

YouGov / Mail on Sunday Survey Results

Politics

Prepared for the Mail on Sunday

Sample Size: 1748

Fieldwork: 17-18 September 2004

| | % |
|---|-----|
| MPs have voted to ban fox-hunting with hounds. Do you support or oppose this ban? | |
| Support | 61% |
| Oppose | 30% |
| Don't know | 9% |

The House of Lords has consistently opposed a ban on fox-hunting. To overcome this opposition, the government has decided to use the 'Parliament Act', which allows the House of Commons to over-rule the Lords and, after a year's delay, pass laws that do not have the Lords' backing. This is only the fourth time in the last half century that a Government has used the Parliament Act in this way.

Do you think it is right or wrong for the House of Commons to over-rule the House of Lords on this occasion?

| | |
|------------|-----|
| Right | 52% |
| Wrong | 39% |
| Don't know | 9% |

When MPs voted this week on fox-hunting, it was a "free vote", which means that MPs vote according to their conscience, rather than according to party instructions. Tony Blair did not vote in this debate, using the time instead to take part in meetings in Downing Street.

Do you think Mr Blair should have voted, or was it reasonable for him to stay in Downing Street?

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Should have voted | 67% |
| Reasonable to stay in Downing Street | 28% |
| Don't know | 5% |

In general, do you think the MPs who support the ban on fox-hunting are motivated mainly by concern for animal welfare, or mainly to fight a 'class war' against people who go fox-hunting?

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Animal welfare | 35% |
| 'Class war' | 33% |
| Both equally | 23% |
| Don't know | 9% |

In the past, Mr Blair has declared his support for a ban on fox-hunting. Do you think he did this mainly because he genuinely believes that fox-hunting is wrong, or mainly to please Labour MPs and party members?

| | |
|---|-----|
| Genuinely believes fox-hunting is wrong | 28% |
| Please Labour MPs and party members | 51% |
| Both equally | 12% |
| Don't know | 9% |

How much respect do you think Tony Blair has for individual civil liberties?

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Too much respect | 4% |
| About the right amount | 40% |
| Too little respect | 42% |
| Don't know | 14% |

And how much respect do you think Michael Howard, the Conservative leader, has for individual civil liberties?

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Too much respect | 3% |
| About the right amount | 36% |
| Too little respect | 30% |
| Don't know | 31% |

Which of these views do you most agree with?

| | |
|--|------------|
| 'The Government promised to ban fox-hunting. It's important that it does what it promised.' | 59% |
| 'Irrespective of what it promised, the Government should concentrate on other issues and not waste time on fox-hunting.' | 37% |
| Don't know | 3% |

Do you agree or disagree with this statement: 'The government is out of touch with people who live in rural areas and doesn't understand their grievances.'

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Agree strongly | 25% |
| Tend to agree | 25% |
| Tend to disagree | 26% |
| Disagree strongly | 13% |
| Don't know | 11% |

Supporters of hunting demonstrated outside Parliament last week. From what you saw and read of the demonstration do you believe the police...

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Over-reacted | 35% |
| Did not act toughly enough | 21% |
| Got the balance about right | 33% |
| Don't know | 12% |

How much sympathy do you have for the demonstrators' anger?

| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| A great deal of sympathy | 15% |
| A fair amount of sympathy | 22% |
| Not much sympathy | 29% |
| No sympathy at all | 32% |
| Don't know | 3% |

Which one of these do you think the protestors were mainly trying to do?

| | |
|---|------------|
| Protect jobs | 11% |
| Preserve traditions and a rural way of life | 40% |
| Maintain a cruel pastime | 30% |
| Protest generally against Tony Blair and the Government | 15% |
| Don't know | 4% |

Some demonstrators managed to enter the House of Commons during the fox-hunting debate. Do you believe security in the Commons to be?

| | |
|-------------|------------|
| Very good | 0% |
| Fairly good | 9% |
| Fairly bad | 28% |
| Very bad | 58% |
| Don't know | 4% |

Which of these words best describes your reaction when you first heard the news about the demonstrators in the chamber of the HoC?

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Anger | 9% |
| Humour | 36% |
| Disbelief | 50% |
| Don't know | 5% |

Which of these statements do you most agree with?

| | |
|---|------------|
| 'It is wrong for the anti-fox-hunting majority in the House of Commons to impose their will on the minority of citizens who take part in fox hunts' | 29% |
| 'It is right for the ban on fox-hunting to go ahead because it is supported by a clear majority of MPs' | 57% |
| Don't know | 14% |

Would you personally be willing to break a law that had been passed by Parliament but which you believed to be wrong?

| | |
|---|------------|
| Yes – I would be willing to defy a bad law even if it was supported by most MPs | 34% |
| No – in a democracy, even bad laws should be obeyed | 50% |
| Don't know | 16% |

Do you think the United States and Britain were right or wrong to take military action against Iraq?

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Right | 38% |
| Wrong | 52% |
| Don't know | 10% |

Thinking back to the war, do you think that at the time, Tony Blair genuinely believed what he told the public about Saddam's 'weapons of mass destruction', or did he deliberately distort the evidence in order to exaggerate the threat posed by Iraq?

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Genuinely believed what he said | 45% |
| Distorted the evidence | 47% |
| Don't know | 7% |

Do you believe Britain should continue to keep troops in Iraq, or should they now be withdrawn?

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Keep troops in Iraq | 38% |
| Withdraw troops | 54% |
| Don't know | 8% |

Cherie Blair has written a book on Prime Ministerial spouses - the first such spouse to do so while in office. Do you approve or disapprove of her doing this?

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Approve | 33% |
| Disapprove | 37% |
| Don't know | 30% |

It has been revealed that Cherie Blair may receive up to £30,000 for each speaking engagement she undertakes in the United States. Do you approve or disapprove of such payments?

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Approve | 31% |
| Disapprove | 55% |
| Don't know | 14% |

One of her former aides has suggested that the wife of the Prime Minister should be an official post – unpaid, but with its own staff and diary. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Support | 25% |
| Oppose | 57% |
| Don't know | 18% |

Mrs Blair has said it can be difficult 'keeping all the balls in the air' combining her work as a barrister, mother and being the PM's wife? From what you have seen and read of her do you believe her job to be...

| | |
|------------------|------------|
| Very difficult | 20% |
| Fairly difficult | 43% |
| Fairly easy | 19% |
| Very easy | 7% |
| Don't know | 11% |

Do you believe she has exploited her position as the Prime Minister's wife?

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Yes, exploited it improperly | 30% |
| Yes, exploited it, but not improperly | 41% |
| No, not exploited it | 23% |
| Don't know | 6% |

Which of these do you believe is the best role model for a Prime Minister's spouse?

| | |
|----------------|------------|
| Denis Thatcher | 29% |
| Cherie Blair | 27% |
| Norma Major | 22% |
| Don't know | 22% |