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WHAT DO WE THINK?

A survey of white opinion
on foreign policy issues

No. 4

Analysed by
ANDRÉ DU PISANI

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The first three surveys of white opinion on foreign policy issues, also entitled What Do We Think?, were published by the SAIIA in 1982, 1984, and 1986. The present Paper is the fourth in a biennial series of similar surveys.

It should be noted that any opinions expressed in this Paper are the responsibility of the author and not of the SAIIA.

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INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth in a series of biennial surveys of white South African opinion on foreign and some domestic issues. Commissioned by the South African Institute of International Affairs, the first survey was conducted in 1982. All four surveys have been conducted for the SAIIA by Market and Opinion Surveys (Pty) Ltd (M & M) of Durbanville, Cape. It is the only series of its kind in South Africa that measures the opinion of white South Africans primarily on foreign policy issues. The major reasons for the restriction to Whites are financial constraints, the more central role played by Whites in the formulation of foreign policy, and the absence of a nationally representative black sample. In our fourth survey, we are in a position to confirm both the constants and shifts in opinion.

In view of recent political developments both inside and outside the country, in preparing the present study, we decided to amend or omit some questions that appeared in the 1986 survey. We have also added two new questions - one on the state of emergency, the other on the Group Areas Act. On the domestic front, the dominant issue since 1986 has been the protracted racial unrest and violence that followed after the introduction of the Tricameral Constitution in 1983, culminating in the declaration of a national state of emergency in June 1986. The South African economy has taken a battering, with an unprecedented drop in the rand's value against most major currencies and a soaring inflation rate. On top of this, South Africa has been plunged into a foreign debt crisis. Politically inspired economic pressure also manifested itself in growing disinvestment and sanctions from the United States and some West European states. The media was subjected to additional curbs by the state.

The Southern Africa region remained highly volatile. The Nkomati Accord limped along, South Africa's relations with Zimbabwe and Angola remained strained. Transborder raids against alleged ANC bases in Botswana added fuel to the fire. Angola captured the international spotlight, with South African forces deeply involved in that theatre. The intractable Namibian issue remained unresolved, seemingly inextricably linked to the situation in Angola.

It is against this background that the findings of our latest survey should be judged. On the whole, the 1988 results recall those of 1982. This means an even higher sense of external threat concurrent with a hardening of attitudes on domestic issues when compared to 1982, whereas in the 1986 survey, for example, a hardening on regional and international issues coexisted with more accommodating opinions on domestic political issues.

1. THE USE AND LIMITATIONS OF SURVEY RESEARCH

Social scientists make use of survey research as an aid towards understanding complex political and socio-economic relationships. From their findings they hope to develop a more comprehensive analysis of the process.

Various objections have been raised about the use of data based on survey research. Some of these are:

- * Most survey research is trivial - it explains the obvious and tends to derive conclusions which the well-informed with 'common sense' already know.
- * Human behaviour - and hence political behaviour - is in essence irrational and unpredictable.
- * Important aspects of political thought and behaviour are largely cognitive and highly individual, inaccessible to research and almost impossible to predict.
- * Researchers' own value systems and socialisation influence their perceptions, making objective 'scientific' analysis impossible.
- * The causes of social and political processes are so complex as to be unique - hence unpredictable.'

These and other objections are important and should be borne in mind by the analyst of survey data. Most of them, however, rest on a misunderstanding of the uses of survey research. Briefly, survey research (and other quantitative methods) enables us to search for (a) the typical, (b) variations from the typical, or (c) patterns of change.

To be sure, this type of research has inherent limitations for the analyst seeking to understand political values, motivations and patterns of thought. The point, however, is that survey research has not been designed for that purpose, therefore it has to be used with circumspection, and in combination with other methods of analysis.

It is not so much the size of the sample that is important, but whether it is actually representative of the population it purports to represent. The basic principle of scientific and meaningful sampling, therefore, is that the sample be truly random, i.e. that all persons in the sampling have an equal statistical chance of being included.

Another important criterion of sample size is the extent to which it is stratified. Typically, a stratified sample is made up of a certain proportion of the total, divided by variables such as the following: region, sex, age, environment (urban/rural), religion, income, education, and politics (party preference/support).

Finally, the type of questions and the way in which they are asked can - and do - affect responses.

2. SURVEY METHOD

As in our previous surveys, this one used self-completion questionnaires sent to M & M's nationally representative white consumer panel in January 1988. Eighty-six per cent of respondents returned the questionnaires in time for analysis - a sample of 1 725. It was necessary, as in the previous surveys, to apply a slight weighting procedure to ensure that the sample's demographic characteristics corresponded with those of the total white population. The weighting, however, has a negligible affect on the results. Another important point is that approximately one-third of M & M's panel of respondents is replaced each year.

The January 1988 sample was stratified according to standard population characteristics as follows:

TOTAL	NUMBER N=1725	PERCENTAGE (%) 100
SEX		
Male	864	50,1
Female	861	49,9
LANGUAGE		
Afrikaans	1011	58,6
English	714	41,4
AGE		
16-24	377	21,9
25-34	384	22,3
35-49	449	26,0
50+	516	29,9
HOUSEHOLD INCOME (per month)		
A R3500 and above	306	17,7
B R2000 - R3500	488	28,3
C R 900 - R2000	594	34,4
D below R 900	337	19,5
GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD		
Cape Province	480	27,82
Transvaal	936	54,26
Orange Free State	109	6,32
Natal	201	11,65
POLITICAL AFFILIATION		
National Party (NP)	744	43,13
Conservative Party (CP)	314	18,20
Progressive Federal Party (PFP)	151	8,75
* New Republic Party (NRP)	24	0,06
Independent (Ind)	179	10,37

* The NRP was recently disbanded.

Of the total sample of N=1725 respondents, 92,47% were registered voters. Of these, 7,53% (130) indicated that they would not vote if a general election were held now (i.e. January 1988).

Concerning the questionnaire, fourteen questions from the three previous surveys (1982, 1984, 1986) were retained (see Annexure). Eight questions from the 1986 survey that were not asked in 1982 or 1984 were repeated. Three changes were introduced to make it as topical as possible without affecting overall length.

As in the 1986 survey, questions directed at measuring respondents' knowledge of foreign affairs were replaced by questions and statements on topical foreign policy issues such as sanctions against South Africa and Soviet involvement in the region.

In line with the earlier pattern, the 1988 survey also included a number of statements/questions on contentious domestic political issues. Here too some changes were made - for example, a question on whether or not the Group Areas Act should be abolished has been included. As with the earlier surveys, we are not interested primarily in the responses on domestic issues per se; rather, the objective is to find statistically meaningful correlations between opinions on domestic and foreign policy issues - a consideration of especial relevance in South Africa, where the two are closely interlinked, perhaps more so than in most countries.

3. A NOTE ON THE ACQUISITION AND FORMATION OF POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS

The way people acquire and form political attitudes and opinions must be seen against a wider canvas - depicting or reflecting the relationship of individuals to their society and its dominant value systems. Political attitudes are formed surprisingly early in life, being shaped largely at two levels. One includes the family, the church, and the school, and the other includes peer group pressures, cultural organisations, political affiliation, and interest/pressure group activity. These and other agencies to a considerable degree shape the political culture within which people live.

In deeply divided societies like South Africa, where basic cleavages such as language, race, ethnicity and regionalism interpose, political attitudes and opinions are often reinforced by the nature of society itself. South Africa's international and regional position, especially in the context of growing isolation from the international community, is a further factor.

Political attitudes and opinions are also shaped and reinforced by the media; in particular, the visual media. In South Africa, the majority of South Africans do not have access to alternative sources of information and must content themselves with the received wisdom imparted by the totally controlled visual medium

and the partially restricted print medium. Clearly, this factor alone is of major importance in understanding South African political attitudes and opinions. The manner in which the media has portrayed the political conflict in South Africa - especially since 1984 and in the context of the national state of emergency introduced in June 1986 - is an important contributory element in moulding opinion.²

Finally, scholars in general accept that political attitudes and opinions are formed and influenced by what is called an 'Index of Political Predispositions' (IPP). The index is directly influenced by socio-economic status, level of education, and patterns of socialisation in the individual or group(s) in question.³

The political opinions expressed in this survey will be analysed and interpreted in the light of this brief theoretical introduction. To enable a more systematic analysis of the data, the various questions are grouped together under four not necessarily self-contained headings:

- (a) domestic and regional security issues
- (b) regional political and economic issues
- (c) international political and economic issues
- (d) domestic socio-political issues.

4. SOUTH AFRICA 'IN CRISIS': AMBIGUITIES IN WHITE OPINIONS ON DOMESTIC AND REGIONAL SECURITY

In line with earlier surveys, this survey contained a selection of questions/statements designed to gauge respondents' opinions on both current and future security developments in the country and in the region. These are of special importance because of the declaration of a national state of emergency in June 1986, and the state's coercive response to violence and popular dissent.

Under this rubric, the following questions/statements were included:

4.1. The 'terros' are coming

Responses to the statement: 'A terrorist/guerrilla war as in SWA/Namibia will in time also develop in South Africa' showed some interesting variations when compared with the percentage agreement and disagreement in our earlier surveys.

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
Agree	55,8	71,1	62,8	75,3
Disagree	39,6	27,9	35,4	22,8

The overall shift in opinion on this question as reflected in the four surveys has to be interpreted against the pattern of domestic violence, the growth and electoral advances of the white right-wing, and developments in the region. The response corresponds to the ebb and flow of domestic violence and unrest. The 71,1% agreement in the 1986 survey has to be explained in the context of escalating internal conflict and violence, and a corresponding deterioration in South Africa's regional and international position. The 1986 survey was undertaken in December 1985, before the introduction of the state of emergency, when many black townships were engulfed in unrest, and in anticipation of the introduction of further sanctions against South Africa.

The 1988 response, in contrast, reflects white opinions after the state of emergency was imposed in an attempt to contain the internal violence and a consequent decline in the latter's intensity and scope. Moreover, the state's control of the media prevented millions of South Africans from knowing what was really going on in the black townships.

The official version on sanctions and their implications for the South African economy and society has conceivably also influenced white opinions on this question. So has a more aggressive regional response by South Africa, especially in the Namibian and Angolan theatres.

The overall shifts in opinion between the four surveys were also reflected among the various subgroups represented in the sample, and variations of opinion within subgroups were not as pronounced on this issue as on many of the other questions. In the level of agreement with the statement, there was a margin of difference of only 1,5% between males and females (1986: 1,8%; 1984: 5,4%; and 1982: 0,2%), and 3,6% between Afrikaans- and English-speakers (1986: 3,3%; 1984: 9,4%; and 1982: 0,8%). Among respondents in the four provinces, in this survey agreement ranged narrowly between 55,4% in the Transvaal and 53,2% in the Orange Free State.

There were some variations, however, in the opinions of the different age groups. The percentages in agreement were as follows: Ages 16-24: 51,7%; 25-34: 64,3%; 35-49: 56,4%; 50+: 49,5%. Greatest support for the statement came from the 25-34 age group (64,3%) [1986: 82,1%], with the over-50s least convinced of the inevitability of a terrorist/guerrilla war (49,5% agreement). The response of the 16-24 age group is particularly interesting, as this group is more directly affected by national service than any other. The 25-34 age group represents that section of the white population just starting out on careers, and for males, with most of their military service behind them. It seems fairly predictable that they would hold a gloomier view of South Africa's future.

(% agreement)				
Political Affiliation*	1988	1986	1984	1982
NP	44,4	64,6	59,6	71,2
CP	65,7	78,9	78,2	----
PFP	58,9	78,3	68,0	81,0
NRP	66,6	62,9	51,2	76,9
Ind	68,7	----	----	----

* The HNP have been omitted throughout

These returns are consistent with the overall responses to this statement. They reaffirm the general trend that irrespective of party affiliation (and notwithstanding important variations), supporters of the various parties base their opinions on - and only have access to - essentially the same sources of information. The hegemony of the visual media and the control of print media suggest that the government's articulation of the threat facing South Africa has an independent influence on the opinions of Whites on these matters.

Significantly, socio-economic stratification does not detract from our findings. In contrast to the 1986 survey, the variation among the different socio-economic strata has actually narrowed.

(% agreement)							
Household Income							
1988				1986			
A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
58,8	61,6	48,7	54,3	80,6	73,4	64,8	67,1

4.2. The internal threat can never be taken too seriously - with some reservations

The respondents' belief in the capacity of the South African Police (SAP) and Defence Force (SADF) to control internal unrest 'indefinitely' has grown in comparison with the 1986 survey. Now 73,4% of the respondents 'definitely agree' with the statement, while 26,0% 'definitely disagree'. In the 1986 survey, 67,8% 'definitely agree', while 31,2% 'definitely disagree'.

This growing confidence is reflected among the supporters of the various political parties.

(% agreement)		
Political Affiliation	1988	1986
NP	85,9	78,3
CP	86,0	85,9
PFP	46,4	37,2
NRP	62,5	65,7
Ind	45,8	----

Consistent with responses in the 1986 survey (this question was not asked in the 1984 and 1982 surveys), supporters of the PFP and NRP (and now the Independents) are less certain of the ability of the coercive agents of the state to control internal unrest. This tendency is also maintained when language is used to stratify the sample. For example, 84,7% of Afrikaans-speakers 'definitely agree' with the statement (80,1% in 1986). In contrast, only 57,3% of English-speakers 'definitely agree' (52,1% in 1986).

The different age categories also register greater agreement, except in the case of the 16-24 age group, which has maintained the same level as that in 1986.

(% agreement)								
Age	1988				1986			
	16-24	25-34	35-49	50+	16-24	25-34	35-49	50+
	68,1	69,0	75,5	78,1	68,0	64,4	68,1	70,8

A similar pattern also emerges in terms of geographic and socio-economic stratification.

(% agreement)								
Household Income	1988				1986			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
	66,4	68,2	79,8	75,4	52,3	66,3	76,8	72,7

To summarise, these responses reflect the extent to which the second state of emergency and the state's concomitant repressive measures - notably against extra-parliamentary opposition organisations and the 'alternative' media - have exercised an independent influence on white political thinking, especially on domestic security issues. Having said that, a note of caution seems in order: many Whites may have become complacent, lulled into thinking that 'normality' has returned to black townships and areas. Such a perception seems understandable in the context of a state of emergency which reinforced the 'separate realities' experienced by Black and White in this country as a consequence of decades of apartheid rule.

A statement related to the above asserted that 'The State of Emergency regulations will stop the spread of ANC influence among black South Africans'. Although not included in any of the previous surveys, it served a useful comparative purpose in this survey and accordingly warrants analysis.

Responses to this statement illustrate some of the anxieties and ambiguities that characterise white threat perceptions. In marked contrast to the responses to the previous question, only 42,7% male and 40,7% female respondents 'definitely agree' with the statement. Political stratification was equally revealing.

<u>Political Affiliation</u>	<u>1988</u>	
	<u>Agreement</u>	<u>Disagreement</u>
NP	54,3	44,6
CP	46,5	51,6
PFP	15,9	83,4
NRP	25,0	75,0
Ind	22,4	77,1

Language and age stratification show a similar pattern of response. 49,6% of Afrikaans-speakers agreed with the statement, while 30,6% of English-speakers indicated a similar opinion.

(% agreement)				
<u>Age (1988)</u>	<u>16-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-49</u>	<u>50+</u>
	31,6	40,4	39,2	52,1

In terms of geographic stratification, the Orange Free State - inclined to hold more conservative opinions on most questions - showed a 49,5% agreement. The Cape and Transvaal both recorded 40,4%. Natal respondents registered 47,2% agreement.

Socio-economic stratification reaffirmed a similar pattern of response.

(% agreement)				
<u>Household Income (1988)</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>
	31,4	40,7	48,1	41,0

An analysis of responses to this question suggests the following conclusions. First, the ambiguity of the word 'influence' compounded the statement. 'Influence' is one of those political concepts capable of many different interpretations. Secondly, party political affiliation and language are substantial variables affecting white political attitudes. Thirdly, the ANC is perceived by many Whites (and also black South Africans) as a movement that wields considerable symbolic power and enjoys a certain

international legitimacy.⁴ Fourthly, the events following the release of ANC leader Govan Mbeki and popular black reaction to this, reaffirmed white perceptions that the ANC is a force to be reckoned with. Finally, the ANC's capacity to mobilise popular support and to engage in military operations inside the country - evidenced by an increase of bomb explosions in urban centres and of landmine incidents, notably in the white commercial farming sector in the Northern and Western Transvaal.⁵

4.3. The 'Reds' are coming - and they're taller than most!

Anti-communism was and still is one of the régime's most effective 'cold war' strategies, both in domestic and regional policy, designed to discredit 'enemies' and legitimise the use of coercive state power. The manipulation of this threat perception, ably assisted by the state-controlled media, has acquired a symbolic status out of all proportion to the realities of Soviet involvement.

In response to the question: 'The communist threat against South Africa is exaggerated by the Government', a predictable and remarkably stable response was recorded. This pattern was maintained among the subgroups represented in the sample, with considerable divergence coming from supporters of the different political parties and from the two main language groups.

Since the 1984 survey, male and female respondents showed a marked consistency in agreeing with the statement.

(% agreement)

1988		1986		1984	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
24,6	16,6	21,4	14,9	23,2	14,4
<u>average</u>		<u>average</u>		<u>average</u>	
20,6		18,2		18,8	

Consistent with other statements on national and regional security, English-speakers (as indicated in the table) were less inclined to disagree with the statement. Nonetheless, they also seem to take the communist threat against South Africa - and the government's portrayal thereof - seriously.

(% agreement)

Language	1988		1986		1984	
	Afr	Eng	Afr	Eng	Afr	Eng
	10,8	34,5	12,6	25,3	11,1	29,0

Political affiliation does seem to be an important factor in shaping white opinions on this question. PFP supporters indicated by far the most agreement with the statement, while the position of supporters of the now defunct NRP are the most ambiguous.

(% agreement)					
<u>Political Affiliation</u>					
<u>1988</u>	<u>NP</u>	<u>CP</u>	<u>PFP</u>	<u>NRP</u>	<u>IND</u>
	9,6	8,9	82,2	12,5	38,6
<u>1986</u>	<u>NP</u>	<u>CP</u>	<u>PFP</u>	<u>NRP</u>	<u>HNP</u>
	7,1	16,5	40,8	8,6	21,3
<u>1984</u>	<u>NP</u>	<u>CP</u>	<u>PFP</u>	<u>NRP</u>	<u>HNP</u>
	8,9	11,9	51,6	22,6	18,8
<u>1982</u>	<u>NP</u>	<u>CP</u>	<u>PFP</u>	<u>NRP</u>	
	6,0	--	43,9	31,5	

Responses to this statement expressed by age stratification also indicate that the majority of Whites are 'captives' of the government's anti-communist propaganda.

(% agreement)				
<u>Age</u>	<u>16-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-49</u>	<u>50+</u>
<u>1988</u>	18,5	24,2	20,5	19,4
<u>1986</u>	19,2	17,7	20,2	16,0
<u>1984</u>	9,8	16,0	22,0	18,0
<u>1982</u>	----	----	----	----

Expressed in terms of socio-economic indicators, the majority of respondents disagreed with the statement, implying that the manner in which the government and state-controlled media articulate the communist threat is widely accepted.

(% agreement)				
<u>Household Income</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>
<u>1988</u>	21,2	23,0	15,5	15,8
<u>1986</u>	22,7	20,4	14,6	14,7
<u>1984</u>	42,0	20,1	18,4	14,6
<u>1982</u>	21,7	14,8	19,0	15,4

An interesting feature of the responses expressed in the above table is that respondents in the A category (with a monthly income in excess of R3 500) have shifted their opinions over time to differ only marginally from those in the B category (monthly income between R2 000 and R3 500).

An interesting variation in geographic attitudes is that respondents in the Orange Free State showed the lowest percentage agreement with this statement (1988: 8.3%; 1986: 12,9%; 1984: 16,2%). No important variations were recorded by the other three provinces, although a slightly bigger percentage agreed with the statement than in 1986. In the Cape Province, 'agreement' rose from 21,6% in 1986 to 24,8% in 1988. In the Transvaal, an increase from 21,6% in 1986 to 24,8% was recorded. Natal showed a 3,3% variation - up from 24,1% in 1986 to 27,4%.

Responses to this statement suggest that the government's simplistic anti-Soviet propaganda works for the majority of Whites. Paradoxically, this may complicate matters for Pretoria and the security establishment in attempts to deal with the Soviet Union more realistically, especially on regional matters such as Angola.

4.4. The hawks are spreading their wings

South Africa, in recent years, has followed an aggressive regional strategy, variously termed 'destabilisation' or 'coercive incorporation'.⁶ Pretoria has applied both military and economic pressure against suspected 'terrorists' - whether SWAPO or the ANC - and their hosts in neighbouring states.

All four surveys have produced consistently high positive responses to the following statement: 'South Africa should militarily attack terrorist/guerrilla bases in its neighbouring states'. In 1982, 81,1% of respondents agreed. The 1984 and 1986 surveys returned an almost identical figure - 81,6%. The percentage disagreement therefore remained constant at roughly 17%. In this survey, 63,0% agreed, with 32,4% in disagreement.

In contrast to the three previous surveys, the intensity of agreement has changed. In 1982 and 1984, 60% of those supporting the statement expressed 'definite' agreement. This dropped to 43,7% in 1986, and even lower to 27,9% in this survey. The latter is a potentially important shift, especially if it is maintained in future surveys. Nonetheless, a far more meaningful and sustained pattern is that not one of the subgroups based on sex, language, age, or province returned a level of agreement under 60% in any of the four surveys.

In 1988, variation in the extent of agreement is most pronounced between Afrikaans- and English-speakers (86,2% and 72,2% respectively), and between supporters of the different political parties - confirming a trend in all earlier surveys. Political stratification is as follows:

(% agreement)				
<u>Political Affiliation</u>				
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
NP	86,5	89,5	83,4	86,2
CP	91,1	92,4	96,6	(NCP) 96,9
PFP	45,7	61,3	70,9	73,2
NRP	79,2	88,5	79,9	84,6

The above table shows that supporters of the NP and the CP have customarily supported transborder military operations against terrorist/guerrilla bases. PFP supporters, on the other hand, showed greatest divergence on this question.

The data suggests that the government's articulation of the security threat emanating from the region and the role of the state-controlled media in reinforcing this view has a direct bearing on the opinions of many white South Africans.

4.5. The dangerous world across the Limpopo

Opinions in response to the statement: 'The Government of Mr Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe constitutes a threat to South Africa's safety' have been maintained since the 1982 survey. On this issue, white South Africans have returned to their earlier high level of threat perception, no doubt assisted by the level of rhetoric that characterises bilateral relations between the two countries and, more recently, ANC insurgency from Zimbabwe.

The following table shows the number of respondents who agreed with the above statement (the figures in brackets indicate the proportion expressing 'definite' agreement).

(% agreement)				
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
	73,8	70,9	62,7	70,5
	(18,9)	(23,4)	(14,9)	(22,7)

Certain subgroups registered high levels of agreement with this statement, confirming the 1986 trend. These were the middle-income groups C (1988: 76,4%; 1986: 75,0%) and D (1988: 76,8%; 1986: 80,0%); females (1988: 76,9%; 1986: 75,5%); the 16-24 age group (1988: 82,2%; 1986: 74,5%); and Afrikaans-speakers (1988: 80,0%; 1986: 74,2%).

These responses are in line with those to other statements/questions on internal and regional security, and confirm the combined impact of the state of emergency, media control and manipulation, and the symbolic impact of ANC guerrilla operations on white political opinions. While these figures suggest interesting variations of opinion within the different subgroups, for example, 14,8% more Afrikaans-speakers than English-speakers agreed with the statement (7,5% more in 1986; 10,8% in 1984; and 14,5% in 1982). Among the income groups, the A category showed the lowest level of agreement (66,1%). The majority of respondents share an anxiety about the 'dangerous world across the Limpopo'.

In line with previous surveys, this statement again evoked variation between supporters of the different political parties.

(% agreement).

Political Affiliation

	1988	1986	1984	1982
NP	78,4	71,5	63,3	78,8
CP	87,5	76,4	83,1	(NCP) 88,3
PPF	43,7	59,2	52,4	55,4
NRP	54,1	80,0	56,0	62,5
Ind	62,6	----	----	----

PPF supporters usually have been considerably less threat conscious (on this specific issue) than followers of the other political parties. At the other end of the spectrum, CP and NP supporters have maintained a very high level of threat awareness.

Conversely, the more 'liberal' respondents are relatively less threat conscious. An interesting variation on the 1986 Survey is that supporters of both the CP and NP are marginally more concerned about 'the communist threat against South Africa' - CP 89,2%; NP 89,6% - than about a 'black peril' - CP 87,5%; NP 78,4%. In 1986, slightly more supporters of these two parties were concerned about the threat from across the Limpopo than with a 'red menace'.

In the responses to this statement and the one on the communist threat, there is an overlap in white threat perceptions. It seems that a majority of white respondents do not draw a clear-cut distinction between 'communism' and black rule in Zimbabwe. White South Africans may well suspect some official Zimbabwean complicity in assisting the ANC - widely presented as a 'communist organisation' - in its campaign of 'armed struggle' against the present socio-political order in South Africa.

4.6. Post-Nkomati - the erosion of trust

In response to the statement: 'Mozambique can be trusted to carry out the terms of the Nkomati Non-Aggression Treaty with South Africa', a growing number of respondents reacted negatively. In sharp contrast to the responses recorded in the 1984 survey - conducted a month after the signing of the Accord - when nearly two-thirds of the respondents agreed with the statement, the level of agreement declined to a mere 30,6% in 1986 and to an all-time low of 17,7% in this survey.

Consistent with 1986 responses, all the non-party subgroups indicated disagreement of over 60% in 1988.

	(% disagreement)							
	Sex		Language		Age			
	Male	Female	Afr	Eng	16-24	25-34	35-49	50+
<u>1988</u>	74,5 (79,4)	84,4	83,6	73,5	72,4	80,7	82,8	80,8
<u>1986</u>	61,2 (69,5)	77,8	74,2	63,0	70,4	72,1	69,1	66,3
<u>1984</u>	60,7	72,9	72,1	59,6	65,0	70,4	----	----

The socio-economic subgroups recorded low levels of agreement.

Household Income	(% agreement)			
	A	B	C	D
<u>1988</u>	21,5	16,8	15,0	20,2
<u>1986</u>	37,9	30,9	27,3	27,4
<u>1984</u>	23,6	25,3	26,5	32,1

These responses confirm and strengthen a trend evident in the 1986 survey, and show an erosion of trust among the majority of Whites in either the ability or willingness of the Mozambican government to carry out the terms of the Nkomati Accord. A similar pattern emerges when the sample is stratified in terms of province.

	Political Affiliation					
	1988		1986		1984	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
NP	18,8	79,5	33,8	63,6	73,9	24,2
CP	8,9	87,3	10,0	88,5	31,9	68,2
PFP	41,0	55,0	41,4	56,2	71,3	26,5
NRP	16,7	79,2	28,6	65,7	72,7	25,0
Ind	14,6	83,8	-----	-----	-----	-----

(% disagreement)				
Age	1988	1986	1984	1982
16-24	86,2	82,8	63,6	55,9
25-34	75,8	74,2	72,3	51,2
35-49	74,6	73,1	76,8	55,4
50+	75,4	77,4	76,0	47,0
Household income				
A	75,8	59,9	54,3	49,6
B	74,2	76,3	54,1	55,9
C	81,4	83,4	52,6	51,2
D	77,7	85,7	59,0	55,4

The higher levels of disagreement, when contrasted to the 1984 and 1982 surveys, especially in the 16-24 and 25-34 age groups, relates to the militarisation of South African society, growing social polarisation, and the continued involvement of the SADF in northern Namibia and Angola. It seems safe to assume that the experience of the 'operational area' and concomitant anti-SWAPO propaganda together influence the opinions of white males on security issues such as this.

The return to a semblance of domestic stability, especially after the introduction of the second state of emergency in June 1986, has arguably enhanced the belief among the different white income groups in general, and the two top income groups in particular, in the capacity of the security forces to deal effectively with any threat emanating from SWAPO (or elsewhere on the African landmass, for that matter).

One of the most interesting responses to emerge in the 1984 survey concerned the issue of Pretoria talking to SWAPO. In 1982, roughly a third of the respondents had supported the statement: 'South Africa should negotiate directly with SWAPO to reach a settlement in SWA/Namibia'. In 1984 the figure increased to just over 50%. The 1986 survey showed a marginal increase to 52,7%. In this survey, agreement has increased even further to 57%.

(% agreement)				
Language	1988	1986	1984	1982
Afrikaans	41,4	41,8	45,7	30,9
English	68,1	66,7	57,8	46,9

The 1988 survey indicates the biggest margin of difference in the two language groups' support for talks with SWAPO (26,7%) than in any of the earlier surveys (24,9% in 1986). Whereas the extent of English-speakers' agreement with the statement shows a steady increase over the six-year period, Afrikaner support at first increased considerably (between 1982-1984), but has dropped by 4,3% since 1984. This slight

hardening of Afrikaner attitudes is in line with their increased threat perception.

Variations among the different age groups also show interesting changes.

(% agreement)				
Age	1988	1986	1984	1982
16-24	57,8	68,9	58,9	60,2
25-34	56,0	53,0	48,0	54,3
35-49	62,3	46,1	45,5	50,2
50+	52,3	45,8	51,5	52,4

The response of the 16-24 age group is politically meaningful, considering that the majority of South Africa's military conscripts - many of whom have seen service in the Namibian and Angolan theatres - are drawn from this group. Moreover, especially important politically, the level of agreement within this subgroup has declined considerably (by 11,1%) since the 1986 survey.

Similar variations were recorded among the four income groups, especially among the highest and second-highest groups.

(% agreement)		
Household income	1988	1986
A	54,6	61,6
B	61,7	51,8
C	55,9	48,5
D	54,3	51,2

Variation in the opinions of the highest income group (A), most probably relate to the introduction of a national state of emergency in June 1986 and the return to 'stability' within the country. This in turn seems to have strengthened a belief in the capacity of the state to maintain stability, and a concomitant view that it is now less urgent to negotiate directly with SWAPO to reach a settlement in SWA/Namibia. The tendency by government spokesmen and the official media to portray the SADF in heroic terms - typical of the frontier army tradition? - and to shield its activities from the public eye, except in carefully composed segments, has conceivably also played a rôle.

There were no meaningful variations in the responses from the four provinces in 1982 or 1984. In the 1982 survey, respondents were uncompromising in their views, but moderated these considerably in 1984. A more accommodating view prevailed in the 1986 survey, although in 1988, this has returned to a less accommodating stance.

(% agreement)				
Geographic spread	1988	1986	1984	1982
Cape	42,5	51,9	55,7	38,9
Transvaal	38,7	51,7	47,8	38,3
OFS	23,0	41,2	53,2	26,6
Natal	53,2	63,7	52,0	38,9

The resurgence of the white right-wing, dramatically emphasised when the CP replaced the PFP as the official opposition in the House of Assembly after the all-white elections of 6 May 1987, has played an important rôle in hardening white attitudes and opinions on this issue. (A similar trend has emerged in statements on the ANC.)

Among party followers, PFP, NRP and Independent supporters returned a level of agreement higher than the overall figure of 40,5%.

(% agreement)				
Political Affiliation	1988	1986	1984	1982
NP	32,6	43,7	47,8	30,0
CP	26,1	26,1	38,8	(NCP) 16,8
PFP	77,5	83,7	67,6	51,6
NRP	54,2	45,7	56,0	35,6
Ind	66,0	----	----	----

4.8. No more money for Pretoria's Praetorians - depending on who you vote for *

In view of white South Africans' pronounced perceptions of threat, we thought it appropriate to find out whether they believed the SADF had sufficient financial resources to protect South Africa's security. Overall response to the statement: 'The government does not yet spend enough money on defence' is as follows:

	1988	1986	1984	1982
Agree	27,7	33,0	38,4	41,6
Disagree	70,7	63,1	59,2	56,0

The figures show a steady drop in the number of people who regard defence expenditure as too low; in 1988, less than one-third of the respondents took this view. The converse is also true.

All four surveys reveal marked differences of opinion among the various subgroups. In the latest survey, 80,9% of

* The term 'praetorian' is borrowed from the Roman guard that made and unmade emperors.

English-speakers disagreed with the statement (75% in 1986) against 63,6% of Afrikaans-speakers (53,8% in 1986).

The age groups disagreed with the statement.

(% disagreement)			
Age	1988	1986	1984
16-24	77,2	70,2	62,8
25-34	72,9	65,3	61,9
35-49	68,8	65,5	65,9
50+	66,1	63,8	56,3

A steady increase is again shown in the number of respondents maintaining that enough is being spent on defence. The response of the 16-24 age group is especially notable, probably explained in terms of their involvement in military training and operations.

The socio-economic groupings showed a similar response.

(% disagreement)		
Household income	1988	1986
A	72,5	69,5
B	74,0	70,5
C	63,3	55,5
D	77,7	53,6

An interesting feature is the change in white opinion within the lowest (D) income group, registering a 24,1% shift since 1986. This variation is largely the result of a real decline in living conditions and standards.

Political party supporters' percentage disagreement shows by implication that they think enough, perhaps even too much, is being spent currently on defence.

(% disagreement)				
Political Affiliation	1988	1986	1984	1982
NP	68,4	47,3	52,1	48,2
CP	49,6	35,1	44,0	(NCP) 30,3
PFP	93,4	85,5	80,4	79,0
NRP	70,8	60,0	36,9	61,5
Ind	79,9	----	----	----

Only PFP and NRP supporters responses conformed to the overall pattern. PFP views on this question were also consistent with their more moderate views on some earlier regional and security issues. The majority of NP and NRP supporters took the view that defence spending was sufficient - an opinion informed by both growing confidence

- (a) A concerted propaganda campaign by the state, directed against 'Marxist' Angola and the 'global imperialistic designs' of the Soviet Union and its socialist allies, notably Cuba.
- (b) The way in which South Africa's own military involvement in Angola is presented as necessary to protect western interests in the region in the light of the Soviet and Cuban presence.
- (c) The hidden nature of the Angolan war and the portrayal of South African forces in heroic terms, engaged in a fight against 'godless Marxism'.
- (d) The fact that the white electorate - and Parliament, for that matter - are deliberately being kept in the dark on the true costs involved.

5.2. Don't feed the hand that bites

The statement: 'South Africa should not export food to black states which support or harbour terrorists/guerrillas' has appeared in all the surveys.

The Republic's export of food to neighbouring black states who are believed to harbour insurgents operating inside South Africa has become a divisive issue in white politics in the 1980s. The HNP charged the government with indirectly feeding 'terrorists'. In 1985 this issue surfaced again as part of the wider question of economic pressure against neighbouring states suspected of harbouring ANC insurgents. The government imposed a virtual blockade against Lesotho - cutting off, among other things, vital food supplies - on precisely these grounds.

(% agreement)			
Sex	1988	1986	1984
Male	59,6	63,8	66,5
Average	66,6	69,9	68,4
Female	73,7	76,1	70,3
Language			
Afrikaans	70,2	73,2	71,5
English	61,6	65,4	64,2
Age			
16-24	65,8	67,2	65,5
25-34	63,5	74,4	73,2
35-49	71,7	68,3	69,3
50+	65,1	69,8	66,6
Household income			
A	68,7	64,6	63,2
B	62,1	67,3	65,4
C	73,3	74,3	71,5
D	60,2	73,0	72,4
Geographic spread			
Cape	66,2	68,5	63,4
Transvaal	68,5	72,5	67,5
OFS	59,7	70,2	71,0
Natal	63,2	62,0	60,5

Comparing the party responses, it is even more difficult to find a general pattern. Consider the following table showing their percentage agreement with the statement on food exports.

(% agreement)				
<u>Political Affiliation</u>				
	1988	1986	1984	1982
NP	66,6	72,3	66,9	75,7
CP	81,5	87,4	89,6	(NCP) 79,0
PFP	29,1	54,8	54,9	59,8
NRP	50,0	74,2	67,9	76,9
Ind	66,0	----	----	----

Only NP and NRP supporters followed the militancy/slight moderation/militancy cycle. PFP supporters are invariably less militant than followers of any of the other parties. CP supporters maintained an habitually high level of militancy, in line with other survey responses.

6. SOUTH AFRICA AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY - SOME POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

6.1. Maggie - still Top of the Pops

In the 1986 survey, respondents were asked to indicate agreement or disagreement with the statement that a number of foreign leaders 'are favourably disposed towards South Africa'. We repeated the statement in this survey. In order of favour, based on the percentage agreement with the statement, the six leaders were rated as follows:

<u>Leader</u>	1988	1986
Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher	92,3	86,3
President Ronald Reagan	78,7	86,0
Chancellor Helmut Kohl	58,0	----*
President Francois Mitterand	19,3	7,7
President Kenneth Kaunda	7,0	13,2
Prime Minister Bob Hawke	6,2	6,8

* Not included in 1986

Mrs Thatcher obviously still occupies the top slot in the popularity ratings. She has in fact strengthened her position. In the case of President Reagan, the introduction of limited sanctions by the US against South Africa in September 1985 and January 1986 accounts for the decline in his rating. Chancellor Kohl's opposition to sanctions account for his positive rating. Mr Hawke's low rating is a result of the perceived animosity of the Australian

government's opposition to apartheid. As in the 1986 survey, there were fewer doubts about Mr Hawke's attitude towards South Africa. Of the 90,8% of the respondents who disagreed with the statement, a full 88,3% expressed 'definite disagreement' - by far the highest proportion to select a definite response option to any of the six questions.

Interestingly, President Mitterand recorded a higher rating than in the 1986 survey. This is probably due to his decision not to introduce the same comprehensive sanctions as introduced by the US government. Chancellor Kohl's positive rating of 58% must also be seen in relation to his continued opposition to sanctions.

English- and Afrikaans-speakers rated the leaders as follows:

	<u>Reagan</u>	<u>Hawke</u>	<u>Thatcher</u>	<u>Mitterand</u>	<u>Kaunda</u>	<u>Kohl</u>
Afr	75,4	6,5	91,1	20,8	7,7	58,4
Eng	83,5	6,0	93,7	17,2	5,9	57,7

Responses recorded for the subgroups of age and income show a similar pattern. It is only among supporters of the various political parties that sharp differences of opinion are shown. The table indicates agreement with the statement that the six foreign leaders 'are favourably disposed toward South Africa'.

(% agreement)					
<u>Leader</u>	<u>NP (1986)</u>	<u>CP (1986)</u>	<u>PFPP (1986)</u>	<u>NRP (1986)</u>	<u>Ind</u>
Thatcher	93,9(90,3)	87,2(76,3)	97,3(89,3)	91,7(91,4)	97,8
Reagan	83,9(92,3)	69,1(83,4)	86,7(83,4)	87,5(97,1)	86,6
Kohl	62,2(----)	45,0(----)	----(----)	79,1(----)	74,3
Mitterand	21,1(7,0)	15,9(12,6)	27,1(5,1)	20,8(2,9)	12,8
Kaunda	7,8(12,8)	5,4(12,1)	9,3(11,3)	0,0(11,4)	3,4
Hawke	6,6(7,9)	6,1(9,5)	6,6(3,5)	12,5(0,0)	1,7

Conservative Afrikaners have traditionally harboured deep suspicions about American liberalism cum capitalism, seeing it as a conspiracy aimed at undermining white rule (synonymous with white survival) in South Africa.

6.2. On sanctions, retaliation and reform

The issue of international sanctions against South Africa has become increasingly salient, therefore we again included a number of statements on this topic.

Respondents were reminded that 'an increasing number of states are busy introducing some form of economic sanctions against South Africa', and were asked to respond to the statement: 'The South African economy is strong enough to prevent economic sanctions hurting our country'. Perhaps surprisingly, no less than 51,6% disagreed (71,0% in 1986), thus by implication believing that sanctions could indeed have damaging effects. Only 46,5% (27,3% in 1986) supported the contention.

The various subgroups agreed with the statement.

(% agreement)		
<u>Age</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>
16-24	50,2	21,2
25-34	39,6	23,0
35-49	44,3	28,4
50+	50,5	34,3
<u>Household income</u>		
A	39,6	20,5
B	38,9	22,0
C	55,0	33,3
D	48,7	36,1
<u>Language</u>		
Afrikaans	52,3	31,6
English	38,4	21,8

Supporters of political parties showed considerable variation.

(% disagreement)		
<u>Political Affiliation</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>
NP	46,1	66,5
CP	44,0	54,8
PFP	80,8	90,2
NRP	12,5	88,6
Ind	69,9	----

Supporters of the NP and the CP have the greatest faith in the South African economy's ability to withstand the harmful effects of sanctions. They are the least likely to be intimidated by sanctions, and their racial policies are the farthest removed from the international norms. At the other end of the spectrum, PFP supporters are overwhelmingly convinced of the damage that sanctions could inflict on the South African economy. In general, the data suggests a hardening of attitudes among a growing number of Whites - a more defiant mood against a 'meddling' international community. It may be that the relative freedom of speech

that persists in economic matters encourages overt dissent from the orthodox 'ons alleen' (we alone) line promoted officially.

As regards the non-party subgroups, it is instructive that the greatest measure of disagreement with the statement was found among the highest income group (A: 60,4%), with the lowest level in the second lowest income group (C: 41,2%). Ironically, those Whites who could least afford the financial consequences of sanctions seem least convinced of the economic harm of such measures. Conversely, those most likely to be affected financially (i.e. English-speaking PFP supporters) are the most aware of potentially damaging effect of sanctions. This may well be a reflection of the wide availability of more informative material to those in the upper income group.

In a subsequent statement, it was suggested that 'South Africa should refuse to sell its minerals to states that apply economic sanctions against it'. Of the 1 725 respondents, 57,1% supported the idea (56,8% in 1986), while 40,8% opposed it (40,4% in 1986). Respondents who endorsed the statement were fairly evenly divided between those who definitely agreed and those who were inclined to agree.

A breakdown by subgroups reveals interesting differences of opinion. Variations in the percentage agreement with the statement on mineral exports were most pronounced between Afrikaans- and English-speakers (61,2% and 51,3% respectively); the A and D income groups (61,8% and 46,0%); OFS and Natal (52,3% and 58,7%); and among political party supporters.

(% agreement)		
<u>Political Affiliation</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>
NP	57,7	61,5
CP	69,7	68,8
PFP	33,1	36,6
NRP	58,3	57,2
Ind	46,4	---

PFP and Independent supporters were the only subgroups in which a majority (63,5% and 53,6% respectively) disagreed with a ban on mineral exports, probably because they understand the costs such action would accrue. The response of CP supporters suggests some correlation between domestic conservatism and external hawkishness or militancy, as indicated in some of their earlier statements on domestic and regional security.

The final statement on the sanctions issue read: 'The only way in which South Africa can in the long run avoid tougher

economic sanctions is by granting equal political rights to Blacks'. In the 1986 survey, a majority of 54,3% supported this view, while 44,1% expressed disagreement. In this survey, only 41,5% supported this view, while 56,7% disagreed. This substantial variation in white opinion is the result of many factors, such as the growth in political support of right-wing parties; increased socio-political polarisation within the country, accompanied by a defiant mood against outside intervention and 'meddling'; and growing confidence in the ability of the state to maintain control in the face of domestic and outside opposition.

That this is a divisive issue is borne out by the responses from the different subgroups.

(% agreement)

<u>Sex</u>		<u>Language</u>	
Male	43,6	Afrikaans	27,8
Female	39,5	English	61,2
<u>Age</u>		<u>Household income</u>	
16-24	36,1	A	46,4
25-34	42,0	B	45,9
35-49	44,1	C	35,5
50+	42,8	D	41,3

Somewhat surprisingly, the two younger age categories (16-24 and 25-34) showed the lowest level of agreement. The two higher income groups also indicated a conservative response.

Political party responses highlighted the cleavages which exist within the white electorate on this issue.

<u>Political Affiliation</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>
NP	35,6	54,3
CP	7,3	9,5
PF	90,7	86,7
NRP	54,2	62,9
Ind	66,5	----

The hardening of NP and CP opinion supports our contention that white right-wingers are least amenable to foreign pressure. The official version to the effect that 'sanctions do not work' seems to have found fertile ground with the supporters of these two parties.

7. INTO SIEGE: PERCEPTIONS OF DOMESTIC CONFLICT

7.1. 'We have the happiest Africans in the world ... but we cannot trust them'

The four surveys all included this assertion: 'South Africa's Blacks have good reason to take up arms against the government' ('Blacks' in this context refers to black Africans only). The degree of agreement never exceeded 30%; in fact, the level of agreement has been steady since 1982 - (1982: 26,9%; 1984: 21,3%; 1986: 28,5%; 1988: 26,5%).

Significant differences of opinion showed in the language and party subgroups.

(% agreement)				
<u>Language</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
Afrikaans	17,6	20,0	11,3	13,9
English	39,1	39,4	34,8	44,9
<u>Political Affiliation</u>				
NP	18,9	19,1	11,9	9,8
CP	8,9	11,5	6,5	(NCP) 2,9
PFP	63,6	61,9	59,6	69,5
NRP	50,0	28,8	6,3	5,4
Ind	49,2	----	----	----

In this survey the different age, income and geographic subgroups also registered a low level of agreement with the statement.

(% agreement)		<u>Household income</u>	
<u>Age</u>			
16-24	35,5	A	24,2
25-34	30,5	B	32,3
35-49	23,7	C	23,0
50+	19,5	D	26,1
<u>Geographic spread</u>			
Cape		27,9	
Transvaal		25,9	
OFS		18,9	
Natal		29,9	

This leads us to the next issue: how Whites thought Blacks would behave in the event of war. The statement read: 'White South Africans cannot depend on the loyalty of black South Africans in the case of war against South Africa' (again the reference is to black Africans). The overall response in the four surveys is as follows:

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
Agree	56,0	56,2	59,2	61,6
Disagree	41,7	42,0	39,1	36,8

The figures show a consistent albeit small drop in the number of Whites supporting the statement. These findings do not fit the pattern of threat perception identified in earlier surveys. In each of the surveys, more than one-third of respondents thought that Blacks would join Whites in the event of war against South Africa, which tallies with the opinion that over 70% of Whites felt that Blacks did not have reason to rise against the government.

In all four surveys, differences in response among various subgroups were considerably narrower on this issue than on most of the previous statements. For example, in 1988 the margin of difference in the level of agreement between English- and Afrikaans-speakers with the statement on black loyalty in a possible war was only 5,9% (2,2% in 1986). Among the non-party subgroups, the level of agreement was remarkably consistent.

<u>(% agreement)</u>		<u>Geographic spread</u>	
<u>Household income</u>		Cape	60,0
A	54,9	Transvaal	54,2
B	59,0	OFS	55,2
C	56,3	Natal	54,7
D	52,5		

The youngest age group (16-24) registered the lowest level of agreement (47,8%). The 25-34 group recorded 53,1%; the 35-49 group 60,1% and the 50+ group 60,3%. Perhaps the 16-24 group's more direct exposure to military service accounts for their relative pessimism.

Party supporters indicated agreement as follows:

<u>(% agreement)</u>				
<u>Political Affiliation</u>				
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
NP	56,0	52,6	52,1	52,7
CP	60,2	61,8	67,2	(NCP) 69,5
PFP	55,6	55,9	75,6	74,6
NRP	58,4	71,4	54,8	72,1
Ind	60,3	----	----	----

The consistently low level of agreement returned by NP followers suggests that many still subscribe to the paternalistic assumption of black loyalty in times of crisis, as mentioned earlier in this section. CP supporters were the only other subgroup to maintain their customary view.

Fluctuations in opinion among supporters of the PFP and NRP are largely due to the relative decline in their political importance.

7.2. Blacks in Parliament? Yes, but it depends on how...

An issue of major political import concerns the parliamentary representation of Blacks. In the 1982 survey the statement read: 'The time has arrived for Coloureds and Indians to sit with Whites in the same Parliament'. Because Coloureds and Indians were then about to enter Parliament, the statement was rephrased in the 1984 survey: 'It is to be welcomed that Coloured and Indians will serve with Whites in the same Parliament'. For the 1986 and 1988 surveys, the statement was again amended to reflect current political debate: 'Blacks should serve with Whites, Coloureds and Indians in the same Parliament'. While due allowance should be made for the different albeit related statements used, it is nonetheless instructive to compare the percentage agreement:

(% agreement)	1988	1986	1984	1982
<u>Total</u>	60,8	67,7	74,9	61,0
<u>Language</u>				
Afrikaans	44,2	53,3	63,6	41,4
English	84,5	86,4	90,1	87,8
<u>Political Affiliation</u>				
NP	60,3	71,3	85,2	41,4
CP	17,5	14,5	11,9	(NCP) 13,5
PFP	96,0	95,0	95,6	98,3
NRP	87,5	94,3	92,9	76,9
Ind	96,6	----	----	----

The growth in support for white parties to the right of the government has impacted strongly on the opinions of Afrikaans-speakers, who registered their second lowest level of agreement (44,2%) since 1982. National Party supporters also recorded their second lowest level of agreement (60,3%) since 1982, a decline of 11% since the 1986 survey. On the other hand, PFP and NRP supporters have shown a constant high level of agreement since 1982, partly because these parties have promoted the idea of Blacks together with the other racial groups in one parliament.

Among the non-party subgroups, in all cases a level of agreement of over 50% was reached, except in the case of respondents in the Orange Free State.

(% agreement)		Household income	
Age		A	71,2
16-24	60,5	B	59,0
25-34	64,0	C	54,2
35-49	61,5	D	65,9
50+	57,6		
<u>Geographic spread</u>			
Cape		64,8	
Transvaal		59,7	
OFS		43,1	
Natal		65,7	

The response of the lowest income group (D) is somewhat surprising, with 65,9% in this category agreeing with the statement. The OFS is arguably the most conservative province in the country, especially on socio-political matters, as is shown in this and other questions.

7.3. Negotiations with the ANC: less likely than before

In view of the extensive publicity given to recent talks between the ANC and white South Africans, such as those in Dakar, Senegal, in July 1987, the following statement was again included: 'The government should negotiate directly with the African National Congress (ANC) to try to find a solution to South Africa's racial problems'. The language and party subgroups responded as follows:

Total	1988		1986	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
	36,2	61,7	40,1	58,0
<u>Language</u>				
Afrikaans	19,0	78,5	25,4	71,7
English	60,7	38,2	59,2	40,5
<u>Political Affiliation</u>				
NP	26,6	71,3	43,7	54,6
CP	11,8	86,0	26,1	72,4
PFDP	82,1	17,2	83,7	15,5
NRP	62,5	29,2	45,7	57,1
Ind	64,2	36,3	----	----

The overall level of agreement with this statement has declined by almost 4% since the 1986 survey. The level of agreement among Afrikaans-speakers has dropped even further (6,4% over the same period), while NP supporters recorded a marginally higher level of agreement than even the CP registered in 1986.

Clearly, both NP and CP supporters are now far less enthusiastic about negotiations with the ANC. These two

subgroups indicated a substantive decline by 17,1% (NP) and 14,3% (CP).

A similar trend also applied in the case of the age, income and geographic subgroups.

(% agreement)		
Age	1988	1986
16-24	36,3	47,8
25-34	36,8	41,9
35-49	34,5	37,6
50+	37,0	35,1
<u>Household income</u>		
A	39,9	58,3
B	36,4	37,3
C	30,9	35,0
D	41,2	32,5
<u>Geographic spread</u>		
Cape	42,1	42,1
Transvaal	33,9	36,9
OFS	18,3	20,9
Natal	42,8	52,7

The overall low level of agreement among the various subgroups, with the exception of PFP, NRP and Independent supporters, is the result of many factors. Arguably, the most important of these include:

- (a) The negative image the ANC has among the majority of Whites as a 'terrorist organisation', bent on the violent overthrow of the existing order.
- (b) A negative perception of ANC policies - widely seen as 'Marxist', 'anti-capitalist', 'coercive', 'non-democratic', and favouring one-party rule in a unitary state.
- (c) The pervasive rôle of government control of the media, with the result that the white population is essentially ignorant of the ANC's history and policies.
- (d) The impact of the national state of emergency introduced in June 1986, and the concomitant belief in the capacity of the state and its repressive instruments, the security forces, to maintain 'law and order'.

7.4. Let's all play together: thumbs up for mixed sport at school level⁸

The statement: 'White school children should not participate in sports meetings with children of other population groups' was repeated. The percentage disagreement with the contention implies support for racially mixed school sport.

(% disagreement) 1988		1986	1984	1982	
<u>Total</u>		79,5	81,4	76,9	75,1
<u>Language group</u>					
Afrikaans	69,1	71,7	66,4	61,8	
English	94,6	94,3	91,3	93,2	
<u>Political Affiliation</u>					
NP	85,2	88,8	83,4	69,4	
CP	42,7	33,7	28,4	(NCP) 21,1	
PFP	99,3	96,4	96,4	99,0	
NRP	87,5	94,3	85,7	87,5	
Ind	98,8	-----	-----	-----	

The age and income groups also showed a high level of disagreement.

(% disagreement)		<u>Household income</u>	
<u>Age</u>			
16-24	82,0	A	86,6
25-34	84,9	B	78,3
35-49	36,4	C	75,4
50+	76,7	D	82,4

The low level of disagreement in the 35-49 age group is intriguing, but is perhaps the result of parental concern. Even the generally more conservative respondents in the OFS indicated 69,7% in disagreement. Natal, at 84,1%, recorded the highest level.

It seems that Whites register less concern over minor social issues such as mixed sport than over political and security issues. Opinions relating to the Group Areas Act (own residential areas) tell a different story, nonetheless.

7.6. A big 'yes' for own residential areas (unless you can buy privacy)

We decided to include the following statement for the first time in 1988: 'The Group Areas Act should be abolished'. In view of the political sensitivity of this issue, the responses make interesting reading.

(% agreement)		<u>Language</u>	
<u>Sex</u>			
Male	39,1	Afrikaans	21,7
Female	38,2	English	62,6
<u>Age</u>		<u>Household income</u>	
16-24	37,7	A	53,0
25-34	39,3	B	40,7
35-49	41,4	C	33,2
50+	36,3	D	31,7

Geographic and political reactions were as follows:

(% agreement)		
<u>Geographic spread</u>	<u>1988</u>	
Cape	46,1	
Transvaal	34,9	
OFS	25,7	
Natal	45,8	
<hr/>		
<u>Political Affiliation</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
NP	27,0	70,9
CP	2,5	95,2
PFP	95,3	4,6
NRP	29,2	70,8
Ind	84,3	14,5

Opinions among the various subgroups clearly underline the symbolic importance of this issue to the majority of Whites. The only exceptions are respondents in the top income category (A), and PFP and Independent supporters. Responses in this survey suggest that Group Areas is an issue that the government will have to handle with circumspection if it does not want to lose the support of the parties to its right.

8. SOME CORRELATIONS OF OPINIONS ON DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN ISSUES

The purpose of this section is to examine the extent to which opinions on domestic issues correlate with opinions on regional and foreign issues. This is especially necessary in the case of South Africa, where domestic and foreign policy are so intricately interlinked. The table shows the extent of correlation on some important domestic and foreign issues.

DOMESTIC ISSUES

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
SAP & SADF strong enough to control unrest	73,4	26,0
Blacks in Parliament	60,8	37,7
Talk to ANC	36,2	61,7
No mixed school sport	19,1	79,5
<u>Group Areas Act</u>	38,5	59,9

FOREIGN ISSUES

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
Communist threat exaggerated	20,6	77,9
Zimbabwe threat	73,8	23,6
Attack terror bases	79,6	18,3
Ban food exports	66,6	30,8
Cannot win SWA war	19,7	77,7
Sanctions hurt economy	46,5	51,6

These figures indicate, for example, that:

- A hardening of opinion concerning talks with the ANC is also reflected in opinions on the repeal of the Group Areas Act and in a general belief that the state is capable of maintaining order and of controlling internal unrest.
- High levels of threat perception are present, both in terms of Zimbabwe and a potential communist threat against South Africa.

9. CONCLUSION

Having compared and contrasted the results of the four surveys, the 1988 survey confirms that the shifts measured in white South African opinion were highly sensitive to the dynamics of domestic, regional and international politics. These changes reflect a considerable hardening of opinion on both foreign/regional and domestic policy issues.

Taking foreign policy issues as a whole, the 1988 survey has found no meaningful moderation in white opinion since 1984. A rough categorisation shows that responses to most of the statements on foreign policy were mostly unchanged - indeed, are singularly hawkish - as in the earlier surveys. Even on an issue such as sanctions, white opinion reflects a more defiant attitude.

The hardening of opinions on domestic issues is most evident in the questions on negotiations with the ANC and the justification Blacks may have to take up arms against the government. These attitudes have been formed largely by the implementation of a national state of emergency since June 1986 and the restrictions on the television and print media. Clearly, security concerns outweigh all others, including reform and democratisation in the socio-political sphere.

Distinct ambiguities exist concerning domestic social issues. For instance, the majority of respondents expressed opposition to the abolition of the Group Areas Act, yet favour non-racial sport at school level. They are perhaps indicative of support for gradualism - liberals, but not now!

In a more general sense, the 1988 opinion survey confirms the continuing relevance of language group and party affiliation as two significant political cleavages in the white South African body politic. Finally, the survey leads to the inevitable conclusion that the hardening on international and regional issues is mirrored in domestic issues, seeming to imply that white threat perceptions are vulnerable to manipulation by politicians - especially those within the government and to its right.

The successful impact of 'thought control' measures in swaying the views of the lower income groups in particular, in line with government's own wishes, may bode ill for access to foreign media at higher levels, should the siege mentality come to dominate political thought in the arena of law and order.

10. ENDNOTES

¹For a discussion of these and other objections, see: Oliver Benson, Political Science Laboratory, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co, 1969, pp 1-6.

²Keyan Tomaselli, Ruth Tomaselli & Johan Muller, Narrating the Crisis - Hegemony and the South African Press, Johannesburg: Richard Lyon, 1987.

³See Graeme C. Moodie & G. Studdert-Kennedy, Opinions, Publics and Pressure Groups, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970; and Leroy N. Rieselbach & George I. Balch, Psychology & Politics - An Introductory Reader, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969.

⁴Various studies and opinion surveys have confirmed the extent of public support enjoyed by the African National Congress (ANC), among these: Theo Hanf, Gerda Vierdag & Heribert Weiland, Süd-Afrika: Friedlieher Wandel?, Munich: Kaiser Grunewald, 1978; and Report of the Ciskei Commission - The Quail Report, Silverton: Conference Associates, 1980.

⁵In the period 1 September 1984 to May 1987, some 47 civilians died from injuries sustained in landmine/bomb explosions. ANC guerrilla fatalities in the same period amounted to 70.

⁶A useful recent overview is provided by Peter Vale: 'Regional Policy: The Compulsion to Incorporate', in Desmond Blumenfeld (ed), South Africa in Crisis, London: Croom Helm, 1987, pp 176-194.

⁷André du Pisani, Beyond the Barracks: Reflections on the Role of the SADF in the Region, Occasional Paper, SAIIA, February 1988.

⁸Similar opinions were registered in a recent survey conducted by Koos van Wyk on elite perceptions of South Africa's international options.

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Van Wyk, J.J.: Elite Opinions on South African Foreign Policy, Research Project on South Africa's Foreign Relations, Occasional Paper No. 1, Johannesburg: RAU, 1984.

Van Wyk, Koos: "Elite Perceptions of South Africa's International Options", in International Affairs Bulletin, Vol. 11, No. 3, Johannesburg: SAIIA, 1987, pp 51-76.

APPENDIX

SECTION B

PLEASE INDICATE THE DEGREE TO WHICH YOU DIFFER OR AGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS (NUMBERED (A) TO (V)) BY CIRCLING THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER ON THE SCALE E.G. (2) :

	Defi- nitely agree	Inclined to agree	Inclined to disagree	Defini- tely disagree	
a) A TERRORIST/GUERRILLA WAR AS IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA/NAMIBIA WILL IN TIME ALSO DEVELOP IN SOUTH AFRICA	1	2	3	4	(22)
b) THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE AND DEFENCE FORCE ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO CONTROL INTERNAL UNREST INDEFINITELY	1	2	3	4	
c) THE COMMUNIST THREAT AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA IS EXAGGERATED BY THE GOVERNMENT	1	2	3	4	
d) MOZAMBIQUE CAN BE TRUSTED TO CARRY OUT THE TERMS OF THE NKOMATI NON-AGGRES- SION TREATY WITH SOUTH AFRICA	1	2	3	4	
e) THE STATE OF EMERGENCY REGULATIONS WILL STOP THE SPREAD OF ANC INFLUENCE AMONG BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS	1	2	3	4	
f) THE GOVERNMENT OF MR ROBERT MUGABE IN ZIMBABWE CONSTITUTES A THREAT TO SOUTH AFRICANS' SAFETY	1	2	3	4	(27)
g) ANGOLA WAS REPORTEDLY ON THE AGENDA AT THE RECENT SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT REAGAN OF THE USA AND MR GORBACHEV OF THE SOVIET UNION. HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: THE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT REAGAN AND MR GORBACHEV WILL LEAD TO THE SOVIET UNION ABANDONING ITS ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA?	1	2	3	4	
h) THE FOLLOWING FOREIGN LEADERS ARE FAVOURABLY DISPOSED TOWARDS SA : - President Reagan of America	1	2	3	4	
- Prime Minister Hawke of Australia	1	2	3	4	(30)
- Prime Minister Thatcher of Britain	1	2	3	4	
- President Mitterand of France	1	2	3	4	
- President Kaunda of Zambia	1	2	3	4	
- Chancellor Kohl of West Germany	1	2	3	4	
i) AN INCREASING NUMBER OF STATES HAVE INTRODUCED SOME FORM OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST S.A. HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: THE S.A. ECONOMY IS STRONG ENOUGH TO PREVENT ECONOMIC SANCTIONS HURTING OUR COUNTRY	1	2	3	4	(35)
j) SOUTH AFRICA'S BLACKS HAVE GOOD REASON TO TAKE UP ARMS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT	1	2	3	4	
k) S.A. SHOULD REFUSE TO SELL ITS MINERALS TO STATES THAT APPLY ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST IT	1	2	3	4	
l) S.A. SHOULD NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH SWAPO TO REACH A SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA/NAMIBIA	1	2	3	4	
m) WHITE SOUTH AFRICANS CANNOT DEPEND ON THE LOYALTY OF BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS IN THE CASE OF WAR AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA	1	2	3	4	
n) S.A. SHOULD NOT EXPORT FOOD TO BLACK STATES THAT SUPPORT OR HARBOUR TERRO- RISTS/GUERRILLAS	1	2	3	4	(40)
o) THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH S.A. CAN IN THE LONG RUN AVOID TOUGHER ECONOMIC SANCTIONS IS BY GRANTING EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS TO BLACKS	1	2	3	4	
p) S.A. SHOULD MILITARILY ATTACK TERRORIST/GUERRILLA BASES IN ITS NEIGH- BOURING STATES	1	2	3	4	(42)
q) BLACKS SHOULD SERVE WITH WHITES, COLOURED AND INDIANS IN THE SAME PARLIAMENT	1	2	3	4	
r) WHITE SCHOOL CHILDREN SHOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS MEETINGS WITH CHILDREN OF OTHER POPULATION GROUPS	1	2	3	4	
s) S.A. CANNOT WIN THE MILITARY STRUGGLE AGAINST SWAPO IN THE LONG RUN	1	2	3	4	
t) THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT YET SPEND ENOUGH ON DEFENCE	1	2	3	4	
u) THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CON- GRESS (ANC) TO TRY TO FIND A SOLUTION TO SOUTH AFRICA'S RACIAL PROBLEMS .	1	2	3	4	
v) THE GROUP AREAS ACT SHOULD BE ABOLISHED	1	2	3	4	(48)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION