

PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B

PS/Ministers (L&B) - B
PS/PUS (L&B) - B
PS/Sir K Bloomfield - B
Mr Burns - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Chesterton - B
Mr Innes - B
Mr Miles - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Hewitt - B
Mr J McConnell - B
Mr Wood
Dr Harrison, PPRU

MRC OPINION POLL ON "PUBLIC REACTION TO THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY CLIMATE"

1. Ministers may be interested to see the main findings of a recent opinion poll conducted by Marketing Research Consultancy Limited. The poll is based on a sample of 1,000 people who were asked questions of current political and security interest. Overall, the survey underscores the dichotomy between Protestant and Catholic opinion in Northern Ireland.
2. The main findings of the survey were as follows:
 - i) There would be significant Nationalist opposition to the implementation of suggested security initiatives, such as introducing identity cards, internment, the sealing of the border and the withdrawal of a suspect's right to remain silent. Unionists, on the other hand, would generally welcome any such developments.
 - ii) With the exception of Sinn Fein adherents, there is overwhelming approval for a requirement for all elected representatives in Northern Ireland, to renounce violence publicly. Overall, 84% of those questioned were in favour, including 86% of SDLP supporters.
 - iii) SDLP supporters appear to be the only section of the community who have drawn comfort from the introduction of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Even middle-ground nationalists tend to believe that the Agreement has achieved little or nothing since its introduction. Supporters of all political parties believe that the security situation has worsened since the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

3. I attach a selection of detailed material at Annex.

(Signed)

D C KIRK
Constitutional and Political Division
30 September 1988

R/G3186

TOTAL	of which	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT
84		70	14
		33	5
		7	3

	ALLIANCE	DUP	SDP	SHL	SP
Yes	54	32	34	26	13
No	5	5	3	2	13
Don't know	0	2	1	5	0

4. QUESTION: Would you object to or support the introduction of the withdrawal of a support's right to remain silent when being questioned?

	TOTAL	of which	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT
Strongly support	13		3	10
Support	25		18	7
Object to	25		22	3
Strongly object to	10		10	0
Don't know	8		13	5

	ALLIANCE	DUP	SDP	SHL	SP
Strongly support	23	43	37	2	0
Support	26	27	35	10	4
Object to	38	18	18	35	13
Strongly object to	4	9	4	25	21
Don't know	6	3	0	12	0

5. QUESTION: Do you agree that the 1988 Bill has achieved little or nothing since its introduction or not?

	TOTAL	of which	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT
Strongly agree	18		19	0
Agree	41		32	9
Disagree	16		12	4
Strongly disagree	2		4	0
Don't know	2		5	0

	ALLIANCE	DUP	SDP	SHL	SP
Strongly agree	17	13	51	2	0
Agree	34	23	44	14	0
Disagree	27	3	4	35	10
Strongly disagree	2	1	1	0	0
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0

ANNEX A

1. QUESTION:

Do you think that all elected politicians, including local councillors should have to publicly reject violence before taking up office or not?

	TOTAL	of which	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT
Yes	84		70	94
No	12		23	5
Don't know	4		7	2

By main political party:

	ALLIANCE	DUP	OUP	SDLP	SF
Yes	94	92	96	86	19
No	6	6	3	9	73
Don't know	0	2	1	5	8

2. QUESTION:

Would you object to or support the introduction of the withdrawal of a suspect's right to remain silent when being questioned?

	TOTAL	of which	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT
Strongly support	23		3	37
Support	25		15	32
Object to	25		32	20
Strongly object to	19		38	6
Don't know	8		13	5

By main political party:

	ALLIANCE	DUP	OUP	SDLP	SF
Strongly support	23	43	37	2	0
Support	38	27	35	16	6
Object to	30	18	18	39	13
Strongly object to	4	9	4	28	81
Don't know	6	3	4	14	0

3. QUESTION:

Do you agree that the Anglo Irish Agreement has achieved little or nothing since its introduction or not?

	TOTAL	of which	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT
Strongly agree	38		20	51
Agree	41		42	41
Disagree	16		30	6
Strongly disagree	2		4	2
Don't know	2		5	1

By main political party:

	ALLIANCE	DUP	OUP	SDLP	SF
Strongly agree	17	73	51	8	51
Agree	54	23	44	45	32
Disagree	27	3	4	35	16
Strongly disagree	3	1	1	6	1
Don't know	0	0	0	6	0

4. QUESTION:

Do you agree that since the introduction of the Anglo-Irish Agreement the security situation has worsened?

	TOTAL	of which	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT
Strongly agree	36		21	47
Agree	39		40	39
Disagree	19		31	11
Strongly disagree	2		4	0
Don't know	4		6	3

By main political party:

	ALLIANCE	DUP	OUP	SDLP	SF
Strongly agree	24	63	44	18	27
Agree	46	27	43	43	37
Disagree	28	7	11	30	25
Strongly disagree	0	1	0	3	4
Don't know	2	2	1	6	6

(All figures are in percentages.

They may not always add up precisely to 100 because of rounding.)

R/G3186