

4 June 1987

PRIME MINISTER

Widely differing polls are main feature of election coverage - Gallup 40.5/36.5/21.5 and NOP survey of 52 marginals - 43/34/20. Private Tory polls show support steady at 43% (Sun). Tories doing well in Cheltenham.

Alliance divided over cooperation with Conservatives in the event of a hung Parliament.

Labour proposing to give council tenants a lump sum if they want to buy their house.

Roy Hattersley insisting unions would be required to hold secret ballots before any official strike.

Douglas Hurd warns of no-go areas if Labour wins.

Conservatives' 2-page advert of unpleasant reading of what would happen under Labour.

Left wing extremists alleged to have burned down local Tory HQ in Hackney.

Militant Tendency wins control of CPSA, largest Civil Service union.

Cap Weinburger causes a minor storm when he says NATO is threatened from within.

Mirror claims, on the report of the Boardroom magazine, that you are having sex hormone treatment to keep you young.

House prices up 14.7% in past year - 25% in South East, but 6-7% in North.

Sun reports viewer protests over Sue Lawley's behaviour towards Norman Tebbit on 'phone-in. Mirror says Mr Tebbit was given the run around by a schoolgirl.

Sunday Today is to close down.

Star: Polls apart - Maggie's lead is down to 14 seats or 100; Alliance in wonderland - all at sea with floating voters; leader says there is everything to play for with Government leading by only 30.

Sun: It's up the poll - opinion polls go crazy. You slam big spenders - prices would soar if Labour came in. Steel's U-turn on cooperating with you in event of hung Parliament; leader headed "Wakey, Wakey" asks why the election has become a big bore -

partly because Kinnock is unbelievable; partly because the Alliance is a busted flush; and partly because too many Tories are behaving as if the election has already been won. As ever, the fire comes only from you.

Mirror says the Tory election campaign is being secretly funded by major British firms behind the backs of their shareholders. Inside it says Tories plan a massive council rent rise.

Today leads with Scotland Yard foiling a plot to murder you in Scotland with the help of a girlfriend of an IRA man. (Mail says police deny it). Inside - the rising price of Labour, according to you; and Tories in for a hiding, according to Gallup; leader says NHS needs care but not from Tories.

Daily News leads with Davids' bid to heal the rift - Steel says he is not ready to work with you, while Owen says he is willing to talk to either party; leader headed "Conscience an issue" asks if you really care. Perhaps you do but you have a funny way of showing it.

Express puts its leader on the front page with a series of questions setting out the choice - taxes, prices, defence, crime, Left wing lunacies, public spending. Inside it says take your pick polls set a poser for Tories. Election pages are headed "Left's formula for anarchy" with Norman Tebbit branding Labour's industrial relations policy as a programme for industrial anarchy and oppression.

In a feature, Peter Dawson, general secretary of the Professional Association of Teachers, attacks teachers who could not care less.

Mail leads with Labour planning to subsidise council tenants who want to move into private housing under heading "Labour gives 'em the money". It has hijacked one of your most popular policies. Pollsters plunge the election into chaos.

Mail leader (1) says the more Owen and Steel are together, the less they see eye to eye on what to do in the event of a hung Parliament. But there could be no guarantee that they would be the power brokers; these could be Ulster Unionists or Scottish Nationalists. Leader (2) asks its readers to look what happens when the Alliance takes power - in Sutton they go comprehensive; in this election only the Tories are offering real power and choice to parents.

Frank Chapple sets out how Scargill rules Kinnock and says Labour's union plans are a recipe for disaster. No one should run away with the idea that trade union extremists have thrown in the towel.

Inside the Mail says hundreds of viewers protested when Sue Lawley tried to rough up Norman Tebbit on 'phone-in. Steel makes a U-turn; you say Labour is the party of division; and Kenneth Baker says Shirley Williams left our schools in ruins.

Telegraph leads with Tory lead cut by half - you call strategy meeting. Professor Richard Rose says, however, that the Tories remain ahead on seats because other voters are wasting so many votes.

Fascinating account by Bill Deedes in Telegraph of canvassing in Stoke Newington and New Romney.

Simon Heffer, in Telegraph, says Labour's plans to extend town hall powers would let high spending local authorities off the leash.

Mr Tebbit apologises to BBC for his call over Cecil Parkinson's appearance.

Guardian leads with "Tory lead in polls on wane again" (sic); and US veiled attack on Labour defence policy. Alliance split on Tory coalition deal. Article on your polished way of outsmarting the press in answering their questions. Peter Shipley engaged by Norman Tebbit to discredit Left candidates.

Guardian leader says there may at last be "slight turbulence" in the marginals and "some resurgence" in Alliance fortunes, but it's too soon to tell. The Alliance has only one week left to make things happen.

Hugo Young, in Guardian, on "The blind alleys of Labour's manifesto". They cannot say clearly what they would do in Government because their preparations for the election were not made with that eventuality in mind. He is struck by the cynicism of Labour. "What we will do, they roughly say, is what we can get away with at the time. Meanwhile, look at our pretty faces."

Independent leads with "Alliance split over coalition with Thatcher" and "poll puts Tories in a solid lead". Norman Tebbit tried to influence LWT's 'Weekend World' programme planning.

David Steel interviewed on the "Thatcher factor" in Independent; news story says he rules out idea of coalition government led by you.

Independent leader says the Alliance are on the horns of a dilemma. The hope of a hung Parliament is not great since there are few signs of the Tory vote falling below 38%.

Peter Jenkins says the latest NOP makes the talk of hung Parliaments somewhat academic and says his own little poll confirmed NOP not Gallup.

Times leads with latest polls bringing election battle to life, with Kinnock trying to drive a wedge in Alliance.

Geoffrey Smith, in Times, says Labour still has no serious expectation of an overall majority but there will be a feeling of anti-climax if it achieves less than a hung Parliament.

Ronald Butt, in Times, says Owen should come off the fence and find a way of explaining that Labour is the common enemy. So far the Conservatives have run an appalling campaign and let Labour get away with a bogus vision of a future in which hospitals and schools will have money lavished on them. So far the Alliance and Tories have been their own worst enemies.

Times leader, headed "Fight on the issues", says a vote for Labour this time is a vote for, among other things, an end to deterrence; inflation as a deliberate aim; putting unions back above the law and party control of the police. You should fight this election on the issues.

FT leads with Conservatives under pressure for the first time as polls show rivals gaining.

BERNARD INGHAM