

# PAY EQUALITY FOR WOMEN FAVORED BY 60 PER CENT.

## Result Of Australia's First Gallup Poll

Should women receive the same pay as men for doing similar work? As a result of women's increasingly active part in our wartime economy keen interest is again being taken in the question.

It was put to a representative cross-section of the community recently in the first Gallup Poll to be held in Australia.

Nearly 60 per cent. of those interviewed declared that they favored equal pay for women.

This poll was conducted by Australian Public Opinion Polls (the Gallup Method), and the analysis of the answers throws an interesting light upon the views held by people of all occupations and grades of income.

Wording of the first question was:—"Women's Pay—Do you favor equal pay for men and women doing the same work?" Any spontaneous comments were recorded with the answers.

This table shows that nearly 60 per cent. of the cross-section interviewed were in favor of equal pay. Only 33 per cent. were against the idea and 8 per cent. were undecided. Apart from the undecided people, equality of pay was supported by six out of 10 men and seven out of every 10 women interviewed.

**Australia-wide opinion**

Favor equal pay . . . . .	59 per cent.
Against equal pay . . . . .	33 per cent.
Undecided . . . . .	8 per cent.
100 per cent.	

Opposition was strongest by better off people, among whom relatively few women work. A common reason given for a "no" answer was that "woman's place is in the home." Some thought that women were temperamentally and physically not so fitted for wage earning.

Those in favor of equality usually based their decisions on the arguments of equal rights and the need for protecting wage standards. The second argument is reflected in the fact that

working people are strongest supporters of equality of pay.

**How People in Different Circumstances Look at the Question**

	Favor Equal Pay		Against Equal Pay		Undecided
	P.c.	P.c.	P.c.	P.c.	
Well-to-do . . . . .	36	58	6		
Comfortably off . . . . .	53	41	6		
Artisans, etc. . . . .	63	28	9		
Poor . . . . .	68	26	6		

People in the lower income groups who said "No" to the question often based their decision on the assumption that most women have not the same responsibilities as men. On the other hand, "Yes" votes were frequently cast on the grounds that many working women have dependants.

Farmers, being far removed from the workshops and offices where men and women work shoulder to shoulder, were slightly less favorable to equal pay, but a substantial majority supported the idea.

**Attitudes of People in Different Localities**

	Favor Equal Pay		Against Equal Pay		Undecided
	P.c.	P.c.	P.c.	P.c.	
Capital Cities . . . . .	56	32	10		
Other cities & towns . . . . .	61	34	5		
Rural . . . . .	56	33	6		

Two out of three supporters of the Labor Party voted "Yes" on the question. Non-Labor people who had formed opinions on the subject were five to four in favor of equality.

**Attitudes of Party Supporters**

	Favor Equal Pay		Against Equal Pay		Undecided
	P.c.	P.c.	P.c.	P.c.	
Labor voters . . . . .	66	26	8		
Other voters . . . . .	52	42	6		

## OTHER FINDINGS LATER

Other questions included in the same survey dealt with compulsory saving, official representation in Russia, how people felt about the last Government's handling of our war effort, Australian representation at meetings of the British War Cabinet, an all-party wartime Government, professional sport during wartime, experience with price control, and preference for taxation or inflation. Findings of the poll on these figures will be published as they become available.

It cannot be guaranteed that the poll gives exactly the same result as a full and expensive referendum. But the Gallup method in America and England has been proved to be a good indicator, with a margin of error of only a small percentage.

The Gallup method, in brief, consists of obtaining opinions by personal interview, from a typical cross-section of people in all walks of life; in the various localities throughout Australia; and in different economic circumstances; in as nearly as possible the same proportions as they exist in the population as a whole.

Interviewers are warned against any voice inflection or action that might bias people's replies. They are instructed to repeat the question, if need be, in the exact words; but under no circumstances to amplify or explain it.

Pros and cons of public opinion polls have been extensively studied in various research foundations, and extensive literature on the subject exists. All this knowledge and experience has been carefully applied to the Australian organization, in the creation of which The Herald took the initiative, co-operating later with newspapers in the other States. It is proposed to conduct a series of Australia-wide polls on

important public questions to help indicate what is in the public's mind.

Australian Public Opinion Polls (the Gallup Method) is affiliated with the British and American Gallup Polls. Its operations are open to full investigation by any reputable body.

It is not suggested that the leaders of Australia should blindly follow poll findings. Popular opinion is sometimes not fully informed. But the polls will add to the evidence on which those with the responsibility of leadership base their estimates of public reaction. Moreover, the leaders can take steps to correct misunderstanding, where it appears to exist.