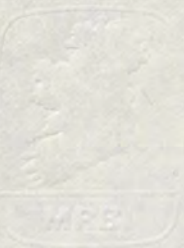




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SURVEY REPORT

THE IRISH TIMES: MRBI POLL  
CURRENT PARTY SUPPORT,  
THE EXTRADITION ACT, AND  
OTHER ISSUES  
NOVEMBER 1987

To:  
THE IRISH TIMES

Prepared by:  
MARKET RESEARCH BUREAU OF IRELAND LIMITED

Ref: MRBI/3580/87

THE IRISH TIMES/MRBI OPINION POLL  
November 1987

Current party support, satisfaction with leaders,  
Extradition Act, and other issues

Contents of Report:

Commentary: Jack Jones  
Chairman, MRBI Limited

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MRBI/3580/87

The survey was conducted on behalf of The Irish Times by Market Research Bureau of Ireland (MRBI Ltd.), among a representative quota sample of 1,000 electors aged 18 upwards, covering one-hundred sampling points throughout the country. Survey interviewing took place on 6th, 7th and 9th November 1987, and the accuracy level is estimated to be approximately plus or minus 3%.

Extracts from the report may be quoted or published on condition that due acknowledgement is given to:

The Irish Times, and  
Market Research Bureau of Ireland Limited (MRBI)

MRBI/3580/87

Jack Jones,  
Chairman,  
MRBI Limited.

Current reaction to the most topical issue of the day - The Extradition Act - shows the Irish people to be very evenly divided as to whether or not it should be implemented on 1st December. However, if the Anglo-Irish Agreement were to be damaged because of a deferral, then support for extradition increases quite significantly.

This survey was conducted over the period 6th, 7th and 9th November, the relevant questions being:

*"The Extradition Act will come into effect on 1st December, unless the Dail decides against it. In your opinion, should the Act come into effect on 1st December, or should it be postponed?"*

Among those saying it should be postponed:

*"Should it come into effect at a future date, or should it be scrapped altogether?"*

The overall findings are:

The Act should be implemented	40%
It should be postponed to future date	23%
It should be scrapped completely	20%
Undecided	17%

A further analysis of the data by day of interview - i.e. prior and subsequent to Sunday 8th, the day of the bomb explosion in Enniskillen - shows that this incident has had an influence on public reaction. Set against an overall 40% who agree that the Extradition Act should be implemented, 37% of those interviewed prior to Sunday 8th say so, compared with 47%, subsequent to the incident.

When analysed in party support terms, it is apparent that Labour, F.G. and P.D. voters - with figures of 50%, 49% and 43% respectively - are more supportive of implementation than are those of F.F., 34%, or other parties, 32%. Correspondingly, 26% of F.F. supporters feel that the Act should be scrapped, compared with figures of 21% P.D., 18% Labour and 11% F.G. Some 41% of other party supporters (W.P. and S.F.) say that it should be scrapped. (Table 1).

Table 1

The Extradition Act

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Interview date</u>		<u>Party Support</u>					
		<u>Prior to 8th</u>	<u>8th</u>	<u>FF</u>	<u>FG</u>	<u>PD</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Undec.</u>
<u>Should be</u>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Implemented	40	37	47	34	49	43	50	32	37
Postponed	23	26	16	22	24	23	21	16	23
Scrapped	20	21	19	26	11	21	18	41	18
Undecided	17	16	18	18	16	13	11	11	22

A further question, in the context of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, was then asked:

*"If the Anglo-Irish Agreement were to be damaged because the Dail postponed the Extradition Act; in those circumstances, do you think that Extradition should be postponed or not?"*

This hypothetical situation shows an increase in support for implementation of the Act to 46%, with a corresponding reduction to 33% against it; the overall figures being:

In the event of damage to the Anglo-Irish Agreement:

The Act should be implemented	46%
It should be postponed	33%
Undecided	21%

These figures are consistent with the fact that the Anglo-Irish Agreement has been heavily supported by the Irish Electorate since its introduction in November 1985. (Irish Times/MRBI Polls, Nov. 1985 and Feb. 1986: 59% and 69% respectively approving of the Agreement).

### Fine Gael Opposition Policy

In overall terms, there is agreement with the Fine Gael policy of supporting the Government, even if it cannot change the Government's policies in regard to specific cuts; 53% hold this view while 41% feel that this support should not continue.

The relevant question was:

*"As you probably know, the Government has decided on heavy cuts in Government spending. While Fine Gael does not agree with the specific cuts proposed, the party does agree with the total amount to be cut. If Fine Gael cannot change the Government's plans regarding specific cuts, should it*

*(a) Continue to support the Government, OR*

*(b) Should it vote against the Government, and have a General Election?"*

The overall situation, and party support analyses, are:

Table 2  
Reaction to Fine Gael Policy in Opposition

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Party Support</u>					<u>Undec.</u>
		<u>FF</u>	<u>FG</u>	<u>PD</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>Other</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
<u>If F.G. cannot change Sp. Cuts:</u>							
It should continue support	53	77	52	40	25	27	34
It should vote against, and have a General Election	41	21	44	56	64	71	48
Undecided	6	2	4	4	11	2	18

It is apparent that the main support for Fine Gael's current policy in opposition comes from Fianna Fail voters (77%), while slightly more than half (52%) of those of Fine Gael are supportive. Majorities in all other parties disagree with the Fine Gael Leader's stance.

Perhaps not surprisingly, in demographic terms, older people over 50, the middle class and large farmers, are most typical of those who support Mr. Dukes' policy in opposition.

#### Programme for Economic Recovery

While a substantial number of people (45%) feel that the Government's Programme for National Recovery will contribute towards this objective, many - primarily those under 24 and over 65 - are undecided or uncertain as to its likely impact. The overall situation - inclusive of party support analyses - is:

Table 3

#### Programme for Economic Recovery

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Party Support</u>					<u>Undec.</u>
		<u>FF</u>	<u>FG</u>	<u>PD</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>Other</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Will contribute towards economic recovery	45	57	44	43	39	29	33
Will not contribute	24	16	25	32	27	30	30
Undecided	31	27	31	25	34	41	37

Whilst almost three in every five Fianna Fail supporters, and two in five in each of the other three main parties see the Programme as making a contribution towards economic recovery, those who are undecided include one in four of Fianna Fail and P.D. voters, and one in three or more, in all other parties. This reflects a relatively high level of incognizance.



### Current Party Support and Satisfaction Ratings

In the hypothetical, and extremely unlikely situation, of an immediate General Election, the overall current support levels, vis-a-vis the previous Irish Times/MRBI poll figures shown in brackets are: Fianna Fail 33% (32%); Fine Gael 27% (26%); P.D.s 11% (12%); Labour 5% (4%); W.P. 4% (4%); Others 3% (2%) and Undecided 17% (20%). When adjusted for those undecided, the net current and previous figures are:

	<u>Nov '87</u>	<u>May '87</u>
Fianna Fail	40%	(41%)
Fine Gael	32%	(33%)
Progressive Democrats	14%	(14%)
Labour	6%	(5%)
Workers' Party	5%	(5%)
Other	3%	(2%)

These figures show slight but non-significant shifts since the previous comparable poll in May, in spite of the difficult economic decisions taken by the Government and the exceptional policies in opposition by Fine Gael and the Progressive Democrats.

The current satisfaction rating level of Fianna Fail in Government is 29%, compared with 31% in the previous poll, and 39% immediately after the Budget. While the drop of 2% is very possibly a reflection of the health cuts and other unpopular decisions, the figure compares favourably with the 1986 positionings of the previous Government.

Satisfaction ratings for all party leaders have dropped since the previous poll, except in the case of Mr. Haughey as Taoiseach, in whose case the previous poll positioning of 38% (lower than both Mr. Dukes and Mr. O'Malley) is maintained. The respective figures (with previous poll levels in brackets) are:

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Previous</u>
Mr. Haughey	38%	(38%)
Mr. Dukes	44%	(51%)
Mr. O'Malley	43%	(47%)
Mr. Spring	33%	(36%)
Mr. MacGiolla	25%	(30%)

Mr. Dukes, leader of Fine Gael, continues to be rated ahead of the other party leaders, as was the case in the previous two comparable polls since the General Election.

MRBI/3580/87 IRISH TIMES/MRBI POLL

TABLE 1 THE EXTRADITION ACT: SHOULD IT BE IMPLEMENTED

	Totals	CO. DU BLIN	REST OF LEIN	MUN STER	CONN /UL STER	URBAN	RURAL	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	MAR RIED	SINGLE
Totals	1000	280	240	290	190	562	438	198	225	255	209	113	670	330
SHOULD COME IN	40%	45%	42%	37%	35%	40%	40%	42%	36%	44%	37%	43%	39%	43%
SHOULD BE POSTPONED	23%	21%	24%	24%	23%	22%	23%	20%	23%	23%	28%	18%	23%	23%
SCRAP IT	20%	18%	20%	21%	23%	20%	21%	21%	24%	20%	19%	16%	20%	20%
NO OPINION	17%	16%	15%	17%	19%	17%	16%	16%	19%	13%	16%	24%	18%	14%

	Totals	ABC1	C2DE	F1	F2	MALE	FEMALE	FIANNA FAIL	FINE GAEL	LABOUR	PROG DEM.	OTHER	DK/REF
Totals	1000	305	491	118	86	502	498	331	267	53	112	63	174
SHOULD COME IN	40%	47%	37%	40%	35%	38%	42%	34%	49%	50%	43%	32%	37%
SHOULD BE POSTPONED	23%	23%	23%	19%	15%	24%	21%	22%	24%	25%	24%	16%	22%
SCRAP IT	20%	14%	23%	19%	28%	27%	14%	26%	11%	18%	21%	41%	18%
NO OPINION	17%	10%	18%	24%	23%	10%	24%	18%	16%	11%	13%	11%	22%

MRBI/3580/87 IRISH TIMES/MRBI POLL

TABLE 2 THE EXTRADITION ACT: RELATIVE TO THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT

	Totals	CO. DU BLIN	REST OF LEIN	MUN STER	CONN /UL STER	URBAN	RURAL	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	MAR RIED	SINGLE
Totals	1000	280	240	290	190	562	438	198	225	255	209	113	670	330
SHOULD COME IN	46%	43%	48%	49%	45%	44%	49%	51%	44%	51%	44%	39%	44%	51%
SHOULD BE POSTPONED	33%	31%	37%	32%	35%	32%	35%	30%	33%	30%	42%	31%	35%	31%
NO OPINION	21%	26%	15%	19%	21%	23%	16%	19%	23%	19%	14%	30%	21%	18%

	Totals	ABC1	C2DE	F1	F2	MALE	FEMALE	FIANNA FAIL	FINE GAEL	LABOUR	PROG DEM.	OTHER	DK/REF
Totals	1000	305	491	118	86	502	498	331	267	53	112	63	174
SHOULD COME IN	46%	52%	42%	53%	40%	44%	48%	40%	61%	52%	52%	27%	37%
SHOULD BE POSTPONED	33%	34%	34%	29%	35%	40%	27%	40%	24%	30%	33%	48%	32%
NO OPINION	21%	14%	24%	19%	26%	15%	25%	20%	15%	18%	15%	25%	30%