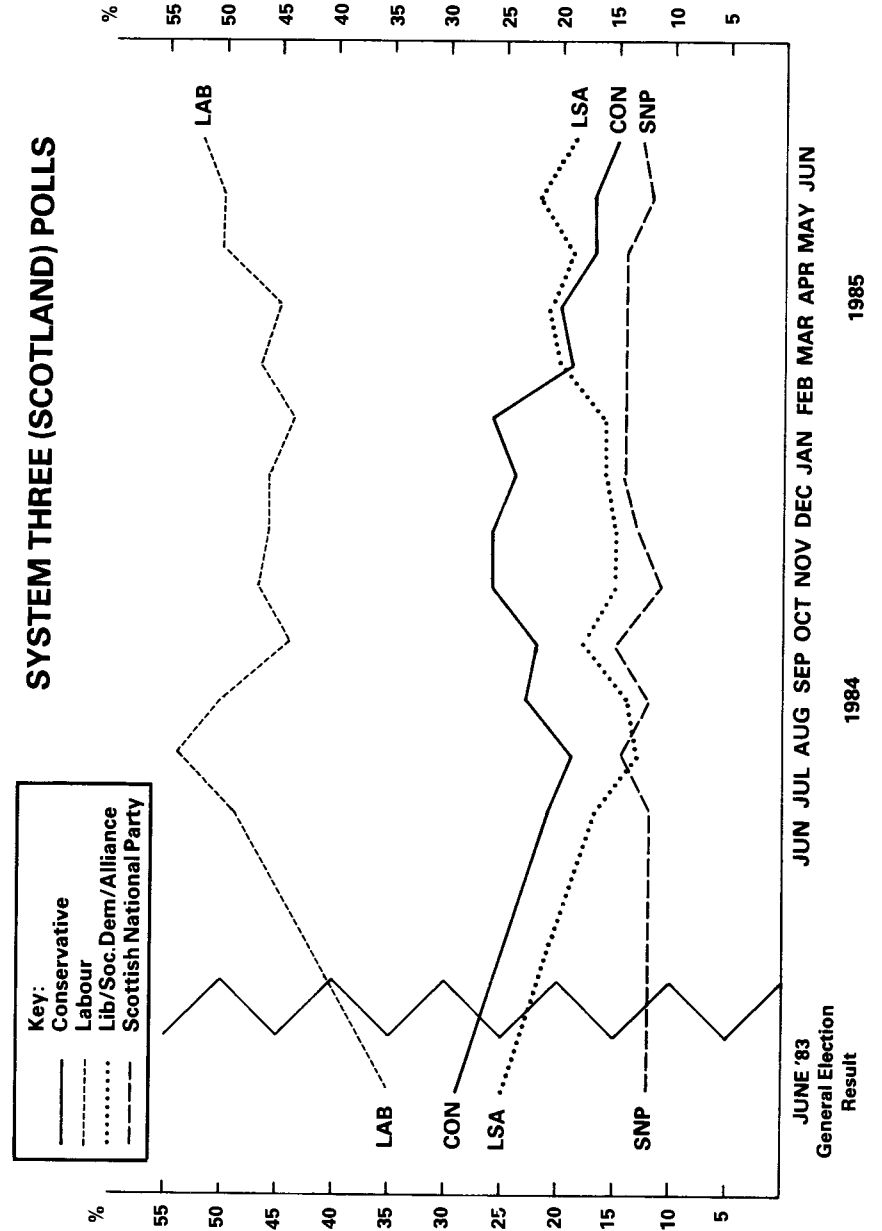
Acknowledgements

The *Yearbook* is again indebted to System Three (Scotland), MORI, the *Glasgow Herald* and *The Scotsman* for permission to publish the data in this section. We are grateful to Edinburgh University Audio-Visual Services for graphical presentation.

Technical Notes

Percentages have been rounded; "don't knows", refusals and "won't votes" have been omitted. The dates given are those of completion of the fieldwork, rather than dates of eventual publication.

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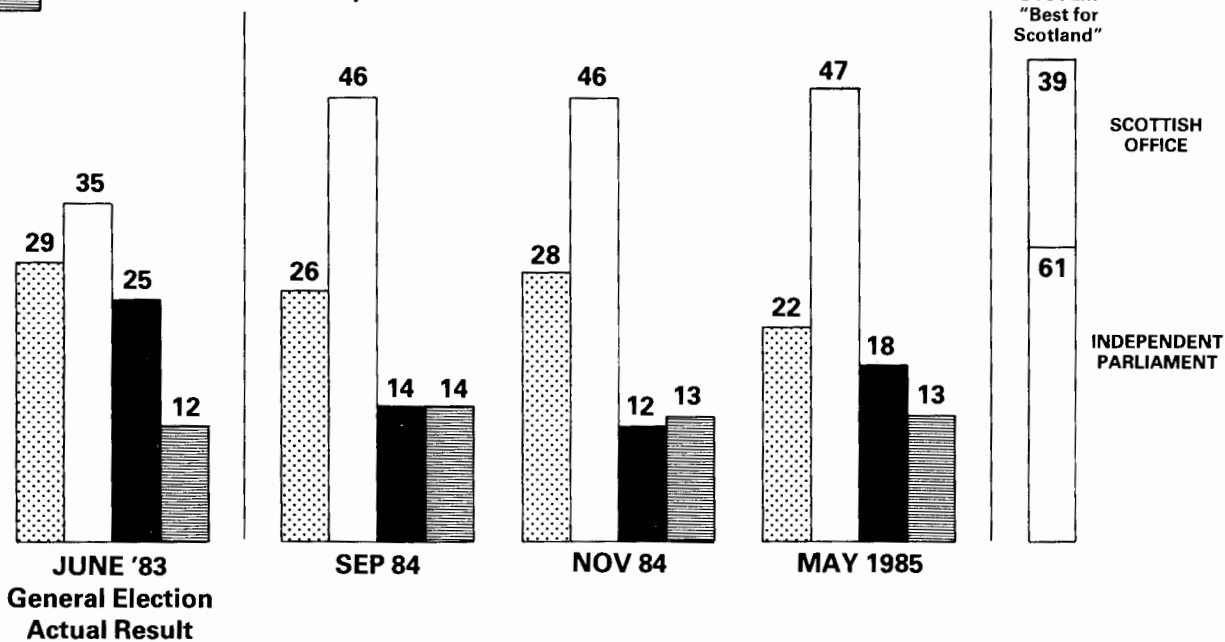
Key:



MORI POLLS

VOTING INTENTION

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GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM
"Best for Scotland"

SCOTTISH OFFICE

INDEPENDENT PARLIAMENT