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AFFAIRS

**WHAT DO  
WE THINK?**

A survey of white opinion  
on foreign policy issues

No. 5

Analysed by  
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The first four surveys of white opinion on foreign policy issues, also entitled What Do We Think? were published by the SAIIA in 1982, 1984, 1986 and 1988. The present Paper is the fifth 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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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the fifth 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 (SAIIA), the first survey was conducted in 1982. All five surveys have been undertaken for the SAIIA by Market and Opinion Surveys (Pty) Limited (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 difficulty in obtaining a nationally representative black sample. In our fifth survey, we are able to confirm both the constants and shifts in opinion.

This survey was conducted in January 1990 in a context of a national State of Emergency, ongoing internecine violence (especially in Natal) as well as the normalisation of politics by the ruling National Party. The survey was undertaken before the important 2 February 1990 Opening of Parliament speech by President F.W. de Klerk, and also preceded the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) as well as the release of Nelson Mandela. It was undertaken, however, in a context of change and followed the earlier release of Walter Sisulu and seven other political prisoners as well as the remarkable phenomenon of mass protest marches and a cautious opening up of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) in its reporting on domestic and international events.

## 2. SURVEY METHODS

As in our previous surveys, this one used self-completion questionnaires sent to members of M & M's nationally representative white consumer panel of 2000 households in January 1990. The questionnaires were sent out on 19 January 1990 and at the time of computerization of the survey data just over 80% of the questionnaires were completed and returned. In tabulating the results, the sample was weighted to adjust for small imbalances in its composition according to certain key variables such as home language, sex, age and region. The total size of the weighted sample was 1602.

The questionnaire (appended to the back of this publication) consisted of a number of statements and respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they 'agree' or 'disagree' with each statement on a four-point verbal scale ranging from 'definitely agree' to 'definitely disagree'.

To facilitate comparison between statements and between different clusters of respondents on a particular statement, an AGREEMENT INDEX was devised by weighting the response options as follows:

	<u>Weight</u>
Definitely agree	10.0
Inclined to agree	7.5
Inclined to disagree	2.5
Definitely disagree	0.0

The January 1990 sample was stratified according to standard population characteristics as follows:

TOTAL	NUMBER N = 1602	PERCENTAGE (%) 100
<u>LANGUAGE</u>		
Afrikaans	966	60.029
English	636	39.70
<u>SEX</u>		
Male	780	48.68
Female	822	51.31

Table continued on next page.

Table continued:

TOTAL	NUMBER N = 1602	PERCENTAGE (%) 100
<u>AGE</u>		
16-24	299	18.66
25-34	370	23.09
35-49	470	29.33
50+	463	28.90
<u>HOUSEHOLD INCOME (per month)</u>		
A: R3500 and above	435	27.15
B: R2000 - R3500	679	42.38
C & D: R 900 - R2000	488	30.46
<u>GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD</u>		
Cape Province	442	27.59
Transvaal	846	52.80
Orange Free State	121	7.55
Natal	193	12.04

Concerning the questionnaire, eighteen questions from the four previous surveys (1982, 1984, 1986, 1988) were retained (see Annexure). Four new questions were introduced to make the questionnaire as topical as possible without affecting overall length. Two previous questions were formulated differently so as to take account of changes since the previous 1988 survey. Consequently, the order of the statements was changed.

As in the 1986 and 1988 surveys, questions and statements 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, this survey also included a number of statements/questions on contentious domestic political issues. As with the earlier surveys, we are not interested primarily in the responses to domestic issues per se; rather, the objective is to find statistically meaningful correlations between opinions on domestic and foreign policy issues - a consideration of special relevance in South Africa, where the two are closely interlinked, perhaps more so than in most countries.

To enable a more systematic analysis of the data, the various questions/statements 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.



### 3. DOMESTIC AND REGIONAL SECURITY: A PERENNIAL QUESTION

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 fact that aspects of a national state of emergency, proclaimed in June 1986, are still in place. More generally, South Africa's domestic as well as its regional and foreign policy has shown a perennial - at times almost primordial - concern with security.<sup>1</sup> Given the unrepresentative nature of the present system of government, this is understandable - at least from a white minority perspective.

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

#### 3.1 Endgame in South Africa - Not that secure after all?

The respondents' belief in the capacity of the South African Police Force (SAP) and Defence Force (SADF) to control internal unrest 'indefinitely' has declined significantly in comparison with the 1986 and 1988 surveys. In the 1988 survey 73.4% of the respondents 'definitely agreed' with the statement, while 26.0% 'definitely disagreed' with it. In the 1986 survey, 67.8% 'definitely agreed', while 31.2% 'definitely disagreed'.

In this survey, only 40.1% of respondents' 'definitely agreed' with the statement [36.6% indicated that they were 'inclined to agree'], with 17.2% 'inclined to disagree' - while 6% 'definitely disagreed'.

In terms of language stratification - an important variable in white politics in South Africa - Afrikaans-speakers registered higher 'definite' and 'inclined' agreement than their English-speaking counterparts. The following table shows their respective responses:

Language	'Definite agreement'	'Inclined to agree'
Afrikaans	52.3%	34.1%
English	21.5%	40.4%

This trend is consistent with that found in our 1986 and 1988 surveys, and has remained remarkably stable. Afrikaans-speaking respondents seem to be more confident on security related issues than their English-speaking

counterparts. At the very least, they seem to have more trust in the capacity of the State to control. The different age categories registered consistently high 'agreement' with the statement when the responses of those that 'definitely agree' and those that are 'inclined to agree' are pooled. This tendency was also reflected in our 1988 and 1986 surveys, as the following table indicates:

---

<u>(%) Agreement</u>				
<u>Age:</u>	<u>16-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-49</u>	<u>50+</u>
1990:	81.6	69.5	76.8	78.8
1988:	68.1	69.0	75.5	78.1
1986:	68.0	64.4	68.1	70.8

---

In the 1990 survey the 16-24 year old category registered the highest 'agreement (81.6%) ever. Perhaps a function of militarization as well as the manner in which the conflict is 'officially' narrated.

In terms of geographic stratification, respondents in the Orange Free State and Transvaal, registered higher 'definite agreement' with the statement than their counterparts in the Cape and Natal. Statistically, there was little difference on the overall agreement index, however as shown below:

---

<u>(%) Agreement</u>	<u>Province</u>			
	<u>Cape</u>	<u>Tvl</u>	<u>QFS</u>	<u>Natal</u>
Definitely agree	35.1	44.1	44.6	31.1
Inclined to agree	41.9	33.5	37.2	37.3

---

This pattern of response was consistent with that of the 1986 and 1988 surveys. Socio-economic stratification reaffirmed a similar pattern of response:

---

<u>(%) 'definite agreement'</u>			
<u>Household Income(1990):</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C &amp; D</u>
	35.9	44.9	37.1

---

A statement related to the above asserted that 'The State of Emergency Regulations will stop the spread of ANC influence among Black South Africans'. Included in the 1988 survey, it served a useful control function 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 previous statement, only 8.2% male and 7.5% female respondents 'definitely agree' with the statement. Language stratification was equally revealing, only 10.8% of Afrikaans-speaking respondents and 3.5% of English-speaking respondents registered 'definite agreement'.

The level of overall agreement with the statement, however, declined when compared to the responses in the 1988 survey.

The following table contrasts these:

---

(%) <u>Agreement</u> ['Definite' & 'Inclined']		
	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>
Afrikaans	35.6	49.5
English	17.7	30.6

---

Age stratification confirmed this trend. The 16-24 year old category being the sole exception.

---

(%) <u>Agreement</u> (Composite)				
<u>Household Income:</u>	A	B	C	D
1990	22.3	28.1	34.4	(C & D)
1988	31.4	40.7	48.1	41.0

---

Geographic stratification mirrored a similar pattern with respondents from the Orange Free State showing strongest overall 'agreement' (37.2%) - down from 49.5% agreement in 1988 - and respondents in the Cape registered the lowest overall agreement, 20.6% (40.4% in 1988).

An analysis of responses to this statement suggests that: First, the ambiguity of the word 'influence' compounded

the statement. 'Influence' is at best an ambiguous concept in political life. Secondly, although overall agreement declined when compared to the intensity of agreement in the 1988 survey, language remains a useful and important variable affecting white political attitudes. Thirdly, the ANC is perceived by many (and also black South Africans) as a movement that wields considerable symbolic power and enjoys a certain international legitimacy.<sup>2</sup> Fourthly, the events following the earlier release of ANC leader Govan Mbeki, as well as that of Walter Sisulu and seven other political detainees and the popular mass marches and popular black reaction to this, reaffirmed white perceptions that the ANC is a force to be reckoned with. Fifthly, ongoing violence in Natal and elsewhere played a role.<sup>3</sup> Finally, in a context of political uncertainty and change, it seems natural for white South Africans to express some level of anxiety over the future.

### 3.2 The icons of the Cold War die slowly: Onslaught less 'total'?

Anti-communism was and still functions as one of the regime's most effective icons of the 'cold war', 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 the region.

In response to the statement: '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 some divergence coming from the two main language groups.

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

---

(%) Agreement [Denotes definite & inclined to agree]

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Average</u>
<u>1990:</u>	31.8	19.9	25.85
<u>1988:</u>	24.6	16.6	20.6
<u>1986:</u>	21.4	14.9	18.2
<u>1984:</u>	23.2	14.4	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

<u>Language:</u>	<u>Afrikaans</u>	<u>English</u>
<u>1990:</u>	15.4	41.2
<u>1988:</u>	10.8	34.5
<u>1986:</u>	12.6	25.3
<u>1984:</u>	11.1	29.0

---

Responses to this statement expressed by age stratification also indicate 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>1990:</u>	21.7	23.5	31.0	24.4
<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	22.2	18.0

---

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>1990:</u>	31.1	24.7	22.2	[C & D]
<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

---

If anything, respondents in the A, C & D income categories, seem to accept the government's version of the communist threat more readily than before. Perhaps a case of SABC TV rules - at least for some respondents in the A income category, there is the possibility of access to alternative sources of information.

An interesting variation in geographic attitudes is that respondents in the Orange Free State showed the lowest percentage agreement with this statement (1990: 21.5%; 1988: 8.3%; 1986: 12.9%; 1984: 16.2%). No statistically significant variations were recorded in the other three provinces. This reaffirmed our findings in earlier surveys.

Responses to this statement suggest that the government's simplistic anti-Soviet propaganda works for the majority of whites. Paradoxically, the 'WHAM strategy'<sup>4</sup> of the government did not win 'hearts and minds' among white South Africans, nor was it intended to achieve that. However, these persistently hostile white attitudes towards the Soviet Union and the region may become a real problem for the government in its attempts to deal with the region more realistically.

### 3.3 The hawks still fly - but not quite as high

South Africa, in recent years has followed an aggressive and assertive regional strategy, variously termed 'destabilisation' or 'coercive incorporation'.<sup>5</sup> Until recently, Pretoria has applied both military and economic pressure against suspected 'terrorists' - whether SWAPO or the ANC - and their hosts in neighbouring states.

All five 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%. Not surprising in view of the fact that the politics of 'destabilisation' reached its apogee in this period and South Africa experienced wide-spread black risings in the townships. The 1988 survey had 63.0% agreement, with 32.4% in disagreement. In this survey, 58.7% agreed, with 41.3% in disagreement.

In contrast to the 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, further declined to 27.9% in the 1988 survey, and went even lower in this survey to 23.9%. The latter is a potentially important shift, for it might signal a change in white opinions on

the region. 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 of over 50% in this survey. Previously these subgroups returned levels of agreement of 60% and above in our four previous surveys.

Consistent with the findings of the 1988 survey, variation in the extent of agreement is most pronounced between Afrikaans- and English-speakers (68% and 44.5% respectively. Comparable findings in the 1988 survey, were: 86.2% and 72.2%.)

The data suggests that the state-controlled media's articulation of the security threat emanating from the region and the role of the former in reinforcing a particular view - although taken less seriously than before - has a bearing on the opinions of many white South Africans. Hopefully, white South Africans may begin to soften their stance on the region, with the prospect of more informed opinion on South Africa's neighbours.

#### 3.4 The dangerous world across the Limpopo - but less anxiety than before

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 not returned to their earlier high level of threat perception. This tendency confirmed, and was consistent with, responses to other statements on regional security. The intriguing question is whether white South Africans project domestic anxiety on to the region, or whether developments in the region fuel levels of anxiety?

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				
1990	1988	1986	1984	1982
57.3	73.8	70.9	62.7	70.5
(15.4)	18.9	(23.4)	(14.9)	(22.7)

---

Consistent with the findings of the 1988 survey, certain subgroups registered higher levels of agreement with this statement. These were: the middle-income groups C/D

(1990: 64.5%; 1988: 76.4%); females (1990: 63.4%; 1988: 76.9%); and Afrikaans-speakers (1990: 65.4%; 1988: 80.0%). Significantly, the level of agreement - even amongst these subgroups - has registered a statistically meaningful decline of between 13.5% - 14.6%.

A further significant shift was registered in the opinions of the 16-24 year old age group. In this survey 55.2% of this subgroup agreed with the statement, as opposed to 82.8% in 1988 and 74.5% in 1986. Perhaps members of this age group are politically more aware of the fact that Zimbabwe poses less of a threat to South Africa, especially now that the political process within South Africa is being normalised.

### 3.5 Post-Nkomati - trust still a missing ingredient

In response to the statement: 'Mozambique can be trusted to carry out the terms of the Nkomati Non-Agression Treaty with South Africa', fewer respondents than in our previous surveys reacted negatively.

The following table lists these:

		<u>(%) Disagreement</u>			
		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>
<u>Sex</u>	: Male	57.5	74.5	61.2	60.7
	Female	73.9	84.4	77.8	72.9
<u>Language:</u>	Afr.	72.3	83.6	74.2	72.1
	Eng	56.4	73.5	63.0	59.6
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	60.8	72.4	70.4	65.0
	25-34	71.4	80.7	72.1	70.4
	35-49	65.6	82.8	69.1	---
	50+	65.5	80.8	66.3	---

Overall level of agreement with the statement was 32.8% close to that recorded in our 1986 survey (30.6%), but significantly higher than that of 17.7% in our 1988 survey.

These responses - although statistically significant - still confirm a trend evident in all our previous surveys, 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 - confirming the findings in our earlier surveys.

( <u>%) Agreement</u>	<u>Province</u>			
	<u>Cape</u>	<u>Tvl</u>	<u>QFS</u>	<u>Natal</u>
<u>1990:</u>	30.6	33.2	31.5	37.3

These findings seem to confirm a tendency for white South Africans to project their anxiety on to the region. It also seems likely that sheer ignorance of the region as well as the role played by state-controlled media, play their part in shaping white opinion. Whatever the precise explanation, the relationship between South Africa and the region has a pathological dimension to it.<sup>6</sup>

### 3.6 No more money for Pretoria's Praetorians\*

In view of white South Africans' pronounced perceptions of threat, we again 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:

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
Agree	21.2	27.7	33.0	38.4	41.6
Disagree	77.7	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 1990, less than one-third of the respondents took this view. The converse is also true.

Consistent with our earlier findings, this survey did reveal some important differences of opinion among the various subgroups. In the latest survey, 88.1% of English-speakers disagreed with the statement (80.9% in 1988, 75% in 1986) against 71% of Afrikaans-speakers (63.6% in 1988, 53.8% in 1986)

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

The disagreement of the different age groups was as follows:

<u>(%) Disagreement</u>				
<u>Age</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>
16-24	81.0	77.2	70.2	62.8
25-34	82.4	72.9	65.3	61.9
35-49	74.9	68.8	65.5	65.9
50+	75.1	66.1	53.8	56.3

Consistent with the pattern, first discernible in our 1988 survey, the different income groups again showed an overall 39.2% shift since 1988. This variation is largely the result of a real decline in white living standards and income. Perhaps the return of a semblance of stability in South Africa - with the notable exception of Natal - also played some part. Interestingly enough, respondents in Natal registered a high 82.9% disagreement with the statement - higher than the 80.8% of those in the Cape Province or the 76.1% in the Transvaal. True to earlier patterns, respondents in the Orange Free State registered the lowest level of disagreement, 71.1%. Again, their response was consistent with that on other security-related questions.

Responses to this statement seem to be a function of two principal factors. First, a decline in living standards and quality of life for many white South Africans; and secondly, a belief that the state has the capacity to deal with any conceivable threat emanating from inside or outside the country. Racial prejudice may also play some role, especially since white South Africans widely hold the view that Blacks are either 'inferior' or 'incompetent' when it comes to matters military.

4. ON INTERDEPENDENCE AND CONFLICT - OPINIONS ON REGIONAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

4.1 'Ivan remains Terrible' and cannot be trusted

In response to the statement: 'The Soviet Union is abandoning its active involvement in southern Africa' (not asked in 1984 or 1982), the overall level of agreement declined since 1988.

The various subgroups registered the following level of 'definite' agreement:

---

<u>(%) Agreement</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>
<u>Sex</u>	: Male	6.7	10.3	4.8
	Female	1.7	10.3	9.3
<u>Language</u>	: Afr	4.1	10.7	9.2
	Eng	4.1	9.7	4.3
<u>Household Income:</u>	A	5.3	8.1	4.6
	B	5.7	10.6	5.6
	C	10.8	12.0	8.8
	D	1	8.6	9.9
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	3.0	8.5	7.3
	25-34	4.6	9.6	6.0
	35-49	2.3	8.0	5.6
	50+	6.3	13.9	8.7

---

In terms of geographic spread the level of 'definite' agreement shifted somewhat, as evidenced in the following table:

---

<u>(%) Definite agreement</u>	<u>Cape</u>	<u>Tvl</u>	<u>OFS</u>	<u>Natal</u>
Province:				
1990	4.5	3.0	8.3	5.7
1988	15.8	7.4	11.9	9.5
1986	7.1	8.4	6.4	2.1

---

The Soviet Union is the one question that registered an invariably low level of agreement, irrespective of language, class, province or age. This unique status

reflects a combination of several factors. Among these are:

(a) A legacy of a long and intensive propaganda campaign by the state, directed at the Soviet Union and its 'imperial allies', notably Cuba.

(b) The legacy of South Africa's own military involvement in Angola and Namibia, and the ongoing conflict in the former country.

(c) The fact that white South Africans are blissfully ignorant about the Soviet Union and the 'new thinking' in its foreign relations.

(d) white opinions to this question, on suspects, are essentially 'manufactured' by state controlled media.

These responses are all the more startling, when one considers that the Soviet Union actively contributed towards achieving peace in southern Africa. Perestroika and its implications for Soviet foreign policy, one suspects, is poorly understood by a great many white South Africans. The legacy of 'Total onslaught' lingers on, with the Soviet Union almost demonised.....

#### 4.2 Don't feed the hand that bites

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

The following table lists agreement with the statement.

<u>(%) Agreement</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>
<u>Sex</u>	:Male	66.8	59.6	63.8	66.5
	:Female	75.4	73.7	76.1	70.3
<u>Language</u>	:Afr	75.9	70.2	73.2	71.5
	:Eng	64.3	61.6	65.4	64.2
<u>Age</u>	:16-24	81.9	65.8	67.2	65.5
	:25-34	69.2	63.8	74.4	73.2
	:35-49	70.2	71.7	68.3	69.3
	:50+	67.1	65.1	69.8	66.6
<u>Household Income</u>	:A	64.3	68.7	64.6	63.2
	:B	72.2	62.1	67.3	65.4
	:C	}76.2	73.3	74.3	71.5
	:D	}	60.2	73.0	72.4

The level of agreement, expressed in terms of geographic spread was consistent with that in earlier surveys.

---

(%) Agreement

<u>Geographic spread</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>
Cape	68.7	66.2	68.5	63.4
Transvaal	73.4	68.5	72.5	67.5
O.F.S.	80.2	59.7	70.2	71.0
Natal	61.7	63.2	62.0	60.5

---

Responses to this statement are consistent with those on regional security issues analysed previously. These responses confirm relatively high levels of white anxiety when it comes to regional relations and have to be seen in the context of recent policies on the region - notably that of destabilisation and 'Total Onslaught'. Moreover, one suspects that South Africa's hegemonic dominance of the region also plays some role in the shaping of white opinions on regional questions.

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

## 5.1 Maggie - still rules the waves

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 this statement in this survey. In order of favour, based on the percentage agreement with the statement, the seven leaders were rated as follows:

---

<u>Leader</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>
Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher	88.0	92.3	86.3
President George Bush*1	72.9	78.7	86.3
Chancellor Helmut Kohl	58.8	58.0	---*
President Francois Mitterand	26.0	19.3	7.7
President Kenneth Kaunda	18.4	7.0	13.2
President Gorbachev		12.5	---*
---*			
Prime Minister Bob Hawke	7.8	6.2	6.8

---

\*1 Ronald Reagan in 1988 and 1986

---\* Not included.

Mrs. Thatcher obviously still occupies the top slot in the popularity ratings, although she has lost some ground. In the case of President Bush, overall ratings have remained relatively stable, with a 5.8% drop. Existing US sanctions against South Africa, probably accounts for a further decline in his ratings. Chancellor Kohl's consistent opposition to sanctions accounts for his stable rating.

Consistent with earlier findings, President Mitterand's rating has gone up by a further 6.7%. President Kaunda's rating has shown the biggest increase (11.4%) of all seven leaders. While still low, this must be ascribed to recent contact between him and State President de Klerk, as well as his known mediatory stance in the conflicts of the region. Mr. Hawke's low rating is a result of the perceived animosity of the Australian government's opposition to apartheid. It is too early to generalize on the basis of the rating given to President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union in this survey.

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

	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Hawke</u>	<u>Thatcher</u>	<u>Mitterand</u>	<u>Kaunda</u>	<u>Kohl</u>	<u>Gorbachev</u>
Afr	68.6	9.2	85.4	26.2	13.9	56.3	9.1
Eng	79.3	5.8	92.0	25.8	25.3	62.7	17.6

Responses recorded for the subgroups of age, income and province show a similar pattern. Consequently, these are not shown in the form of a table. Responses from these subgroups were not statistically significant enough to influence the overall pattern of response to the statement.

Although, it is interesting to note, that Mrs. Margaret Thatcher is very popular with the 16-24 year olds (90.7%), President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union, on the other hand, only scored 42.2% with the same age group. In his particular case, the 16-24 category scored him the lowest. Anti-communism, like political beliefs, seems to start young.... Hardly surprising when one considers the centrality of anti-communism as a political mobiliser in white South African politics.

## 5.2 On sanctions, retaliation and reform

The issue of international sanctions against South Africa is still part of the debate on the country's future, therefore we again included 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 68.8% disagreed (51.6% in 1988; 71.0% in 1986), thus by implication believing that sanctions could indeed have damaging effects.

The various subgroups agreed as follows with the statement.

The table is on the following page.

<u>(%) Agreement</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>
<u>Age</u>	:16-24	36.8	50.2	21.2
	:25-34	25.1	39.6	23.0
	:35-49	25.8	44.3	28.4
	:50+	32.0	50.5	34.3
<u>Household Income:</u>	A	21.2	39.6	20.5
	B	29.3	38.9	22.0
	C	36.9	55.0	33.3
	D	48.7	48.7	36.1
<u>Language</u>	:Afr	33.7	52.3	31.6
	:Eng	23.1	38.4	21.8

Afrikaans-speakers, 16-24 year olds and respondents in the lower income bracket (C & D) have the greatest faith in the economy's ability to withstand the harmful effects of sanctions. In general, the data suggests a growing belief among white South Africans that sanctions do in fact hurt the economy. The overall level of agreement has indeed declined significantly from that registered in the 1988 survey. This response also reflects tougher socio-economic conditions inside the country.

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 1602 respondents, 57.5% supported the idea (57.1% in 1988; 56.8% in 1986), while 41.7% opposed it (40.8% in 1988; 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 - as was the case in the 1988 and 1986 surveys - most pronounced between Afrikaans- and English-speakers (61.4% and 51.6% respectively); the A and C & D income groups (45.8% and 66.6%); and between 16-24 year olds and those over 50+ (51.8% and 59% respectively).

Provincial breakdown made little difference.

See table on following page.



---

 (%) Agreement

<u>Province:</u>	<u>Cape</u>	<u>Transvaal</u>	<u>O.F.S</u>	<u>Natal</u>
	60.2	56.2	51.3	60.6

---

Responses to the statement have remained remarkably stable since it was first included in 1986, suggesting that white South Africans maintain a somewhat defiant mood against outside intervention and 'meddling'; and a basic (but declining) confidence in the ability of the state to maintain control in the face of domestic and outside opposition.

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. The level of support dropped to 41.5% in 1988. In this survey, 55% supported this view, while 43.7% disagreed. The level of support, therefore, returned to much the same as that in the 1986 survey.

Variation in white opinion on this issue is the result of many factors, such as the growth in political support of right-wing parties; marked socio-political polarisation within the country, accompanied by a defiant mood against outside intervention and 'meddling'.

---

 (%) Agreement

		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>
<u>Sex</u>	: Male	55.6	43.6
	: Female	54.6	39.5
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	48.8	36.1
	: 25-34	64.8	42.0
	: 35-49	54.7	44.1
	: 50+	51.2	42.8
<u>Language</u>	: Afr	40.8	27.8
	: Eng	76.6	61.2
<u>Household Income</u>	: A	62.7	46.4
	: B	54.1	45.9
	: C	] 49.4	35.5
	: D	] ]	41.3

---

Provincial breakdowns confirmed a similar trend. Clearly, the opinions of white South Africans have been influenced by the impact of sanctions on the domestic economy. Significantly, all the subgroups registered a higher level of agreement with the statement than before. Responses to this statement confirm the close relationship between domestic and foreign policy - a distinction that is not always all that meaningful anymore. The important question is whether these opinions are also present on domestic socio-political reform. It is to this section that we turn next.

## 6. PERCEPTIONS OF DOMESTIC CONFLICT

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

The five 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 remarkably stable since 1982 (1982: 26.9%; 1984: 21.3%; 1986: 28.5%; 1988: 26.5%; 1990: 28.9%).

Significant differences of opinion showed in the language groups.

---

<u>(%) Agreement</u>					
<u>Language</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
Afrikaans	20.0	17.6	20.0	11.3	13.9
English	42.3	39.1	39.4	34.8	44.9

---

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

---

<u>(%) Agreement</u>			
		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	39.8	35.5
	: 25-34	31.4	30.5
	: 35-49	30.9	23.7
	: 50+	17.7	19.5
<u>Household Income</u>	: A	32.2	24.2
	: B	30.9	32.3
	: C	22.9	23.0
	: D	26.1	26.1
<u>Geographic Spread</u>	: Cape	31.4	27.9
	: Transvaal	28.9	25.9
	: O.F.S.	32.2	18.5
	: Natal	20.2	29.9

---

Interestingly enough, respondents in the Orange Free State shifted their opinions on this question from 18.5% (1988) to 32.2% (1990) - a shift of some 13.7%. The

lowest response came from Natal - down by some 9.7% compared to 1988 - one suspects that the ongoing internecine violence in Natal resulted in a hardening of white opinions. Conflict has a tendency to harden and polarise opinions.

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 five surveys is as follows:

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
Agree	64.4	56.0	56.2	59.2	61.6
Disagree	34.3	41.7	42.0	39.1	36.8

This survey registered the highest level of agreement ever with the statement - it even surpassed that of 1982 (61.6%). This response reflects pervasive distrust between 'white' and 'black' South Africans, and does not auger well for negotiations.

The different subgroups responded as follows to the statement:

<u>(%) Agreement</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>
<u>Language</u>	: Afr	67.5	65.0
	: Eng	59.6	54.5
<u>Geographic Spread</u>	: Cape	64.8	60.0
	: Transvaal	64.5	54.2
	: O.F.S.	71.1	55.2
	: Natal	57.0	54.7
<u>Household Income</u>	: A	64.8	54.9
	: B	65.5	59.0
	: C	}64.0	56.3
	: D	}	52.5
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	60.2	47.8
	: 25-34	63.2	53.1
	: 35-49	67.0	60.1
	: 50+	65.2	60.3

Clearly, the level of distrust of black motives is high, and has risen from that recorded in the 1988 survey. Again, one fears a reflection of the degree of social polarisation and alienation in the country. Responses to this statement are in line with those on the previous statement on black South Africans having good reason to rise against the government.

## 6.2 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 Coloureds and Indians will serve with Whites in the same Parliament'. For the 1986, 1988 and 1990 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.

---

(%) <u>Agreement</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
	63.2	60.8	67.7	74.9	61.0
<u>Language:</u> Afr	48.7	44.2	53.3	63.6	41.4
: Eng	85.1	84.5	86.4	90.1	87.8

---

In the case of the different subgroups a level of agreement of over 50% was reached. This is shown in the following table:

---

(%) <u>Agreement</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	62.2	60.5
	: 25-34	64.9	64.0
	: 35-49	65.3	61.5
	: 50+	60.3	57.6

---

Table continued on next page.

Table continued:

( <u>%) Agreement</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>
		<u>Geographic Spread</u> :	Cape
	: Transvaal	53.1	59.7
	: O.F.S.	52.0	43.1
	: Natal	74.1	65.7
<u>Household Income</u> :	A	71.5	71.2
	: B	62.6	59.0
	: C & D	56.6	60.05

Responses from the O.F.S. and the Transvaal are interesting. In the case of the former, the O.F.S., it is only fractionally more conservative on this issue than the Transvaal. The inroads that white right-wing parties have made in the Transvaal are, one suspects, chiefly responsible for a lower level of agreement in that province than was the case in 1988.

The overall trend, however, is in the direction of a more accommodative attitude when it comes to the parliamentary representation of black South Africans. On a more abstract level, government reform has presumably played some part in shaping white opinions on this question.

### 6.3 Negotiations with the ANC: more likely than before, but not universally liked

In view of exploratory talks between the ruling National Party and the ANC, 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 different subgroups responded as follows:

	<u>1990</u>		<u>1988</u>		<u>1986</u>	
	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<u>Total</u>	52.3	46.8	36.2	61.7	40.1	58.0
<u>Language</u>						
Afr	38.0	61.5	19.0	78.5	25.4	71.7
Eng	73.9	24.5	60.7	38.2	51.2	40.5

Table continued on next page.

Table continued:

Age	1990		1988		1986	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
16-24	45.1	55.1	36.3	63.7	47.8	52.2
25-34	52.4	46.0	36.8	63.2	41.9	58.1
35-49	56.8	42.4	34.5	65.6	37.6	62.4
50+	52.1	46.7	37.0	63.0	35.1	64.9

A similar trend also applied in the case of income and geographic subgroups. The following table lists these:

(% Agreement		1990	1988	1986
<u>Household Income</u> :	A	61.4	39.9	58.3
	B	48.6	36.4	37.3
	C	}48.8	30.9	35.0
	D	}	41.2	32.5
<u>Geographic Spread</u> :	Cape	55.9	42.1	42.1
	Transvaal	50.9	33.9	36.9
	O.F.S.	35.6	18.3	20.9
	Natal	59.1	42.8	52.7

Responses to this statement are especially interesting and significant, in view of political developments in the country, with the ruling NP engaging in exploratory negotiations with the ANC. These responses confirm a softening on the part of whites to engage in talks with the ANC, however, Afrikaans-speakers are far less inclined to do so than their English-speaking counterparts (a mere 38.0% as opposed to 73.9%). Also, 16-24 year olds are less inclined to enter into talks with the ANC, so too are middle income groups and respondents from the Orange Free State. While the overall trend is in the direction of negotiations, this perception is not universally strongly shared by the different subgroups in our survey.

The low level of agreement amongst Afrikaans-speakers, is especially significant and reflect the deep divisions in this language group on the issue of negotiations with the ANC. Their opposition to talks with the ANC constitutes a real constraint for the ruling National Party, and accounts largely for the latter's caution in this regard.

6.4 Let's all play together: thumbs up for mixed sport at school level

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 sport at school level.

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( <u>%) Disagreement</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>
<u>Total</u>		77.7	79.5	81.4	76.9	75.1
<u>Language Group</u>	:Afr	66.8	69.1	71.7	66.4	61.8
	:Eng	94.3	94.6	94.3	91.3	93.2
<u>Age</u>	:16-24	70.6	82.0	----	----	----
	:25-34	77.3	84.9	----	----	----
	:35-49	76.6	36.4	----	----	----
	:50+	78.4	76.7	----	----	----
<u>Household Income</u> :	A	82.5	86.6			
	B	77.3	78.3			
	C	}74.2	75.4			
	D	}	82.4			

---

Responses from the four provinces were almost identical to the above. 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 maintenance/abolition of the Group Areas Act (own residential areas) reflect different concerns, nonetheless.

6.5 Own residential areas: language and class matter most

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

Table follows on next page.



<u>(%) Agreement</u>		<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>
<u>Sex</u>	: Male	54.0	39.1
	: Female	49.0	38.2
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	53.9	37.7
	: 25-34	53.5	39.3
	: 35-49	52.1	41.4
	: 50+	47.3	36.3
<u>Geographic Spread</u>	: Cape	61.8	46.1
	: Transvaal	47.7	34.9
	: O.F.S.	38.0	25.7
	: Natal	51.3	45.8
<u>Language</u>	: Afrikaans	34.9	21.7
	: English	76.4	62.6
<u>Household Income</u>	: A	66.5	53.0
	: B	47.6	33.2
	: C	}43.4	33.2
	: D		} 31.7

Opinions among the various subgroups clearly underline the symbolic importance of this issue to many whites. In line with earlier findings, language and socio-economic status are the most important variables influencing opinions on this issue. For the first time, however, 51.4% of all respondents agreed that the Group Areas Act should be abolished. This is a significant finding, although Afrikaans-speakers and those in the lowest income groups (C & D) are far less enthusiastic in their level of agreement.

#### 6.6 ANC: hardly a military threat

The aspect of 'armed struggle' conducted by the ANC has emerged as a divisive factor in South African politics. In this survey, we included the statement: 'SA cannot win the military struggle against the ANC in the long run'.

Opinions on this statement registered a low level of agreement by all the subgroups. Language and age proved to be important variables.

Table on following page.

---

 (%) Agreement

<u>Language</u>	: Afrikaans	16.7
	: English	42.1
<u>Sex</u>	: Male	29.3
	: Female	24.4
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	20.5
	: 25-34	30.8
	: 35-49	30.9
	: 50+	23.5
<u>Household Income</u>	: A	35.6
	: B	21.8
	: C & D	25.6
<u>Province</u>	: Cape	28.5
	: Transvaal	27.4
	: D.F.S.	27.2
	: Natal	20.2

---

While this is a new statement, not previously included, it is interesting to note that a mere 19.7% of respondents agreed with the 1988 statement to the effect that 'South Africa cannot win the war against SWAPO in SWA/Namibia'. It seems as if white South Africans do not take an ANC military threat too seriously.

## 6.7 SABC TV rules OK?

The final statement under this rubric, read: 'SABC TV adequately informs the public on domestic and international political developments'. This statement - included for the first time - was intended to function as a control for one of the hypotheses that informed the analysis of this survey, namely: That the kind of information to which white South Africans have access, plays an important role in shaping their understanding of domestic as well as of international developments.

---

 (%) Agreement

<u>Language</u>	: Afrikaans	55.4
	: English	28.8

---

Table continued on next page.

Table continued:

---

<u>(%) Agreement</u>		
<u>Sex</u>	: Male	38.8
	: Female	50.7
<u>Age</u>	: 16-24	55.2
	: 25-34	41.9
	: 35-49	35.9
	: 50+	49.9
<u>Household Income</u>	: A	37.0
	: B	45.1
	: C & D	51.7
<u>Province</u>	: Cape	45.7
	: Transvaal	43.3
	: O.F.S.	50.5
	: Natal	46.7

---

Responses to this statement are interesting, for they suggest that language, socio-economic factors as well as age play some role in determining opinions towards SABC TV. The higher income groups (A & B) in all probability have access to alternative electronic as well as written media. English-speakers and the 35-49 age group registered the lowest level of agreement with the statement.

## 7. 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	76.7	23.4
Blacks have reason to take up arms	31.15	68.85
Blacks cannot be trusted	64.4	34.3
Blacks in Parliament	63.2	36.8
Talk to the ANC	52.3	46.8
No mixed school sport	14.5	80.55
Group Areas Act	51.5	48.5

### Foreign Issues

Communist threat exaggerated	25.85	74.15
Zimbabwe threat	57.3	42.7
Attack terror bases	58.7	41.3
Ban food exports	71.1	28.9
Nkomati Accord	32.8	67.2
Soviet involvement in the region	4.2	95.8
Sanctions do not hurt the economy	31.2	68.8

These figures indicate, for example, that:

- A softening of opinion concerning talks with the ANC and Blacks in Parliament is also reflected in opinions on the repeal of the Group Areas Act as well as on the issue of mixed sport at school level.
- On the whole opinions have softened somewhat on socio-economic issues as well as on reform.
- High levels of threat perception persist, both in relation to the region as well as a potential 'communist threat' against South Africa. The legacies of the doctrine of 'Total Onslaught' seem to live on in the minds of many white South Africans.
- A high level of distrust is prevalent when it comes to the loyalty of fellow black South Africans.

- Compared to our previous surveys, there has been some softening of opinion on both foreign/regional and domestic policy issues. High levels of anxiety, however, are present when it comes to domestic as well as regional security related issues.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This survey once again confirmed the extent to which anxiety and threat - like evil - can be manufactured and manipulated to serve particular interests. This tendency was especially evident in relation to domestic as well as regional security issues. There seems to be a tendency, not confined to South African whites, to project domestic anxiety on to the region. Ignorance of socio-political life in the region - largely a consequence of apartheid politics in this country - also plays a part in the continuation of serious misperceptions. Sadly, the misguided and dangerous legacies of the doctrine of 'Total Onslaught' seem to live on in the minds of many white South Africans. This is especially sad in view of the fact that a changing and changed South Africa will have to redefine its relations with the region.

The 1990 survey confirmed a previous trend: white South Africans are becoming less anxious about domestic social change. If anything, this trend was more pronounced than before. It seems to indicate more of a willingness to come to terms with the inevitable. Language and socio-economic variables, however, remain significant in understanding strongly divergent opinions on issues such as Group Areas and negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC).

## 9. ENDNOTES

1. The search for status and security also runs like a golden thread through South Africa's foreign relations. See for example, the recent work by James Barber & John Barratt *South Africa's Foreign Policy - the search for status and security 1945-1988*, Cambridge, University press, 1990 (also published by Southern)
2. Various 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: Friedlicher Wandel?*, Munich: Kaiser Grönewald, 1978; and Report of the Ciskei Commission - *The Quail Report: Conference Associate*, 1980
3. Unlike most parts in the rest of the country, the violence in Natal has been ongoing since 1985. Recently, events there took a turn for the worse, with increased fatalities and population displacement.
4. 'WHAM' is an acronym for 'Winning Hearts and Minds'.
5. See, Vale, Peter: 'Regional Policy: The Compulsion to Incorporate', in Blumenfeld, J (ed), *South Africa in Crisis*, London: Croom Helm, 1987, pp.176-194
6. See, Vale, Peter: 'Pretoria and southern Africa: A Pathological Report', *International Affairs Bulletin*, Vol.13, No.3, 1989, pp.96-105.

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APPENDIXSECTION A

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

	<u>Defi-</u> <u>nately</u> <u>agree</u>	<u>Inclined</u> <u>to</u> <u>agree</u>	<u>Inclined</u> <u>to</u> <u>disagree</u>	<u>Defini-</u> <u>tely</u> <u>disagree</u>	
(a) The South African Police and Defence Force are strong enough to control internal unrest indefinitely .....	1	2	3	4	
(b) The communist threat against South Africa is exaggerated by the government .....	1	2	3	4	
(c) Mozambique can be trusted to carry out the terms of the Nkomati Non-Aggression Treaty with South Africa .....	1	2	3	4	
(d) The state of emergency regulations will stop the spread of ANC influence among Black South Africans .....	1	2	3	4	
(e) The government of Mr. Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe constitutes a threat to South Africa's safety .....	1	2	3	4	(11-15)
(f) The Soviet Union is abandoning its active involvement in Southern Africa .....	1	2	3	4	
(g) The following foreign leaders are favourably disposed towards SA :					
- President Bush of America .....	1	2	3	4	
- Prime Minister Hawke of Australia .....	1	2	3	4	
- 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	
- President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union .....	1	2	3	4	(16-23)
(h) An increasing number of states have introduced some form of economic sanctions against SA. How do you respond to the following statement : The SA economy is strong enough to prevent economic sanctions hurting our country .....	1	2	3	4	
(i) South Africa's Blacks have good reason to take up arms against the government .....	1	2	3	4	
(j) SA should refuse to sell its minerals to states that apply economic sanctions against it .....	1	2	3	4	
(k) White South Africans cannot depend on the loyalty of Black South Africans in the case of war against South Africa .....	1	2	3	4	
(l) SA should not export food to Black states that support or harbour terrorists/guerrillas .....	1	2	3	4	(24-28)
(m) The only way in which SA can in the long run avoid tougher economic sanctions is by granting equal political rights to Blacks .....	1	2	3	4	
(n) SA should militarily attack terrorist/guerrilla bases in its neighbouring states .....	1	2	3	4	
(o) Blacks should serve with Whites, Coloureds and Indians in the same parliament .....	1	2	3	4	
(p) White school children should not participate in sports meetings with children of other population groups .....	1	2	3	4	
(q) SA cannot win the military struggle against the African National Congress (ANC) in the long run .....	1	2	3	4	(29-33)
(r) The government does not yet spend enough on defence .....	1	2	3	4	
(s) The government should negotiate directly with the African National Congress to try to find a solution to SA's racial problems ..	1	2	3	4	
(t) The Group Areas Act should be abolished .....	1	2	3	4	
(u) SABC TV adequately informs the public on domestic and international political developments .....	1	2	3	4	(34-37)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the fifth in a series of biennial surveys of white South Africans opinion on foreign and some domestic issues. This survey was conducted in January 1990 in the context of a national state of Emergency, ongoing internecine violence (especially in natal) as well as the normalization of political life by the ruling National Party. The survey was undertaken before the important 2 February 1990 Opening of Parliament speech by President F.W. de Klerk, and also preceded the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) as well as the release of Mr. Nelson Mandela.

As in our previous surveys, this one used self-completion questionnaires sent to members of a nationally representative white consumer panel of 2000 households. At the time of computerization of the survey data just over 80% of the questionnaires were completed and returned. In tabulating the results, the sample was weighted to adjust for small imbalances in its composition according to certain key variables such as home language, sex, age and region. The total size of the weighted sample was 1602.

To enable a more systematic analysis of the data, the various questions/statements were grouped under four headings:

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

Responses to the first cluster of questions/statements, namely domestic and regional security, showed a high level of anxiety, especially among Afrikaans-speaking respondents. For example, there was marked decline in the respondents' belief in the capacity of the South African Police (SAP) to control internal unrest 'indefinitely', compared to the 1986 and 1988 surveys. In the 1986 survey, 67.8% of the respondents 'definitely agreed' with the statement. The level of 'definite agreement' increased to 73.4% in the 1988 survey. In this survey, however, only 40.1% of respondents registered 'definite agreement' with the statement. Afrikaans-speakers, however, registered 52.3% 'definite agreement', as opposed to 21.5% of English-speakers.

Language stratification functioned as one of the most pervasive variables, especially when it came to domestic as well as regional security issues. Afrikaans-speakers consistently registered higher levels of anxiety than their English-speaking counterparts. On the whole, women also showed a higher level of anxiety than men.

In relation to regional security issues, the icons of the Cold War and of the Total Onslaught, seem to linger on in the minds of many white South Africans. For example, only 25.85% of all respondents believed that the Government was exaggerating the communist threat against the country. The world across the Limpopo was viewed with considerable (albeit declining) apprehension. Mozambique was widely seen not to carry out the

terms of the 1984 Nkomati Agreement - despite evidence to the contrary. The implications of Glasnost and of Perestroika for Soviet foreign policy were seemingly lost on the vast majority of white respondents. Trust was still missing ingredient when it came to both domestic and regional security issues. There was a tendency to project domestic fear and anxiety on to the region, and this effectively meant that regional relations were pathologically perceived.

Regional political and economic issues showed remarkable consistency with earlier surveys. The hawks still fly - but not quite as high. South Africa retained the right to impose sanctions against its neighbours that harbour 'terrorist/guerillas'. The Soviet Union was unlikely to abandon its active involvement in the region.

As far as South Africa and the international community was concerned, British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, headed the popularity rations. She was followed by President George Bush of the United States; Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the Federal Republic of Germany, with Prime Minister Bob Hawke of Australia the least favoured.

Perceptions of domestic conflict, showed a marked shift from those of previous surveys. Economic factors as well as internal conflict, sanctions and the reform programme of the ruling National Party, all played their part. This survey, for example, registered a higher level of agreement compared to previous ones, on issues such as Blacks in Parliament; mixed sport at school level; the repeal of the Group Areas Act, as well as negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC).

Language, age, income, as well as provincial breakdown, seemed to be the key factors when it came to domestic politic-economic reform. Again, Afrikaans-speakers were more cautious than their English-speaking counterparts. On the issue of own residential areas, language and class mattered most.

This survey once again confirmed the extent to which anxiety and threat - like evil - can be manufactured and manipulated to serve particular (and often sectional) interests. This tendency was especially evident in relation to domestic as well as regional security issues.

The 1990 survey also confirmed an earlier trend: white South Africans are becoming less anxious about domestic social change. If anything, this trend was more pronounced than before. Language and socio-economic variables, however, remain significant in understanding strongly divergent opinions on issues such as the Group Areas Act and negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC).

Intriguing paradoxes continue to haunt the psyche of white South Africans: it will take some time for the less savoury legacies of apartheid such as fear of one's fellow man and for the world to depart.