

## GRAHAMSTOWN ECC PROPOSAL FOR AN OPINION SURVEY:

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

The idea of conducting an opinion survey arose out of the Grahamstown conceptual discussion. We felt that our understanding of our constituency was hazy, based largely on hunch and highly selective feedback.

It was suggested that an effective way of overcoming these problems and providing a more systematic basis for our planning, would be through an opinion survey.

What follows is a rough outline which can serve as a basis for discussing the feasibility of such a survey. If the project does go ahead this outline will have to be developed through a process of discussion with other ECC regions, the advice services, interested church groups and academics and people with experience in drawing up surveys.

### 2. THE NATURE OF THE SURVEY:

For ECC purposes, the ideal would be a national survey of white attitudes towards the conflict in SA, militarisation, conscription and ECC, providing a breakdown of opinions according to age, sex, language, occupation, religious denomination, city and status with regard to military service.

If other white democrat organisations are interested in more detailed information concerning their constituencies, it should be possible to broaden the scope of the questions to suit their needs.

As ECC is in no position to finance a project of this nature, it was suggested that we ask IDASA to sponsor the survey. This would involve IDASA employing a market research agency to conduct the survey on our behalf.

Reasons for ECC not undertaking the project are a) that we lack the funds and expertise required and b) national co-ordination of such a project would be enormously difficult and c) it would cast doubt on the credibility of the findings.

IDASA has considerable financial resources, they are keen to assist us and the project should be an attractive one for them and their funders - it being a tangible project based in the white community, providing a valuable service to progressive organisations as well as being important research in its own right.

### 3. A TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE SURVEY:

a) Support for ECC demands and policy.

conscription/ right to alternative service / right for troops not to go into the townships and Namibia/ troops out the townships/ troops out Namibia / SA in civil war / support cadets.

b) Perceptions of ECC

Heard of ECC/ Support ECC/ Sources of information about ECC (SADF, school, TV, paper, ECC)/ Attitude towards ECC/ what do you understand to be ECC's policy/ are ECC members cowards/ Does ECC support the UDF/ANC.

c) Perceptions of SADF

Role in townships/ role in Namibia/ role in Southern Africa/ defends apartheid/ military arm of NP/ attitude towards SADF/ is the cause SADF defending just/ attitude towards ANC and SWAPO.

d) Attitudes towards participation in SADF:

Should go/ would like to go/ does young men good/ knowledge of board for religious objection/ alternatives too harsh/ perception of co's and exiles/ attitudes towards 'Dad's army'/ camps/ military training too long/ conscripts maltreated by SADF/ would you be scared to go to SADF.

e) Conscripts personal experience with SADF:

Will go/ gone/ unhappy about going/ alternatives considered/ refuse to go into the townships/ refuse to carry weapon/ enjoyed township service/ enjoyed Namibian service/ attitude of township residents to troops/ army period constructive/ military training too long/ subjected to propaganda/ difficulty re-adjusting to civilian life/saw action in SADF/ attitude to SADF changed after going/ maltreated either physically or psychologically in the SADF.

f) Personal outlook on war:

Secular or religious (active)/ Pacifist or just war.

4. THE PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY:

a) The survey would help us in identifying which aspects of our policy have broad public support or support within a particular constituency. This would enable us to plan both general campaigns and constituency work in a far more rigorous fashion than we have done in the past.

The survey would be particularly valuable when working in areas in which we have little experience, eg conscripts and veterans.

b) It should point to areas of work we have neglected or not thought of.

c) The survey could help legitimise ECC, eg if 20% of the white population oppose conscription, we could state publicly that we represent 1-million white South Africans who oppose conscription.

d) The results would help us gauge the success of the smear campaign against us and indicate how to counter it.

e) It is probable that the results will lend support to our critique of the Board for Religious Objection by showing how small a proportion of conscripts it caters for.

f) The survey would provide information to the advice services, church groups and academics working around militarisation.

5. PROCESS:

Should the project be approved in principle by ECC, the decisive question will be whether we are able to obtain funding for it, either from IDASA or elsewhere.

If we are able to obtain funding, regions would have to provide details about the information they want to come out of the survey, and we should consult other white democrat organisations to see whether they would be interested in participating in the project.

The final responsibility for compiling the questions and liaising with the market research agency should fall on the ECC region in which the agency is based.

April 1987

## Draft proposal: national communications

### Abstract

This proposal suggests that personal computers with telephone modems could be used to provide secure national communications. They could be programmed to encode and decode information so that if the phone lines they used were tapped, it would be impossible for the listener to discover the contents of the message.

### Overview

The proposal which follows was prepared in a hurry, and there are several areas which need to be investigated in greater depth.

It has become clear over the past ten months that a safe national communications network is essential if organisations are to survive and operate in times of harsh repression. Our present methods of communicating are vulnerable to telephone tapping and mail interception, especially considering the advanced technology employed to monitor telephones in the major centres. This means that we can never be quite sure when our communications are in fact safe, and consequently have to find more secure routes for especially sensitive information such as arrangements for national meetings.

Many regions have access to personal computers, especially the IBM PC and compatibles, which have become standards at most universities. A device is available called a modem, which plugs into the back of the PC and connects to a standard telephone jack and allows the PC to communicate with other computers similarly equipped along normal telephone lines. This would allow one PC to send several pages of text to another in less than a minute.

The greatest benefit of this method is that PC's are fairly powerful computers and can be used to implement sophisticated encryption algorithms. So information could be encoded by the PC before it is sent, and decoded again at the other end. The encryption process would be controlled by a secret password 12 to 16 characters long, and anyone intercepting the message without knowing the password would be unable to decode the message, so it would be useless to them. The encryption system could be sufficiently advanced so that even with the aid of extremely powerful computers and trained cryptanalysts (code-breakers) it would be virtually impossible to decode them without access to the password. For example, similar encryption systems are used by banks for electronic funds transfers; if these could be broken then the successful cryptoanalyst could transfer millions of dollars to his/her own account.

The equipment required by each region would be: one IBM-PC or compatible (quite expensive at approx. R3000, but hopefully already available in most centres); one telephone modem, available for R395-00 from Computer Warehouse distributors nationally; and an interface card and cord for the modem, about R140-00. So the total would be about R600-00 per region including tax (assuming PC's are already available), or about R2400-00 for four regions.

In addition, programs would be needed (1) to operate the modems and (2) to encode and decode the information. The software for the modem is already included with the cost, and encryption software is quite easy to write for anyone who can program in assembler language; I have written a couple of systems for protecting word-processor files etc. which could be used with very little modification. In the medium term, it would probably be a good idea to write a customised package which would handle both the communications and the encryption; this would take a month or two. In the meantime, however, the programs already available should do a fairly good job.

There are a couple of potential problems which we must consider. Firstly, have regions got access to IBM PC's or compatibles (eg. CW-16) which they could install the interface card into (not a major job - it just consists of plugging the card into a socket inside the machine) and which they could use near a telephone plug? Secondly, cost: can we afford R2400-00, and more if we have to buy PC's for any of the regions? Thirdly, the system would probably

been seen as a serious threat in certain quarters, so action might be taken to render it inoperable, eg. by interfering with the telephone lines being used. This could, of course be countered by moving the computer to a new venue, but this would rely on cooperation from the owner. In addition we must consider whether an Aida Parker exposé of this "sinister secrecy" would cause problems.

In spite of these potential difficulties, I think the system is worth investigating since it might allow us to remain in touch even in times of severe repression. It would also be nice to know, for sure, that our national communications were not being intercepted.

#### Technical Details

Please note that I have only had a couple of days to investigate modems etc, so there may well be better options which I have not come across.

The modem which I suggest is the Shiron, available from Computer Warehouse for R395-00 plus GST. It is a Hayes compatible, offering transmission rates of 300 baud (full duplex), 1200 baud (half duplex) and 1275 baud (full duplex). It conforms to the V21 and V23 telecommunications standards for 300 and 1275 baud respectively, and comes complete with a communications package. Interface to PC's is via a serial port (RS-232), and serial cards for computers which don't already have them cost R108-00 plus approx R30-00 for the cable. Because it links via the serial port, it should be quite easy to interface to almost any system, although I would suggest that we should adopt the IBM & compatibles as our standard to make software design easier. The modem has an auto-answer mode (but not auto-dial) so it would be possible to send data to an unattended system, although I think this is a project for the future.

Regarding encryption algorithms, I have experimented with a couple of possibilities. The obvious one is the American National Bureau of Standards NBS-DEA1 (DES), which has been thoroughly investigated by IBM and certified by the CIA. However, I would not choose this one for two reasons: firstly, it is designed to be implemented in hardware, and is quite complicated and fairly slow to implement in software. Secondly, there are fairly widespread suspicions in cryptographic circles that the algorithm may have been broken by the CIA, and this must be seen as a potential security risk. There are a couple of alternatives which I know of; the best is possibly one developed by the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. It was designed as an alternative to the NBS DEA1, and offers high security whilst being easy to implement in 8088 assembler. It is also very fast. Anyway, suffice it to say that there are algorithms available which should suit our needs; we can select one if and when we decide to go ahead with the scheme.

**Aluta Continua!**

**Collection Number: AG1977**

**END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)**

**PUBLISHER:**

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

©2013

**LEGAL NOTICES:**

**Copyright Notice:** All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

**Disclaimer and Terms of Use:** Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a collection held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.