

SURVEY

At the beginning of February a questionnaire was distributed to all girls in the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th forms, in which they were asked, among other things, to give their views on a wide range of social and political issues and to indicate their career preferences and expectations. Altogether 305 forms were handed out and 216 were completed and returned, i.e. 70 per cent of them; the rate of response was slightly above average in the Fifth and slightly below in the Eighth.

In analysing the forms it was decided to group them according to the replies to a question in which people were asked to rate themselves on a seven point scale stretching from 1 (left wing) to 7 (right wing). Very few girls placed themselves at the extreme ends of this scale and, indeed, one third indicated their political position by marking the centre point of the scale. The ratings are shown in Table I in detail, and from this it would seem that in political outlook the girls who replied fall into three roughly equal groups - 35 per cent left wing, 30 per cent right wing, 30 per cent centre.

These proportions varied from form to form. Thus in the Fifth and Sixth almost half of the girls (44 per cent) placed themselves in the Centre and the rest divided roughly equally between Left wing and Right. In the seventh and Eighth, appreciably more indicated either a left (41 per cent) or right wing position (34 per cent) only 1 in 4 of these older girls picked the central point in the scale to describe their political views.

Table I Self - Description: Left wing / Right wing

		%	
Left wing:	1	5.6)
	2	19.0) 34.7
	3	10.1)
Centre:	4	33.8	
	5	15.7)
	6	8.8) 29.6
Right wing:	7	5.1)
Don't know:		1.9	
		100.0	

As a check on the meaning that people gave to these terms, we looked at the answers the three groups gave to another question when people were asked whether or not they approved of socialism; only 7 per cent of the left wingers disapproved of it, while 8 per cent of right wingers approved of it (see Table 2). This result strongly supports our decision to divide people into three groups, for analysing the answers to most other questions.

Table 2 Attitudes to socialism: by political self-description

	<u>Left</u> <u>wing</u> %	<u>Centre</u> %	<u>Right</u> <u>wing</u> %	<u>All</u> %
Agree with socialism	66	22	8	33
Uncertain	27	68	41	46
Disagree with socialism	7	10	51	21
	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

Attitudes to protests, demonstrations

One of the distinctive features of most democratic societies today, is that people are not content to express their dissatisfaction on social and economic matters solely through voting at elections; increasingly they turn to forms of protest that fall outside conventional party lines and that usually make their point by disrupting the orderly, humdrum, workings of society. To see how far such behaviour is acceptable, the questionnaire asked: "As a means of protest or protecting rights, or securing justice etc. how often are the following actions justified?" There followed a list of 15 types of protest action, and people replied by marking 1= often, 2= sometimes, 3= rarely, 4= never. To reduce the replies to a single index of approval three points were allotted to an answer of 'often', two points for 'sometimes', and so on. The points were then expressed as a percentage of the maximum obtainable, if everyone had answered 'often'.

Five forms of protest are supported by a clear and sometimes solid majority of all girls, irrespective of their political inclinations, such as signing a petition. At the other extreme there are five forms of protest that are overwhelmingly condemned, such as sabotage in factories. In between these, are the five forms of protest that really distinguish the Left from the Right, in that they receive much more support from the former: these significant discriminators are; refusal to pay rents or taxes, unofficial strikes, sit-ins, obstructing traffic, and painting slogans on walls. The full results to this question are set out in table three.

Table 3 Approval of Protest Behaviour

<u>Method</u>	<u>All</u> %	<u>Left</u> %	<u>Centre</u> %	<u>Right</u> %
Signing a petition	89	92	88	87
Letter to a newspaper	85	89	82	84'
Non-violent demonstration	78	82	74	77
Attending protest meeting	69 7	74 6	69	65
Boycott of goods, sports, etc.	53	56	50	53
Refuse to pay rent, taxes, etc.	43	52	34	44
Unofficial strike	39	48	39	28
Occupy buildings, sit-in	38	47	35	32
Obstructing traffic	35	45	31	25
Painting slogans on walls	30	42	25	25
Sabotage in factories	13	23	9	8
Guns or explosives	10	14	11	5
Damaging buildings	9	17	5	5
Assassination	9	12	8	7
Personal violence	8	14	5	5
Average	41	56	38	37

Women's Lib

As an indirect way of measuring attitudes to Women's Liberation people were asked to say whether they agreed or disagreed with the four statements that they were given. The two pro-Women's Lib. statements each received very little support; this support was higher among left wingers than among right wingers, as can be seen from Table 4. At the same time the two traditional views received even less support, and again there was very little difference between left and right wings.

Table 4 Proportion agreeing with various statements

	<u>All</u> %	<u>Left</u> %	<u>Centre</u> %	<u>Right</u> %
Half all top jobs should be reserved for women	25	25	28	12
Beauty contests are degrading to women	23	30	21	16
Careers are fine, but real fulfilment is home & children	13	9	18	12
In marriage a man must take decisions for all the family	13	7	18	16

The Overprivileged

Most girls named various groups who they thought "have an unduly privileged position in our society", and they have been classified into five groups; these - the idle rich, the rich, and the nouveaux rich, were named by over 40 per cent of the girls as examples of those who get more rewards than they deserve. The only other substantial group mentioned were greedy workers (18 percent). Only 9 per cent of left-wingers described greedy workers as overprivileged, but right wingers saw such people as far and away the biggest group of over privileged people (36 per cent). It should be remembered though that 40 per cent of all girls could not think of any overprivileged groups in British society.

Table 5 Named as overprivileged

	<u>All</u> %	<u>Left</u> %	<u>Centre</u> %	<u>Right</u> %
Idle rich	15	25	6	14
The rich	15	25	13	5
Nouveaux riches	I 11	8	18	6
Greedy workers	18	9	12	36
Feckless poor	4	1	4	8
Others	7	12	1	8
No one	4	4	4	3
Don't know	40	37	49	33
Total	114	121	107	113

The Underprivileged

When asked to name any group of underprivileged people in Britain, over one third of the girls could not think of a single one; this blankness was particularly widespread among those in the political centre. The two most commonly mentioned groups were the old and the poor. The centre and the right wingers particularly emphasised the old, while left wingers gave more prominence to the low paid and the unemployed. The third most frequently mentioned group were coloured immigrants, and here again the views of left wingers were appreciably more emphatic than those of the centre and right wingers. The latter suprisingly enough gave second place to a group that can be described as social misfits (drop-outs, drug-takers, prisoners, alcoholics, etc.), that is people whose underprivileged position was related to personality traits rather than to social conditions.

Table 6 The Underprivileged

	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Left</u> %	<u>Centre</u> %	<u>Right</u> %
The old	19	13	22	23
The poor, unemployed, etc.	17	24	14	12
Coloured immigrants	11	16	5	11
Nurses, teachers, etc	10	12	8	11
Drop-outs, gypsies, alcoholics	9	5	5	17
Women	7	7	6	8
Young people, students	6	8	9	2
Sick, disabled	3	7	1	2
Police, firemen etc.	3	4	1	5
Others	4	5	3	3
No one	2	4	-	3
Don't know	<u>35</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>33</u>
	126	135	116	130

Attitudes on social matters

At one point the questionnaire contained a list of 34 topics and asked: "Which of the following do you favour, agree with, or believe in?" There was no particular order in the list but they can be rearranged into a handful of groups although the boundaries between them are sometimes ambiguous; this is particularly true of some of the items I have included in the category of school.

(a) School and Discipline

Of the five topics in this group opinions varied greatly - from almost complete approval of co-education to almost complete rejection of school uniforms. Broadly, these attitudes were common to all three shades of political opinion, but were held most strongly by left-wingers. Only one-third of all girls approved of compulsory games.

Table 7(a) Attitudes on school and discipline

<u>Topic</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Left-wing</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Right-wing</u>	
Co-education	75	89	69	66	<u>% approving</u>
Compulsory games	33	28	36	34	
Strict rules	15	7	14	22	
Corporal punishment	14	7	16	20	
School uniforms	9	7	12	9	

(b) Sex, marriage, women's rights

This is a group of topics which can be considered to be of special concern to them because of their sex. Although less than half (48%) support Women's Liberation and over four-fifths approve of marriage (81%), yet solid majorities are in favour of many of the forms of behaviour which, rightly or wrongly, are popularly considered to be 'progressive' and 'liberating' policies, e.g. mothers who go out to work (66%) sex before marriage (59%), divorce by consent (70%), birth control (87%), and abortion on demand (60%). On some of these issues there were substantial differences between left-wingers and others; the former gave much more support to working mothers, sex before marriage and Women's Liberation.

(c) Political Issues

It was on these issues that differences between left and right were most likely to emerge, even so there were some on which these differences were relatively slight. There was all-round rejection of capital punishment, Black Power, compulsory military service, white supremacy, and anarchism. The really big contrasts were that left wing attitudes were much more favourable towards conscientious objectors, free entry for Ugandan Asians, and socialism; while right wingers favoured royalty, strong leaders and patriotism. Supporters of communes, legalised pot, and hippies were in a minority even among left wingers.

The questionnaire listed 33 possible careers and people were asked to indicate in order the five they would most like to take up. (Those who had preferences outside the list were invited to write in any such additions). After they had indicated their preferences they were asked to say which occupation they, in fact, expected to be following when they were aged 25 to 30.

Slightly over half all preferences concentrated on three occupational groups - professions (medicine, law, Civil Service, etc), communications (journalism, T.V., and publishing), and the arts. Less than 10 per cent of the preferences were for teaching at any level and even fewer chose either business or social work. At the bottom of the list came the preference for being a full time housewife, or a politician (3 per cent). Between left and right wingers the biggest difference was the latter's relatively high preference for a career in the professions - mainly medicine and law. The left wingers compensated for this lag by expressing slightly greater preference for the communications industries, for the arts, and for teaching

	<u>All</u> %	<u>Left</u> %	<u>Centre</u> %	<u>Right</u> %
Professions	20	17	17	28
Communications	16	19	15	15
Arts	15	19	12	14
Science and technology	11	10	13	8
Teaching	9	10	9	7
Business	8	7	10	8
Social work	8	8	8	7
Full-time housewife	3	1	4	3
Politics	3	3	1	4
Others	7	6	11	6

The jobs people expected to be in during their late twenties roughly paralleled their preferences but there were some striking differences. One in six expected to be a full time housewife, and among centre and right wingers this proportion was 1 in 5. The biggest single group of left wingers expected to be employed in communications, while two-fifths of right wingers expected to be employed in one of the professions.

Table 8(b) Job expectations at the age 25 - 30

	<u>All</u> %	<u>Left</u> %	<u>Centre</u> %	<u>Right</u> %
Professions	25	15	22	40
Housewife	16	7	23	19
Communications	15	25	8	10
Arts	7	9	8	4
Science and technology	7	11	8	2
Teaching	7	9	6	6
Social work	7	11	8	2
Business	4	5	4	2
Politics	2	2	-	4
Others	10	6	15	9

Some heavily frustrated groups (in the sense that expectations were well below preferences) were those who would have liked a career in the creative and performing arts, those preferring to be scientists, to have business careers, and to be university teachers.

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