

**From Apartheid to Democracy in South Africa: Changing attitudes  
toward institutions, 1981-1995**

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## Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Date: 17/9/1999

## Abstract

This study aims to both describe and explain patterns of continuity and change in the South African public's attitudes toward institutions (public and private) from 1981 to 1995. The selected public institutions include the armed force, the police force, legal system, parliament and the civil service. The selected private institutions include churches, the press, labour unions and major companies. Confidence patterns will be compared and comparisons will be made over time as well as between public and private institutions.

This study will test the hypothetical assertion that public confidence reflects the changing political atmosphere in South Africa as it has moved from apartheid to a democratic system. The general hypothesis is that those individuals excluded from institutional representation and/or participation during the apartheid era exhibit less confidence toward institutions than individuals who were included in the political system. It would be expected that confidence toward institutions among all population groups in the post-apartheid era will be less polarised given the nature of the new, multi-racial democracy.

The focus of this study is the effect of the independent variables (population group, political party preference and time) on confidence toward selected institutions. Data is drawn from three surveys (1981, 1991 and 1995) which form part of the World Values Survey. Confidence toward institutions is compared by contrasting specific periods in South Africa's history: firstly, the levels of confidence toward institutions during the apartheid era (1981) are compared with confidence levels toward institutions at the onset of transition (1991). Secondly, confidence levels toward institutions are compared from the onset of the transition (1991) to the beginning of the post-apartheid era (1995). Means, cross-tabulations and factor analysis are employed to analyse and interpret the data.

The results suggest that the hypothesis holds true for some groups in society at different times in the period studied, although not for all groups at the same time.

During the apartheid era blacks, coloureds and Indians were critical, particularly of public institutions, due to their exclusion from true representation and participation. In the post-apartheid era, confidence among blacks toward public institutions improved remarkably, and also rose toward private institutions from 1981 to 1991, decreasing from 1991 to 1995. Although whites had a significant degree of confidence in public institutions during apartheid, these confidence levels decreased dramatically in the post-apartheid era, with confidence toward private institutions also decreasing in the period studied. Confidence toward public institutions among coloureds remained stable in the same period, and only improved marginally among the Indian population. Confidence toward private institutions among coloureds increased slightly from 1981 to 1991, and decreased from 1991 to 1995. Confidence toward private institutions among Indians improved slightly from 1981 to 1991 and remained stable from 1991 to 1995. Overall, it seems that the South African population in the post-apartheid era is neither fully confident towards nor actively distrustful of either private or public institutions. The findings of this study may be interpreted as a tentative and a discreet warning for the popular standing of institutions in South Africa.

The findings of this study should be regarded as tentative and exploratory. Levels of confidence toward institutions may fluctuate sharply over time. This will be true especially until democratic consolidation has been achieved, stabilising confidence to a degree so that fluctuations in public confidence toward both public and private institutions will not be as detrimental to South Africa's nascent democracy as they are at present.

## Opsomming

Die doel van hierdie studie is om die Suid-Afrikaanse publiek se opinies jeens staatsinrigtings en privaatinstellings vanaf 1981 tot 1995 te beskryf en te verduidelik. Die gekose staatsinrigtings sluit in die weermag, die polisiemag, die regstelsel, die parlement en staatsdepartemente. Die gekose privaatinstellings sluit in kerke, die pers, vakbonde en groot maatskappye. Vertrouenspatrone in staatsinrigtings en privaatinstellings word vergelyk en vergelykings word oor tyd en tussen staatsinrigtings en privaatinstellings gemaak.

Hierdie studie sal die hipotese toets dat vertrouenspatrone van die publiek 'n weerspieëling is van die veranderende politieke atmosfeer in Suid-Afrika soos dit beweeg het van apartheid tot 'n demokratiese stelsel. Die algemene hipotese is dat die individue wat uitgesluit was van verteenwoordiging en/of deelname in instellings gedurende die apartheidsera, minder vertroue in instelling sou gehad het as individue wat ingesluit was in die politieke-sisteem. Die verwagting is dat vertroue in instellings onder alle groepe in die post-apartheid era minder gepolariseer sal wees as gevolg van die aard van die nuwe, veelrassige demokrasie.

Die fokus van hierdie studie is die effek wat die onafhanklike veranderlikes (populasie groep, politieke party voorkeur en tyd) op vertroue in die gekose instellings het. Data is verkry uit drie opnames (1981, 1991 en 1995) wat deel vorm van die *World Values Study*. Vertroue in instellings word vergelyk deur spesifieke periodes in Suid-Afrika se geskiedenis te kontrasteer. Eerstens, word die vertrouensvlakke in instellings gedurende die apartheidsera (1981) vergelyk met vertrouensvlakke in instellings by die aanvang van die oorgangstydperk. Tweedens, word die vertrouensvlakke in instellings vergelyk vanaf die aanvang van die oorgangsperiode (1991) tot die begin van die post-apartheidsera. Ten einde die data te analiseer en te interpreteer word gemiddelde, oorkruis-tabelle en faktor ontledings gebruik.

Die resultate impliseer dat die hipotese bevestig word vir sommige groepe in die samelewing op verskillende tye in die periode wat bestudeer word, maar nie vir alle groepe op dieselfde tyd nie.

Tydens die apartheidsera was swartmense, kleurlinge en Indiërs krities, oor veral staatsinstellings, a.g.v. die beperkings aan ware verteenwoordiging en deelname. In die post-apartheidsera, het vertroue onder swartmense jeens staatsinstellings merkwaardig verhoog, en ook vir privaatinstellings van 1981 tot 1991, maar het afgeneem van 1991 tot 1995. Alhoewel blankes groot vertroue in staatsinstellings gedurende apartheid openbaar het, het hierdie vertrouensvlakke dramaties afgeneem in die post-apartheidsera, en vertroue in privaatinstellings het ook afgeneem in die periode wat bestudeer word. Vertroue in staatsinstellings onder kleurlinge het onveranderd gebly in dieselfde periode terwyl daar 'n geringe toename onder Indiërs plaasgevind het. Vertroue in privaatinstellings onder kleurlinge het effens verhoog van 1981 tot 1991, en het afgeneem van 1991 tot 1995. Vertroue in privaatinstellings onder Indiërs het effens toegeneem van 1981 tot 1991, en het onveranderd gebly van 1991 tot 1995. Oor die algemeen, blyk dit dat die Suid-Afrikaanse bevolking in die post-apartheid era nie instellings volledig vertrou nie, maar hulle wantrou hulle ook nie. Die bevindings van hierdie studie moet geïnterpreteer word as 'n tentatiewe en diskrete waarskuwing van die populêre stand van instellings in Suid-Afrika.

Die bevindings van hierdie studie moet beskou word as tentatief en ondersoekend. Vlakke van vertroue in instellings mag skerp wissel oor tyd. Dit sal die geval wees totdat demokratiese konsolidasie bereik is, wat tot 'n mate 'n stabiliserende uitwerking sal hê op vertroue sodat wissellings in publieke vertroue in beide staats-en privaatinstellings nie so nadelig vir Suid-Afrika se ontluikende demokrasie sal wees nie.



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for all their love and support.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: Scope of Inquiry**

### **1. Introduction**

The power of government is a double-edged sword. It has the potential to both threaten and protect individual freedom and welfare. In order for governments to govern effectively there must be a minimum of public confidence that they will protect more of these interests than they will threaten. In circumstances where confidence is absent collective action is impossible except as a consequence of coercion, the limits of which are widely accepted (Mishler and Rose 1995:3).

Historically, governance in South Africa has protected particular interests at the expense of freedom and welfare within the broader society. The apartheid state epitomised a partisan ethnic state where the state was utilised by the regime as an instrument to advance white interests - in particular, ethnic Afrikaner interests - at the expense of other population groups (Gagiano and Du Toit in Kotzé 1996:57). With the completion of the transition and inception of the democratisation process, questions have arisen concerning the ability of the new institutional dispensation to achieve objectives of individual freedom and welfare for society as a whole. In a true democracy, the state must be able to deliver goods equitably to the whole of society (Gagiano and Du Toit in Kotzé 1996:57).

In summary one could argue that the historically oppressed black majority are wondering whether their political and economic needs will be met, whilst the white community are wondering if their social and economic status will be safeguarded under the new regime. This study will assess public confidence that these objections can be achieved through the current institutions, with particular reference to changes since the end of the apartheid era.

However, a conceptual clarification is warranted: confidence or trust is a reflection of the public's evaluation as to whether or not institutional performance is in accordance with their normative expectations (Miller and Listhaug 1993:358).



## **2. The study of attitudes towards institutions**

It is useful to relate the South African public's confidence toward institutions within a broader comparative framework of various international studies. This section will therefore start with a brief discussion of some relevant research and findings from Europe, the United States of America (USA) and some post-communist states. The discussion will address the possibilities of applying these findings to the South African situation, and conclude with the available research on institutions in South Africa.

### **2.1 Studies concerning Europe, the United States and post-communist countries**

Numerous studies concerning an assessment of public attitudes toward institutions have been completed in the USA and Europe. The importance of such research, in particular the assumption that low confidence levels in institutions produce problems in political systems has long been acknowledged among the advanced industrial states. A recent growth area with particular relevance to South Africa is the study of 'attitudes in transition' in the post-communist states.

A variety of empirical studies examine the public confidence in Europe toward institutions (Huntington 1974; Brittan 1975; Barnes and Kaase 1979; Listhaug 1984; Jennings and van Deth 1989; Rohrschneider 1994; Listhaug and Wiberg 1995; Le Roy 1995; Abrahamson and Inglehart 1995; Dalton 1996; Anderson and Guillory 1997). The dominant finding during the 1970s was that an overload plagued democratic systems. Democracy is perceived as incapable of dealing with expanded demands by citizens and levels of popular political participation (Brittan 1975, Huntington 1974, quoted in Anderson and Guillory 1997:67). This undermines the government's decision-making capacity as well as its ability to implement decisions satisfactorily. In order to protect themselves governments make promises that they cannot carry out with the consequence that there is a delegitimation of authority (Kaase and Newton 1995:25), widespread public dissatisfaction and a lack of confidence in institutions (Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki quoted in Kaase and Newton 1995:25). Kaase and Newton (1995:149) point out that

these developments overlook the growing acceptance in West European democracies that public priorities must change.

Inspired by the perception evoked by the 'crisis literature' of the 1970s, namely that states were less able to respond to participatory demands due to increasing fiscal crises, Listhaug and Wiberg (1995) examine whether patterns of public confidence toward institutions across 14 nations in Western Europe during the 1980s mirror this crisis. Results showed that a widespread decline in the public's confidence toward institutions during the 1980s was not evident. Listhaug and Wiberg conclude that such stability in the public confidence could be explained by various factors. Firstly, inter-institutional linkages are thought to be important for determining overall confidence towards the political order. Secondly, the study shows that confidence toward government is not directly related to government instability or unemployment. Thirdly, that decline in confidence toward some institutions may be the result of weakened traditional belief systems, in particular religious beliefs. In short, Listhaug and Wiberg demonstrated that building confidence toward institutions is a long-term process, that the public's confidence would not immediately mirror a 'crisis' in the short-term. The relevance of these findings to South Africa is, however, questionable. Countries in Western Europe are established democracies whereas South Africa is a new democracy faced with markedly different challenges.

Listhaug (1984) discusses various aspects relating to the Norwegian public's confidence toward both public and private institutions. His focus is on the structure of confidence and on the effect of various independent variables upon this confidence. Key results are that individual life satisfaction contributes to confidence toward institutions, that basic political attitudes and values have an impact on confidence, although age has a weak effect.

Rohrschneider (1994) reports on the influence of institutions on the democratic values of the political elite in the united Germany during 1991. His results support institutional learning theory (see 10.2 of this chapter) as well as a diffusion of support for liberal democratic values in the former East Germany.

Le Roy (1995) examines confidence toward democratic institutions in Europe and specifically in Sweden. He argues that if a decline of citizen confidence were only one of distaste with politics and government it would be far easier to pin the blame for the crisis on the current party system. The phenomenon, however, demands broader analysis. Le Roy argues that where private institutions fail to mediate between citizens and economic and political institutions - between states and markets - a crisis of confidence is all the more likely. Citizens cease to see these institutions as the product of their own efforts in the project of civic creation, and begin to view them as “agents of the state”.

Researchers also identify a trend toward higher levels of political sophistication coupled with an emphasis on public involvement in the democratic process (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Jennings and van Deth 1989; Abrahamson and Inglehart 1995; Dalton 1996 quoted in Anderson and Guillory 1997:67). Dissatisfaction with institutional performance among the Western European public is viewed as the result of institutional inadequacies that constrain the capacity of the public to participate in decision-making. But, as Anderson and Guillory (1997:68) argue, public participation and the quality of political outputs are but two aspects in the link between institutions and public attitudes. Public access to the political system does not necessarily result in higher levels of confidence. In South Africa, for example, large parts of the population are estranged from governmental procedures and would therefore be uncomfortable airing their concerns publicly. As a result, only those with the resources and capacity to fully understand the contents of policy documents will be able to advance their interests through the political process (Besdziek in Venter 1998:162). Inglehart concludes that distaste for institutions in Western democracies is the result of individuals' need to attain higher aesthetic needs through the political process. According to Le Roy (1995:304), this type of “...theoretical work allows for the question of political efficacy and can explain political dissatisfaction among ‘postmaterialists’ but has considerable difficulty explaining the frustration of a polity that seems to transcend the categories of materialism and postmaterialism”.

Anderson and Guillory (1997) examine political institutions and satisfaction with democracy in 11 European democracies. The analysis revolves around differences in consensus and majoritarian systems. Their argument is that when it comes to attitudes toward the political system a distinction must be made between the winners (those who voted for the governing party or one in a governing coalition) and the losers in the democratic competition (Nadeau and Blais 1993; Kaase and Newton 1995 quoted in Anderson and Guillory 1997:68). They found that the losers have lower levels of satisfaction and therefore confidence toward the political system than do the winners. The winners are more inclined to perceive the government as interested and responsive to their needs. In the South African context the, implication is that those who identify with the political parties that comprise the Government of National Unity (GNU) would have more confidence in institution than those who do not.

Studies have also addressed the United States' democratic and civil society institutions (Lipset and Schneider 1983; Kornberg 1990; Capella and Jamieson 1996). Lipset and Schneider (1983) study the decline of confidence toward institutions. They investigate disrespect and the decline of confidence in the public's perception of their political, social and economic institutions. The public's criticism is directed at the performance (competence, trustworthiness and integrity) of the institutions, while the structure and norms of the political system as a whole is strongly supported.

Capella and Jamieson (1996) examine the relationship between political cynicism and media cynicism. They argue that the manner in which political activity is interpreted by the media influences the public and may activate cynicism towards institutions. Results show that that cynicism toward political institutions is related to cynicism in the press. However, the direction of causality is problematic: does media cynicism result from political cynicism or vice versa? They conclude that cynics "...in one domain tend to be cynics in the other domain".

Kornberg's (1990) research is concerned with political support for institutions in Canada. He concludes that there are two principal sources of support, namely the individual's socialisation process and public judgements of the regime's ability to perform its functions.

The theory of democratic elitism predominant in certain discussions of trust and distrust, holds that distrust exists because the masses are ignorant, alienated (lack of democratic values) or anomic (lack all values). Hart (quoted in Barber 1983:70) argues that political distrust is not the result of ignorance, alienation or anomie but rather the product of the public's realistic and accurate perception of their leaders' incompetence.

Dalton (1988:235) notes that evidence suggests that public confidence in institutions in West European democracies have markedly decreased over the last two decades. Changes in attitudes are generally the result of socio-economic transformations in these countries. He explains the crisis of confidence toward political institutions in terms of new political issues and goals (i.e., social equality and environmental protection), increased public participation patterns and new value priorities which emphasise individualism (Dalton 1988:9). Governments struggle to adjust to these new issues and a more participatory form of democracy. Many democratic governments are simply not able to meet public expectations and this stimulates public criticism (Dalton 1988:226).

In sum, it is clear that in Western Europe and the USA, researchers have questioned the confidence in and legitimacy of political rule. This has been inspired by a growing trend of scepticism that power holders are incapable of satisfying public expectations (Lewis in Held 1990:432). This testing of public attitudes has simply attempted to measure if such scepticism truly exists and, if so, if it impacts upon democratic governance.

A more recent growth area has been the study of attitudes toward institutions in post-communist countries (Hibbing and Patterson 1994; Mishler and Rose 1995; Crawford and Lijphardt 1995). Hibbing and Patterson (1994) analyse public trust and distrust in

parliaments in Central and Eastern Europe. Their findings suggest that confidence is strongly related to economic performance and effectiveness of government.

Crawford and Lijphardt's (1995) study attempts to explain political and economic change in post-communist Eastern Europe. They contrast the "legacies of the past" and "imperatives of liberalisation" approaches as alternative causal factors shaping regime change. They conclude that "...the immediate context of norms, institutions, and international pressures shapes the particular way that legacies influence outcomes" (Crawford and Lijphardt 1995:196).

Mishler and Rose (1995) examine confidence toward civil society institutions across nine post-communist societies. They conclude that the public demonstrates scepticism rather than confidence or distrust toward institutions. Results of the study show that perceptions of freedom and fairness have a positive effect on contemporary confidence toward institutions. Virtually all the post-communist regimes are committed to the protection of freedoms and, "...as a result, popular distrust is unlikely to increase in the future as a consequence of significant reductions in freedom, but positive trust also is not likely to be raised by substantial increases in individual freedom" (Mishler and Rose 1995:30).

Social embeddedness<sup>1</sup>, also has a strong positive influence on confidence in institutions, and is likely to be a constant dynamic in confidence because it is the result of long-term socialisation (Mishler and Rose 1995:30). Changes in embeddedness are likely to occur in the medium- to long-term as a result of generational change.

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<sup>1</sup> Social embeddedness refers to an individual's position in society and can have a significant bearing on their life experiences and influence, and as a consequence, their attitudes toward institutions. Therefore, to the extent that trust or distrust of institutions reflects life-long experiences or political socialisation, one would expect them to vary according to an individual's position in the social and economic structure of the broader society. The implication is that trust should vary directly with the extent to which an individual's position in the social structure reflects their embeddedness in the community (Mishler and Rose 1995:20-21).

In contrast, economic performance has both a short- and medium-term impact on confidence. Mishler and Rose (1995:31) conclude that the change from a command economy to a market economy contributes to public scepticism as living standards and macro-economic conditions have deteriorated. Yet, market reforms have simultaneously fuelled public hopes for improved economic conditions in the future. In conclusion, their study claim that the public's confidence toward institutions depends on the maintenance of individual freedoms, the expansion of social embeddedness and successful economic reforms.

No research has been completed in African states (excluding South Africa) which explicitly examines confidence toward institutions. Breytenbach's (1997) study is one of the first studies to focus on democratisation, party elections, and other factors that have an impact on the consolidation of democracy in Africa. His study excludes institutions due to their unfavourable public status on the continent. Although Africa has experienced numerous inclusive, democratic multi-party elections since the mid-1990s, paving the way for public participation in state institutions, the majority of these states have since regressed to one-party or military regimes (Breytenbach 1997:1-2).

Problems that face many African countries include the colonial legacy which imposed arbitrary boundaries, aggravating political and ethnic conflicts, an authoritarian political environment, and the statisation of society with state interference in all spheres of society leaving little in the way of democratic self-rule (Breytenbach 1997:7). These problems are exacerbated by the heterogeneous ethnic composition of many African states with leaders often employing measures to stifle divisive elements. The absence of elite commitment to democratic values and corrupt governments adds to these problems. A free, robust civil society with the right to demand accountability from those who govern is mostly absent in African states. Chazan (quoted in Breytenbach 1997:23) refers to civil society in Africa as "the missing middle" as people are so poorly organised with exception of churches and unions.



The basic challenge facing African countries is thus the establishment of political, economic and social justice. The public of African countries hopes that their socio-economic life will improve with the advent of democracy. It is not always clear why these expectations arise, yet it is imperative that these people see the result of democracy in, for example, improved living standards, education, housing and access to health services.

### 2.1.1 A framework for the study of the South African public's attitudes toward institutions

Relatively few studies have attempted to assess public confidence toward both public and private institutions, with any exceptions being mostly concerned with advanced industrial nations. Studies in Europe have tended to downplay the short-term impact of economic downturns and have concluded that long-term changes in the political culture, class structure and democratic competition (or party affiliation) is more important in influencing attitudes towards institutions. In contrast, studies in the United States and post-communist countries have tended to focus on perceptions of performance compared to norms of transparency or compared to the past as the predominant influence on attitudes respectively.

While the studies from Western Europe and the USA constitute the first examples of testing public attitudes towards institutions, they could not be taken as a precedent with a methodology to all other cases. Indeed, the same logic of investigation cannot simply be transplanted to emerging democracies like South Africa confronted with vastly different social and historical developments. In South Africa, legitimacy has been slim and unstable at the best of times. As with other so called emerging democracies, (see section three) South Africa has in recent times experienced far-ranging structural societal transformation. Measuring attitudes and legitimacy is therefore not born out of a perception of growing scepticism towards an established democratic political system, but rather interacts with a fast-changing social and historical context.



One fact that should be taken into consideration is South Africa's position as one of the most divided societies in the world. These divisions are primarily ethnic, class, social, race, linguistic and religious (Venter 1998:3) ensuring that institutions have to relate different ethnic groups within institutions themselves (Horowitz 1985:18). Problems that face South Africa have either already been dealt with by countries in Western Europe and the USA, or are simply not relevant to them as established democracies. South Africa has more in common with the post-communist countries, with these countries undergoing fundamental economic and political reform. However, South Africa has always had a partial market economy<sup>2</sup> and the apartheid government did not control society to the same extent as the communist regimes. It is nevertheless expected that there could be overlapping explanations. Given the specified history of transformation, the following aspects or propositions could probably be related to attitudes toward institutions in South Africa:

- Comparison with the past in terms of performance - As with post-communist states, comparison with the past dispensation might be an important factor in determining attitudes towards the new institutional setting. Indeed, some scholars have assumed that as long as the new institutional setting does not resemble the old apartheid institutions, it will evoke positive attitudes among the public. Yet, whilst the post-communist studies have concluded this might be true in the short-term, only positive long-term performance will sustain this perception.
- Democratic Competition - Given the South African history of strong polarisation over political issues, it is expected that winning and losing divisions along party lines might be an important explanation of attitudes toward institutions.

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<sup>2</sup> Mohr and Fourie (1995:56) note that "South Africa does not have a pure market system. The system is a mixed one in which both the market mechanism and command or central direction (in the form of government intervention) play a significant part".

- Inclusiveness - South African studies on institutions and attitudes toward them demonstrate that the inclusiveness that institutions provide is taken as a fundamental determinant of attitudes toward institutions. Inclusivity is defined in racial terms but is closely related to party affiliation. Two issues of inclusivity/exclusivity are deemed to be vital in determining attitudes towards institutions: a) the denial of participatory claims (see Kotzé 1989) and, b) the perception that rights are constitutionally guaranteed (see Singh and Wright 1995; Kotzé 1996).

These propositions give weight to expectations that patterns of attitudes towards institutions in South Africa might correlate significantly with cleavages centred upon two variables: population group (race) and political party affiliation (see Section five). Inclusivity or exclusivity of institutions has caused mobilisation around race as the criteria of inclusion or exclusion, and has also spilled over into party affiliation and democratic competition.

### 2.3 Studies Concerning South Africa

Unfortunately little empirical research has been completed dealing with South Africa's institutions, and even less concerned with measuring attitudes towards institutions and how they change over time. Kotzé's 1989 study investigates political change and institutionalisation in apartheid era South Africa. He argues that political institutions during the apartheid years failed to satisfy the participatory claims of a large segment of the population, and that is why the regime faced the continuing erosion of order and stability. The implicit assumption of his study is that the failure to meet participatory claims automatically translates into receding levels of confidence toward institutions. Following this assumption, avenues for redressing this situation are explored and problems related to institutionalisation examined.

Kotzé's 1996 study deals more specifically with elite and public attitudes toward political institutions. It is argued that constitutionally created institutions largely determine the ability of a democratic system to regulate conflict (Kotzé 1996:1). This implies that

people will feel confident that their needs will be met if they believe that their rights are constitutionally protected. The institutions chosen for the study are Parliament, 'government in Pretoria', and the executive. The key finding was that elites had more confidence toward these institutions than the public. Overall, as Kotzé (1996:17) argues, "...there is already considerable sympathy and confidence toward important new institutions". While Kotzé (1996:17) concludes this finding points towards a growing institutionalisation of the new political institutions, it will be interesting to note how the public's attitudes evolve.

Schumacher (1994) and Singh and Wright's (1995) research deal with constitutional design and the prospects for mediating conflict in divided societies. Schumacher specifically investigates the impact of institutions in the process of restructuring a South African society. Central to his study is the constitutional engineering to create a political system that is flexible enough to react to social change, while at the same time is able to mediate conflict between different groups in society. It is argued that while there were attempts to adapt to social change in the past (i.e., the constitutional dispensation of 1983) these reforms were not sufficient. The question that remains in a democratic South Africa is whether the new institutional setting is able to transform prevailing conflicts into a stable democracy.

Singh and Wright's (1995) study concerns the conflict-regulating role of legal and political institutions upon religious, racial, linguistic and ethnic divisions. The role of national constitutions, the judicial system and the nature of the political representation of systems in India, Malaysia and South Africa are considered. Their central question is whether constitutions are able to reduce prospects of conflict in such diverse societies. In their conclusion, they argue that it would be particularly difficult to secure minority protections (especially for KwaZulu-Natal) given the ANC's widespread popularity.

Sisk (1995) investigates South Africa's transition from an institutional choice perspective. The central theoretical question that his study addresses is on what basis do political

actors choose among different institutions, and what are the prospects that these choices will build a mutually acceptable political system? (Sisk 1995:6). Importantly, Sisk (1995:250) argues that a social contract can only develop in South Africa when new political and economic institutions and civil society interest groups develop to transcend the divisions that were reinforced by apartheid institutions (Sisk 1995:250). In order to relate it more specifically to the study of attitudes towards institutions, it could be argued that stability will only arise once polarised cleavages of confidence and distrust are removed; when individuals from different racial groups converge and demonstrate similar levels of confidence in these institutions.

Despite these efforts, the primary deficiency is the lack of longitudinal research in South Africa that explicitly examines changing confidence toward both public and private institutions. This deficiency highlights that many researchers have made the qualitative assumption that due to the practices of apartheid institutions, attitudes towards these institutions were polarised along racial and political party lines. Yet, this assumption has not been adequately tested. Given this omission, the study of attitudes toward institutions in the new South Africa is problematic. It is hard to debate the health or legitimacy of new institutions if we cannot compare this within a particular time frame. For example, it would be interesting to test speculation that blacks do not have confidence towards the legal system due to racial bias and financial constraints (Corder 1985:81-85). If one speculates on whether this attitude is increasingly prevalent or receding within the new institutional setting, comparison with the past is necessary.

### **3. Purpose Statement**

The aim of this study is to describe and explain patterns of continuity and change in the South African public's attitudes toward institutions. The period relevant to this study is 1981 to 1995, a period marked by fundamental changes as the state moved from apartheid to democracy, with this progression being reflected in the operation and purposes of both public and private institutions.

The dependent variable that this study will utilise is ‘attitudes toward institutions’, denoted by synonyms such as confidence and trust. For purposes of description and explanation this study will assess how institutional confidence is generated and sustained. It will examine two independent variables, namely political party preference and population group, that it deems to be crucial in the explanation of the formation of confidence toward institutions. Exactly to what degree political party and/or population group correlates with institutional confidence as an explanatory factor is the focus of my empirical and statistical analysis. From this analysis, this study will assess whether these two variables provide a sufficient explanation for confidence toward institutions.

Confidence in both public and private institutions will be examined. The distinction between public and private institutions is discussed in more detail in Section Nine of this chapter. The public institutions selected for analysis include the armed forces, the police, the legal system, Parliament, and the civil service. The selected private institutions include; churches, the press, labour unions and major companies.

#### **4. Problem statement**

The issue that this study will address involve the independent variables that may play a role in the shaping of perceptions about institutions in order to assess the significance of these perceptions for an emerging democracy. The timing (surveys were conducted in 1981, 1991 and 1995) of the data used in this study coincides with important periods in South Africa’s history. Firstly apartheid was still securely entrenched during 1981, whilst 1991 signalled the distinct move towards a new dispensation (transition to democracy). By 1995 South Africa had a democratic political system in place. It would be interesting to note the trends these changes had on the public’s attitudes toward institutions. The two independent variables (race and political party preference) were chosen to assess their impact on confidence, taking into account the exclusion and inclusion of ethnic groups, with regard to the use of political parties as vehicles for inclusion or exclusion.

The relevance of the connection between institutions and public confidence forms part of the contemporary debate about democratic performance. It is pertinent, as Anderson and Guillory (1997:67) note, "...because it involves the extent to which those attitudes and, by implication, the potential for protest or instability are mediated by a country's political institutions".

The scope of this study (1981 to 1995) facilitates a comparison of confidence patterns. Comparisons will be made over time as well as between public and private institutions. This will enhance the general understanding of public confidence toward institutions. Assessments of confidence are most informative when comparisons are made possible (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:298).

It is also worth studying confidence toward institutions as it is a step towards measuring legitimacy (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:299). When the majority of the population support and accept institutions it is an indicator of perceived legitimacy of the system.

## **5. Hypotheses**

The study will test the hypothetical assertion that public confidence reflects the changing political atmosphere in South Africa. The general hypotheses is that those excluded from institutional representation and/or participation during apartheid had less confidence toward institutions than did those who were included. It is expected that confidence toward institutions in the post-apartheid era will be far less polarised. A distinction should be made here between public and private institutions (see Section Nine). It is also expected that confidence toward public institutions will be more polarised than their counterparts in the private sphere. The representative nature of public institutions is of primary concern for according or withholding confidence. This is true to a lesser extent for private institutions as they are voluntary and some times membership-supported (e.g., churches, labour unions). The apartheid state also did not completely control these institutions although it did interfere to a significant extent in their functioning. If South

Africa's democratic constitution upholds and respects the boundaries between state and society it is expected that confidence toward institutions will depend primarily on their performance.

Further, it is asserted that the independent variable party preference will influence institutional confidence: those who identify with the winning party will, in general, become more trusting of institutions. This in opposition to those identifying with the political opposition who may become politically less supportive or even alienated (Tóka quoted in Klingemann and Fuchs 1995:265). The hypothesis is thus that the political 'losers' will be less satisfied with political institutions than the political 'winners'.

Furthermore, the independent variable population group is assumed to be significant in the context of a multi-racial society such as South Africa, especially when one considers that apartheid excluded 'non-whites' from any substantial participation in institutions. With race being a significant factor in South African politics, belonging to a certain population group is expected to be a significant factor in determining institutional confidence.

Finally, since historical cleavages have been based on race and political party identification, the expectation is that cleavages will be particularly strong in apartheid-era South Africa. As a process of new institutional learning (see Section 10.2) sets in during the post-apartheid phase, it is expected that these cleavages will lessen.

## **6. Limitations of the study**

The focus of this study is the South African public's attitudes toward institutions. Kotzé (1996:10) argues that "...although the support of the broad public is important, elite support is even more important in a state that has gone through an elite settlement". An underlying elite value consensus, a shared belief in the rules of democracy, and the worth and legitimacy of democratic institutions are essential elements for enhancing the stability and survival of democratic regimes and democratic consolidation (Bialer in Held



1990:423; Higley et al. 1992:423; Nelson 1996:348). A lack of such commitment may limit democracy which in turn may result in shifts toward authoritarianism (Higley et al. 1992:10). Dye and Zeigler (quoted in Dalton 1988:17) bluntly claim that "...the survival of democracy depends upon the commitment of elites to democratic ideals rather than upon broad support for democracy by the masses. Political apathy and non-participation among the masses contribute to the survival of democracy. Fortunately for democracy, the anti-democratic masses are generally more apathetic than elites".

This paper does not dispute the importance of the elite's role in the transition nor the importance of the elite's perceptions of political institutions. Their attitudes together with those of the public are viewed as both related and complimentary, with the representativeness of a political system being judged by this citizen-elite consensus (Dalton 1988:207). Whereas elite pact formation (see Chapter 2) is of fundamental importance in establishing the transition to democracy, public perceptions may become increasingly important for the consolidation of democracy in South Africa. As Diamond (1997:34) notes the acceptance of democracy by the masses may prevent the mobilisation of anti-democratic demagogues.

The elite's relationship to institutions is pro-active in their creation whilst the public's role is reactive through the granting or denial of their confidence. Although the public's attitudes are merely reactive, this does not mean that they cannot determine the future development of institutions. The elite have to take account of the 'reactive power' of the public in order to counter the erosion of political institutions. Elite consensus and unity are often necessary for the creation of democracy, but are never sufficient alone (Nelson 1996:351).

## **7. Significance of the study**

This study will identify and empirically test the extent to which sectors of society during the apartheid-era accorded or withheld confidence to institutions and the reasons thereof,



thus shedding light upon existing scholarship. A study of public confidence levels in institutions in South Africa following the transition is important firstly for policy makers as it makes them aware of possible threats to the stability of the political system. Policies will be more sensitive to the population's perceptions when they are attentive to sections of the population that have confidence in institutions and those sections that feel less confident and the reasons for their opposing attitudes. Secondly, it will consolidate and review the existing literature of public attitudes toward institutions. Thirdly, such a study is important for researchers as it enhances the literature on the subject from a South African context by examining attitudes to specific institutions.

## **8. The conceptual and theoretical framework**

Drawing from the overview above, a number of conceptual and theoretical issues come to the fore. The conceptualisation of terms serves as a preliminary description for a general framework of understanding of terms used in this study. This discussion will start with a conceptual definition of the term 'institution', what constitutes an institution, why they are important, and a critical review of their value. A classification of institutions will follow focusing on a public-private divide - the nature of civil society (private institutions) and state (public institutions) institutions will be discussed in more detail. This chapter will conclude with a 'theoretical framework' (see Section 10) for the study of confidence toward institutions.

### **8.1 Institutions: definitions and functions**

As noted earlier it is vital to understand the nature and function of institutions in general. In the literature there exists a variety of perspectives as to how institutions should be viewed and classified, and exactly what their functions are, be they public or private.

#### **8.1.1. Conceptualisation**

There are numerous definitions of the nature and function of institutions, due to the different approaches to the study of institutions. Sjöstrand (1993:9) argues that institutions

can not be observed as a functioning whole as they are neither physical nor objective phenomena. Human activity, on the other hand, is observable. He defines an institution as a "...human mental construct for a coherent system of shared (enforced) norms that regulate individual interactions in recurrent situations". Rules are enforced by those who are formally recognised to do so (Levi quoted in Pontusson 1995:125). Shared norms not only contribute to the stabilisation of human action and the predictability of behaviour, but are also signs of efficiency and legitimacy (Sjöstrand 1993:9).

There is a wide agreement that institutions provide order and stability, integrate actions and co-ordinate interests (Ethington 1995:92). Conflicting individual preferences are mediated through the rules of co-operation. As Shepsle (quoted in Skowronek 1995:92) metaphorically notes, institutions are "...the 'glue' that holds otherwise atomistic and self-interested individuals together in an organised society". The existence and continuity of institutions are nonetheless generally taken for granted: "Institutions are 'there', usually unquestioned regulators of expectations and behaviour" (O'Donnell 1996:37).

Institutions are structures, and like many other structures constrain individuals. Their distinguishing feature is the manner in which they constrain individuals. Institutions have a legalistic aspect and they rely on a structure of enforcement (Pontusson 1995:125). There is an inherent tension between state coercion and institutions and citizen autonomy (Glasner 1997:21). The ability of institutions to constrain individual freedom is a much debated issue.

The debate centres upon the relationship between the individual and institutions. Some scholars claim that institutions primarily limit freedom while others emphasise their possibilities for promoting issues/values (Sjöstrand 1993:10). On the one hand observers claim that institutions are anti-human and that they merely set limits within which human life must take place. Vickers (1973:103) uses Rousseau's phrase "Men are born free but everywhere they are in chains" as an illustration of this view. Contemporary chains are interpreted as "...our institutions or the system which our institutions have combined to

form; and the jailers are the officials of those institutions by whom those institutions act, themselves double enslaved by subordination to their official roles". The emphasis is thus on the preservation of individual freedom and an aversion for coercive measures.

On the other hand individuals are seen as being supported by the institutional environment within which they live. According to this view individuals are "...free only in so far as they are born into the freedoms which their institutions provide" (Vickers 1973:103). In order to preserve and extend their freedoms individuals have to play the roles which institutions offer them. In so doing institutions liberate the individual and these liberties are in turn protected by institutions, building a complex interdependent relationship.

In conclusion then, institutions do have the ability to exploit freedom but they also have the potential to respect freedom (Nathanson 1992:88). Institutions can both extend and circumscribe freedoms; the restriction of some liberties may extend others (Glasner 1997:21). Public confidence toward institutions must in the final instance be based on their nature and quality. As O'Donnell (1996:37) argues the "...institutional setting therefore does not define in an unanimous way the actions taken by an individual - there is always some freedom of action".

## 8.2. Classification of institutions

To effectively study institutions it is useful to differentiate between different groups of institutions. Institutions in general, and institutional confidence in particular, are usually studied by differentiating between sets of institutions. Institutions can be categorised into state and non-state institutions (Listhaug 1984:114). Rose (quoted in Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:303) classifies six institutions as belonging to government namely: the armed forces, the education system, the legal system, the police, parliament and the civil service. He identifies four non-state institutions namely: the church, the press, trade unions and, major companies. This classification of institutions is thus a public-private sector divide; between the spheres of politics and that of civil society. Civil society institutions exist within the sphere where individuals pursue private interests and actions - thus the private sphere

(Chandhoke 1995:169). The organisation and institutions of the public sphere constitutes the state (Keane 1988:1).

This classification of institutions will be used in this assessment of changing attitudes toward institutions in South Africa as it simplifies analysis. It is especially relevant for the study of the South African situation, where democratisation has signalled for the first time a real distinction and autonomy between the two spheres, after continuous attempts by the apartheid state to control the private lives of citizens.

After having dealt with the major characteristics of institutions, a stipulative definition for institutions is tentatively put forward as either public or private, with functions including the provision of order in the polity, the integration of action and the co-ordination of interests.

#### 8.2.1. The nature and function of civil society (private) institutions

The institutions of the private realm are the institutions of civil society. The concept of civil society is undergoing a global revival as the result of the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, the overburdened welfare state in Western Europe and the demise of the one-party state in Africa (Diamond 1993:3; Chandhoke 1995:27; Reitzes 1997:15). Now in the nascent stages of post-authoritarian transformations, we see the hallmarks of civil society, i.e., an independent media, trade unions, and religious organisations (Ruperez quoted in Nelson 1996:349).

Existing definitions of civil society are notoriously varied (Narsoo 1990:24; Glasner 1997:21). For the purposes of this study, Chazan's (quoted in Friedman et al. 1996:59) definition of civil society will suffice. She regards civil society as "...organisations that are autonomous from the state but interrelated with it ... that interact with the state but do not want to take it over". Although civil society institutions are self-limiting (as they do not attempt to share state power) they are by no means powerless. Dryzek (1996:481) identifies several ways in which they exercise power. Firstly, they can effect public policy

by influencing political discourse.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, by creating permanent positions for issues on the public agenda they can produce long lasting effects on political culture. Thirdly, they can entice governmental responses through protest, thereby creating a fear of political instability.

The ideal relationship between civil society institutions and the state is a hotly debated issue in South Africa as elsewhere. It is not surprising that such a debate has emerged considering the recent democratisation process. The re-emergence of civil society to explain transitions to democracy taking place especially in Eastern Europe has contributed to the recent interest in civil society in South Africa (Camerer 1994:67). Friedman (in Kotzé 1996:78) distinguishes two extreme positions regarding the relationship between the state and civil society. None of these views are held in their extreme form, but variants of these positions are frequently apparent.

The first view emphasises the independence between civil society institutions and the state. Any attempts by the state to control civil society is seen as a violation of democratic principles. This view, however, ignores the reality that civil society can not exist without the state's implementation of the rules of institutional life. Civil society also cannot claim to be as representative as a democratic state. It is precisely civil society's partiality which means that no institution seeks to represent an entire community's interests (Diamond 1994:7). The point here is that civil society must be subjected to state control; it can not be entirely independent.

The second view evaluates democracy according to the incorporation of civil society into the state. The argument is that the more civil society is included in decision-making

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<sup>3</sup> The degree to which civil society institutions are able to have an impact on public policy depends on the resources at their disposal and their capabilities. It is also dependent on the extent to which their position reflect the position of the majority in society. The issue, however, is the opportunity to influence policy (Friedman in Kotzé 1996:77-78).

structures; the more democratic the state. This view threatens the role of civil society as a means for citizens of holding the state accountable. An effective civil society requires access to a democratic state, but for democracy to survive there must be a gap between the two (Friedman in Kotzé 1996:80). Bahmueller (1996:1) goes even further when he states "...in liberal thought society occupies a position of moral superiority in its relations with the state. The state is merely the extension and servant of society".

Yet societal autonomy can go too far; limits are necessary. Civil society must be autonomous but not alienated from the state; it must create a balance where it is watchful yet respectful of the authority of the state. State institutions must also be autonomous to a degree so that they can respond to demands in ways that encourage pluralist competition (Fish 1994:32).

The preconditions for the survival of civil society institutions are an inclusive constitution, representative democracy, political tolerance, and a legitimate government and state (Friedman et al. 1996:59). Civil society possesses the potential to hold the state accountable if these conditions are present. None of these conditions existed during the apartheid era, so that many organs of civil society were in reality misidentified; the extensive politicisation of civil society institutions blurred the boundary between public and private spheres. A coercive state undermines the autonomy of civil society as these institutions become not much more than conveyor belts for unrepresentative state policies (Chandhoke 1995:10; Narsoo quoted in Friedman et al. 1996:63). Reitzes (1997:19) warns that "...the state can use the concept [of civil society] to legitimate its actions and claim public support which may not exist".

The apartheid state's overreaching penetration of society resulted in the repression of civil society, ensuring the erosion of a sphere where the state should have been held responsible and the parameters of public-discourse laid down. Holding the state accountable cannot rest with formal government institutions alone (e.g. constitution and various commissions) because these could all be dominated by a single party. When a state is in such a dominant

position to define the terrain of public discourse and the boundaries of social interaction, the vibrancy and creative impulses of civil society are stifled (Chandhoke 1995:27). The apartheid state, however, did not destroy all forms of independent life, i.e., church membership encompassed all races (Reitzes 1997:17). By denying the majority access to democratic institutions, non-whites were forced to rely on extra-parliamentary institutions, i.e., labour unions and churches, to resist and protest against apartheid policies (Boraine 1993:38).

According to liberal theory civil society is the property of a democratic state (Chandhoke 1995:161). Only a democratic state can create a democratic civil society, and only a democratic civil society can sustain a democratic state (Shils 1991:4; Walzer 1991:302; Diamond 1994:7; Chandhoke 1995:9; Linz and Stepan 1996:19; Friedman in Kotzé 1996:78). A democratic state provides civil society with the liberties, public order, material conditions and access to public decision-making to prevent its subordination or even collapse (Friedman et al. 1996:63). Keane and Held (quoted in Camerer 1994:46) therefore call for an interdependent transformation of both state (restructuring state institutions) and civil society (expanding its autonomy); a process of double democratisation for states undergoing a transition to democracy. The transformation of civil society institutions in South Africa would entail a reversal of economic and racial inequality, and real accountability and representativeness among state institutions.

Civil society and the state are bound together by the constitution and traditions which entail obligations towards one another (Shils 1991:15; Du Toit 1993:6). The rule of law is undoubtedly an important condition for democracy as it enables citizens to exercise their political rights with freedom and independence, and it provides reassurance against unfair treatment by the state (Shils 1991:10; Linz and Stepan 1996:19; Glasner 1997:22; Krygier 1997:80). The more institutions of the state function according to the rule of law, the higher the quality of democracy and the more democratic the society (Linz and Stepan 1996:19).



Civil society therefore completes a democratic state by contributing to its stability, predictability and governability (Rose 1993:20; Diamond 1994:12; Lungu 1996:21; Chandhoke 1995:9). Although civil society institutions act as vehicles aside from political parties for citizen participation by creating channels for the articulation, aggregation and representation of interests, they can also pose a threat to democracy. When their only concern is their vested interests and welfare as opposed to the good of the whole society, and if they have disproportionate power and influence over public-policy making and links with political parties (Sadie in Venter 1998:288), they may pose a real danger.

Initially civil society's role in the consolidation of democracy is neither the most decisive nor the most important factor, but it does play a significant role (Diamond 1994:16). Civil society plays a supporting role during the consolidation of democracy, with the primary challenge being as Fish (1994:34) notes, that of political institutionalisation. The more "...active, pluralistic, resourceful, institutionalised and democratic civil society is, and the more effectively it balances the tension in its relations with the state - between autonomy and co-operation, vigilance and loyalty, scepticism and trust, assertiveness and civility - the more likely it is that democracy will emerge and endure" (Diamond 1994:16).

Moreover, as the effective functioning of a representative democracy depends on the consent of citizens to sustain itself, confidence toward institutions is essential (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:6; Linz and Stepan 1996:17).

### 8.2.2 The nature and function of state (public) institutions

The institutions of the public sphere are the institutions of the state. Various theoretical approaches, i.e., pluralism, elite theory and Marxism, have attempted to define the state (Dunleavy and O'Leary 1987; Held 1987; Jessop in Leftwich 1990). For this study, however, two broad approaches are relevant - an organisational and a functional approach. The organisational approach defines the state as consisting of those institutions that formulate rules, that control, guide, and regulate society. Some characteristics of the state are:



- that the state comprises a separate set of institutions which are so differentiated from the rest of society that it creates identifiable public and private spheres;
- that it has the power to make binding rules which are upheld by a formal monopoly of force; and.
- that civil service personnel are trained and recruited in a bureaucratic manner for public management (Dunleavy and O'Leary 1987:2).

The term state thus comprises a set of governmental institutions (i.e., the civil service, the military, the police, and the legal system). This study is concerned with the key state institutions (parliament, the police, the armed forces, the legal system and the civil service) that are the central structures through which power is exercised and whereby policy is shaped. In all states there are major non-elected institutions including the civil service and armed forces that are in many ways the muscle of the state (Hague and Harrop 1987:239).

A functional definition of the state views it as a set of institutions that carries out particular goals, purposes or objectives (Dunleavy and O'Leary 1987:3). Public institutions define and enforce binding decisions on society in the name of common interest (Jessop in Leftwich 1990:45). It can also be defined by its consequences including the maintenance of social order, i.e., through the armed forces, police force, civil service and legal system (Barber 1983:68; Chandhoke 1995:161). The state plays a paradoxical role in the lives of the public, consisting of coercive institutions that also provide certain protections and benefits (i.e., citizen rights) which no other institution is willing or able to provide (Jessop in Leftwich 1990:45; Kornberg and Clarke 1992:6; Chandhoke 1995:47). In short, public institutions are necessary to enact legislation, enforce rights, formulate policy, and contain the inevitable conflicts between particular interests, by implication authorising and co-ordinating these activities (Held in Leftwich 1990:15).

Democratic public institutions affect the distribution of resources, determine the relative power of political and economic actors, structure preferences and constrain their choices (Crawford and Lijphart 1995:191). Public institutions can play a causal role by constraining possibilities and influencing likely outcomes (Crisp 1996:31). Institutions

therefore have the ability to “mobilise bias” to the advantage of certain groups in society. This point was clearly illustrated during apartheid when public institutions were identified with the white community. In contrast to this past, contemporary South Africa is characterised by a truly representative political system where the political sphere and public institutions are open and representative of the entire population. Weaver and Rockman (quoted in Pontusson 1995:119) make four kinds of claims to illustrate why institutions are important, namely:

- the capacity of governments to legislate and implement policies is determined by institutions;
- they determine the strategies of political and economic actors by means of the opportunities and constraints they provide;
- they determine the distribution of power between political and economic actors; and
- they determine who the actors are and how they conceive of their interests.

In sum, institutions are vital for their facilitation of government policies, policy goals and to politics in the broadest sense.

The relationship between state and society is dialectic as they constitute, limit and enable each other. The state is held responsible though the practices of civil society (Chandhoke 1995:162). The maintenance of responsive democracy (and by implication that of public institutions) in the post-apartheid era will in part be ensured by an independent and robust civil society (Shubane 1991:33). For civil society to flourish citizenship (the key qualification from which the status of a person’s conduct is derived) must be invested under the rubric of civil rights. During apartheid non-whites were treated as subjects not citizens. For civil society to emerge, the state had to draw the entire population under a common jurisdiction where the status of citizenship and law applies to all (Du Toit 1993:6). As democracy expands the public-political realm and replaces the ideological limitations of apartheid, citizens become in Nelson’s (1996:352) words “...‘legitimators’ with expectations for responsive political institutions and leaders”.

Unlike the apartheid state, where indoctrination and suppression was used to maintain the system, a representative democracy implies the freely given consent of citizens (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:6) and anyone who wishes to participate is free to do so (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:10). The reformed institutions of the democratic South Africa have created a competitive political system providing society with the incentive to participate in the political process (Crawford and Lijphart 1995:197). For democracy to survive, the public sphere has to serve as the primary vehicle in which citizens indicate their preferences to public representatives (Friedman and Reitzes 1996:62). The sustainability of democracy is in part dependent on the general acceptance of the norms of participatory culture as the public sphere expands (Nelson 1996:351). Without this participatory ethos there can be no responsiveness or accountability (Nelson 1996:359). Accountability and transparency are two of the main requirements of democratic political life whereby elected officials are held accountable by the public for their duties and decisions.

Given this brief overview of the nature and function(s) to further or diminish the public's democratic demands and interests, the discussion can now be narrowed down to a focus on the public's attitudes towards institutions.

## **9. Theoretical framework**

There are various theoretical approaches available to evaluate institutions in particular attitudes towards them. This section will start with the general approaches to the study of institutions and will then narrow down to the focus of this study: institutional analysis in South Africa and the issue of public confidence.

Democratic theorists generally regard the state as central in assessing democratic stability and survival. Although political institutions are undoubtedly significant for a stable democracy, an exclusive focus on the state is often inadequate. Dryzek (1996:475) therefore proposes analyses of society that go "beyond the state". Further van Deth

(1995:2) states that the population's perceptions are "...equally relevant for our understanding of political life".

### 9.1. A systemic analysis of institutions

The study of society from an institutional perspective can be somewhat simplified if it is conceived of as part of a system. A systemic analysis is but one way of looking at society, with a specific focus on selected aspects. A system at the most general level can be defined as "...a complex of interrelated parts, surrounded by a boundary, and existing in an environment" (Turner 1972:3). Institutions are thus interrelated within a system, they do not exist in a vacuum. As institutional boundaries are penetrable their relations are never completely autonomous. They are, however, largely autonomous in the pursuit of their objectives (Shils 1991:9).

The assumption, as Turner (1972:4) notes, is that a change in the structure of one institution will influence other institutions to varying degrees. The influence the parts have on each other depends on their power, control and authority (Anderson and Carter 1974:22). The extent of these repercussions will thus vary and may display "...mutual, direct, indirect, weak or strong influences on each other" (Turner 1972:11). Changing patterns of confidence toward institutions in South Africa will clearly reflect the changing political context. The political context has consequences for all the institutions in society as all parts of the system are related. The political context during apartheid, with the exclusion of true non-white participation in public institutions and its knock-on effect on all other institutions, influenced the structure and functioning of all institutions in society. Similarly South Africa's democratisation process has resulted in a transformation of institutions that ought to be fully representative of the entire population.

The role that confidence toward institutions plays in the systemic approach is referred to as 'energy' (Anderson and Carter 1974:12). The apartheid government suffered from a lack of legitimacy as there was not enough 'energy'(confidence) to maintain the system; the system had to either break down or reform. In the discussion of transition theory in

Chapter Two it is noted that the legitimacy crisis (the lack of public and elite confidence in institutions) was an incentive for elites to react to and reform the system. It is this confidence that enables a system to act, maintain itself and effect change (Anderson and Carter (1974:18). Systems continuously experience change and the trick is to maintain a shifting balance between status quo and change to ensure the survival of this confidence.

## 9.2 Approaches on attitudes (confidence) toward institutions

The two dominant theories that explain confidence toward institutions are the constitutionalist or contract theory, and the political culture approach. Listhaug and Wiberg (1995:300) contrast these approaches in examining confidence toward institutions. The constitutionalist approach emphasises the protection of citizens, through constitutional arrangements designed to prevent the abuse of power by the government. This approach is thus concerned with mechanisms that ensure that the power of institutions will be used exclusively for their specified purposes. It is assumed that if authority is transferred to corporate actors, whereby some control over private lives is relinquished, a measure of distrust is to be expected. As Listhaug and Wiberg (1995:300) argue "...it is indeed rational to be cynical under such circumstances". Buchanan (quoted in Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:300) criticises the constitutionalist view as too rigorous because "...the public's trust in institutions is seen as deriving from the same kind of processes as the game of an assembly of founding fathers designing an optimal constitution".

The political culture approach refers to political attitudes (generally about the legitimacy of the system, government policies and the role of the individual in the political process and specifically the feeling of the importance of the democratic processes and institutions) as the political culture<sup>4</sup> of a nation (Dalton 1988:227). Almond and Verba's classic study

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<sup>4</sup> The study of people's orientations to politics is the study of a country's political culture. The concept of political culture is essentially psychological; it refers to what people think about politics - to their beliefs, values and emotions (Hague and Harrop 1987:71).

*Civic Culture* (1963) attempted to identify the type of political culture most supportive of democracy (Alford and Friedland 1992:62; Hague and Harrop 1987:73). They assert that a participatory political culture is most supportive of democracy where citizens are capable of influencing government but are not so involved that they refuse to accept elite decisions (Hague and Harrop 1987:74).

The political culture approach interprets confidence toward institutions as a relatively stable characteristic in society (Almond and Verba, and Easton quoted in Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:300). It is argued that confidence is a reflection of the population's socialisation into dominant norms. A political culture thus develops from a life-long socialisation process where political outlooks mature in response to events and experiences (Alford and Friedland 1992:62; Hague and Harrop 1987:82). Norms are seen as enduring, making it possible to classify societies according to prevalent norms.

Criticism of the political culture approach includes the fact that:

- Political culture may be a reflection of the political system rather than a determining factor;
- Civil culture may in general be conducive to political stability rather than to democratic stability in particular; and,
- Almond and Verba devote little attention to political sub-cultures i.e, those groups whose political attitudes deviate sharply from the national culture (Hague and Harrop 1987:74-75).

To conclude then, Almond and Verba regarded culture as an independent factor which is more influenced by the political system than it is affected by the system. Contemporary political scientists are more concerned with the impact of government on the public's attitudes toward it. A country's political culture can be transformed whatever the underlying cultural values of the population. Yet the debate continues concerning causality: is culture a cause or consequence of the form of government? (Hague and Harrop 1987:87)

It is proposed that because this study deals with the South African public's attitudes to both public and private institutions, a broader approach than a pure political culture approach is necessary. While the basic assumptions of the political culture approach are relevant to a degree, it is necessary to include other contributing factors to explain a change in confidence levels (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:300). The following theoretical assumptions will provide a broader explanation to analyse the empirical data.

Listhaug and Wiberg (1995:301) propose that confidence toward institutions rather depends on the attitudes<sup>5</sup> and values<sup>6</sup> of individuals. Individuals' values are influenced by the social environment and by their social positions in that environment (van Deth and Scarbrough 1995:6). A symbiotic relationship exists between values on the one hand and confidence toward institutions on the other. The strength of this relationship, and those values that are important, varies across institutions. Confidence towards the church, for example, is directly related to the strength of a person's religious beliefs. The performance of institutions is also a strong determinant and will vary for different institutions (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:301). Institutions influence individual's values because beliefs about the political process are learned from the observation of institutions (Verba quoted in Rohrschneider 1994:928). This implies that the process of institutional learning shapes people's values.

The process of institutional learning assumes that individuals' basic values are influenced by their exposure to new institutional configurations, values and regime practices

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<sup>5</sup> Rokeach (1969:132) defines an attitude as a "...relatively enduring organisation of interrelated beliefs that describe, evaluate, and advocate action with respect to an object or situation, with each belief having cognitive, affective, and behavioural components. Each of these beliefs is a predisposition that, when suitably activated, results in some preferential response toward the attitude object or situation, or toward others who take a position with respect to the attitude object or situation, or toward the maintenance or preservation of the attitude itself".

<sup>6</sup> Rokeach (1969:124) defines values as "...abstract ideals, positive or negative, not tied to any specific attitude object or situation, representing a person's belief about ideal modes of conduct and ideal terminal goals".



(Rohrschneider 1994:928). Under a new political system, the impact of new institutional learning will initially be delayed by existing value predispositions (Almond and Verba quoted in Rohrschneider 1994:929) before it is incorporated within the individual's value system. Generational experience may become in Eckstein's (quoted in Rohrschneider 1994) words a "major basis for subcultural differentiation" as individuals born after a transition will only be exposed to new institutional configurations, and should therefore expound less resistance than those generations that were also shaped by pre-transition institutions. Although these assumptions will not be empirically tested in this study, it is worth mentioning as it may become an important method to explain confidence and the value predispositions of the public as the post-apartheid phase proceeds.

To conclude, it is the public character of institutions that makes them dependent on confidence from the public (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:301). A framework is created by institutions "...which lasts beyond the time and day of particular incumbents". However, institutions are not insulated from political and social life (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:302). Confidence towards institutions firmly rests upon the ability of institutions to solve the problems they are designed to address (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:302). Thus, at the most general level, confidence depends on an institution's performance and effectiveness.

The following section will analyse the connection between confidence and legitimacy; highlight problems in assessing confidence toward institutions, explicitly noting the role, sources, dimensions, and role of time as related to confidence; and, conclude with expectations of confidence toward institutions in South Africa.

### 9.2.1. Confidence and legitimacy

An assessment of confidence towards institutions invariably hints to a possible connection with legitimacy.<sup>7</sup> The concepts are indeed closely related, but they are not identical. Listhaug (1984:111) notes that "...legitimacy is narrower and primarily confined to the

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<sup>7</sup> Legitimacy is, according to Lipset (1960:77) "...the capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society".



support for the political system”. Analysing confidence towards institutions should be seen as a step towards measuring legitimacy. The question that arises is Does a decline in confidence levels or low confidence levels threaten legitimacy? Low levels of confidence toward institutions is not an inevitable reflection that the legitimacy of the system is threatened. It is rather an indication that something is going wrong. Legitimacy would only be threatened if “...the public was losing trust, and at the same time, showed support for alternatives to existing institutions” (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:299). Regime legitimacy and stability are to a large extent dependent on the absence of mobilised anti-democratic demagogues (Przeworski quoted in O’Donnell et al. 1988:52; Diamond 1997:34). Therefore, simply stated, legitimacy implies that the public choose to channel their interests through democratic institutions and not through unregulated and undemocratic extra-parliamentary arenas.

#### 9.2.2. Assessment of confidence

It is important to make a distinction between institutional actors and institutions *per se* when assessing confidence toward institutions. If the public lose confidence in the actors it does not necessarily imply that they lose confidence in the institution itself (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:299).

It should be noted at the outset that assessing levels of confidence toward institutions is not completely problem-free; there are no absolute standards for what should be regarded as high or low levels of confidence. Comparisons made between public and private institutions may enhance an understanding of confidence in what Listhaug and Wiberg (1995:298) call the “lieu of unequivocal benchmarks”.

The functioning and maintenance of institutions is intimately linked with the public’s perceptions of these institutions. Low levels of public confidence toward public institutions can signal serious problems for a democracy by impeding the government’s ability to govern effectively and thereby creating a vicious circle (Mishler and Rose 1995:4; Anderson and Guillory 1997:67). Arguments have also been made that distrust is

not necessarily negative in a democratic polity as distrust of others is a basic tenet of political theory (Listhaug and Wiberg 1995:300). While insubstantial confidence can contribute to the disintegration of civil society and the deterioration of social control, too much may lead to political apathy and encourage inactivity. Excessive confidence may result in a loss of public influence over government decisions (Mishler and Rose 1995:5).

An informed scepticism or cynicism is regarded as better than blind faith in institutions. Criticism and the inevitable disappointment of the competitive political process, as Sniderman (quoted in Kaase and Newton 1995:10) points out, is paired with a basic identification and commitment to democratic norms and institutions. Some distrust, if it is based on democratic allegiance, is an essential part of a viable democratic order (Barber 1983:81).

### 9.2.3. The role of confidence

The role of confidence in democratic theory is “double edged” (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:136; Mishler and Rose 1995:5). Democracy is not a one-sided form of government; it makes strong demands on both political leaders and citizens. The government’s task is to persuade citizens of its ability to lead and assure them of their accountability, thereby creating confidence in them. The broad public on the other hand must have confidence toward institutions, but at the same time maintain a measured scepticism towards them (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:136). Institutions can generally be criticised on two counts: their responsiveness and their efficiency. The public must feel that they are able to make the political system and its leaders respond to their interests and demands. The efficiency of institutions refers to their ability to make good on their promises in a capable and sufficient manner (Vickers 1973:105; March and Olsen 1989:129).

Confidence toward institutions is a necessary condition for both democracy and civil society for various reasons. Firstly, it should be remembered that individuals do not rule directly; it is the responsibility of representative institutions to aggregate the interests and preferences of individuals. The role of confidence in this sense is as a “...creator of

collective power” (Mishler and Rose 1995:4). This enables the government to make decisions and commitments without always having to consult and receive approval in advance from the public. A virtuous spiral emerges when political institutions can make decisions and commitments on the basis of confidence from their citizens. A flourishing virtuous circle, as Gamson (quoted in Mishler and Rose 1995:4) argues, can increase and bring about even more confidence. However, “...if the institutions are the objects of chronic distrust, however, they will engender distrust” (Krygier 1997:69). Confidence toward institutions must be earned; it cannot be ordered into existence. Trustworthy institutions are the result of a history of accommodation and co-operation (Rose 1993:29). It is confidence “...which gives representatives the leeway to ignore short-term, constituent concerns in order to pursue longer term, constituent needs and national interests” (Mishler and Rose 1995:4).

Secondly, confidence toward institutions is important for the establishment of civil society. The institutions of civil society, amongst other things, connect citizens with the government and with each other. Confidence and co-operation are important factors in a working democracy (Putnam quoted in Mishler and Rose 1995:5).

Thirdly, public participation in public and private institutions is also dependent on confidence (Mishler and Rose 1995:5). The most meaningful and effective forms of participation by the public are generally by means of civil society institutions, although voting is the defining feature of a democracy. As Perry et al. (quoted in Rose and Mishler 1995:5) comments “...if there is a single key to political participation it must be group membership”. Vickers (1973:41) makes a distinction between the membership-support of institutions, such as trade unions, and the support of members of society for public institutions. Membership in private institutions is generally more homogenous with a more limited purpose. The advantage of this is that members who make demands can easily assess services and benefits. Moreover, civil society institutions can contribute to an individuals’ commitment and identification with a new regime. The establishment of a representative democracy “...requires the establishment and effective functioning of a civil

society, the creation of which is dependent, in turn, on a certain minimum of popular trust in institutions that claim to represent citizens" (Mishler and Rose 1995:5).

Fourthly, as Mishler and Rose (1995:19) note "...if nothing else, memories of the old regime provide a baseline against which current institutions can be judged". Confidence is invigorated with the expansion of civil rights and personal freedom, together with the establishment of civil and representative public institutions. For the overwhelming majority of the South African population, the break with the past has meant a lifting of limits on individual freedom, and equal treatment and opportunities.

Finally, economic performance also plays a role. Public perceptions of economic performance prove strong indicators of confidence toward the government and its key institutions, especially parliament (Kornberg 1990:714).

High confidence levels toward institutions contribute to stability in a newly democratised country. Di Palma (1990:39) notes in this regard "...that whether the risk of a breakdown stays out of the agenda of a new democracy depends also on how institutions turn out. Thus, on the one hand, as institutions emerge, they should become valued per se and should make the chances of players backing out ever more remote. They should at least render inoperative any reservations that players may residually hold. On the other hand, such players' 'socialisation' (following as it were, their recruitment to the game) remains contingent, and consent relies on institutional performance".

Confidence toward institutions does have consequences for the political system. Confidence has an influence on the population's political participation, as well as on the extent to which they are willing to follow the authoritative orders of government (Kornberg 1990:15). The public will support a state, and thus its political institutions, if they accept the state's legitimacy, when they voluntarily comply with the state's authoritative edicts, and when the use of coercive measures by the state is accepted when and if voluntary compliance is not sufficient (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:19).

#### 9.2.4. Sources of confidence

Confidence, as Kornberg and Clarke (1992:21) argue, consists of two processes - that they term “twin pillars”. The first pillar is an individual’s socialisation process; a person’s experiences. Individual experiences vary. An individual’s position in society has an impact on their experiences and influences and therefore also on their attitudes toward institutions (Mishler and Rose 1995:20; Anderson and Guillory 1997:70). Political values also play a role in confidence toward institutions. An individual may lose confidence in institutions if his/her attitudes and values are in opposition to the dominant societal values (Listhaug 1984:121). In short, the particular political context to which people are exposed has a significant influence on them.

The second pillar is an individuals’ judgement of the ability of institutions “...to perform their ascribed functions effectively and equitably, and in so doing to provide for national and personal well-being” (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:29). The public’s demands and dependence on institutions make the institutions’ task extremely complex (Vickers 1973:99). The performance of institutions is increasingly exposed to judgements by the public. Trust for institutions must be based on institutional performance (Mishler and Rose 1995:20; Kuechler quoted in Anderson and Guillory 1997:70). It is however feasible that citizens may base their confidence or the lack thereof on past experiences. Although the performance of both social and political institutions is judged in a myriad of ways (e.g., the extent to which individual liberties are secured), individual material well-being and, by implication, the performance of the economy are among the principal bases of evaluation (Mishler and Rose 1995:20).

A state’s constitution determines the ability of institutions to mediate instability. Anderson and Guillory (1997:66) argue that it is fundamental to how the political system deals with winners and losers after an election. It is by no means guaranteed that democratic institutions will lead to superior outputs for “...the same set of democratic institutions can have different consequences for different groups among those governed by them, and in

particular for those in the political minority and majority” (Anderson and Guillory 1997:79). Anderson and Guillory (1997:66) found that the losers of electoral competition display lower confidence levels than those on the winning side.

The perception that new institutions are democratic and representative depends in part on the political minority’s perception that they will act as a protector of their rights and interests against those of the majority. The political minority are more likely to be satisfied with institutional reform if there are mechanisms that allow them opportunities to participate in decision-making. The new system should, however, ensure that “...winning is still meaningful and allows for the implementation of policies preferred by the majority” (Anderson and Guillory 1997:79). Through this, new institutions may contribute to the establishment and maintenance of confidence with the system as well as maintaining the system in the long-term.

#### 9.2.5. Confidence and temporality

Time plays a fundamental role in the relationship between institutions and the public (Anderson and Guillory 1997:79). Citizens have to experience the system and their place in it before they can judge institutions. Some have argued that too little time has passed to evaluate South Africa’s post-apartheid phase. However, as Ginsburg (1996:81) argues “...a number of fundamental choices have already been made that set in place, and in motion, a web of social, economic and political institutions and practices that not only lend themselves to preliminary stock-taking, but already have enough continuity about them for us to make prognoses with some measures of confidence”. Democracy has existed long enough in South Africa for citizens to form at least preliminary judgements and to differentiate contemporary institutions from those during apartheid.

#### 9.2.6. Dimensions of confidence

Civil society assumes that citizen’s confidence is broad. The public have “...to trust the whole of society and not just certain institutional parts” (Mishler and Rose 1995:15). Listhaug (1984:111) notes the importance of dimensionality when studying confidence

toward institutions. An assumption often made when considering confidence toward institutions is that the underlying concept is one-dimensional. The empirical implication is that an individual's confidence towards one institution equates with confidence toward other institutions. The perception and evaluation of institutions is thus perceived as being harmonious (Listhaug 1984:111). However, citizens do not have to trust all institutions equally, or even trust all institutions. Citizens can differentiate among different institutions. Mishler and Rose (1995:16) argue that "...a civil society assumes that citizens perceive civil and political institutions as an integral part of a larger social network; it assumes that citizens have at least a minimum of trust in civil society over and above their trust or distrust of specific institutions". This type of general trust is essential. It is important for amongst other things, to ensure that the existence of institutions that are distrusted in the short-term "...while attempting to establish a more rational or instrumental basis of support through long-term performance" (Mishler and Rose 1995: 16).

Alternatively, as Listhaug (1984:112) argues, institutions may be in conflict with each other: confidence towards one institution will not guarantee confidence toward other institutions. When there are strong cleavages in a society there is a greater chance that these institutions will be in conflict with each other. Stronger conflict is expected between institutions at the public level in these societies.

Although the question of dimensionality does not refer to the level of confidence in institutions, it is "...reasonable to assume that societies which are strongly divided will show a lower level of confidence toward their institutions than societies which are more homogenous" (Listhaug 1984:112).

#### 9.2.7. Confidence and the South African public

It is assumed that South Africans expect their new democratic institutions not only to protect their civil liberties but also to improve their material standard of living. If these expectations are not met, substantial demoralisation could emerge resulting into waning



support for the new democracy (Habib 1996:67). Confidence will thus inevitably depend firmly on the perceptions of performance of these institutions.

For Mishler and Rose (1995:3) distrust and/or alienation is the predictable legacy of “...decades of rule by regimes with totalitarian aspirations”. It would therefore be expected that confidence toward South Africa’s institutions, at least in the short-term, will not be very high considering its history of apartheid. In the long run, confidence must be earned through institutional performance. State and civil society institutions will depend on the public’s perception that they provide “...some measure of individual and collective good” (Mishler and Rose 1995:7). Anderson and Guillory (1997:70) note that confidence toward institutions is subject to change over time. Institutions are continuously evaluated by the public.

Chapter Three will discuss the South African public’s confidence toward institutions in detail, with a focus on the disparities between confidence levels of public and private institutions.

## **10. Framework of Study**

This study will be divided into five chapters. Chapter Two entitled “ From Apartheid to Democracy: Reforming the exclusivity of apartheid institutions” provides an overview of South Africa’s history from apartheid to democracy. This overview is necessary to understand the structural change and changing patterns of public confidence toward institutions which occurred in the period 1981 to 1995.

Chapter Three analyses “The Institutional Setting of South Africa”. It is argued that the apartheid state’s domination of the political sphere spilled over into the social and economic spheres of society. The institutional setting of the ‘new’ South Africa is examined with an emphasis on the transformation and restructuring of both public and private institutions.



Chapter Four deals with the empirical presentation, analyses and interpretation of the data. In the final chapter general conclusions and findings will be reported.

## **11. Conclusion**

The first part of this dissertation serves as an overall framework for the chapters that follow. The study has been placed within the broader scope of the available literature concerning attitudes toward institutions by noting empirical studies and their major findings, and comparing them to the South African situation and highlighting both differences and similarities. It was concluded that confidence by the South African public would have more in common with the post-communist countries than with Western European states and the USA.

The theoretical approach used in this study has been identified as an adapted political culture approach; the main contributing factors to the classical political culture approach being the attitudes and values of individuals.

The aim, the variables, the hypotheses, the delimitations and the significance of the study have also been established. Important themes that run throughout this dissertation have been highlighted including the nature and functions of institutions; the classification and relationship between public and private institutions; and an assessment of the role, sources, and the role that time plays in the dimensions of confidence. Preliminary and tentative expectations of confidence levels of the South African public have also been made.

This introductory chapter, together with Chapter Two will set the stage for a comprehensive discussion of the changing attitudes toward institutions of the South African public in the period between 1981 to 1995.

## **CHAPTER TWO: From Apartheid to Democracy: Reforming the exclusivity of apartheid institutions**

In this chapter the history, ideology and practices of the apartheid state are examined in more detail. It is the premise of this study that the ideology and practices of the apartheid state were vital in the formation of attitudes towards its institutions. This chapter argues that the polarisation of attitudes the state created along racial and political lines was so great that it became untenable and was manifested in what has been called a 'legitimacy crisis'.

Transition theory is a useful tool to examine how elites reacted to this legitimacy crisis, and also to place South Africa's transition to democracy in a new perspective. As this study focuses on public perceptions it aims to address the issues that transition theorists attempt to address. In the first place, elites are informed and base their strategies in part on the attitudes, and by extension the legitimacy that they can expect from the public. While transition theory explains important factors driving the transition process, the 'background of public attitudes' which gives stability for or incentives to challenge the status quo must also be central to the study of transition to democracy and democratic stabilisation.

### **1. The apartheid state: ideology and practices**

Changing patterns in institutional confidence are best studied in a historical context. This study will address the period from 1981-1995 as the state in South Africa moved from apartheid to democracy. In order to understand this historical context it is necessary to examine the ideology, policies and impact of apartheid.

This section will briefly describe apartheid ideology according to three central ideas (Greenberg 1987:130). The first is the primacy of racial-national groups. The second is the centrality of the state with a subordinate role for civil society. The third is the objective of separate national expression embodied in the concept of 'homelands'.

The primacy of racial-nation groups in apartheid policies was intricately woven into the constitutional foundations of the state. Racial domination provided the *raison d'être* of the apartheid state. The apartheid political system was formed as the state divided the population into four official racial groups: White, Coloured, Indian and Black. Individuals were registered according to race and ethnicity (Barber and Barratt 1989:132; Venter 1989:2; Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:125; Evans and Newnham 1992:14; Sisk 1995:4). These classifications served as the ideological foundation for the disbarment of blacks from truly representative institutions (Sisk 1995:8). The oppression by the white minority of the black majority highlights overlapping racial and class divisions.<sup>1</sup> Although apartheid was unique, the oppression of majorities by minorities is not an uncommon phenomenon (Grann 1994:680).

The centrality of the state and the subordinate civil society was the result of a massive exercise in social engineering as legislation subordinated and regulated not only politics but also social and economic life. Racial domination was thus entrenched in all economic, political and ideological spheres (Adam and Moodley 1993:23). In essence racial discrimination went beyond the state, it was institutionalised in the entire fabric of the political and social structure. Indeed, racial classification coupled with the exclusion of blacks from political, social and economic power lay at the heart of the South African conflict (Sisk 1995:4).

To maintain this apartheid ideology the NP had to maintain control over all political institutions. Yet, as Greenberg (1987:133) notes, decision-making was not controlled in a

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<sup>1</sup> Where social class and ethnic origins coincide, it is possible to speak of ranked ethnic groups. If ethnic groups are ranked hierarchically, ethnic conflict moves in one direction. Stratification becomes synonymous with ethnic membership. In such systems, Horowitz (1985:22) notes "...political, economic, and social status tend to be cumulative, so that members of Group B are simultaneously subordinated in each of these ways to members of Group A. Relations between the groups entail clearly understood conceptions of super-ordinate and sub-ordinate status".

conventional manner. What set this control apart was the benefits derived from it as a means of self-realisation for the white minority; the apartheid state epitomised a “partisan ethnic state” (Gagiano and Du Toit in Kotzé 1996:57) implying that the state was utilised as an instrument of the white community. The constant humiliation of, and denial of dignity to, the majority black population only made sense in terms of ethnic politics (Du Toit 1995:331). Whites received public goods at the expense of the bulk of the population. Apartheid thus formally precluded opportunities for any broader loyalty and identification by segregating national expression and identifying South Africa’s national institutions solely with the white community. The whole edifice of ideas of racial stratification, state practice and social support was buttressed by the institutions of civil society.<sup>2</sup> The apartheid state dealt with its political opponents by employing all means of coercion and law at its disposal based on the assumption that political ends justified every means (Maphai 1993:25). Indeed, it is interesting to note how ideology and policies effectively reinforced each other.

An important objective of apartheid was the separation of national expression, leading to the creation of ‘independent’ homelands where the majority of the black population were forced to live. According to apartheid ideology the ‘non-white’ population were not South African citizens and were treated accordingly as subjects or aliens (Horowitz 1985:77; Du Toit 1995:302). Indeed in the homelands they were granted certain political ‘rights’ (Davies et al. 1988a:198; Schlemmer in Berger and Godsell 1988:8; Barber and Barratt 1989:3; Evans and Newnham 1992:14; Ellis 1992:67; Jackson and Roseberg quoted in Du Toit 1993:11) but were never able to develop a strong ethnic identity (Singh and Wright 1995: 38).

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<sup>2</sup> In deeply divided societies allegiances permeate organisations, activities, and roles. By infiltrating so many sectors of social life an all-pervasive quality to ethnic conflict develops, raising the stakes of ethnic politics (Horowitz, 1985:7, 8).

In summary, apartheid era South Africa represented a diverse pluralist society that was characterised by domination and coercion. Through this domination and manipulation of the political realm, state and society was so entangled that the public and private merged (Adam and Moodley 1993:223). Excluded ethnic groups found themselves without rights, citizenship or organisation. Greenberg (1987:8) notes that "...for the excluded groups, compliance represents little more than a dulled necessity, without trace of supportive sentiments". Further, the country was characterised by ideas and policies which promoted a fragmented society stratified according to race. The next section attempts to explain the origins of apartheid, and the incentives for this ideology and related policies.

## **2. The origins of apartheid**

The apartheid system was not a spontaneous result of the NP's ascent to power in 1948. Its complex structure evolved over centuries emerging as early as colonial settlement in 1652 (Venter 1989:32; Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:1). South Africa's history is contaminated with various forms of racism and oppression.

The character of the conflict in South Africa has been the subject of fervent academic debate since the 1970s (Habib 1995:53). The three dominant schools of thought are the liberal modernisation school, the Marxist and neo-Marxist schools. The centre of the debate is concerned with the relation between South Africa's racial policy and economic development (Wright 1977:3). The liberal modernisation school suggests that the conflict was the result of struggles between racial groups. Inequality is seen as the product of the monopolisation of power by whites (Habib 1995:53). Marxist scholars, on the other hand view the conflict as the result of class differences; race was the means by which class was expressed.

The liberal modernisation school interprets apartheid and capitalism as two incompatible forces (Wright 1977:12; Habib 1995:53; Du Toit 1995:334). According to this view the apartheid system suppressed the effective function of capitalism. In effect "...apartheid's

refusal to adequately educate the black population, and its establishment of a cheap labour system, directly contributed to a skills shortage and a stunted home market that adversely affected capitalists in the country” (Habib 1995:53). Liberals were concerned with the interests of blacks and were committed to the ending of discriminatory legislation, attempting to secure civil liberties and an education for all races (Wright 1977:4).

Marxist and neo-Marxist theories interpret the relationship between capitalism and apartheid as a functional relationship (Habib 1995:54, Du Toit 1995:333). These views interpret apartheid as a means of capitalist exploitation, and specifically as an instrument of black exploitation. Their argument is that capitalist industrialisation expanded in mining and agricultural and was “...dependent on the availability of cheap labour” (Habib 1995:54). According to this view, South Africa’s history of racism and oppression had one constant: the aim of securing cheap black labour (Davies et al. 1988:2; Alexander quoted in Habib 1995:54).

Some scholars have argued that the struggle was posed against both racial oppression and class exploitation (Mntonga 1987:6). Bonner, Delius and Posel (quoted in Grann 1994:680) argue that the state was “...internally differentiated ... a site of conflict and ... an important locus of power in its own right which both grappled with, and was influenced by wider contradictions and conflicts”. This debate was deadlocked by the late 1980s when it became evident that political changes were under way.

The question that inevitably arises is how was it possible for apartheid to last so long? Apartheid resulted in a situation where political, economical and social power was centred within the white segment of the population and, this amplified inequalities (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:104; Venter 1989:3; Gagiano and Du Toit in Kotzé 1996:52). Inequality was thus cumulative and reinforced across all spheres of society. The structural setting for maintaining apartheid was provided by a certain “...paternalistic benevolence [which] oiled the system and [helps] to explain why apartheid lasted so long” (Adam and Moodley 1993:1). Other contributing factors include the fact that the privileged white group was in

the minority, natural resources were plentiful, and the white minority monopolised the military (Berger and Godsell 1988:268; Stremlau 1997:26). The South African Defence Force (SADF) together with the South African Police (SAP) had a central role in the maintenance of apartheid due to amongst other factors, their intervention in emergencies (Schlemmer in Berger and Godsell 1988:35; Grann 1994:681).

At this point, it is also interesting to consider what caused the apartheid structure to change. Section Four considers an explanation for structural change from apartheid to the post-apartheid era, but first we will consider the events that were part of the transition.

### **3. From apartheid to democracy**

Attitudes toward institutions should be assessed within the context of the changing political atmosphere. The political environment over the period studied has undergone fundamental changes as it has shifted from a system of repression to a democratic system.

By 1980, the non-white majority was involved in a massive struggle against the repressive apartheid system which gave them no normative basis for political participation. The protest against apartheid can be traced back to the student upsurge in Soweto in 1976 (Zulu 1988:131 in Berger and Godsell; Barber and Barratt 1989:205; Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:126; Ellis 1992:83; Neocosmos 1996:78). By the mid-1980s a low intensity civil war was being waged in the townships (Stremlau 1997:79). Resistance organisations increasingly intensified their action to mobilise the opposition against the repressive apartheid system. The black nationalist movement split into two main streams, namely the ANC and PAC - formed by a breakaway group from the ANC in 1959. They have been rivals ever since (Adam 1988:123 in Berger and Godsell; Barber and Barratt 1990:70; Ellis 1992:29-30; Du Toit 1995:346). The PAC classifies itself as an Africanist party committed to black values, the spirit of Pan-Africanism (i.e., the goal of uniting all states in Africa) and ultimately black control of the state (Barber and Barratt 1990:70). It was only with the formation of the Youth League that the ANC moved into a more radical



and active stance (Zulu 1988:128 in Berger and Godsell; Barber and Barratt 1990:21,32; Du Toit 1995:345). Both the ANC and PAC created revolutionary movements/groups: Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) was linked to the ANC and Poqo affiliated to the PAC (Schlemmer 1988:31 in Berger and Godsell; Ellis 1992:32; Barber and Barratt 1990:71, Du Toit 1995:347).

The black resistance movements were increasingly faced with both internal and external problems. Internal difficulties included inadequate funds, internal rivalries and inexperienced leaders. The most pressing problems, however, were external: the fierce determination of the apartheid government to silence the oppressed and, with the implementation of new oppressive legislation, the banning of black parties and the arrest of their leaders (Barber and Barratt 1990:71). However, the aim of the black movements remained constant: the overthrow of the government and their advent to power (Barber and Barratt 1990:152).

The protest against the mechanisms of social control imposed on society took the form of bus and rent boycotts, housing movements, squatter revolts, labour strikes, school protests and community stay-aways under the joint leadership of the ANC and the PAC (Zulu 1988:152 in Berger and Godsell; Du Toit 1993:11,12; Du Toit 1995:348; Neocosmos 1996:80). During the 1980s the marginalised population's discontent reached a climax with campaigns to render South Africa ungovernable. In this case the empirical expectation would be that these grievances, couched in primarily racial terms, would be reflected in patterns of institutional confidence.

The era of 1984-1988 was again marked by intense and widespread uprisings in the "cycle of revolt and repression" (Sisk 1995:63). In 1985, the ANC launched the slogan "Make apartheid unworkable and the country ungovernable" which combined mass action with the armed struggle (Davies et al. 1988:2; Nel and Esterhuyse 1990:20,22). While white South Africans did not form a uniform group supporting and identifying with the apartheid system, the great majority did support the apartheid government.



Once enforcing a state of emergency could no longer contain the excluded majority, the apartheid government ran out of repressive options to suppress mass action and the armed struggle (Ginsburg 1996:79). P.W. Botha (president from 1978-1989) made attempts to reform apartheid because of mounting internal and international pressure termed the 'total onslaught' (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:112; Sisk 1995:67; Du Toit 1995:348). Reform was thus coupled with the notion of 'total onslaught'. Reform and security were in fact united in the notion of the total onslaught: reform was required to maintain security, and security was necessary for reform (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:117; Sisk 1995:67). This period signalled the beginning of the end of official apartheid. However, Botha's reluctant liberalisation policies were not enough to break the racial paradigm and fervent anti-communism (Adam and Moodley 1993:40).

In 1983 the NP amended the Constitution to introduce some coloured and Indian political participation by creating two additional, but subordinate parliamentary chambers; the Tricameral Parliament was born. It was based on 'power sharing' with three legislative chambers: a House of Assembly for whites, a House of Representatives for coloureds, and a House of Delegates for the Indian population (Venter 1989:47; Barber and Barratt 1990:289). The coloured and the Indian communities were denied the right to elect their own representatives (Venter 1989:49; Barber and Barratt 1990:289; Sisk 1995:9). Despite these amendments, as Sisk (1995:9) remarks, the fundamental principle of race classification remained intact together with the concentration of political power in the hands of the whites.

The new parliament was nothing more than blatant tokenism as blacks were totally excluded from the new system (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:86; Faure 1994:194; Sisk 1995:9). The new constitution was seen as a vehicle for permanent black exclusion (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:86; Lawrence quoted in Friedman and Atkinson 1994:4). By denying the franchise to the largest portion of the population the relative strength of political parties in parliament was severely distorted (Faure 1996:194). Gagiano and Du Toit (in Koté

1996:71) describe the 1983 constitution as the “...high-point of apartheid, effectively merging the ruling NP regime and state into a single hegemonic unit of social control”. In the final instance the underlying factor behind the mortification of apartheid was precisely this denial of blacks to vote (Friedman and Atkinson 1994:44). The system was also condemned for the way it institutionalised racial groups. Analysts generally agree that these reforms were intended as vehicles for co-optation, drawing the population into formal decision-making yet leaving them powerless in influencing outcomes of the policy-making process (Du Toit 1995:348). The accepted truism was that apartheid would only end when all citizens could elect a government (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:86; Robertson quoted in Friedman and Atkinson 1994:44).

The United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed to mobilise resistance against the extension of the franchise (Ngidi and Zulu in Schlemmer et al. 1987:104; Zulu 1988:135,154 in Berger and Godsell; Barber and Barratt 1990:291; Sisk 1995:70). Although the UDF was not a political party - its membership consisted of existing organisations i.e. educational, religious and trade unions - the leadership identified with the ANC's goals although they rejected the armed struggle and subscribed to the Freedom Charter (Ngidi and Zulu in Schlemmer et al. 1987:104; Barber and Barratt 1990:291; Lodge 1991:53). The UDF pledged to unite the masses against the Constitution by arranging boycotts of elections (Zulu 1988:136 in Berger and Godsell; van Zyl Slabbert 1989:87). Embarrassingly low voter turn-outs in the Indian and coloured houses (less than a third participated in the ‘apartheid elections’) were the result of the UDF's effective mobilisation strategies (Sisk 1995:8).

The UDF was very active in the first state of emergency which began in 1985 and lasted until 1986 (Neocosmos 1996:81). The state of emergency was imposed by the apartheid government in an attempt to control the massive upsurge in resistance, and to reassert control over ‘ungovernable areas’. The second state of emergency associated with massive repression began in 1986 and lasted until 1988. The state of emergencies allowed the banning, deportation and/or detention of people, and the restriction and/or banning of

activities by organisation perceived to be a threat to the state (Du Toit 1995:350). The spiral of revolt and repression led to further polarisation of South African politics (Sisk 1995:73). At the one pole was the regime with their attempts to impose a co-optive solution; and at the other, a growing sentiment that an end to apartheid was dependent on the overthrow of the NP government. A stalemate was reached.

F.W. de Klerk's election as president in 1989 with his promise of a new 'dispensation' increased optimism for change (Sisk 1995:63). An election was held in 1989 and de Klerk received his mandate to proceed with his reform programme. Sisk (1995:80) notes that the NP's percentage of the popular vote declined from 52 per cent in 1987 to 48 per cent. The election send a clear signal that NP support was being eroded from the right by the Conservative Party (CP), and it could easily lose support on the left to the Democratic Party (DP) if it continued to vacillate between programmes of reform and repression (Giliomee 1992:112). The election also demonstrated that the coloured and Indian houses of parliament still lacked legitimacy, with an even lower percentage of voters than in 1984 (Giliomee 1992:112).

The period 1990-1994 marked one of the most crucial eras in South Africa's constitutional and political history (Faure 1995:194). The watershed in South African politics came on 2 February 1990 when President de Klerk announced the unbanning of the ANC, PAC, SACP (South African Communist Part) and other organisations, the release of their leaders, and negotiations to establish an inclusive democracy (Lawrence quoted in Friedman and Atkinson 1994:8; Du Toit 1995:378). However, apartheid had for some years been failing in crucial areas (Adam and Moodley 1993:40). The process toward the negotiated transition had in effect started long before the rise to power by de Klerk.

Although apartheid was still deeply entrenched by 1990, there was acceptance among whites that the conflict gripping the country could only be resolved by granting the black majority their democratic rights (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:153). The white

community was increasingly unwilling to protect their political privileges through material sacrifices, and they realised that a shift of political power to the black majority was inevitable (Stremlau 1997:11). Internationally anti-apartheid sentiment was growing, with persistent calls for economic, sporting and diplomatic sanctions as both a moral gesture and a vehicle to undermine apartheid (Barber and Barratt 1990:80; Du Toit 1995:348). The NP government tried to counter the threat of sanctions by increasing economic self-reliance and reducing vulnerabilities (Barber and Barratt 1990:155). Although most whites opposed a purely race-based system, many were afraid of becoming “politically eclipsed in a mass democracy” (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:243).

In 1991 all legal cornerstones of apartheid were expunged from the statute books. A complete redesign of the institutional structure was necessary to end legalised apartheid (Sisk 1995:10). Adam and Moodley (1993:39) argue that the repeal of the race laws almost passed as a “non-event” in contrast to Pretoria’s “dramatic turnaround” in February 1990. The actual advent of a new era of legally unregulated race relations began even earlier. Laws were either ignored or not implemented for some time; their repeal simply verified existing social trends “that had outpaced ossified regulation” ,i.e., in universities, private schools and the workplace (Adam and Moodley 1993:19).

In 1992 an all-white referendum was held regarding De Klerk’s policy of planned negotiations with blacks, and 68 percent voted in support of these planned negotiations (Singh and Wright 1995:30). The result implies that by 1992 the majority of whites were either against apartheid or they trusted that their leaders could craft a new dispensation.

The negotiated transition to a post-apartheid state started with the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA). This initial forum ended in deadlock as both the ANC and the NP overestimated their own strength relative to that of their opponents (Friedman and Atkinson 1994:12). Nevertheless, multilateral talks were resumed and by 1993 the negotiations resulted in broad agreement on issues to incorporate the political aspirations of the black population, and constitutional assurance providing the incumbent

and significant parties representation in a Government of National Unity (GNU). The period 1990-1994 can be described as a period marked by "...a process of popular demobilisation as an elitist deal was struck behind closed doors by an outgoing National Party and an incoming ANC in their interests and arguably in those of a 'new' South African bourgeoisie" (Neocosmos 1996:77).

The GNU was the institutional manifestation of the negotiated settlement. The GNU "...promotes the reconciliation of the interests of different parties as the principal feature of South African politics" (James and Caliguire 1996:58). A system of proportional representation with no minimum threshold for entry into parliament was adopted (James and Caliguire 1996:57). Representation in the executive cabinet was assured for parties who received more than 5 per cent of the national vote. Representation in the nine provincial cabinets required 10 per cent of the vote. The interim Constitution that came into operation when elections began on 25 April, 1994 to a large extent institutionalised the notion already practised in various governmental structures of national unity (van Vuuren 1995:15).

The results of the election were as follows: 62.65% for the ANC; 20.93% for the NP; 10.54% for the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party); 2.2% for the FF (Freedom Front); 1.7% for the DP; 1,2% for the PAC, 0.5% for the ACDP (African Christian Democratic Party) (Sadie in Venter 1998:276) . All the other parties failed to meet the minimum required threshold to be represented in both the national and provincial cabinets (James and Caliguire 1996:57).

#### **4. The transition from authoritarian rule**

The structural changes which underlay South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy require further explanation. Having described the major events of the transition, the next step is to explain this transition.

#### 4.1. The international climate

South Africa's transition can be viewed as part of the present global democratic expansion. It is helpful to analyse South Africa's democratisation against the backdrop of international trends. The transition can be categorised into what Huntington (quoted in Löwenhart 1995:14) calls the third wave of democratisation. Huntington identifies three long "waves of democratisation" since the early nineteenth century. The first two waves were both followed by a "reverse wave" that substantially reduced the number of democracies. According to Löwenhart, (1995:14) there is no reason to believe that a reverse wave will not follow the third wave, followed yet again by a next wave of democratisation.

The negotiations for a democratic South Africa occurred within a transformed international climate. The collapse of societies in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and the bankruptcy of social democracy in Western Europe "delegitimised radical notions of democracy and social change" (Ginsburg and Webster 1995:7). The collapse of communism "...had the effect of driving a wedge between democratic opposition to the apartheid state and commitment to the socialist or communist redistributive agenda with which that opposition had been inescapably associated, at least in the minds of opponents" (Shapiro 1993:133). For the government this meant that the "...ANC without Soviet backing was a containable force" (Giliomee quoted in Du Toit 1995:385).

#### 4.2 The study of transition to democracy

In essence, transition theory is the product of reflection and abstraction from the paths to democracy experienced in Central Europe and Latin America during the late 1980s. The focus of transition literature is on the prospects of liberal democracy which also entails assessing the maintenance of order and political stability (Ginsburg and Webster 1995:1).

#### 4.2.1. The purpose of a framework of transition

A comparative framework of regime transition facilitates an understanding of transition and makes it possible to place transitions into perspective. Habib (1995:51) criticises much of this scholarly writing for its attempts to “pigeon-hole” South Africa’s transition into some historical trends. South Africa’s transition does bear some resemblance to transitions elsewhere, but by either emphasising the ‘normalcy’ or the ‘exceptionalism’ of the transition a complex process is devalued. Nevertheless, as Löwenhart (1995:17) notes, “...the breaking up of authoritarian rule unleashes social forces that are basically the same everywhere on the globe”. South Africa’s experience can thus be examined within a broader context to explain “...past, present and future outcomes in the struggle to forge a new political order” (Ginsburg 1996:74).

Adam et al. (1993:17) highlight both similarities and differences between South Africa’s transition and experiences in Latin America, and the successor states of the Soviet Union. All experienced a declining economy coupled with threats to personal security. Fortunately, however, South Africa did not have to deal with a situation of extreme economic deprivation. South Africa’s market economy, together with civil society institutions have remained more or less intact following the transition (Adam et al. 1993:17). In the former Soviet Union, economic deprivation together with deteriorating living standards and unrealistically high expectations of democracy have lead to nostalgia for the old dictatorship. According to Adam et al. (1993:17), the same scenario is appearing in South Africa where “...a majority of coloureds and Indians in South Africa turn to the NP for protection instead of embracing majority democracy under African auspices”.

There are a number of differences that Adam et al. (1993:16) note between South Africa’s transition and countries elsewhere. Firstly, South Africa is not a colonial power although it has a colonial history. Secondly, inter-group relations in South Africa are different from countries with distinct nationalities in their own territory. Thirdly, coinciding socio-



economic cleavages and race “...give the processes of liberation and democratisation a sharp edge of class warfare”. Finally, South Africa has always been a ‘democracy’ (i.e., elections were held, government was accountable to parliament, and a relatively free press existed) although it was restricted to the white population. This distinguishes “South African racial authoritarianism from political totalitarianism, where no opposition or dissent are tolerated. In South Africa it is a question of extending democracy and political equality to all citizens, not of creating democratic institutions from scratch” (Adam et al. 1993:16).

The following section will identify some of the core tenets of transition theory that are relevant to the South African context.

#### 4.2.2. Transition theory and the South African experience

Transition from authoritarian rule is characterised by extreme uncertainty and unpredictability (Di Palma 1990:5; Karl and Schmitter 1991:270; O’Donnell and Schmitter 1995:15). This is the result of a breakdown of established political rules and struggles for the institutionalisation of new rules. There is a broad consensus among theorists regarding various issues of democratisation. According to Ginsburg (1996:74), the agreement concerns reasons for the disintegration of undemocratic regimes, the forces that propel and shape transitions and the nature of the new political system.

The transformation from a non-democratic to a democratic regime is not marked by any particular timeframe. It is a process that originates before the actual transfer of formal power and it continues under the new regime (Löwenhart 1995:13). A typical sign of the onset of transition is ‘liberalisation’ as authoritarian incumbents adjust their rules in relation to the rights of their subjects vis-à-vis the state (O’Donnell and Schmitter 1995:7; Löwenhart 1995:19). Liberalisation thus prompts the use of human rights<sup>3</sup> and opens

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<sup>3</sup> These rights are accorded on two levels - on the individual level (i.e., freedom of speech) and on a group level (i.e., freedom of voluntary association) (O’Donnell and Schmitter 1995:6)



political space (Adam et al. 1993:68). O'Donnell and Schmitter (quoted in Löwenhart 1995:20) interpret transition as a “double stream” where liberalisation and democratisation, as the two sub-processes of transition, interact over time. They evolve simultaneously yet autonomously (Przeworski quoted in O'Donnell et al. 1988:56). Whereas liberalisation refers mainly to changes in civil society, democratisation (although it does involve civil society) refers more to political society and its relationship with civil society (Stepan 1988:6, De Villiers 1993:49).

Liberalisation in South Africa started when the government granted industrial rights to black workers (i.e., the right to form trade unions and to strike) prior to political rights<sup>4</sup>. The liberalisation process was speeded up following de Klerk's speech of 2 February 1990 (De Villiers 1993:343,345). Further liberalisation measures included the scraping of all apartheid laws; significant liberalisation thus preceded democratisation in South Africa (De Villiers 1993:345).

Apartheid era South Africa, like many other modern authoritarian systems, was characterised by a combination of what Löwenhart (1995:45) terms a relatively strong government (using oppression instead of legitimacy) and a weak society. Such a system can be stable for quite some time, but internal and external pressures to democratise will lead to compromises. Political legitimacy (or the lack of it) is a fundamental approach in explaining the stability or instability of a regime. In Przeworski (quoted in O'Donnell et al. 1988:50) comments “...no regime can last without legitimacy (support, acquiescence, consent), it disintegrates”. A perception of a legitimacy crisis by major actors provides the impetus for regime change (Gillespie 1990:54; O'Donnell and Schmitter quoted in Löwenhart 1995:15).

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<sup>4</sup> O'Donnell and Schmitter (1995:10) note “...that once some individual and collective rights have been granted it becomes increasingly difficult to withhold others”.

Turning to institutional confidence, this study predicts polarised patterns of confidence with the majority showing reduced confidence which undermined the legitimacy of the apartheid regime. The lack of legitimacy of South Africa's political institutions effected by the exclusion of the majority of the population from the democratic process was recognised for a long time (Adam and Moodley, 1989:368; Van Zyl Slabbert 1992:74; De Villiers 1993:321). In short, South Africa's transition was only possible when the apartheid government lost its legitimacy among the majority of the population, and further, some of those in power no longer believed in the values espoused by the apartheid ideology.

At the heart of the theory is the truism that an authoritarian regime does not surrender power voluntarily (Ginsburg 1996:75). It is rather the result of a shift in the balance of power between those seeking the maintenance of the status quo and pro-democracy forces pressing for change (Zartman 1989:6; Ginsburg 1996:75). Consistent with the core tenet of transition theory, South Africa's transition was triggered by the growing untenability of the apartheid status quo (De Villiers 1993:339; Ginsburg 1996:79).

A stalemate between the apartheid government and the opposition developed. On the government's part this resulted from Botha's failed attempts to 'reform' apartheid, and their inability to suppress the democratic pressure from the broader masses. The opposition, on the other hand, were incapable alone of bringing the apartheid government to its knees (De Villiers 1993:338; Sisk 1995:74; Ginsburg 1996:79). A transition process starts when there is a shared perception of a stalemate and a recognition that the only solution is a negotiated settlement (Ginsburg and Webster 1995:6). By the mid-1980's key actors acknowledged this stalemate (Marx 1992:264; De Villiers 1993:325; Sisk 1995:75; Ginsburg and Webster 1995:6) and exploratory talks began as negotiations were perceived as beneficial to all sides. F.W. de Klerk's nomination as President in 1989 provided the incentive for reformers to move toward a negotiated solution. Nelson Mandela's release and the unbanning of the PAC and SACP followed in 1990. An alliance between the ANC, SACP and Cosatu (Congress of South African Trade Unions) was forged over the

following twelve months. In Przeworski's terms, the preconditions for negotiations had been met (Ginsburg and Webster 1995:6). Thus fulfilling the second tenet of transition theory that a successful transition is most often the result of pacts negotiated by elites (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1987:37-9; Diamond and Linz 1988:14; Karl and Schmitter 1991:281; Ginsburg 1996:75).

The pacts<sup>5</sup> are negotiated by reformers in the state and moderates in the opposition (Ginsburg and Webster 1996:3), and are based on two theoretical assumptions. Firstly, the masses cannot conduct negotiations by themselves and this process is therefore left to the elites. Secondly, some actors might be unwilling to forge pacts. Thus, at the heart of transition theory is the unfolding of a common cause in a limited notion of democracy by reformers and moderates. Transition can only come about when "...reformers are stronger than standpatters in the government and moderates are stronger than extremists in the opposition. In such circumstances standpatters and extremists can be marginalised from the emerging consensus of the new order" (Huntington quoted in Shapiro 1993:138).

Whilst the progress of many democracies of the third wave is exhilarating, at the same time they also bring disillusionment (Huntington quoted in Shapiro 1993:123). This is the result of a trade-off in democratic bargaining between participation and moderation. Huntington (quoted in Shapiro 1993:123) notes that "...few political leaders who put together the compromises creating [democratic] regimes escaped the charge of having 'sold out' the interests of their constituents". There is also an inherent risk that a negotiated democracy may become authoritarian in practice as leaders, once in power, ignore the interests of their followers during the transition period (Przeworski quoted in Shapiro 1993:123).

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<sup>5</sup> O'Donnell and Schmitter (1995:37) define a pact as "...an explicit, but not always publicly explicated or justified, agreement among a select set of actors which seeks to define rules governing the exercise of power on the basis of mutual guarantees for the 'vital interests' of those entering into it".

Scholars of democratic consolidation emphasise two choices that have to be made (Zielonka 1994:95). The first following the transition is the choice between a parliamentary or presidential system (Przeworski quoted in James and Caliguire 1996:60). Parliamentarianism is generally regarded as the superior option as it is less likely to cause governmental paralysis (Löwenhart 1995:36). The second choice concerns the structure of elections and whether to implement either proportional representation or majoritarian system. The period 1990-1994 signified a rapid growth in consensus among major political actors about the desirability of proportional representation (Faure 1996:149).

The outcome of the negotiations in South Africa was thus a set of democratic principles that cater for regular multi-party elections based on universal suffrage in “an extremely inclusive system” of proportional representation (James and Caliguire 1996:57). Such an agreement could only come into being when all parties perceived it as the sole viable exit from stalemate.

The transition period ends when the new regime has “...endowed itself with legitimate institutions and a constitution” (Hermet 1991:255). The new constitution, outlining the independence of the organs of the state, provides for the protection of society, minorities, and individuals against the arbitrariness of the state and is a reflection of a new regime’s institutionalisation (Löwenhart 1995:43). South Africa’s Interim Constitution was adopted in 1993 and provided power-sharing and within the GNU until 1999, to be followed by the final Constitution in 1996 (Breytenbach 1997:83). The basis of proportional representation and the GNU is power-sharing (Maphai quoted in Breytenbach 1997:84). The certification and signing of the final Constitution of the Republic of South Africa can be regarded as the second milestone of the transition to democracy following the start of the negotiations (Strydom et al. 1997:38).

A hybrid state, where the former authoritarian rulers and new democratic leaders share power through conflict or by agreement is a characteristic of a transition (Hermet 1991:255). In the period 1994-1996, South Africa’s GNU (composed of the ANC, the

IFP and the NP) was the institutional manifestation of the negotiated settlement (James and Caliguire 1996:57). Majoritarianism would replace the old order under the auspices of the final Constitution (Maphai quoted in Breytenbach 1997:84). Przeworski (quoted in Ginsburg and Webster 1995:3) asserts that transitions result generally "...where existing power holders retain much of their control over the levers of power in society, property, the military and, not least, the state bureaucracy". The NP's attempts to control crucial portfolios such as defence and law and order failed.<sup>6</sup> Some key institutions of the state (i.e., the military, police and the civil service) remained intact. To ensure that the new government of South Africa would represent the entire citizenry, the legislative and executive branches of government were redesigned (James and Caliguire 1996:57). All parties that received more than 5 per cent of the national vote gained representation in the executive cabinet (James and Caliguire 1996:58). Maphai (quoted in Breytenbach 1997:84) argues that the phase of power sharing bestowed the new institutions with legitimacy and also created the environment for a relatively stable transition to democracy.

South Africa's transition was marked by a negotiated transition where a set of rules for the future was formulated by both the incumbent regime and the opposition (Sisk 1995:127). According to transition theory a country in the process of transition from authoritarian rule to democracy proceeds through three stages (Stremlau 1997:9). Two of these stages have already been realised in South Africa. The first phase, the beginning of transition, was set in motion by P.W. Botha's attempts to modernise apartheid. F.W. de Klerk's term resulted in the first universal franchise elections during 1994, and this founding election is evidence of the second phase towards democracy. What remains to be achieved is "...the longer, less dramatic but still essential third step of consolidating South Africa's new democratic institutions that will probably last for another decade. The struggle to sustain and improve democracy is a never-ending one" (Stremlau 1997:9).

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<sup>6</sup> Maphai (quoted in Breytenbach 1997:84) argues that it therefore "...was no big surprise when the NP decided, in June 1996, to withdraw from the GNU in June 1996".

The consolidation of democracy does not form part of the transition process itself. Consolidation is a process that may overlap with transition, but the outcome is not predetermined (Gunther et al. 1996:155). According to Löwenhart (1995:18) "...this is so because the main characteristics of the transition process is that during it, the rules of the political 'game' are not defined". Consolidation is also not an obvious manifestation following a transition to democracy.

This section has provided a more in-depth explanation of the structural transition of South Africa from apartheid to democracy. However, explanation of the transition process by way of elite actions is not the primary focus of this study. Instead, it provides a contextual framework to monitor confidence in institutions: how it is formed, in what patterns and how it changes over time. At this point, a few preliminary observations can be made. It is to be expected that confidence in institutions became more and more polarised as these institutions stepped-up their efforts to achieve discriminatory rule, with the confidence of the black majority increasingly withheld from institutions as the NP government failed to satisfy demands for reform. Certain institutions such as labour unions and the church, (see Chapter 3) are expected to show increased levels in confidence during the 1980s as demands for economic and political reform increased and were channelled through them. After the transition, the process of consolidation implicitly suggests a need for the system to reduce polarised patterns of confidence to converge around new institutions. The next section describes and explains the institutional development issues of the post-transition phase.

### **5. Democratic consolidation**

After the transition the emphasis moves to the consolidation of the new democracy. Consolidation refers to the acceptance by politically significant groups of the established political institutions and to democratic rules of the game (Higley and Gunther 1992:3; Gunther et al. 1996:152). Democratic consolidation is the process whereby "...democracy becomes routinised and deeply internalised in social, institutional, and even psychological

life, as well as in political calculations for achieving success” (Linz and Stepan quoted in Diamond 1997:30). Other factors that require attention are the performance of democratic institutions and the quality of political and social life that have emerged. The quality of democracy can always be improved by broadening and deepening democratic consensus which can further reinforce a democratic regime (Gunther et al. 1996:153).

Democratic consolidation consists of overlapping behavioural, attitudinal and constitutional dimensions (Linz and Stepan quoted in Diamond 1997:30). From a behavioural point of view, democratic consolidation is achieved when there is an absence of significant national, social, economic, political or institutional actors who attempt to secede from the state or create a non-democratic regime by spending significant resources on their objective (Linz and Stepan 1996:6; Diamond 1997:30). The attitudinal dimension entails the belief among the majority of the public that democratic institutions and procedures are regarded as legitimate. Anti-system bias must be minor or reasonably isolated from pro-democratic forces (Linz and Stepan 1996:6; Diamond 1997:30). The constitutional dimension of democratic consolidation refers to the acceptance by actors that conflict has to be resolved within the framework of laws, procedures and institutions (Linz and Stepan 1996:16).

Apart from a functioning democratic state, democratic consolidation is dependent on a number of other requirements. Firstly, the development of a free and healthy civil society. Secondly, the establishment of a relatively autonomous political society. Thirdly, all actors should be subject to the rule of law. Fourthly, an operational state bureaucracy must exist. Finally, there must be an institutionalised economic society (Linz and Stepan 1996:17). These conditions will be evaluated more specifically in terms of South Africa’s democratic transition in Chapter Three.

Democracy relies on democratic institutions, and the consolidation of democracy warrants the institutionalisation of institutions (Sjöstrand 1993:9; Gunther et al. 1996:152). The democratisation process involves two phases. The first phase is “crafting” that is a



“...time-bound process designed to ensure that even unwilling players enter the game” (Di Palma quoted in Liebert and Cotta 1990:38). The second is the “institutionalisation” process which gives institutions value and stability (Di Palma quoted in Liebert and Cotta 1990:38; Sjöstrand 1993:9; Löwenhart 1995:24). Political institutions thus need to be endowed with both representativeness and responsibility to prevent them turning into institutions that quickly lose all legitimacy. A political system, according to democratic theory, can be described as legitimate “...only if [it] guarantee[s] citizens justice, help[s] to secure prosperity, maintain[s] a distinction between the concept of political regime and political authorities, provide[s] opportunities for citizens to participate in periodic constitutionally sanctioned elections, and exercise[s] influence over the content of public policies in the interim between elections” (Kornberg et al. 1992:6).

Legitimation is the dynamic aspect whereby legitimacy is acquired; it occurs when a political order and/or its rulers are accorded legitimacy due to conformity with rules that apply indiscriminately to both state and society (Löwenhart 1995:28; Crisp 1996:32). Legitimation thus entails more than a commitment to democracy in the abstract. Rather it asks for the crucial adherence to rules and constraints of the constitutional system. A widely shared legitimation of democracy buttresses consolidation (Diamond 1997:30). Full acknowledgement of the legitimacy of political institutions is an ideal case as in every society there are individuals who reject these criteria (Gunther et al. 1996:135). Problems of governance and even widespread disapproval of the government can be overcome if elites and the public believe “...that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life” (Diamond 1997:30).

By acknowledging the legitimacy of institutions the probability that conflict will be channelled through democratic representative institutions are greatly increased, as opposed to unregulated extra-parliamentary arenas (Higley and Gunther 1992:31). Although conflicting values and interests are natural in a complex society, they must be resolved within existing procedures and institutions (Rose 1993:169; Przeworski 1995:61). The ability to institutionalise conflict is essential for the consolidation of



democracy (Habib 1995:66). There can be disagreements concerning some policies and institutional arrangements provided the general consensus is that, overall, the system is reasonable efficient and fair. Democracy contains a "...double injunction: safeguard rights by means of institutions, and safeguard citizens from those institutions" (Apter 1991:166).

The open-ended nature of democracy necessitates that rights be protected. A principle of democracy is majority rule, which remains in the words of Löwenhart (1995:24) "...one of the less satisfying elements of democracy". The innate complexity of the principle of majority rule in democracies results from those instances when the majority's rights and interests clash with those of the minority (Löwenhart 1995:24). Minority powers have to be protected to ensure democratic stability (Przeworski 1995:41). Political philosophers have always emphasised the obligation of democratic regimes to provide institutional safeguards (i.e., constitutional arrangements like a bill of rights) to provide against the violation of minority rights by majorities (Löwenhart 1995:24).

On a different level, how the regime will perform in the future is an important factor in ensuring high levels of confidence and legitimacy. As Löwenhart (1995:26) notes, "...democratic rule requires consent, and consent requires legitimacy, whereas legitimacy requires effective performance". Some have claimed that legitimacy is related to effectiveness (Lipset quoted in Sartori 1991:437). In contrast, Przeworski (1995:59) believes normative consolidation is achieved when "...the legitimacy of democracy becomes largely autonomous from its efficacy and when it is unconditionally accepted by large majorities".

A generally accepted sign that a country has an established democratic system is when the so called 'two turnover test' defined by Huntington is accomplished. The two turnover test is regarded as complete when power has been exchanged peacefully by electoral competition on two occasions between parties (Rose 1993:158). Usually two decades or longer is needed for a country to past this test.

High confidence levels in institutions will attribute to stability in a newly democratised country. Di Palma (1990:39) notes in this regard "...that whether the risk of a breakdown stays out of the agenda of a new democracy depends also on how institutions turn out. Thus, on the one hand, as institutions emerge, they should become valued *per se* and should make the chances of players backing out ever more remote. They should at least render inoperative any reservations that players may residually hold. On the other hand, such players' 'socialisation' (following as it were, their recruitment to the game) remains contingent, and consent relies on institutional performance".

The most pressing problem facing new regimes is the very survival of democracy (Hermet 1991:249). There exists an inherent risk in the process of transition of a potential failure (Hermet 1992:255). Even when a regime is consolidated there is still a possibility of breakdown (Linz and Stepan 1996:16). Empirical studies have demonstrated the equal likelihood of "...protractedness, stagnation, temporal reversal, and quite often deconsolidation" (Gunther et al. 1996:155). A breakdown is not the result of problems relating to the democratic consolidation process itself, but the cause of "...a new dynamic in which the democratic regime cannot solve a set of problems, a non-democratic alternative gains significant supporters, and former democratic loyalties begin to behave in a constitutionally disloyal or semi-loyal manner" (Linz and Stepan 1996:16).

For Di Palma (quoted in Löwenhart 1995:21) the likelihood of anti-democratic backlash has been exaggerated, although coups in several countries have halted democratisation. He draws attention to those conservatives in many countries who utilised the safer means of new political channels of democratic institutions to express their views and interests. Over the short- and medium-term "...it is the stance of organised, active groups that has the most direct relevance for the prospects for regime stability and survival" (Gunther et al. 1996:154).

### 5.1 Democratic consolidation in South Africa?

Habib (quoted in Breytenbach 1997:995) argues that South Africa's democracy is not yet consolidated. He classifies South Africa as a "delegative democracy". It is delegative in the sense that although democratic procedures exist, power has shifted to a few individuals in the executive and to the president. Decision-making at the centre is not driven by civil society but is increasingly technocratic (Breytenbach 1997:95).

The consolidation of democracy is generally complicated by attitudes of high expectations among citizens. New regimes are expected to solve persistent socio-economic problems rapidly (Przeworski 1995:60). Many South Africans expect their long awaited hopes to be met overnight. The transition resulted in high expectations among the populace, who not only expect the protection of their human rights and civil liberties, but also the upliftment of their material standards (Habib 1995:67). If these hopes are not met either by the GNU and/or the ANC government it may result in a strong demoralisation. This could, as Habib (1995:67) points out, result in an undermining of support that ultimately undermines the social foundations of the democratic order. Social forces could again engage in extra-institutional action that could lead to a clamp-down by the newly elected regime. In short, perceptions of performance of institutions is a key to public confidence in the same institutions.

Common to other delegative democracies, weak government performance contributes to the persistent economic inequality created by apartheid (Breytenbach 1997:95). Habib (1995:68) notes that "...the racial character of the ownership structure of the South African economy has and will continue to be a stark reminder of apartheid and inequities". He calls for the deracialisation of the economic system as it will be decisive, amongst other factors, in the achievement of long-term democratic consolidation. Although some economic growth has been achieved unemployment has not reduced significantly (Breytenbach 1997:95). On the contrary, Adam (Venter 1989:15), claims that it is not ethnicity, but material conditions (and equality) that matter to South Africans.

According to Habib (1995:66), powerful forces in civil society (i.e., organised labour, or a combination of civil society institutions) may perceive the grand compromise as insufficient notwithstanding its acceptance by elites. This may mean trouble for the consolidation of democracy. These social forces may then turn to "...wide-spread extra-institutional action that could, but need not, lead elements within the GNU and ANC to adopt an authoritarian, repressive response that would ultimately threaten the fragile foundations of the democratic order" (Habib 1995:66).

Ethnic conflict in plural societies and popular disappointment with economic performance are the two most widely cited obstacles to democratic consolidation. Another problem for consolidation in South Africa are the ethnic divisions of South African society (Breytenbach 1997:95). Elements in the IFP and in the right-wing, for example, perceive the new order as a threat to their ethnic identity and interests. If the ANC does not maintain its stance as an ethnically neutral state, a reactionary ethnic response is possible. Ethnic entrepreneurs could, according to Venter (1998:14), "...transform support for the ANC into mobilisation of the various African and black subcultures against the party".<sup>7</sup> Similarly a white reactionary response is possible if the state is experienced and perceived as a manipulated and black-dominated state (Venter 1998:14).

Linz and Stepan (1996:23), however, are convinced that "...democracy can still make significant strides toward consolidation under such conditions". The greater the occurrence of diversity of national, linguistic, religious, or cultural societies the more complex politics becomes. Although this does not mean that consolidation is impossible in

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<sup>7</sup> Venter (1998:14) notes that "...some evidence of such mobilisation is emerging in the Western Cape where the ANC is facing continuous problems of reconciling the material interests of the coloureds and Africans in their constituency. The NP is capitalising on the ANC's impotence regarding the contradictions in its support base in this province".

a multi-national or multi-cultural state, it does warrant careful crafting of democratic norms, practices and institutions.

It is often assumed that democracy in multi-group societies, like South Africa, is confronted by many more difficulties than more homogenous countries. Przeworski (1995:19) quotes Mill and Dahl to illustrate this point. Mill argued that "...free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among a people without fellow-feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion, necessary to the working of representative government cannot exist". This primordialist view of cultural identity is an obstacle to the integration of commitments and values of people. Eckstein (quoted in Przeworski 1995:20), for example, claims that while social mobility in such societies might be possible, cultural mobility is not.

Recent scholarship, in direct contradiction to primordialist theory, has demonstrated that "...common cultural roots are neither necessary nor a sufficient condition for ethnic or national membership" (Przeworski 1995:20). When an emphasis is placed on cultural differences and they are engrossed by ethnic outbidding "...it is more likely a consequence of institutional failure rather than a cause of it" (Przeworski 1995:21).

There are however various positive elements present in South Africa for the consolidation of democracy. Firstly, the private sector plays an important role in future developments (i.e., black capitalist empowerment). This, however, does not address redistribution in a sufficiently rapid manner (Breytenbach 1997:95). Secondly, the growing middle class has a potentially stabilising influence on the whole system, but faster economic growth is still required. Thirdly, President Mandela's commitment to reconstruction and development is also seen as a positive factor (Breytenbach 1997:95).

In sum, democracy is a process that may take years to consolidate, and its emergence is no guarantee of its continued existence. South Africa, like other nations, "...could easily succumb to the totalitarian impulses within their midst" (Habib 1995:69). It may be useful

to remember that "...the people who rose up in revolt, did it not so much for the sake of democracy as against their former leaders" (Hermet 1991:250).

## **6. Summary**

This chapter has attempted to provide a historical and theoretical background for this study. In this chapter, the intent was to describe the history of South Africa from apartheid to democracy, as the changing context is deemed fundamental in explaining the formation and patterns of the public's attitudes toward institutions.

The discussion of the apartheid phase centred around its ideology, practices and origins. An emphasis was also placed on the events leading to transition, notably the 'oppressed majority's' struggle against the repressive state, and the attempts of the government to reform apartheid (i.e., the formation of the Tricameral parliament), and the impact of de Klerk's 1990 speech.

The discussion then turned to South Africa's transition by explaining it in terms of transition theory. Both similarities and differences of South Africa's transition were identified in relation to experiences elsewhere in the world. Although South Africa's transition does resemble transitions elsewhere, cognisance must be taken of its distinctiveness - notably its particular history, population and the nature of the transition. Some core tenets (i.e., reasons for disintegration of authoritarian regimes, the forces that propel the transition, and the nature of the new political system) of transition theory were identified and applied to the South African context. The most important steps of South Africa's democratisation process have arguably been the formulation of the Constitution, and the establishment of regular multi-party elections and a system of proportional representation.

After a transition, democracy has to be consolidated or routinised and internalised in political and social life. The dimensions of consolidation are behavioural, attitudinal and constitutional. The importance of institutionalisation as a process which gives institutions

value and stability was highlighted. Emphasis was also placed on the legitimacy, stability and survival of democracy. The institutionalisation of conflict is essential for the consolidation of democracy and is primarily determined by institutions and party structures.

South Africa has made significant strides towards democracy, but its own democratic system has not yet been consolidated. Factors which complicate the process are unrealistically high expectations and perceptions of institutional performance, weak government performance, persisting economic inequalities, and the perceptions of some civil society institutions that see the transition as an elitist project. However, the private sector's involvement in economic development, a growing middle class and President Mandela's commitment to reconstruction and development are positive developments. However, in the final instance, it may be too soon to assess democratic consolidation in the new South Africa.



### **CHAPTER THREE: The Institutional Setting in South Africa**

The preceding two chapters attempted to establish a broad theoretical framework for the study of public attitudes toward institutions. This chapter attempts to deal with the institutional setting and the historical context in South Africa from 1981 to 1995. The discussion will focus more specifically on the history of particular institutions.

South Africa's institutions are currently involved in a broad process of transition from exclusiveness to inclusiveness. Democratic representation in political institutions during apartheid was monopolised by the white minority ensuring the exclusion of 'non-whites' from truly representative political institutions. In the aftermath of the transition political society is open to anyone who wishes to participate and is ostensibly able and free to do so.

#### **1. The institutional setting: From ethnic exclusivity to democratic inclusion**

Ethnicity in South Africa, like in other deeply divided societies, has influenced a myriad of issues (Horowitz 1985:8), and is reflected in organisational structures such as political and economic organisations. Apartheid era South Africa could be classified as having had a ranked ethnic group structure (Horowitz 1985:22; Lever quoted in Venter 1989:3). In a hierarchical, ethnically-ordered society (one super-ordinate the other subordinate) stratification is synonymous with ethnic membership where opportunities are accorded or restricted according to this ethnic group identity.

As is characteristic of a hierarchically ordered system, political, economic and social divisions in apartheid South Africa were cumulative and reinforcing (Horowitz 1985:22; McDonough et al. 1994:353). Whites were at the apex of this hierarchy, controlling power in state and society and ensuring a position of privilege for themselves. Political, economic and social power were thus centred in white hands serving to strengthen and intensify inequalities across the functional spheres of society as well as influencing public decision-making (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:52). The unequal distribution of

status in society and in the economic sector provided actors in these spheres with the opportunity to exploit their position influencing political decisions corresponding with their needs and interests. The result was an accumulation of these advantages across the institutional boundaries of the economic and social spheres, which manifested itself as political domination (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:52).

The apartheid state's overreach of society resulted in the repression of civil society, effectively blocking the bridge between social values and conventional political actions. However, the system was not merely buttressed by the state. The entire edifice of racial stratification, state practice and social support was reflected in the political structure and supported by some institutions of civil society. Indeed, the apartheid government expected institutions, both public and to some extent private institutions, to participate in the collective task of apartheid. The state used and tried to control private institutions such as the press, labour unions, and even some churches, to further its goals. This is referred to as a process of 'politicisation' of society; shaping private institutions to the needs of the public agenda and blurring the boundaries between public and private. The apartheid state was clearly enmeshed in civil society; it was no 'independent authority' and left few 'private' realms untouched by politics (Held 1990:11,12). The nature of public power, the relation between public and private, and the proper scope of politics, and appropriate reach of the government was severely corrupted (Held 1990:11). The state, in its relations with society was neither separate nor impartial, and it was therefore inevitable that citizens would not be treated in a free and equal manner.

Many preconditions for civil society including an inclusive formal/legal constitutional framework; inclusive legal citizenship; a culture of rights and duties; inclusive representative democracy; a culture of political tolerance; formal, legal equality of all individuals; and a legitimate government and state were absent during the apartheid years (Reitzes 1997:17). Nevertheless, the state was not totalitarian, and "...did not destroy all forms of independent associational life" (Friedman and Reitzes 1996:60). The state did interact with some independent institutions and the membership of these institutions (i.e.,

church and business organisations) transcending the boundaries of the enfranchised and disenfranchised. However, the use of racial criteria to define the disenfranchised sector in turn resulted in a racially divided civil society. The existence of black civil society, due to its disenfranchised status coupled with economic exploitation and marginalisation, was thus not dependent on state power, economic power or institutions within the dominant political society. Instead, it was based on the social movements in civil society (Swilling 1991:90).

The exclusion of the black majority from the political arena forced a reliance upon extra-parliamentary institutions to protest against and resist apartheid. The absence of democratic procedures in political society forced sectors of black civil society to organise themselves politically. This adaptation of concerns was a key feature of the struggle which sought to overthrow the apartheid state. Black civil society was therefore dominated by 'the struggle' and its aim of overthrowing the apartheid state. Mobilisation was led by a network of civic, youth and other movements that coalesced into the UDF as opportunities for legal organisation opened in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Reitzes 1997:15). The trade unions were the first to present an organised challenge to the system. As these movements mobilised independently from the state they inspired an unique South African variant of 'civil society' (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:61; Reitzes 1997:15). Activists within these movements, when calling for a greater role in decision-making, did so in the name of 'civil society'. Consequently, calls for democratisation were not limited to demands for universal franchise; democracy would only be complete, the argument went, if 'civil society' was assured a place in political decision-making.

In defining civil society as consisting of those organisations participating in the struggle, it was believed that it possessed the capacity to "...change society which state institutions, even representative ones lack" (Reitzes 1997:15). However, the institutions of civil society do not aim to take the state over, and it is thus questionable whether these 'liberation' movements did indeed form part of civil society as their primary aim was to overthrow the state (Friedman and Atkinson 1994:15; Reitzes 1997:16). Their goal was to

fight against an undemocratic polity and not to participate in a democratic one. It was not rules of democratic citizenship which guided them, but rather rules of 'the struggle' (Reitzes 1997:17).

As we have discussed in Chapter One, democratisation involves the transformation of both state institutions (i.e., to accountability and representativeness) and civil society institutions (i.e., reversal of economic and racial inequality); the process of double democratisation. The key qualification of this process is citizenship. Real civil society could only emerge once the state could draw the entire South African population under a common jurisdiction where the status of citizenship applies to all (du Toit 1993:6).

Following the transition it was clear that the ANC government would be dependent on an inherited security forces and civil service, and a range of white economic and political actors (Glasner 1997:8). 'White' civil society and 'black' civil society would likewise be intact in this equation (Glasner 1997:8). South Africa's market economy, together with civil society institutions has remained more or less intact since the transition (Adam et al. 1993:17).

The transition to democracy did not result in a coherent unified conception of either democracy or civil society. Gagiano and du Toit (in Kotzé 1996:48) note two broad adversarial notions concerning the establishment of South Africa's democracy and civil society, namely: the liberal democratic or liberal view which finds its support from the largely white middle-class, and, the liberationist view associated with the social democratic tradition, and supported by the black communities. The primary issue of debate centres upon a boundary dispute or the lines that separate the economic, political and social spheres and the unequal distribution thereof to members in society (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:50).

The liberal view sees inequalities in political, economic and social power as undesirable due to the exploitation of members of society by the powerful in each sphere. The best

means of incorporating and protecting the individual from the forces of control is through the formal separation of these spheres through law, custom and organisational autonomy (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:50). This creates a situation where political, economic and social power is distributed among different groups. In other words, the interests of the state (preserving its independent power to act), society (preserving its solidarity), and the economy (preserving its opportunities to base decisions on economic rationality), combine virtuously and enhance human choice (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:51). Although liberals acknowledge that inequalities (i.e. material wealth, political power and societal influence) exist in society, these divisions are dispersed and transient rather than cumulative. Thus implies that power in these spheres does not form a block which can control society on its own terms (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:51-52). For liberals, democracy can only be said to exist if politics is clearly separate from the overall system of societal inequality. The corollaries of this view being that: 1) democratic participation implies competitive and inclusive contestation; and 2) leaders have power that must be limited where consensual rather than majority rule dominates decision-making (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:53).

On the other hand, the liberationist view of democracy and civil society transforms the normative precepts of democracy such as participation and equality into an ideal of national self-determination (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:59). Democracy implies the national liberation from oppressive structures (political and economic), to a state controlled by the indigenous peoples as well as the psychological empowerment of the historically oppressed (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:59-60). Together these themes are seen as black empowerment. This process of black empowerment is in a certain sense equated with democracy. Such an interpretation of democracy views "...any social, political or economic arrangement in the new South Africa that blocks or impedes the process designed to advance black empowerment, as essentially undemocratic" (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:60). The liberationist perspective also views the separation of the functional spheres of society as essentially undemocratic due to their role in the justification and reproduction of the existing inequalities in South Africa. They support

the Marxist view that the state in capitalist societies maintains institutional boundaries in order to protect middle-class power. The liberal and liberationist pursuit of the revitalisation of civil society are clearly at odds.

Gagiano and du Toit (in Kotzé 1996:61) suggest that it is more accurate to understand the liberationist conception of civil society as consisting of those excluded and oppressed by the apartheid state and who are now penetrating these power centres. Thus, there is a progressive fusion and softening of boundaries rather than a separation of state and 'civil society' which is reinforced by communal and political solidarity between the newly liberated and which reduces the autonomy of both (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:61). With the achievement of this solidarity initial enthusiasm for "...the building up of a vibrant civil society as a defensive formation against an overbearing state" is waning (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:62).

It is ironic that black empowerment, while validating the egalitarian premise of democracy, (i.e., the capturing of political power in state institutions, administrative control in the civil service, the demand that bureaucracies must reflect the demographic profile of society), is likely to lead to compromises in the autonomy of newly appointed employees due to the demands of this political and communal solidarity (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:62-63). When empowerment is equated with acting according to the interests of communities, and where public responsibility is aimed at that community, loyalty to the institutional interests and functions of the state are seriously compromised by an overriding loyalty to the community, ultimately leading to an undermining of autonomy. In short, what liberals interpret as the remedy, liberationists see as the problem (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:61).

Beyond this debate, democratisation warrants a process of institutional transformation of all institutions "...in line with the calls for non-racialism, gender equality and the empowerment of black people" (de Beer 1997:1). This occurs in a context of certain procedural holdovers from apartheid. The challenges that now face institutions are

transparency, to function democratically and to be responsive to the needs and interests of all races (Stremlau 1997:42). The public's confidence will be based on principles (consensus, representativeness, accountability, transparency and morality) of the legitimacy of institutions (Williams 1993:47). Institutions need to recognise "...that each interest within civil society is obliged to consider not only its relationship with government, but with other interests within civil society too" (Friedman 1996:90).

South Africa's transition to democracy arguably had a huge impact on the structure and the functioning of all institutions in society. An important change since democratisation, for example, is found in the sphere of political decision-making and public policy-making. The aims, actors involved, ordering of the organisations, and individuals that wield power over the processes have changed profoundly since democratisation (Booyesen and Erasmus in Venter 1998:222). New processes of policy-making were designed to produce a fundamental shift away from policies of exclusion, to a legitimate ethos based on a democratic political culture (Booyesen and Erasmus in Venter 1998:222). Business organisations and labour organisations (i.e., Cosatu) in particular have used the new decision-making process to lobby for policies affecting their interests (Booyesen and Erasmus in Venter 1998:237).

There is a great deal to be said for the positive effects of transforming institutions. However, "...the flip side of the coin is that it has also brought about tension between the 'old guard' and the new incumbents; it has led to the application of the spoils systems and cronyism; and the present government is also intent upon rewarding party faithfuls and those who were involved in the freedom 'struggle' against apartheid" (Hilliard 1997:1). Transformation of institutions should not become an end in itself; "...it must be executed with specific objectives in mind". Institutions are difficult to change because "...you cannot carefully create an ethos and structure that will promote brutal oppression and expect it to change at the flick of a switch so to speak. Much more has to be done. For organisational change to take place one has to change the organisation's culture and structures that facilitate its expression. This is not easy but it can be done" (Shearing 1991:12).



The following section will briefly describe and interpret the history of each institution relevant to this study. Confidence in each institution must be assessed within the particular context in which the institution operated, its structure and performance as it related to apartheid, transition and finally to democracy. The history of each institution will serve as an important source for reasons of confidence accorded or withheld. Clearly the particular history of each institution, and the broader context of the changing institutional setting in which it had to function, would have had a fundamental impact on how different groups perceived and experienced the system.

## **2. Public institutions**

This study is concerned with key state institutions including parliament, and the major non-elected institutions of the state such as the police, the armed forces, the legal system and the civil service. The latter institutions are the central structures through which power is exercised and whereby policy is shaped.

### **2.1 Parliament**

Parliament is arguably the most visible and important institution in a democratic regime (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:112). It forms part of the constitutionally protected *trias politica* or separation of state power into legislative, executive and judicial powers (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:25). The most important function of parliament is to transform government policies into laws. Parliament is thus responsible for discussing, changing and passing bills from ministers or from parliamentary members. Other functions include considering petitions from the public, holding the executive (cabinet) accountable (i.e., the approval of the annual budget which makes funds available to state departments), and fulfilling judicial functions concerning its own-activities (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:26).

The structure of parliament has underwent a number of changes during apartheid, and has undergone fundamental changes following South Africa's first democratic election. Confidence in parliament will probably reflect these structural changes.

The NP, from its rise to power in 1948, until the first democratic elections in 1994 secured the majority of seats in parliament. By 1980, the NP held a strangle-hold over parliament. The 1977 elections resulted in a major triumph for the NP who won 134 seats. White opposition parties secured only 30 seats in parliament (Liebenberg and Spies 1993:457). In fact, the NP secured the majority of seats in parliament until 1989. Table One below compares the general election results of 1981, 1987 and 1989 according to the number of directly elected Members of Parliament (MPs) and the percentage of the vote won by each party. Interestingly, the 1989 election signalled a major drop in the NP's percentage vote for the first time (Sisk 1995:80).

*Table 1: House of Assembly election results: 1981, 1982 and 1989*

Party	1981		1987		1989	
	Number of seats won	Percentage of votes polled	Number of seats won	Percentage of votes polled	Number of seats won	Percentage of votes polled
National Party	131	(57,7%)	123	(52,5%)	93	(48,0%)
Conservative Party	a		22	(26,4%)	39	(31,2%)
Progressive Federal Party	26	(19,0%)	19	(14,0%)	b	
New Republic Party	8	(7,6%)	1	(2,0%)	b	
Democratic Party	a		a		33	(20,4%)
Herstigte Nasionale Party	0	(14,0%)	0	(3,1%)	0	(0,2%)
Independent	-		1	(1,3%)	-	
Total	165		166		165	

a Not yet in existence

b Disbanded from the Democratic Party

Source: Race Relations Survey (1989/90:550)

Some reform of parliament was introduced when the Constitution was amended in 1983, and the Tricameral parliament was created. The Constitution provided for one parliament with three legislative chambers - a House of Assembly for whites (178 members), and two subordinate tiers - a House of Representatives for coloureds (85 members) and a House of Delegates (45 members) for the Indian population. Blacks were excluded from this

system, ensuring that the Tricameral parliament was perceived as a vehicle for permanent black exclusion (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:62; Lawrence quoted in Friedman and Atkinson 1994:4; Sisk 1995:9). The new parliamentary system handed over the control of 'own affairs' i.e., health, education, culture, to the Indian and coloured communities so that they gained some power and patronage together with civil service jobs (Venter 1989:47; Barber and Barratt 1990:289; Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:140). Nevertheless, the concept of 'own affairs' and the whole system of race classification and group areas was rejected by most middle-class members of these communities. Surveys "...have shown that Africans [were even] more opposed to this constitution than they ever were when whites ruled alone" (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:140). The fact that apartheid was constitutionalised was the most serious aspect of these reforms. Ironically, while premised on the notion of lessening exclusion, reform only reaffirmed blacks' sense of exclusion.

The NP's attempt to restructure the second and third tiers of government in effect reinforced the concentration of power in white hands (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:132). The new legislatures were created with two objectives in mind. Firstly, it enabled the government to pursue their reforms. Secondly, it was aimed at dividing the oppressed groups by incorporating selective elements into the representative state apparatus. Although this concession appeared to concede political rights, in reality it did not provide for the possibility of challenging the existing power structure (Davies et al. 1988:40). In short, the new constitution was implemented at a great cost. It was an insult to the blacks, coloured and Indian communities alike.

The constitutional extension to coloureds and Indians were not met with much enthusiasm, as reflected by the low electoral turnout in the 1984 elections: 29.6 per cent for the House of Representatives and 20.2 per cent for the House of Delegates (Barber and Barratt 1990:292). The boycotts of the 1989 elections were just as effective as those in 1984 the percentage poll was 25 percent for the House of Representatives and 15 per cent for the House of Delegates (Sisk 1995:80). It became obvious that the Tricameral Parliament lacked legitimacy in these communities.

South Africa's first democratic election, was held in 1994 and resulted in the formation of the GNU. The 1994 elections meant that for the first time in South Africa's history the entire population was granted the right to participate in a free democratic election. Table 2 shows the results of the main parties in the democratic election, while Table 3 indicates the racial basis of voters for the three major parties: the ANC, IFP and NP. South Africa's democratically elected parliament convened for the first time on 9 May 1994 (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:24).

*Table 2: 1994 National election results*

ANC	62.6%
NP	20.4%
IFP	10.5%
FF	2.2%
DP	1.7%
PAC	1.2%
ACDP	0.5%
Other	0.9%

*Table 3: Estimated "racial" basis of votes for major parties*

Racial group	ANC	NP	IFP
Black	94	14	85
Coloured	4	30	n/a
Indian	1,5	7,0	n/a
Whites	0,5	49	5

Source: Welsh (quoted in Sadie in Venter 1998:263)

The formation of parliament, according to democratic principles, is imperative for the consolidation of democracy. It is necessary that an assembly (parliament) be institutionalised to manage conflict (Hibbing and Patterson 1994:571). Parliament in the democratic South Africa consists of two Houses the National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) that participate in the legislative process according to constitutional principles. Government by the people under the Constitution is ensured by the elected NA that acts as a national forum for public consideration of issues through

elected representatives. Members of the NA are mainly responsible for scrutinising the executive, and also consider, amend, pass or reject legislation (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:27, 33-34). The NA provides mechanisms to ensure that the executive organs of the state are accountable to it, whilst overseeing the exercise of national executive authority (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:29). Rules and orders made by the NA must have regard for "...representative and participative democracy, accountability, transparency and public involvement" (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:30). The portfolio committees of the NA are the watchdogs of all aspects of parliamentary legislation, "...monitor, investigate, inquire into and make recommendations relating to any aspect of the legislative programme, budget, rationalisation, restructuring, functioning, organisation, structure, personnel, policy formulation or any other matter it may consider relevant" (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:33-34). The interests of the nine provinces are represented by the NCOP and it is the responsibility of its members to ensure that these interests are considered in the national sphere of government (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:27). This is achieved by providing a national forum for public consideration of issues affecting the provinces, and by the participation of NCOP members in the national legislative process

The NA together with the NCOP is responsible for formulation legislation. This process is usually begun by demands expressed in a public service department through the respective minister. After the circulation of a discussion document to concerned civil society institutions, a greenpaper (a preliminary statement of public policy) is drawn up and circulated to MP's, the government and interested institutions in civil society for comment. A white paper (which states official government policy) is then drawn up which has to be approved by the cabinet. Draft bills are then circulated for parliamentary approval (Taljaard and Venter in Venter 1998:43).

In practice, the South African parliament is faced with various problems, i.e., insufficient control over the executive<sup>1</sup> and the fact that its work in the public eye quite often seems a ridiculous mud-slinging match between parties. However the need for parliament should never be underestimated - there can be no democracy without parliament.

Confidence in parliament is judged on different levels with effectiveness arguably being the primary factor in public attitudes. Parliamentary effectiveness is measured by its accountability, policy responsiveness, and/or its proficiency to carry out certain tasks (Hibbing and Patterson 1994:572). However, the performance of parliament is not all. Parliament must acquire legitimacy from citizens, act effectively, and also be seen as effective by the public. This implies confidence from the population at large.

A distinction can be drawn between short-term and long-term influences on the public's confidence in parliament (Hibbing and Patterson 1994:572). Short-term confidence is influenced by the public's satisfaction with parliamentary performance. In the long-term, confidence in parliament is based on a cumulative experience of the institution over a life time; it is not based on specific experiences. However, experiences could act both to strengthen or erode perceptions of legitimacy. This long-term confidence "...can be a source of public commitment to the institution through good times and bad and a basis for public compliance with the enactment of the legislature whether they are liked or not" (Hibbing and Patterson 1994:572).

It is to be expected that confidence in parliament will be primarily dependent upon the inclusion or exclusion of different groups. During apartheid, this confidence came

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<sup>1</sup> According to Taljaard and Venter (in Venter 1998:30) "...a shortcoming in the current legislative process which hampers effective oversight over the executive by the legislature is the fact that legislation leaves numerous aspects open to regulation by the relevant minister. These ministers are not compelled to report such regulations back to the legislature. Hence one runs the risk of legislation by regulation without the legislature having adequate control over the legislative process".

primarily from whites, and in particular those supporting the NP. It is doubtful that there was significant support from the excluded 'non-white' majority. However, some confidence toward parliament would have been expected in the ranks of those included in the Tricameral system. Following the transition, the expectation is that the highest levels of confidence will be found among those included in the GNU, and among ANC supporters.

## **2.2 The armed Forces**

The security forces (consisting of the South African Police and South African Defence Force) were the pivotal institutions in South Africa's "cauldron of violence" (Nathan and Phillips 1991:7). The apartheid government's main instruments of repression included these defence forces, the police and the legal system (Davies et al. 1988:179). Together these institutions protected minority white rule. Their role was controversial and both characterised at times by provoking conflict in the black communities whilst at other times an unwillingness to contain it.

In deeply divided societies such as South Africa, the composition of the defence force is imperative to both state and society. Minorities or majorities who consider themselves under-represented in these institutions perceive such an imbalance as undermining their political power and security. Although the South African Defence Force (SADF) incorporated blacks, coloureds and Indians into its structure it was largely dominated by whites until 1994 (Baynham 1991:21). The SADF incorporated coloured members in 1963, followed by Indians and later blacks. By 1980, 12 000 blacks were trained and deployed, with coloureds and Indians making up 10 per cent of the force (South African Review I, 1983:46). The majority of these members were members of the Cape Corps or the SADF's nine ethnic battalions (Baynham 1991:22).

The SADF was increasingly pulled into a central role as violence intensified in the mid-1980s blurring the traditional tasks of a defence force and the police (Schlemmer 1988:35 in Berger and Godsell; van Zyl Slabbert 1989:88; Baynham 1991:22). The traditional



division between military tasks (maintaining territorial integrity) and police tasks (maintaining internal stability) had largely fallen away in apartheid South Africa (Prior 1989:56). This fusion of functions was deemed necessary by the former regime as extra-parliamentary opposition grew stronger, both inside and outside South Africa's borders.

Apartheid South Africa always retained pretensions toward a civilian government, in effect where the military is subordinate to the political processes of the state (Adam and Moodley 1993:16). Yet the SADF has always been an integral part of minority white rule (Venter 1989:58; Howe 1994:30). Notwithstanding the extraordinary influence of the security establishment until 1989, it never took formal charge or disbanded the institutions of white democracy (Adam and Moodley 1993:16). The SADF has always respected civilian rule despite interpreting its role, together with that of the government as maintaining white hegemony during the apartheid era (Howe 1994:32).

Politicians and bureaucrats often claimed that "...the military produced superior and timely ideas, that military men were leaders, and that the SADF best knew how to do things". (Seegers 1991:253; Seegers 1996:161) The SADF went as far as placing itself beyond the reach of institutions such as parliament, the courts, commissions of inquiry, and even the state's auditors (Howe 1994:35). The political arena in South Africa was increasingly influenced by military considerations. The military-dominated State Security Council (SSC), for example, was formed and endowed with the status of a sub-committee to the cabinet quickly came to dominate the cabinet (Venter 1989:85; Seegers 1996:165). The power of the SSC was derived from its statutory status which paved the legal ground for the development of an inner cabinet. Although the SSC was not formally empowered to make decisions, it met before the cabinet creating a "decision-making momentum" that the cabinet could not or were unwilling to stop (Seegers 1996:166). Indeed, by 1986 the SADF played an active role in policy-making (Grundy quoted in Howe 1994:31).

During the apartheid era South Africa was surrounded by threats both external (international sanctions, and the 'front-line states') and internal threats (blacks who

viewed the government as illegitimate and sought to make the country ungovernable) (Barber in Venter 1998:322). Security concerns thus revolved around the prevention of a 'revolutionary climate' and internal action was directed at the black communities (Seegers 1991:259). Under Botha a 'Total strategy' was waged against what was perceived as a 'Total Onslaught' by its opponents (Howe 1994:31). This Total strategy was a reflection of Botha's perception of security which became of critical consideration in foreign and domestic policies (Barber and Barratt 1990:253).

Total strategy was the response to the perception of a communist-led 'Total Onslaught' from Moscow. The communist assault was waged in two ways in Southern Africa. Firstly, the Soviet Union and its allies provided pro-communist governments with arms and ammunition. Secondly, they acted as ANC patrons (Seegers 1996:175). According to General Malan "The Total Onslaught is an ideologically motivated struggle and the aim is the implacable and unconditional imposition of the aggressors' will on the target state. The aim is therefore also total, not only in terms of ideology, but also as regards the political, social, economic and technological areas ... In South Africa, the aim is the overthrow of the present constitutional order and its replacement by a subject communist-oriented black government" (Barber and Barratt 1990:254).

The Total Onslaught argued that communism indirectly attacked the West through targets in the Third World such as South Africa (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:115; Seegers 1996:175; Barber and Barratt 1990:254). South Africa, it was argued, was targeted in particular for its strategic location, mineral wealth, and strong economy. It was further argued that a direct military attack on South Africa would be 'too expensive' and an indirect strategy (i.e., economic boycotts and psychological propaganda) was therefore adopted (Barber and Barratt 1990:255). The perceived threat from Moscow was given a sharper edge by statements that the Soviet Union tried to isolate South Africa using a 'communist belt' across Africa, as demonstrated by its campaign in Angola where it maintained a permanent basis to act against Zambia, Zaire and South Africa (Barber and Barratt 1990:255).

The all-embracing nature of Total Onslaught asked for an all-embracing government response. The NSMS (National Security Management System) was created to combat revolutionary activities merging the SCC, cabinet committees and various related structures (Barber and Barratt 1990:255-256; Liebenberg and Spies 1993:468). According to Seegers (1996:176), it would be unfair to dismiss all of Total Onslaught as errant political cosmology. Indeed, official ANC policies did state that a socialist phase would follow the nationalist phase of the revolution; their documents often resembled the political discourse of the Socialist International and the claims of its patrons in the region (i.e., its association with the FRELIMO government at the peak of its commitment to socialism and human rights abuses). The ANC was depicted by the South African government as “the next best thing to the devil” (Seegers 1996:176). The SADF continued to treat the ANC as the ‘enemy’ as late as 1992 (Howe 1994:35).

The ideology of the Revolutionary Onslaught was abandoned in the late 1980s and replaced with a concern for developmental problems. Instead, it was suggested that South Africa “...being part of the ‘Third World poverty and instability’ legitimated state violence and rationalised the white electorate’s fears of ‘lowered standards’” (Seegers 1991:265). By mid-1992, a reduction in the military’s political influence was on the cards as reformist politics came to the fore. President de Klerk significantly weakened the power of the SSC and established a civilian dominated Cabinet Committee concerning security affairs (Howe 1994:38). The SSC’s status was scaled down to an ordinary cabinet committee and the NSMS was demilitarised, the conscription period was reduced and the military budget decreased in real terms (Nathan and Phillips 1991:114-116; O’Meara in Innes et al. 1992:17).

Following South Africa’s transition, a redefinition of the role of the armed forces and their organisational structure and culture to ensure a credible and legitimate defence force began to emerge (Williams 1993:43,44). Restructuring is essentially concerned with the integration of the SADF, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and the armies of the TBVC states (Transkei, Boputhatswana, Venda and Ciskei) to form a cohesive national Defence Force

(the SANDF). It is particularly important in arenas including parliamentary control of the armed forces, the definition of nature of the threat, civilian control over the armed forces, and an institutional restructuring of the armed forces themselves.

The role and mission of the armed forces in a democratic South Africa may play a decisive role in public confidence in the institution as such. In the past, the 'Total strategy' (with its party-political agenda) was the basic premise upon which the structure of the armed forces was built. A doctrine of "Offensive Defence" was adopted by the SADF in both local and regional arenas. Many anti-apartheid activists believed that security personnel were active in a so-called 'third force' consisting of political vigilantes that instigated "...violence in order to disrupt/prevent the transition to, and achievement of, majority rule" (Howe 1994:32). The 'third force' was suspected of "...random shooting of blacks, participation in train massacres, assassination of local leaders, attempting to unite opposition factions, theft from armouries, and para-military training of anti-ANC blacks and whites" (Howe 1994:36). Thus, it is "...hardly surprising that a high level of suspicion and mistrust exists towards the existing South African Defence Force and its regional intentions" (Williams 1993:50). A legitimate defence posture will "...in the eyes of the citizenry, be strongly determined by the plausibility of the threat analysis underpinning this posture" (Williams 1993:49). A commitment to a more defensive doctrine will contribute to credibility in the eyes of the citizens toward the armed forces (Williams 1993:50).

The racial composition and representativeness of the SANDF arguably has an impact upon public confidence levels. Its first annual report for the 1994/1995 financial year indicated that more blacks were represented in the 75 579 strong force, than any other race group (see Table four for racial composition).

**Table 4: Racial composition of the SANDF 1994/95**

Racial group	% of SANDF
African	39 473 (52%)
White	28 192 (37%)
Coloured	6 983 (9%)
Indian	832 (1%)

Source: South African Survey (1995:88)

Democracy implies that the armed forces should be perceived as legitimate by the populace who maintain confidence in them. The armed forces had to change their image from "...oppressors to friends; while, on the other side of the coin, those who had defied the apartheid state now had to accept the forces as their own" (Barber in Venter 1998:323).

Confidence levels at the height of the onslaught during the 1980s are expected to fit a polarised pattern. White/NP confidence toward the armed forces was positive as they perceived the non-whites as a majority threat to security, and wanted the force to take a strong stance against violence. Blacks were the target of repression and violence, and are thus expected to hold negative patterns of confidence. However, these marked polarities are expected to water down with the systematic reform package in the new South Africa.

### **2.3 The police**

The classic task of a police force in any functioning democracy is crime prevention. However, the primary function of the South African Police (SAP) under apartheid was the "suppression of political dissent" (Stremlau 1997:39). Coercion was a major feature of apartheid era South Africa, and the SAP played an vital part in this system utilising a mainly "...latent coercion of internalised form of control through the legal and judicial system backed by the threat of physical force" (Prior 1989a:190). A variety of special

units were created for the “specific purpose of controlling political opposition” (Prior 1989b:55). The special units were either a direct part of the SAP or served in an auxiliary role and included reaction units, the special task force, a counter-insurgency unit, a special guard unit, township police, special constables, private security firms and police intelligence.

The SAP was the first line of defence of the apartheid state serving to both implement and maintain the official policies of the government (Prior 1989a:189; Grann 1994:683). The police had three major functions under apartheid rule. Firstly, the police were responsible for enforcing the myriad of apartheid laws and controls so loathed by the majority of the population. Secondly, the police had to control ‘riots’ by intervening in meetings and demonstrations - which were loosely defined as any action that challenged the system. Thirdly, the Security Police were responsible for the arrest, detention, interrogation and prosecution of opponents of the state (Davies et al. 1988:192).

Total strategy resulted into a situation where the police became increasingly unaccountable. A series of deaths in detention under suspicious circumstances and shootings severely curbed their credibility. The police were automatically assumed to be “...wrong, negligent or acting in bad faith. On the other side, there is a culture of illegality: apartheid laws have undermined the entire legal system” (*Financial Mail* 28 August 1992:24).

During apartheid, the SAP had formidable powers within the political system. It was fully supported by the state and protected from watchdog institutions such as the press, parliament and the courts (Prior 1989a:202). Indeed, the SAP had the image as being little more than an agency of the NP, even as late as the early 1990s (Maphai 1993:27). Ultimately, with the public unable to rely on an impartial police force or court system, the rule of thumb simply became “do unto others before they do it unto you” (Maphai 1993:27).

Although 'non-whites' were incorporated into the police force, their subordinate membership and role could be said to have reinforced perceptions of exclusion and vulnerability (see Table five). The size of the black population made it impossible for the numerically smaller white group to effectively perform their policing function for the whole society (Prior 1989a:192). The apartheid state was thus forced to employ coloured, Indians and blacks to police themselves. These officials "...exercised authority only over other blacks, and their conditions of recruitment, training and pay-scales were inferior to those of whites" (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:25; Prior 1989b:54). Table Six indicates the relative numbers of blacks to whites in the SAP up to 1986.

*Table 5: Distribution of ranks allocated according to race 1984*

	Major	Captain	Lieutenant	Warrant officer	Sergeant
<b>Africa</b>	11	25	28	1 158	2 626
<b>Coloured</b>	1	8	13	246	505
<b>Indian</b>	2	4	14	247	330
<b>White</b>	470	741	1 085	5 337	4 685

Source: Race Relations survey 1984

*Table 6: Racial composition of the SAP*

Year	Actual white complement	Actual black complement
1912	3 169	2 933
1925	6 354	10 219
1950	10 468	7 343
1975	17 719	15 903
1983	18 302	18 824
1986	26 463	22 458

Source: Annual Reports of the Commissioner of the South African Police (quoted in Prior 1991a:193)

Segregated facilities and residential areas made it possible for the police to carry out their functions in their assigned communities. In such a racially divided country where there was an under-representation of subordinate racial groups in the police force, perceptions were arguably shaped by these groups perceiving "...the imbalance as a reflection of their political vulnerability" (Prior 1989b:45).

Complaints about the police force's illegality and immorality were widespread and were supported by actual events. Complaints by the black population that the police were less



concerned about crimes against blacks than those against whites were in fact justified (Grann 1994:684). Unequal distribution of resources meant unequal police security. The dominant white group were offered police protection, whilst subordinate groups were treated as “a potential threat to the established order” (Prior 1989a:191). This resulted into a situation where the police were seen as “upholders of this unequal divisions”, and as an instrument of the repressive white state (Prior 1989b:53).

The size and composition of the police force are very important in South Africa given its enduring race and class cleavages (Prior 1989b:53). The nature of the legal system which the police force enforced also bears upon public perceptions. Indeed, the relationship between the law and its implementation is telling. Prior (1989a:195) notes that “...if the legal system is manifestly partial in its treatment of different citizens, then the police are seen as agents of the unfair system”. A police force in a democratic state should act to promote the interest of the legitimate government; communities should be served equally and the police’s methods ought to be humane (Shearing 1991:11).

The SAP, unlike many other legacies of apartheid cannot be abolished, but it can only be rehabilitated (*The Financial Mail* 28 August 1992:24). Negotiations for an integrated police force did not raise problems between the South African government, due to the lack of an ANC police force (Seegers 1996:275). The restructuring of the police force after democratisation involved the amalgamation of the 11 homeland police forces into the South African Police Service (SAPS) (South African Survey 1996:75). Changes in the SAPS are aimed at creating an accountable police service according to the requirements of a democratic government (Stremlau 1997:39). The SAPS will clearly have to provide more services to the townships, yet the baggage of negative perceptions from the past remains a difficult issue to overcome, in particular because “...politically, the SAP has always been under crossfire, blamed both for intervening in the townships and thereby stimulating violence, and for not intervening and thereby leaving violence unpunished” (Grann 1994:684).

In summary, one could argue that contrary to the past where confidence in the police depended upon status under apartheid laws, confidence in the police force in the future will arguably be shaped by its performance, (i.e., efficiency to eradicate crime). Public confidence in the police depends largely on perceptions of their honesty and levels of anti-corruption (Stremlau 1997:40); and on public experience of quality of service (Rauch 1991:20).

#### **2.4 The civil service**

The civil service was designed as the linchpin of apartheid's political, economic and social policies. During its reign, the NP created a huge state sector which benefited Afrikaners in particular (Venter 1989:75; van Zyl Slabbert 1989:10; Grann 1994:685). It was in the main Afrikaners who staffed the higher echelons of the apartheid bureaucracies. Until 1970, the apartheid government reserved skilled, better-paid jobs for whites through the 'civilised labour policy'. This policy was a vehicle for preferential treatment for white employees, ensuring that preference was given to the employment of whites and coloureds over blacks (Liebenberg and Spies 1993:180).

Contrary to the notions of impartiality commonly associated with liberal democracies, the apartheid civil service was visibly penetrated by state politics. A civil service could be said to be politicised when the personnel, instead of being neutral, are supportive towards, and propagators of, government policies. A high level of politicisation, especially in the top echelons, was prevalent during apartheid (Marais 1989:2). The civil service offered the NP a willing ally in the execution of their apartheid policies. It is argued that citizens are naturally inclined to be sceptic about the civil service (Marais 1989:15). Scepticism is a natural result of an us-and-them scenario. When the civil service is politicised, it only strengthens the notion that supporters of the governing party will support the civil service, while supporters of opposition parties perceive the civil service as an active instrument of the governing party.

During the apartheid era, although coloureds were not statutorily excluded from the civil service, they were in practice mainly employed as unskilled labourers (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:25). The rationale behind the employment of ‘non-whites’ in the civil service was that there were simply not enough “...whites to staff the upper levels of both the private and public sectors” (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:116). The government was thus forced to employ blacks to supplement their own forces.

*Table 7: Racial composition of the civil service 1989-1991*

	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
<b>Central and provincial government and parastals</b>					
1989	264 385	110 218	26 160	314 183	714 946
1990	308 188	117 160	27 207	304 596	757 150
1991	324 322	119 026	25 734	309 491	778 473
<b>Local government and community councils</b>					
1989	110 601	29 292	5 907	53 615	199 415
1990	105 853	29 815	6 437	53 0133	195 122
1991	107 844	29 915	6 949	54 284	198 992
<b>Non-independent homeland administration</b>					
1989	183 616	2	35	532	184 185
1990	195 042	4	133	847	196 026
1991	204 463	5	197	1 322	205 987
<b>Telkom and South African Post Office</b>					
1989	28 027	12 011	1 892	53 991	95 921
1990	28 160	11 801	2 533	53 489	95 983
1991	28 313	12 164	2 764	53 670	96 911
<b>Transnet</b>					
1989	83 547	14 122	1 678	82 451	181 799
1990	72 903	13 269	1 746	78 131	166 049
1991	75 191	13 171	2 097	81 285	171 744

Source: 1991 Manpower Survey (in Race Relations Survey 1994:461-463)

By mid-1980, the overwhelming majority of the administration of central-government was white (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:130). A breakdown of the upper levels of

government during 1981 (10 966 employees) was as follows: 96% white, 1,8% black, 1,4% Indian, and 0,7% coloured. This breakdown demonstrates that a sector of the oppressed population was directly dependent on the state for their livelihood. These individuals were in practice removed from active resistance through a process of co-optation into the civil service (Adam and Moodley 1989:143). Furthermore, at that stage only six out of 26 departments employed a black person in the five most senior posts. In none of these departments were blacks represented in the top three levels (Giliomee and Schlemmer 1991:130). Table Seven notes the number of people employed, across ethnic groups between 1989 and 1991.

The civil service in the democratic South Africa has had to incorporate the civil services of both the TBVC states and the former self-governing territories (Theunissen in Venter 1998:11). The amalgamation has brought about changes in the structure and personnel of the service whilst merging various (and often diverse) legislation, codes, management practices, rules and regulations (Theunissen in Venter 1998:112).

A dominant theme of the transformation of the civil service in the new South Africa has been the fact that it has to be representative of the racial and gender demographics of the country (Skweyiya quoted in Mazwai 1995:61; South African Survey 1996:267; Theunissen in Venter 1998:112). The civil service will only be acceptable and responsive to the population if it reflects the composition of this population (South African Survey 1996:267). Although blacks constituted the majority of civil servants by 1993, the upper echelons remained predominantly white (Adam 1995:12). By 1994, 95% of the employees in the civil service at the top level were white males, with only 0.6% of positions being filled by blacks (*Finansies en Tegniek* 11 March 1994:10). By October 1995, the racial breakdown of workers in the public sector was as follows: 51.7% black, 22.5% white, 9.6% coloured and 1.9% Indian (South African Survey 1996:270).

While the pre-transition negotiations between the ANC, NP and others guaranteed the employment of incumbents for five years, it was also agreed that a process of affirmative

action would be a part of the process of restructuring. The main target groups for affirmative action included blacks, women and the disabled (South African Survey 1996:269). According to Grann (1994:685), the ANC "...will doubtlessly follow the NP's footsteps - but now with the aim of advancing Africans as opposed to Afrikaners". Given the controversy that affirmative action policies has evoked, it is doubtful whether politicisation of the civil service will be reduced for some time to come.

During apartheid, confidence in the civil service is expected to mirror racial polarisation. After the transition it is expected that confidence will emanate most strongly from blacks, with some lesser levels of confidence from whites.

## **2.5 The legal system**

In a truly democratic state, high value is placed on an independent legal system (and courts) as it is fundamental to the rule of law (Hague and Harrop 1987:179). The functions of courts in democracies are the resolution of conflict over basic liberties between the state and citizen; rulings on the constitutionality of specific laws; and, the resolution of conflict between different institutions (Hague and Harrop 1987:181).

The South African legal system is a reflection of its historical development and underlying values (Malherbe in Venter 1998:85). Under apartheid the legal system was largely inaccessible, unaffordable and culturally inappropriate for the majority of the population. Customary law was given only limited recognition, serving as a subordinate source of law (du Toit 1995:306). The judiciary was nominally independent of the state, but was in "practice increasingly subordinated to a racist parliament" (Maphai 1993:26). The dictum of 'separate but equal' did not apply to the legal system of apartheid South Africa (Randall 1973:30).

The majority of legislation implemented in the apartheid years was clearly to the advantage of the white population. The legal system expressly authorised a departure from the principles of natural justice by legitimating unreasonableness, domination and unequal

treatment (Randall 1973:31). At this level, the legal system became a reflection of the patterns of the broader society under apartheid (Randall 1973:31). This situation created the context wherein the system became an instrument to maintain white privilege and power. The fundamental fact that laws which the populace does not believe in are ultimately doomed to failure no matter how draconian their enforcement was ignored in apartheid South Africa (Carpenter 1996:110). Indeed the notion that the legal system is the instrument whereby justice is attained was distorted under apartheid rule by political bias. There were both racial and ideological disparities in sentences against offenders. Adam and Moodley (1989:231) note that "...persons on the political right receive far milder sentences for 'terrorist' offences than those on the left and that infractions by whites against black are generally treated more leniently than vice versa [which] constitutes and embarrassing indictment of the system of justice".

The fact that most judges were white males during the apartheid era only served to reinforce perceptions of bias in the legal system. The first black judge was appointed in 1987. Black membership on the four Bar Councils only accounted for a tiny percentage of the total (Dugard quoted in Adam and Moodley 1989:232). A spokesman for the Black Lawyers' Association said that "...while we accept the principle of appointing judicial officers from all race groups, acceptance of such office would mean that black lawyers would have to administer laws that are unjust and which blacks did not have a hand in formulating" (Race Relations Survey 1985:780). Dugard notes further that "...it would not be to speculate therefore, to portray the overwhelming majority of our judicial officers as White Protestant males of conservative outlook, who support the present political/racial status quo (and often the NP government), and who have little personal contact with members of the other racial groups, except at the master-servant level".

Indeed, some form of restructuring of all institutions to include more black, coloured and Indians is imperative if the confidence and legitimacy of these institutions is to improve. Beyond that, confidence is said to be premised on performance. The institutionalisation of legal institutions is of primary importance (Krygier 1997:52) to generate an ethos where

permitted roles, behaviour and constraints and resources are respected. As Krygier (1997:52) argues, "...it also moulds the expectations of non-incumbents, who can predict what institutional officeholders will do in most circumstances".

There appears to exist an intimate relationship between law and confidence; the one cannot effectively function without the other. Public perceptions of the legal system may have a direct effect on the legitimacy of the institution, and more specifically on the authority of the law (Miller quoted in Carpenter 1996:122). There is an inherent risk that the public may take the law into their own hands when the system is seen as ineffectual (Carpenter 1996:113). More specifically, the legitimacy of the legal system is determined by fundamental values (i.e., quality and fairness of judicial processes, efficiency of courts and judicial proceedings, accessibility of the justice system and the maintenance of public confidence in the legal system) underlying the administration of justice (Carpenter 1996:112). The practice of law, in turn, has the potential to have an impact on confidence and legitimacy in society. Institutional development is self reinforcing "...as each successful case of law enforcement and dispute resolution creates a demonstration effect that builds overall trust in the legal process" (Gray 1997:45). In this sense, an effective legal system creates order and thereby extends confidence.

This study expects that there will be a polarisation of confidence levels toward the legal system during apartheid, and some blurring of the boundaries following democratisation. Most whites viewed the legal system as a fair protector of their rights and freedoms. The oppressed majority probably viewed the legal system as yet another instrument of repression. The legal system was clearly not a guardian of justice in the eyes of the disenfranchised. Following transition, confidence levels will probably equate once the financial constraints of access to the legal system are overcome.

### **3. Private social institutions**

This study is concerned with the following private institutions: the church, the press, major companies and labour unions. Major companies and trade unions can be said to form part



of private economic institutions. Indeed, the liberation struggle was not merely concerned with political freedom, but also economic equity. Since the late 1970s battle lines were drawn between management, government and labour, with the latter demanding better wages and living conditions, but also functioning as a rallying-point for political protest through mass action.

### **3.1 The churches**

During apartheid, the churches served both as a source of strength and weakness for the regime. In 1980, the majority of South Africans (76.7%) regarded themselves as Christians, with the racial breakdown of these findings as follows: 92% whites, 87% coloureds; and, 74% of blacks (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:274). Church membership figures for 1985 were as follows:

1. Black independent churches (5.07 million members)
2. Roman Catholic Church (2.35 million members)
3. Methodist Church (2.11 million members)
4. Nederduitse Gereformeerde Church (for Whites) (1.69 million members)
5. Anglican Churches (1.61 million members)
6. NG Church in Africa (for Blacks) (1.11 million members)
7. Lutheran Churches (0.83 million members)
8. NG Mission Church (for Coloureds) (0.67 million members)
9. Apostolic Churches (excluding the Apostolic Faith Mission) (0.62 million members)
10. Presbyterian Church (0.49 million members)
11. Congregational Church (0.40 million members)
12. Apostolic Faith Mission (0.30 million members)
13. Baptist churches (0.25 million members)
14. Nederduitsch Hervormde Church (for Whites) (0.24 million members)
15. Gereformeerde Churches (for Whites) (0,20 million members)

The churches could be categorised according to those who participated passively; those who were critical of apartheid; and those who were traditionally supportive of apartheid

policies (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:279). Four branches can be distinguished in the group of churches that were 'passively' involved in politics during apartheid. The first branch of the political passive churches consisted of the Pentecostal groups, the most prominent being the Apostolic Faith Mission and the Full Gospel Church (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:280). The second was the mainly English-speaking conservative evangelical churches with a generally fundamentalist religious outlook, and included the Church of the Nazarene, the Baptists, Free Methodists, Free Lutherans and the evangelic wing of Anglicanism (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:280). The third branch comprised the charismatic movement that was not so much a group of churches as a general trend found in several churches whose interests centred around the 'charismatic experience' (i.e., baptism in the Holy Spirit) rather than involvement in socio-political issues (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:281). The last branch was the Black independent churches which constituted the largest religious groups in South Africa, and served as a refuge to thousands of blacks uprooted by urbanisation and social, economic and cultural effects of apartheid. In short, the passive participant churches were those churches who avoided participating in the 'political' debate and instead concentrated on 'spiritual' matters. Yet, by their very reluctance to address political issues they did in fact play a part in apartheid and were sometimes forced to at least make statements about relevant topics.

The so-called 'passive' churches provided apartheid's victims with both material and moral support (Lambert 1985:68). The role the church fulfilled in the black communities was predictable as they had access "...to far more resources than most other prominent black groups and [were] often the only organisation which [had] relative freedom to intervene in black areas" (Friedman 1996:11). In effect, these churches functioned as agents of acquiescence rather than of change, assisting their adherents to cope with the status quo and not actively seeming to change it (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:281).

The 'critical' churches included those churches belonging to the SACC (South African Council of Churches), namely the Methodist Church, the Anglican Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Congregational Church, the NG Church in Africa, the NG

Mission Church and the Reformed Church in Africa. They criticised the status quo vehemently and were supported by the Roman Catholic Church (Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:149; Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:282). These churches were a strong force, basing their opposition to apartheid on biblical grounds as it was thought to be in direct contradiction to the Christian gospel (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:282; Lambert 1985:68). Ironically, the Afrikaans churches also claimed biblical support to defend apartheid. The critical churches held the moral high ground by criticised the harm and injustice apartheid policies inflicted. Indeed, the emergence of a strong black leadership in the Anglican and Catholic churches during the 1970s provided a significant moral force against apartheid around which people could mobilise. This gave black leadership the opportunity to articulate black views and to give support to township resistance (Friedman 1986:11). Yet, as Friedman (1986:11) notes "...calls by churchmen [tended] to be followed if they coincide with activist groups' aims, but ignored if they [did] not". The activism and moral claims of these church leaders granted them a measure of immunity against the apartheid state, enabling them to become a thorn in the flesh of the apartheid state (Diescho 1997:12).

The churches supporting apartheid were the three Afrikaans 'sister churches' - the NG Church, the Hervormde Church and the Gereformeerde Church - who had supported racial segregation since before 1948. There is no doubt that these churches provided the government with religious justification and legitimation for its racial policies (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:287; Venter 1989:152; Stremlau 1997:10). They supported the regime by projecting powerful ideas for the maintenance of apartheid policies (Greenberg 1987:124).

Overall, the churches became increasingly involved in dealing with reactions and consequences of repression as the apartheid state narrowed down the avenues for legitimate dissent. Funerals became forums not only for community grief, but also where solidarity and determination to continue resistance against the government were renewed (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:136). The state's response was repressive, barring television crews

from funerals, restricting attendance, as well as “what could and could not be said” (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:136).

The churches serve as a primary component of civil society in positively influencing changes in people’s attitudes, beliefs and behaviour (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:136; James and Caliguire 1996:65). Starck (1996:12) notes that the church can fulfil interests and needs that the state can not: “...religion provides answers to the fundamental questions about human existence. These answers influence political life”.

In 1982, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches signed the Ottawa Declaration. Some of the delegates from the black reform churches demonstrated most dramatically their condemnation of the support from the Afrikaans churches of apartheid by refusing to take part in a communion service with delegates from these ‘apartheid churches’ (Loader in van Vuuren et al. 1985:286). Diescho (1997:12) notes that “...even the Dutch Reformed Church - the apartheid church - could no longer remain mute on the state-society struggle that was unfolding”. The churches increasingly challenged the moral base of apartheid, rather than fighting the apartheid government (Stremlau 1997:10). A joint declaration in 1987 of major dominations, including the Dutch Reformed churches, condemned the regime as “morally illegitimate” (Schlemmer 1988:47 in Berger and Godsell; Stremlau 1997:11). Although this was relatively late in the struggle against apartheid, “...the declaration was important because it was issued at a critical moment in the debate within the white community about the future of minority rule” (Stremlau 1997:11).

Stremlau (1997:10) notes that 78 per cent of South Africans are Christians and that “...common religious and moral beliefs have helped overcome racial and cultural distinctions between black and white”. The church is different from the other civil society institutions as it was not infiltrated by the state (although there were close ties between the NGK leadership and the NP leadership) and was not based on exclusion. One would therefore expect confidence in the church to remain constant over the entire social spectrum.

### **3.2 The press**

The press is the primary institution whereby information is distributed to society. It is a primary institution in the socialisation process of individuals as it distributes information upon which public attitudes and values are based (Kornberg and Clarke 1992:116). To fulfil its goals effectively the press must be free from government control or intervention. Freedom of the press implies the right to discuss, report and criticise politics, and the government and political parties openly and without impunity (de Beer 1997:111). This basic freedom was denied to the press during apartheid. Although the press was not under direct government ownership it was firmly regulated by law. Indeed, apartheid was buttressed by institutions in civil society and the Afrikaans press was one of the institutions that voiced prevailing presumptions (Greenberg 1987:124; Venter 1989:16). The apartheid government adopted various restrictions on the press which prevented a reporting of all sides of the political situation in South Africa (Laurence 1987:9). The main concern of the press until the end of the 1980s was the political, economic and social life of the white population.

Television and radio stations were also subdivided into racial and language groupings, and fell under the control of the apartheid government (Akhilwya quoted in Novicki 1987:15). Broadcasting covered little in the way of politics. The South African Broadcasting Company (SABC) was in effect a propaganda tool for the NP, and thus its credibility was never high (Mills 1986:135, Venter 1989:15). African language channels were intended to "...create an acquiescent African population reconciled to its status and role in the apartheid society" (Mills 1986:135).

During the apartheid era the press could be divided into two main groups: the established 'white' press, and the community press or 'alternative media' for the remainder of the population. Both were controlled by mainly whites. The 'alternative' press was openly partisan and sympathetic to extra-parliamentary opposition, and was therefore the obvious target of state action (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:136). Although some black-owned

newspapers operated, they found it extremely difficult to survive in an environment where apartheid policies infiltrated most sectors of society. 'The Voice' was one of a few newspapers owned and run by blacks that had to close down because of lack of advertising support (Setuke quoted in Novicki 1987:15).

The NP employed various restrictions on the press with regard to defence and broader national security in effect subjecting it to ongoing censorship over the years. These restrictions were aimed firstly at suppressing the conflict and violence sweeping across South Africa, and secondly, at prohibiting reports on these matters; in reality they led to more confrontation, conflict and violence (de Beer 1997:123). Restriction of press freedom during the apartheid era was a finely tuned strategy. It was aimed at keeping the public unaware, as far as possible, of information regarding the repressive tactics of the apartheid government. Whilst helping to perpetuate the myth that racial differences were greater than any common humanity. It also helped to maintain the illusion that "...the fine-sounding ideas of apartheid were not only desirable and moral, but also reliable" (Merrett quoted in de Beer 1997:22).

Censorship and restrictions against the press were mirrored by South Africa's increased militarisation (Heard 1986:57). Although censorship and regulations were always harsh, they became stricter during the states of emergency (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:136; Venter 1989:15). In 1985 journalists were barred from reporting or photographing the rebellion in the black townships, euphemistically described as unrest (Laurence 1987:9). Restrictions further prohibited reporting on the activities of the security forces. The rationale behind this, according to the government, was that this kind of coverage gave a distorted picture of South Africa, arousing world hostility. Press restrictions were broad and the Minister of Law and Order even had the power to seize or ban newspapers (Laurence 1987:9; Maphai 1993:26). The government justified these curbs as a means of deterring a 'revolutionary climate'. The Deputy Minister of Law and Order went as far as arguing that they were necessary for the "protection of democracy" (Laurence 1987:11). An emergency decree issued by the Commissioner of Police made it "...unlawful for newspapers to publish

articles or advertisements defending, justifying, or even explaining resistance strategies of unlawful organisations” (Laurence 1987:11). This followed advertisements in several major newspapers supporting the unbanning of the ANC. In reality, this maze of laws made it very difficult for journalists to fulfil their duties as ‘watchdogs’ (Mills 1986:135); the press under apartheid was never entirely free.

These regulations frustrated the ability of all South Africans to peacefully campaign for the reform of apartheid. It frustrated those “...who have not chosen the path of violence, but have opted for the only alternative open to the disenfranchised: civil protest by specifying, demonstrating, organising, striking and boycotting” (*The Economist* 20 December 1986:17). Yet these restrictions did not “reduce the press to complete docility” (Laurence 1987:11). There were still avenues available to air anti-government views. Mill (1986:135) notes that “...considerable latitude in criticising government policies (exercised mostly in the liberal English press) has usually been tolerated”. However, such critics operated under the constant threat of state action as “they nudge the official threshold of tolerance” (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:136).

After democratisation, the press, like all other institutions is undergoing a transformation in line with non-racialism, gender equality and black empowerment (de Beer 1997:109). Notwithstanding the democratisation process in South Africa, the press is still controlled by a white monopoly and the so called “alternative press” now belongs to the past (Du Toit 1995:23). A key missing element according to du Toit (1995:23), is the emergence of truly investigative journalism.

Cognisance should be taken of the roles that the press fulfils in a democratic state. Firstly, it is there to inform and educate the public using accurate, unbiased information from various viewpoints (du Plessis in Kotzé 1996:124; de Beer 1997:25). Secondly, the press must act as a watchdog on governmental and other powerful institutions’, holding officials accountable for their actions. The press is not only a watchdog for government but also for society “...to expose ills as they threaten the very moral fibre of our society”.



(Latakoma 1987:3) It is responsible for "...conveying to the public an impression of how the nation's institutions are performing" (Lipset and Schneider quoted in Capella and Jamieson 1996:73). It is important for the new government to gain citizens' support, understanding and patience in order to consolidate democracy, reform the economy, and to deal with social needs (Stremlau 1997:41). The role of the press in enforcing democratic accountability is imperative as the public's knowledge of the performance of institutions is the foundation of democracy; without it democracy may fall prey to corruption. New democracies often experience corruption. Directly after the democratisation process the state often lacks the necessary legal and bureaucratic means to counter corruption. Diamond (1994:7) notes that "...without a free, robust, and inquisitive press, corruption is likely to flourish". Thirdly, the press sets the agenda for public debate and so influences public perceptions on certain issues.

Public confidence in the press depends on its ability to show valid cause for both negative and positive coverage of government and other actors. Its independent status must be based on the "...truth, justifiability, sincerity and comprehensiveness of the picture of society they reflect" (de Beer 1997:125).

Confidence levels in the press during the apartheid era will probably be higher among whites than blacks as news coverage was so partial. It is expected that confidence levels among different racial groups in the new South Africa will eventually converge.

### **3.3 Major companies**

Not all institutions of civil society have equal strength and influence (Friedman 1996:83). In mixed-market economies, such as South Africa, economic institutions are more dominant because of their ability to organise more effectively, and their centrality in decision-making structures. Major companies and trade unions can thus, more easily than say the church, block or frustrate state decisions that affect their interests.

The Financial Mail (quoted in Davies et al. 1988:61) identifies the top companies during 1981 as including the following: Anglo American Corporation, Barlow Rand SA Mutual, Anglo-Vaal, SA Breweries, Rembrandt, Volkskas and the Sanlam Group. Before industrial unrest in South Africa in the mid-1970 business in South Africa was essentially apolitical. However, business came under increasing pressure from internal political actors (i.e., unions) to indicate their stand in the 'struggle' (Bernstein and Godsell 1988:191 in Berger and Godsell; Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:146). Adam and Moodley (1989:260) argue that it was only when "...political events directly intruded into business operations and the costs of apartheid could no longer be passed on to someone else that business accepted its political role". These political events refer to factors such as sanctions, trade unions and local consumer boycotts.

Initially major companies were involved in the development of a number of apartheid policies (Lipton quoted in Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:147). The politicisation of business was the result of the unrest in the mid-1970, the recession and the growing international condemnation of apartheid. The apartheid government realised that it could not afford to alienate these major companies and therefore implemented a series of reforms that were supported by business. However, at times business openly criticised apartheid policies. In the early 1980s major companies strongly criticised the increasingly tight controls over the influx of black workers whilst deploring the state's resort to violence in townships, warning that it was a threat to the industrial order. Business even began to lend its name to the reconstruction of the labour framework, and propagated a move away from directly coercive measures. However, this did not convince workers to support big business. A representative survey conducted in 1984 revealed that 91 per cent of production workers agreed that employers "work with and support the government" (Adam and Moodley 1989:23).

From the mid 1980s onward, business leaders attempted to build a more independent stance. They were increasingly disillusioned by the government's reforms (Hugo and O'Malley 1989:148 in Venter). Business tried to distance itself from the government,

whereas previously it had cultivated close private relationships with many senior cabinet ministers. It became clear to big business that South Africa had to move beyond NP rule and they accepted that South Africa would “eventually have a ‘black President’ ” (Davies et al. 1988a:17). Bernstein (quoted in Hugo and O’Malley 1989:148 in Venter) summarises the shift in business’ attitude as “...for the first time in organised commerce and industry, numerous individual businessmen across the English-Afrikaans divide questioned the economic and the societal costs of enforcing such policy. Indeed, it can be argued that significant sectors of business now see their interests as tied to the abolition of apartheid”. The state had to accept that it could not longer rely so strongly on the support of big companies as it had done during earlier decades (Greenberg 1987:111).

There is always a danger that major companies may become the ally of an undemocratic state (Friedman 1996:93). The relationship between major companies and the state is symbiotic (Friedman 1996:93). This was certainly the case in apartheid South Africa where government contracts and other linkages made business an integral part of the establishment, even as its interests did not necessarily always coincide with those of the state. The state and market were inexorably entangled during apartheid so that political power merged with economic power. As the state was so partial it could not act as an arbiter between labour and capital. Greenberg (1987:18) notes that “...the centrality of the state, with its expansive posture in the market, invites generalised politicisation of society, it invites African claimants to state power”.

Big business employed ‘behind the scenes’ lobbying efforts and were successful with scrapping of the Masters and Servants Act, the repeal of job reservation, the extension of state-recognised union rights to blacks, and the repeal of the influx control laws. Lobbying was unsuccessful in calls for the release of political prisoner, the restoration of the rule of law, and the unbanning of political organisations (Bernstein and Godsell 1988:171 in Berger and Godsell). Innovations in non-racial education were significantly promoted by corporate grants and involvement (Bernstein and Godsell 1988:172 in Berger and Godsell).

The centralisation of ownership and the consequent distributive effects were a key characteristic of apartheid. Apartheid resulted in a situation where whites owned almost 90% of the country's land and formal business (*The Economist* 18 December 1993:17; Schoeman 1998:305). Out of the 100 biggest companies in South Africa, there were approximately 40 black directors by 1992. The biggest companies in South Africa are controlled by just six groups. The biggest of these belongs to the Oppenheims (with the Anglo American, De Beers and Minorca groups), and the others include Rembrandt, Richmond, Liberty Life, Anglo-Vaal, Sanlam and South African Mutual Life Assurance. According to the *Financial Mail* (28 August 1995:3), "...the new government's clear dislike for what it perceives as a concentration of economic power in the hands of a few large business organisations, exemplified by conglomerates and cross shareholdings" is not apparent.

**Table 8: Racial composition of a sample of South African companies 1989-1995**

<b>Position</b>		<b>African</b>	<b>Coloured</b>	<b>Indian</b>	<b>White</b>
Senior managers	1989	0,1%	0,3%	0,3%	99,3%
	1992	1,1%	0,3%	0,5%	98,2%
	1995	6,4%	1,6%	1,7%	90,2%
Middle managers	1989	1,0%	0,8%	1,0%	97,2%
	1992	1,5%	1,3%	6,5%	91,0%
	1995	6,4%	2,5%	2,2%	88,9%
Professionals	1989	4,8%	4,5%	4,7%	86,0%
	1992	6,0%	5,3%	5,5%	83,2%
	1995	9,9%	8,6%	8,6%	72,9%
General staff	1989	23,2%	8,7%	6,7%	61,5%
	1992	22,4%	9,9%	8,0%	59,7%
	1995	26,4%	10,3%	7,1%	56,2%
Lower skilled	1989	63,3%	21,3%	14,7%	0,7%
	1992	59,0%	23,1%	17,3%	0,6%
	1995	61,5%	21,9%	16,0%	0,6%

Source: Race Relations Survey (1996:467)

Aside from the ownership of major companies, the racial make-up of positions in companies is also telling. By 1992 only 5% of managerial positions were occupied by

blacks. An analysis of the top 100 companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in 1992 revealed that 1.6% (40) of approximately 2 550 directorships were held by blacks (Race Relations Survey 1994:467). Table Eight shows the racial composition of a sample of 71 companies in various sectors of the South African economy during 1989 and 1992, and gives projections for 1995.

It is expected that confidence toward major companies during apartheid was higher among whites than 'non-whites', as they saw these companies as part of a system of 'worker exploitation'. After the transition, attitudes will probably become more positive in all racial groups if substantial economic growth occurs and employment is created, provided the major companies are seen to be part of that.

### **3.4 The labour unions**

Labour unions are essential institutions of civil society. They offer a large number of people a vehicle for voicing their interests, acting as convenient sources for democratic participation (Friedman 1996:92). However, labour movements are often perceived as sources of disruption or as the enemies of democracy (Friedman 1996:92). Labour movements should not be seen as obstructions to be conquered and controlled as they play an important role in economic policy-making (Adler in Mittleman 1996:118).

Until 1976, South Africa's trade unions were comprised mainly of white, coloured and Indian members; blacks were not defined as workers. These unions developed within the framework of the 1924 Industrial Conciliation Act which consolidated their members' position at the expense of black workers (Cooper 1983:204). Until 1979, statutory recognition was only granted to unions with white, coloured and Indian members. However, white trade unions never had much influence in authoritative policy-making processes (Pretorius 1996:263). The membership of white unions declined steadily throughout the 1970s and 1980s as they were incapable of sustaining white workers' standard of living (Adler in Mittleman 1996:126). The apartheid state employed various statutory and administrative measures to hinder black involvement in industrial-political

affairs (Pretorius 1996:258). The division of race in labour resulted in specific grievances for black workers as well as providing the impetus for collective action (Adler and Mittleman 1996:126). However, as Pretorius (1996:258) notes in line with the major theme of this study, “formal exclusion invites reaction”. During the apartheid era, industrial relations were characterised by struggles by blacks to attain equal union recognition (Innes in Moss et al. 1992:342).

The Wiehann Commission, was appointed by the government to investigate burgeoning labour problems during 1979. The findings of the Commission resulted in amendments to the Labour Relations Act (LRA) including the establishment of an Industrial Court, the acknowledgement of unfair labour practices, and a degree of legal freedom for black unions to organise. The incorporation of black unions in the industrial relations system was aimed at bringing them under the state control and regularising their operation (Maree quoted in Pretorius 1996:260). These controls demanded that unions keep “...audited accounts, to supply the industrial registrar at with regular information about the unions, and to draw up its constitution in accordance with the specifications laid down in the Industrial Conciliation Act (subsequently called the LRA)” (Pretorius 1996:260). Black workers entered a new era with these reforms, but they had to struggle to establish themselves in the new legal terrain. The period 1979-1989 was again characterised by severe industrial disruption as black unions fought for their recognition as a legitimate force in industry. Union organisation was strenuously resisted by many employers who still perceived unions as an un-called for interference in their rights to manage (Innes in Moss et al. 1992:342).

Black trade unions took over from the racist (white) unions becoming the central institutions of South African labour. Adam (quoted in Hugo and O'Malley 1989:144 in Venter) classifies three formations within the trade union movement, reflecting the three major tendencies in black politics. The first are the black consciousness unions affiliated to the National Congress of Trade Unions (Nactu), and linked to the Azapo grouping; secondly the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) affiliated to the UDF and

thirdly the United Workers Union of South Africa (Uwusa). Uwusa was formed in 1986 in response to the formation of Cosatu, opposed sanctions and disinvestment-investment, and was both pro-free enterprise and anti-socialist (Hugo and O'Malley 1989:144 in Venter).

Nactu was formed through a merger between the Council of Unions of South Africa (Cusa) and the Azanian Congress of Trade Unions (Azactu). Their position was anti-capitalist, and included the principles of non-collaboration with ruling class organisations (Hugo and O'Malley 1989:14 in Venter).

Cosatu was formed by the majority of independent trade unions in South Africa during 1985. The Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu) was probably the biggest of the unions which helped to form Cosatu (Adler in Mittleman 1996:128; Hugo and O'Malley 1989:145 in Venter). Cosatu entered political society forming, together with the UDF, the front-line in the struggle against apartheid (Ngidi and Zulu 1985:105 in van Vuuren et al.; Stremlau 1997:31). Cosatu had informal ties with the banned ANC as it adopted the Freedom Charter as "...a guiding document which reflects the views and aspiration of the majority of the oppressed and exploited" (Carim quoted in Hugo and O'Malley 1989:145 in Venter). It was almost inevitable that unions would become part of political society given the state's attempts to cut other legitimate channels of political dissent (Hugo and O'Malley 1989:144 in Venter; van Zyl Slabbert 1989:141).

The trade unions played a central role in challenging the white monopoly of power with their ability to mobilise members for mass action more efficiently than any other black opposition group (Friedman 1986:12; Friedman and Reitzes 1996:56). The trade unions successfully combined "routine" workplace activity with anti-apartheid mobilisation or 'social movement unionism' (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:141; Adler in Mittleman 1996:126). This social movement unionism was expressed with the formation of Cosatu (Neocosmos 1996:97) which advocated the politicisation of trade unions. Jay Naidoo, then the General Secretary of Cosatu, said that "...non-political unionism is not only undesirable but



impossible in South Africa. Therefore, we believe that though Cosatu is not a political party, Cosatu has a responsibility to voice the political interests and aspirations of organised workers and also more broadly the working class” (quoted in Neocosmos 1996:97). However, labour unions are not regarded as the best organisations to intervene in a political system. Workers join unions to negotiate upon their positions in the workplace with obvious political implications. Unions may therefore lack political coherence, with members belonging to various political groups or even to no group at all (Friedman 1986:12). However, apartheid actually resulted in the need for labour unions to be engaged in both politics and economics (Ngidi and Zulu 1987:105 in van Vuuren et al.; Innes in Moss et al. 1992:342; Adler in Mittleman 1996:124).

The apartheid government’s attempts to contain labour’s political role became increasingly repressive (Barett and Mullins 1990:27). Many trade union leaders were detained, tortured and sometimes even killed under mysterious circumstances (van Zyl Slabbert 1989:141). However, government action did not have the consequences hoped for, with the labour movement retaining its resilience. As Barett and Mullins (1990:27) note “...far from distancing itself from politics in response to the bargaining and repression of political organisation, the trade unions took on a leading role in internal resistance to apartheid”. The repressive policies adopted by the state were both the cause and consequence of the union alignment with the broader struggle (Baskin 1996:8). Although the government granted the disenfranchised industrial citizenship, political citizenship was still denied. The result of this deprivation was a politically-engaged union movement combining socio-political and ‘bread-and-butter’ demands. Indeed, in the latter half of the 1980s the new unions were in the vanguard of the anti-apartheid movement (Hugo and O’Malley 1989:143 in Venter).

Pressure on unions to become involved in politics emanated from the workers themselves, “...as they experienced not only oppression in the workplace but the same urban problems and coercion as all other residents at their homes” (Neocosmos 1996:97). It has always been the unstated assumption “...that as soon as political parties with support among the

oppressed majority were able to operate openly, unions would then 'withdraw' to their 'natural domain' in civil society, ascribed to them by division of labour" (Neocosmos 1996:98).

Union membership has doubled from 1985 to 1995, but since 1995, membership has declined by about 6% while total employment has remained relatively stable (Baskin 1996:9), (see Table nine).

**Table 9: Union membership data 1985-1995**

	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995
Union members (registered LRA)	1 391 423	1 879 400	2 130 117	2 750 400	2 890 174	2 470 481
Union members (non-LRA)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	382 594	595 379
Total union membership	1 391 423	1 879 400	2 130 117	2 750 400	3 272 768	3 056 860
COSATU % of total	33,1	37,9	43,4	43,8	36,8	43,0
Total workforce	7 842 700	8 016 500	8 156 700	7 987 500	7 757 665	7 702 400
Total workforce (excluding agricultural and domestic workers)	6 090 900	6 265 500	6 454 500	6 315 600	6 115 365	6 074 600
Union density	17,7	23,4	26,1	34,4	42,2	39,8
Union density (excluding agricultural and domestic workers)	22,8	30,0	33,0	43,5	53,5	50,5

Source: Baskin (1996:9)

Transformation of the political scene produced the need to redefine the role and function of labour unions. Ginsburg and Webster (1995:7) note that Cosatu entered the negotiation process in South Africa perceiving itself to be an equal political partner. These illusions were shattered when their application to participate in Codesa were rejected on the grounds that it was not a political party. Instead their interests were represented through their ANC and SACP allies who formed part of the tripartite alliance. However, Adam and Moodley (1993:65) states that despite the ANC-Cosatu alliance, Cosatu membership retains a greater loyalty and identification with Cosatu although their votes go to the

ANC. Union members saw the ANC as the only viable vehicle to displace the apartheid regime.

Following the transition, the trade union movement still plays an important role in South Africa's future. Although it has conceded its political role to formal political organisations it is carving out new areas of involvement (Innes in Moss et al. 1992:340). A significant strategic shift in union thought has occurred with a repositioning in order to have a direct influence on state policy-making within existing state structures (Innes in Moss et al. 1992:342). The three nation union centres (Cosatu, Nactu and Fedstal) are the most significant groups, and are all represented in Nedlac. The best available estimates of their share of membership support are: Cosatu 43%; Nactu 11%; and Fedstal 8%. Cosatu is the dominant union in most industrial sectors (Baskin 1996:9).

As Table 10 demonstrates, black workers make up more of the union membership than any other racial group. This is the result of their generally lower-paid and less-skilled jobs, and their use of unionisation to aid their bargaining power. The lack of alternative channels to express social and political grievance until 1990 acted as a further stimulus for blacks to join unions. In the last few years, many white workers have joined traditionally black unions as they are perceived to be more effective in addressing grievances. However, artisans and less skilled white workers have joined right-wing (whites-only) unions that have so far resisted the erosion of white privileges and affirmative action policies (Baskin 1996:12).

*Table 10: Union percentage by race and gender 1994.*

<b>Race</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
Black	35,1	36,0	35,4
Indian	32,7	33,2	32,9
Coloured	29,5	31,5	30,3
White	26,9	16,5	22,7
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,4</b>	<b>29,3</b>	<b>31,3</b>

Source: Baskin (1996:12)

This study expects that confidence levels in labour unions will be higher in the 'non-white' sector of the population. The disenfranchised viewed labour unions in a more positive light given their ability to mobilise against the political and economic power of the apartheid government. Whites viewed labour unions as part of the 'Total onslaught', creating disorder that was detrimental to economic interest. In the post-apartheid era, these boundaries will probably blur, especially since the labour unions do not retain their strong political role. Worker rights now reign supreme on their agenda, and confidence in them will depend on the extent to which unions can deliver and pressure the government and business for concessions.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Public attitudes toward institutions will ultimately be influenced by both the individual's experience and the performance of institutions. The individual's position in society as well as the manner in which they are treated by the system in general, and institutions in particular, will also have a bearing upon their attitudes. Firstly, the excluded sector of society are not expected to demonstrate much confidence toward public institutions (especially parliament). Although 'non-whites' were not totally excluded from these institutions their incorporation, albeit in a sub-ordinate fashion, meant that they were not treated as equals, excluded from decision-making and their interests frustrated.

It is to be expected that the institutions of civil society during the apartheid era that were membership-supported, notably the church and the labour unions, would have been accorded more confidence in comparison to public institutions. Confidence toward the press and major companies would probably be lower than that accorded to member-supported institutions, but higher than that accorded to public institutions. In other words, confidence would have been influenced by the manner in which each institution perpetuated, supported or reinforced apartheid policies.

During the apartheid era, it is to be expected that the white segment of the population would retain higher levels of confidence in institutions, reflecting their inclusiveness and

the institutional protection of their privileges. Ultimately, this confidence would have been dependent on the individual's support, or not, of apartheid and its policies. Those who fought against apartheid would clearly not have had high levels confidence in the public institutions, but may have demonstrated confidence for other civil society institutions such as churches.

Following South Africa's transition, a depolarisation of attitudes is to be expected. Confidence in institutions will arguably be influenced by factors such as representativeness, and by implication the extent of transformation of specific institutions. However, the previously excluded majority are likely to have more confidence in public institutions than the white minority. Private institutions are likely to experience the least polarisation in public confidence.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: Data Analysis and Interpretation**

### **1. Introduction**

The preceding three chapters have attempted, with a focus upon the theoretical framework, institutional setting and historical context in South Africa from 1981 to 1995, to lay the foundation of this study. The discussion will now turn to the empirical presentation, analyses and interpretation of the data.

It is expected that the prime influences on people's perceptions of institutional performance include how the individual is treated and his/her position in the political system; whether they are included or excluded by the system. The general hypothesis is that those excluded from institutional representation and/or participation during apartheid had less confidence toward institutions than did those who were included. It is to be expected that confidence toward institutions in the post-apartheid era will be less polarised. This is expected to be quantified in the data that follows. The objective of this chapter is to note changes in the public's attitudes toward private and public institutions.

South Africa has undergone substantial changes and developments over the period relevant to this study. With different political, social and economic systems existing in parallel, one can expect confidence levels to overlap, supplement or to be in conflict with each other. South Africa has developed from a society largely structured, engineered and controlled 'from the top' to an open society, and major shifts in perception and attitudes are expected to be revealed by the data.

This chapter will begin by noting both historical and current levels of confidence in civil society and political institutions. The research outline which follows narrows the focus of the particular study by indicating the plan of this study, the population involved, the research methods and the purpose thereof. The hypotheses and major assumptions set forth in previous chapters will be tested. This chapter will conclude with an assessment of the prospects for establishing a firmer foundation for confidence in institutions in post-apartheid South Africa.

## 2. Research outline

The extent of public confidence toward institutions is an empirical question about which speculation exceeds systematic research. The question of whether high levels of confidence are beneficial or not is often regarded as a normative issue. However, empirical research can investigate the relationship between changes in confidence levels within a time period, assess the degree of support for legitimacy, and determine its depth and resilience over time. In transitional societies the measurement of attitudes and legitimacy interacts with a fast-changing social and historical context. The purpose of this study is to describe and explain patterns of continuity and change in the South African public's confidence in institutions from 1981 to 1995 (a longitudinal study), with a focus on the effects a number of independent variables upon confidence in institutions.

Time is a very important independent variable in this study as it influenced changes in institutions and also changes in individual's perceptions. South Africa has experienced far-reaching structural transformation within a changing politico-social context. It is also asserted that the independent variable, political party preference, will influence institutional confidence. Those who identify with the winning party will, in general, have more confidence in institutions as opposed to those identifying with the opposition (Anderson and Guillory 1997:68). The hypotheses are thus that the 'losers' will be less satisfied with political institutions than the 'winners'. The independent variable, population group, is assumed to be significant in the context of a multi-racial society such as South Africa, especially when one considers that apartheid excluded 'non-whites' from true participation in institutions (coloureds and Indians had some limited participation). Due to the fact that race is such a significant factor in South African politics, belonging to a particular racial group is expected to determine institutional confidence. Moreover, since historical cleavages have been based on race and political party identification, the expectation is that these cleavages will be especially strong in apartheid era South Africa.



To assess levels of public confidence, data are drawn from three surveys conducted by the South African market research company, Markinor, and Market and Opinion Surveys. These surveys form part of the World Values Study (WVS) which was conducted world wide in 20 countries in 1981, 40 countries in 1990-1991 and 50 countries in 1995. The questionnaire dealing with these subjects was developed by the European Value System Study Group and was used in South Africa, as in all other countries, unchanged except for some minor local adaptations.

### 2.1 Data and variables

The phrasing of the question on confidence in institutions was as follows: "I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?" For the purpose of comparing data over time only the institutions which are present in all the studies of 1981, 1991, 1995 were selected<sup>1</sup>. These institutions include the following:

- the press
- churches
- labour unions
- major companies
- the armed forces
- the legal system
- the police
- Parliament
- civil service

To facilitate analysis and individual evaluations of institutions, the confidence scale used in the surveys ranges from 1 to 4. One 1 designates a great deal of confidence, 2 quite a lot of confidence, 3 not very much confidence and, 4 none at all. Confidence in institutions is ordinally measured as the attributes of the variable are rank-ordered and indicate progression in confidence.

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<sup>1</sup> A factor analysis of all listed institutions in each survey indicated that these institutions also factor together when all institutions are included.

Due to the fact that black political society was not officially acknowledged during apartheid the 1981 and 1991 questions for political party preference are phrased differently to the same question following the transition. The question for party preference for 1981 and 1991 was: "Which one of the following party's, group's or organisation's policy comes closest to the way you personally feel?" The party's, groups or organisation listed in the 1981 and 1991 surveys were as follows:

- Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu)
- Conservative Party (CP)
- Progressive Federal Party (PFP) (1981), Democratic Party (DP) (1991)<sup>2</sup>
- Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)
- Mass Democratic movement (MDM)
- South African Communist Party (SACP)
- National Party (NP)
- United Democratic Front (UDF)
- African National Congress (ANC)
- Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB)

It should be noted that in order to simplify the analysis, and to observe more meaningful patterns (as a relatively small percentage of respondents fall into some of the party categories), some of these parties, groups or organisations with generally the same convictions and policies, e.g., AWB and CP, were combined and coded as one variable.

The ANC, Cosatu, MDM, SACP, and UDF collapsed into the category 'ANC'. The ANC was declared unlawful by the government in 1960 in the wake of Sharpeville, and was only unbanned on 2 February 1990. Following its banning, it transformed itself into an underground movement with a commitment to the 'armed struggle' (Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:165; du Toit 1995:347). There was a clear overlap of principles and personalities between the UDF, ANC, Cosatu, and SACP, as indicated by the composition of the UDF's top structure (Hugo and O'Malley in Venter

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<sup>2</sup> The DP was created in April 1989 following the merger of the Progressive Federal Party, the Independent Party and the National Democratic Movement.

1989:157). Since 1960, the SACP moved distinctly closer to the ANC as their political policy and tactics were generally similar, even to the extent that their membership were duplicated (Kotzé and Greyling 1991:39,40). The SACP was declared an illegal organisation by the apartheid government in 1950 when communism was banned by law (Ellis 1992:1). Cosatu were internally associated with the UDF and externally with the banned ANC and were viewed by the apartheid state as part of the 'total onslaught'. They were effectively banned in February 1988 (Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:145) and formally included in the ANC-SACP alliance in April 1990 (Kotzé and Greyling 1991:41,198, 220). Most labour unions were in a close working relationship with the UDF and together they successfully organised numerous strikes and stay-aways in opposition to apartheid (Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:157; du Toit 1995:348s). The MDM was founded to foster greater co-operation between the UDF and Cosatu. The spokespersons of the MDM were the same people who headed the UDF, Cosatu and other organisations (Kotzé and Greyling 1991:127). The MDM was more of a movement than an organisation and was intended only as a temporary vehicle for resistance and opposition during apartheid, while other organisations, i.e., the UDF and Cosatu were constrained by the state. After the unbanning of organisations, the MDM started to fade as leaders were once again free to publicly identify with their old organisations (Kotzé and Greyling 1991:228). The UDF dissolved for the same reason in March 1991 (Kotzé and Greyling 1991:212).

The CP and the AWB were combined in a 'right-wing' category with their objective of partitioning South Africa. Their aim is to establish an Afrikaner-controlled "volkstaat". The CP have strong ties with some Neo-Nazi-movements, notably the AWB (Zille in Berger and Godsell 1988:57, 59). There is considerable overlap in membership between the AWB and CP (Hugo and O'Malley in Venter 1989:165). Although the AWB is registered as a political party it does not operate as one, but has instead asserted its influence in politics by supporting the CP (Zille in Berger and Godsell 1988:60). The right-wing parties share certain ideological, philosophical and socio-political perceptions including Afrikaner self-determination and Christianity - they believe that the survival and maintenance of their nationhood enjoys divine sanction

(Bekker and Grobbelaar in van Vuuren et al. 1985:68) The PFP/DP, IFP, and NP variables remain unchanged.

The question for political party preference in 1995 was: "If there were a national election tomorrow, for which party on the list would you vote?" The following political parties in South Africa were listed:

- ANC
- Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO)
- CP
- DP
- Freedom Front (FF)
- IFP
- NP
- Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)
- SACP
- Coloured Resistance Movement
- 'other'<sup>3</sup>
- 'undecided'

Once again parties were combined into a single variable. The ANC and SACP alliance was collapsed into the ANC. AZAPO and the PAC were collapsed into the PAC as both organisations have a similar philosophy of black-consciousness and Africanism (Hugo and O'Malley 1989:160). The AZAPO name can be traced back to the PAC's Azanian People's Manifesto of 1959 (Hugo and O'Malley 1989:161). Although AZAPO is not a PAC-affiliate, it has closer ties with the PAC than with the ANC (Ellis 1992:156). The CP and FF were combined into a right-wing category. The Coloured Resistance Movement, together with the smaller parties, was collapsed into an "other" category. The IFP, NP, DP and 'undecided' variables remain unchanged. Political party support is nominally measured as the attributes are exhaustive and mutually exclusive (Babbie 1995:135).

The population group variable for all three surveys was coded by the interviewer according to their observations - black, white, Indian or coloured. The level of measurement for the population group variable is also nominal.

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<sup>3</sup> Note that the 'other and 'none' categories will not be analysed in this analysis in order to observe more meaningful patterns as a relatively small percentage of respondents fall into these categories.

Private institutions are primarily membership-supported. However, some institutions examined in this study consist of various sub-categories (i.e., different churches and trade unions). The implication therefore being that if an individual is a member of a particular sub-category their response is based on their level of confidence in that particular category. When the respondent is not a member of a particular institution, confidence will be rated by different criteria as it is largely beyond his/her field of interest.

The sample was weighted and projected and is representative of the universe from which it was drawn. In 1981 and 1991 the fieldwork was completed by Markinor, a South African market research company with many years of experience and very high standards in conducting fieldwork. In 1995, the same work was completed by Market and Opinion Surveys. Interviews were conducted on a personal, face-to-face basis or alternatively with the respondent completing the questionnaire. The original English questionnaire was translated into Afrikaans, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana and Xhosa. The interviews were conducted in the respondent's language of preference. A minimum 10% back-check was administered.

To accurately compare confidence toward institutions, between groups and over time, it is necessary that samples are truly comparable. The 1981 survey excluded black people living in rural areas. Although the 1995 survey did include 500 black people living in rural areas, these respondents were filtered out during the data analysis to make comparisons between similar samples possible. The filter will have an effect on confidence levels toward institutions as blacks are the majority supporters of the ANC, IFP, and PAC (Breytenbach 1997:70). Some variation would also be expected in the NP supporters' confidence, as blacks form a small part of the NP's base of support following the transition to a post-apartheid era .

The 1981 and 1995 data are compared, highlighting the contrasts and differences of the apartheid and post-apartheid eras. Two independent variables were used to highlight the difference in levels of confidence in institutions between these periods in South Africa's history. The data of 1991 and 1995 (here the rural black people were

included) were then compared (1991 broadly marking the onset of transition and 1995 signalled the beginning of democratisation). Such a comparison holds the promise of interesting insights into how institutions were perceived during the transition, democratisation, and the beginning of the consolidation phase.

Missing values or no answer are always present in questionnaires, and these were coded as missing values. Although missing values were included in the data processing, they were excluded from the calculations made in order to assess and compare different sets of responses.

## 2.2 The 1981 survey

The 1981 survey was conducted in October of that year. The following samples of persons 16 years and older (N=1600) made up the final number of respondents:

- Blacks: 600 persons living in the following metropolitan areas: Johannesburg, Reef, Pretoria, Durban and East London;
- Whites: 600 persons living in urban and rural areas throughout the country;
- Coloureds: 200 persons living in Cape Peninsula; and,
- Asians: 200 persons living in the Durban area.

All samples were quota samples, stratified by area and controlled for sex, age, language/ethnic group, working status and household income.

## 2.3 The 1991 survey

The 1991 survey was conducted during October and November 1991. The sample included a larger number of respondents (N=2, 736) than the 1981 sample. The sample consisted of the following sub-samples:

- Blacks: 600 persons living in the former PWV, Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London and Cape Town areas plus 500 persons living in the homelands and other rural areas;
- Whites: 1 236 persons throughout South Africa;
- Coloureds: 200 persons living in Cape Town; and,

- Asians: 200 persons living in Durban.

The same sampling method was utilised except in the case of white respondents. A postal questionnaire was used and in addition 150 personal interviews were conducted to make up for the shortfall in respondents. All samples were weighted and projected onto the respective universe, ensuring they are representative of the universe from which they were drawn.

#### 2.4 The 1995 survey

The 1995 survey was conducted during September and October of that year. This survey was administered to a probability sample - the realised sample being 2 935 cases. The universe of this sample design consisted of South African residents aged 16 years and older. All nine provinces were included in the sample. The sample was stratified according to the number of persons in the provinces, population groups (i.e., race) and community size as follow:

- Blacks: 600 persons living in the major urban centres plus 500 persons living in rural areas;
- Whites: 1 236 persons throughout South Africa;
- Coloureds: 200 persons living in Cape Town; and,
- Asians: 200 persons living in Durban.

A minimum back-check of 20% was administered on each interviewer's work. The questionnaire was made available in all the major languages and the interview was conducted in the respondent's language of preference. The 1995 sample was weighted and projected onto the universe, and is thus representative of the universe from which it was drawn.

### **3. From apartheid to democracy, 1981 and 1995**

The following two sections will begin with means levels of confidence toward institutions to analyse the average confidence scores for each independent variable. In a means procedure, "...the dependent variable is broken down in terms of the



independent variable, and the mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for each subgroups of the independent variable is computed” (Bryman and Cramer 1990:177). It is thus possible to examine the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The average mean for confidence in public and private institutions (where the separate institutions of each domain is aggregated to get the mean) for the independent variables will be used to highlight the differences in confidence between the two spheres. Secondly, cross-tabulations will be used to demonstrate the relationship between variables. The analysis of the cross-tabulations will highlight low and high scores for individual institutions according to population group and political party preference/those feeling closest to a certain party’s policy and the reasons thereof. This makes it possible to effectively compare confidence levels toward institutions between the different groups.

Finally, a factor analysis<sup>4</sup> was done of the relevant institutions in the particular survey where a principal components analysis identifies two factors<sup>5</sup> with eigen values<sup>6</sup> greater than 1.0 to determine relations among variables. Factor analysis is concerned with describing the shared variation of the respondent’s score on variables (Bryman and Cramer 1990:257). Although a single factor solution provides the best fit with the data, a second factor gives some insight into subsidiary dimensions of confidence. The first factor accounts for the largest amount of variance shared by the test, and the second for the next largest amount of variance which is not explained in the first one (Bryman and Cramer 1990:258).

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<sup>4</sup> Factor analysis, as Dooley (1995:93) notes, “...identifies how many different constructs (called factors) are being measured by a test’s items, and the extent to which each item of a test is related to (‘loaded on’ in the jargon of factor analysis) each factor. Factor analysis uses the correlations among all items of a test to identify groups of items that correlate more highly among themselves than with items outside the group. Each such group of items defines a common factor”.

<sup>5</sup> Bryman and Cramer (1990:263) note that “...in general, the meaning of a factor is determined by the items which load most highly on it. Conventionally, items or variables which correlate less than 0.3 with a factor are omitted from consideration since they account for a low percentage of the variance and so are not very important”.

<sup>6</sup> An eigen value is the amount of the variance items account for. Bryman and Cramer (1990:259) note that “...since the total variance that any one variable can have has been standardised as one, what this means, in effect, is that a factor which explains less variance than a single variable is excluded”.

### 3.1 Confidence in institutions with race as the independent variable

#### 3.1.1 Means

Table 11 reports the means and standard deviations<sup>7</sup> (in brackets) of public confidence in each institution with race as the independent variable during 1981 and 1995.

**Table 11: Confidence in institutions during 1981 and 1995 with race as the independent variable: means (standard deviations)**

	1981					1995				
	Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Avg	Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Avg
Armed forces	3.9 (1.3)	1.7 (.9)	2.7 (1.3)	2.6 (1.5)	3.2 (1.5)	2.8 (1.6)	3.2 (1.6)	3.2 (1.6)	2.9 (1.6)	3.0 (1.6)
Legal system	2.9 (1.5)	2.0 (1.0)	2.9 (1.2)	2.7 (1.4)	2.7 (1.4)	2.4 (1.4)	3.3 (1.6)	3.2 (1.6)	3.0 (1.6)	2.8 (1.6)
Police	3.6 (1.4)	1.7 (1.0)	3.0 (1.3)	2.7 (1.4)	3.1 (1.5)	2.3 (1.5)	2.5 (1.4)	2.6 (1.6)	2.5 (1.6)	2.4 (1.5)
Parliament	3.8 (1.3)	2.4 (1.2)	3.6 (1.2)	3.3 (1.5)	3.5 (1.4)	2.0 (1.3)	3.8 (1.5)	3.3 (1.6)	2.9 (1.6)	2.7 (1.6)
Civil service	3.3 (1.4)	2.6 (1.2)	3.0 (1.3)	3.2 (1.5)	3.1 (1.4)	2.5 (1.5)	3.6 (1.5)	3.1 (1.6)	3.0 (1.5)	2.9 (1.6)
Churches	2.3 (1.4)	1.9 (1.2)	1.7 (1.0)	3.4 (1.6)	2.2 (1.4)	1.7 (1.3)	2.1 (1.4)	1.4 (1.0)	2.2 (1.5)	1.8 (1.3)
Press	2.9 (1.4)	3.4 (1.1)	2.7 (1.2)	3.0 (1.3)	3.0 (1.4)	2.5 (1.5)	3.7 (1.5)	3.8 (1.5)	3.0 (1.6)	3.1 (1.6)
Trade unions	3.1 (1.5)	3.6 (1.1)	2.9 (1.3)	3.5 (1.3)	3.2 (1.4)	2.6 (1.6)	4.0 (1.4)	3.3 (1.6)	3.1 (1.6)	3.0 (1.7)
Major companies	3.0 (1.5)	2.6 (1.2)	3.0 (1.2)	3.5 (1.3)	2.9 (1.4)	2.1 (1.4)	2.2 (1.2)	3.1 (1.6)	2.3 (1.4)	2.3 (1.4)

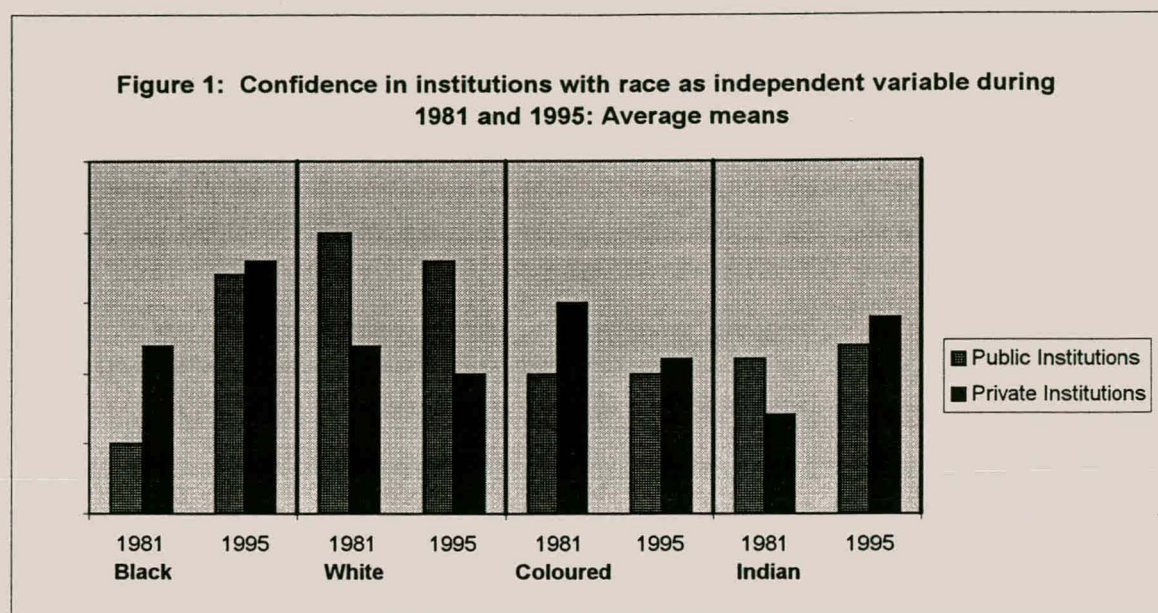
Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1= a great deal, 2= quite a lot, 3= not very much, 4=none at all.

Avg= Average.

Examining the average means of the race groups combined reveals low average means for the institutions listed in 1981. Overall, only churches had a relatively high average mean in both 1981 and 1995. The lowest average means of confidence during 1981 were for parliament (3.5), and during 1995, for the press (3.1). In both 1981 and 1995 the average means were quite low. However, the mean average of confidence toward institutions has generally improved during the period 1981 to 1995. The greatest improvement was exhibited toward parliament, followed by major companies and the police. The press was the only institution where the mean average declined. Within

<sup>7</sup> Standard deviation is a method to show the amount of variation by that distribution, i.e. how widely spread the distribution is (Bryman and Cramer 1990:85). In essence the standard deviation "...calculates the average amount of deviation from the mean. The standard deviation reflects the degree to which the values in a distribution differ from the arithmetic mean. The standard deviation is usually presented in tandem with the mean, since it is difficult to determine its meaning in the absence of the mean" (Bryman and Cramer 1990:87).

each category there is considerable variations in confidence levels which are indicated by the standard deviations.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

Figure One reports the average mean for confidence in public and private institutions with race as the independent variable for 1981 and 1995. In 1981, only the white population group had more confidence in public institutions than in private institutions. Among the race groups, blacks had the least confidence in public institutions in 1981. Although Indians and coloureds also had little confidence in public institutions, this was slightly higher than among the black population. This finding confirms the general hypothesis: those excluded (blacks, Coloureds and Indians) from institutional representation and/or participation during apartheid had less confidence toward institutions than those included (whites).

In 1981, coloureds had the most confidence of all the race groups in private institutions, and Indians the least. In 1995, all race groups accorded private institutions more confidence than their public counterparts. Blacks had the most confidence of all the race-groups in both public and private institutions. Whites and coloureds accorded low confidence to both public and private institutions. Indians too

expressed relatively low confidence levels toward public and private institutions, although it was somewhat higher than that of whites and coloureds.

From 1981 to 1995, confidence in public institutions has only improved among blacks while dropping quite significantly among whites. Confidence levels dropped slightly among Indians and have remained relatively stable among coloureds. These findings suggest that the general hypotheses only holds for blacks, as it is this group whose confidence in public institutions has improved from apartheid to democracy, whilst confidence of the white group in public institutions has fallen. Confidence in private institutions from 1981 to 1995 has increased among blacks and Indians, and decreased slightly among whites and coloureds.

With this information, the confidence gap between the institutions in the two sectors during 1981 and 1995 can be assessed. The largest variance in the levels of confidence between public and private institutions for 1981 was among whites, and in 1995 among Indians, blacks and whites. The confidence gap narrows in 1981 among Indians and in 1995 among coloureds. The discrepancy in confidence levels is overall far larger between the two sets of institutions in 1981 than it was in 1995. This relates to the dimensionality of confidence discussed in Chapter One where stronger cleavages during apartheid implied that institutions were in greater conflict with each other, and that following democratisation this polarisation would decrease.

### 3.1.2 Cross-tabulation

Table 12 reports confidence in a cross-tabulation format with race as the independent variable. As churches were accorded the most confidence by all the race groups in both periods, albeit for different reasons (except among the Indians in 1981) it will be taken as a constant trend throughout this analysis. The high scores accorded for churches reflects the high level of religious belief among all South Africans during apartheid and the post-apartheid phase.

In an analyses of each racial group, the following patterns came to the fore:



- Black pattern

Blacks, coloureds and Indians were rather critical, especially of public institutions during 1981 as they were largely restricted from genuine representation and participation. It can be speculated that 'non-whites' were probably not convinced that the surveys were truly confidential probably fearing the consequences (i.e., arrests, detentions, exile) if their identity became known and their scores were revealed. It was illegal to belong to the ANC and PAC under the Unlawful Organisations Act adopted by the apartheid government in 1960. Overall, blacks had the least confidence of all race groups in public institutions, as they had even less part in them in contrast to the limited role enjoyed by coloureds and Indians. This trend among blacks was reversed in 1995, in accordance with the hypothesis, when compared to other race groups they exhibited the most confidence in all nine institutions. Confidence levels also improved most significantly in this group. The highest level of confidence among blacks in 1995 was toward parliament. The most significant improvements were recorded in public institutions (especially parliament, the police and the armed forces) consistent with the hypotheses.

- White pattern

The institutions that enjoyed the highest degree of confidence among whites in 1981 were institutions in the public sphere. Among the public institutions, the highest score was for the armed forces and the lowest for the civil service. The high score for the armed forces among whites must be seen in the context of the 'total onslaught'. Although the civil service were given the lowest score of the public institutions, whites still accorded it more confidence than any other race group. This reaffirms the assumptions made in Chapter Three about the relationship of groups' inclusion or exclusion in the system. Due to white inclusiveness and representation in public institutions, they displayed the highest levels of confidence therein.

In 1995, major companies were accorded with the highest levels of confidence, probably a reflection of the fact that big business is mainly controlled by a group of white companies, that provided the majority of whites with their material needs and job security. In 1981 and 1995 the press and trade unions were given a vote of no

confidence, and confidence for both institutions declined between 1981 to 1995. The press, notwithstanding its primary concern with 'white' issues during apartheid, were still regarded critically by most whites. In the democratic South Africa, whites feel excluded by the system, and this is reinforced by reportage. Low confidence levels in trade unions are probably the result of their overtly political role, and declining white

**Table 12: Confidence in institutions with race as the independent variable during 1981 and 1995**

1981						1995					
		Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Avg	Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Avg
Armed forces	1	10.5%	53.3%	17.6%	29.2%	21.0%	19.0%	9.9%	10.9%	20.0%	15.2%
	2	12.0%	36.9%	42.2%	29.2%	21.3%	36.5%	37.3%	33.3%	32.9%	36.1%
	3	33.5%	6.7%	29.4%	25.0%	27.0%	29.9%	40.0%	38.6%	35.0%	34.3%
	4	44.0%	3.1%	10.8%	16.7%	30.7%	14.7%	12.7%	17.2%	12.1%	14.4%
Legal system	1	24.7%	30.3%	10.8%	24.0%	24.3%	25.1%	7.8%	12.1%	13.4%	17.5%
	2	25.9%	51.8%	39.2%	36.0%	33.2%	42.2%	33.5%	31.6%	39.9%	38.1%
	3	25.3%	16.4%	38.2%	28.0%	24.9%	20.6%	38.6%	39.0%	34.4%	29.2%
	4	24.1%	1.5%	11.8%	12.0%	17.5%	12.0%	20.1%	17.3%	12.3%	15.2%
Police	1	11.2%	45.1%	12.7%	25.0%	19.0%	32.0%	19.5%	25.2%	30.3%	27.3%
	2	19.8%	44.1%	38.2%	33.3%	27.4%	38.6%	50.6%	38.5%	36.7%	42.0%
	3	31.2%	9.7%	33.3%	29.2%	26.8%	20.8%	22.3%	26.6%	27.0%	22.3%
	4	37.8%	1.0%	15.7%	12.5%	26.8%	8.7%	7.6%	9.8%	6.1%	8.4%
Parliament	1	8.1%	27.0%	4.0%	17.4%	12.0%	38.5%	4.4%	10.1%	15.5%	23.4%
	2	16.1%	42.9%	23.8%	21.7%	22.9%	41.7%	22.8%	34.0%	40.6%	35.0%
	3	33.9%	22.4%	46.5%	30.4%	32.7%	15.2%	47.3%	40.6%	35.0%	29.1%
	4	41.9%	7.7%	25.7%	30.4%	32.4%	4.6%	25.4%	15.2%	8.9%	12.4%
Civil service	1	13.1%	18.4%	9.9%	20.8%	14.1%	21.1%	5.3%	13.8%	11.6%	14.8%
	2	26.5%	41.3%	41.6%	20.8%	31.2%	43.3%	27.2%	33.2%	44.8%	37.1%
	3	28.9%	33.2%	35.6%	37.5%	30.8%	24.5%	45.2%	37.5%	35.6%	33.1%
	4	31.5%	7.1%	12.9%	20.8%	23.9%	11.2%	22.3%	15.5%	8.0%	15.0%
Press	1	18.1%	4.6%	17.6%	16.7%	15.1%	26.0%	4.1%	5.5%	12.8%	16.0%
	2	35.0%	26.2%	41.2%	33.3%	33.8%	40.9%	29.6%	27.0%	43.8%	35.7%
	3	25.7%	52.8%	34.3%	37.5%	32.8%	26.5%	51.2%	57.9%	36.1%	38.8%
	4	21.2%	16.4%	6.9%	12.5%	18.3%	6.5%	15.1%	9.6%	7.3%	9.5%
Church	1	45.8%	50.8%	58.8%	21.7%	47.7%	60.9%	44.2%	69.0%	39.4%	56.3%
	2	20.7%	29.2%	27.5%	13.0%	23.1%	22.0%	33.4%	24.5%	27.2%	25.8%
	3	23.4%	16.9%	11.8%	26.1%	20.8%	11.9%	19.4%	5.7%	20.2%	13.4%
	4	10.2%	3.1%	2.0%	39.1%	8.5%	5.2%	3.1%	8%	13.1%	4.3%
Trade unions	1	17.7%	3.6%	13.7%	12.5%	14.1%	22.5%	2.0%	11.8%	12.9%	14.0%
	2	31.4%	22.6%	36.3%	16.7%	29.7%	32.7%	12.5%	25.9%	30.4%	26.0%
	3	24.8%	48.7%	40.2%	41.7%	32.1%	26.0%	32.9%	36.0%	34.8%	30.0%
	4	26.1%	25.1%	9.8%	29.2%	24.2%	18.8%	52.6%	26.3%	21.9%	30.0%
Major companies	1	21.9%	14.4%	9.8%	12.5%	18.7%	37.2%	16.9%	14.9%	25.8%	28.0%
	2	27.1%	49.0%	37.3%	16.7%	32.6%	34.2%	63.9%	35.3%	46.8%	44.0%
	3	23.4%	30.9%	43.1%	45.8%	27.8%	16.6%	15.2%	38.1%	20.9%	18.0%
	4	27.6%	5.7%	9.8%	25.0%	20.9%	12.0%	4.0%	11.7%	6.5%	9.3%

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1= a great deal, 2= quite a lot, 3= not very much, 4=none at all.

Avg= Average.

membership from the late 1970s and 1980s as they became incapable of sustaining white workers' standard of living. The low confidence in trade unions in 1995 can be explained in terms of black trade unions entering political society and challenging white power. It is possible that they are also perceived as creating disorder detrimental to

economic interests. White membership of trade unions makes up the smallest percentage of all the race groups, (see Table 11 in Chapter Three).

Whites were the most critical of all institutions in 1995. Confidence levels among whites have declined quite significantly from 1981 to 1995 consistent with our hypotheses. This reflects the shift of state power from the white to black populace.

- Coloured pattern

In 1981 coloureds had little confidence, especially in public institutions, due to their restricted levels of representation and participation in them (consistent with the hypotheses). During 1995, the police recorded the highest levels of confidence among coloureds, although this confidence was the lowest of all racial groups. The lowest confidence scores were, similar to the white group, for the press and trade unions, with the latter demonstrating the second lowest level of membership after the white group. Comparing the confidence levels among coloureds of 1981 and 1995 reveals the same trend found among Indians, with confidence improving for all institutions apart from the armed forces and the legal system. The major difference is a marked decline of confidence in trade unions since 1981.

- Indian pattern

Compared with blacks and coloureds Indians displayed more confidence toward public institutions in 1981. In 1995, Indians had the most confidence in major companies with trade unions recording far lower confidence levels. The racial composition of trade unions indicates that blacks dominated trade union membership followed by Indians. As trade unions are membership-supported it can be deduced that overall Indians would have less confidence toward trade unions than blacks, but more confidence than coloureds and whites. Confidence for almost all institutions improved from 1981 to 1995, except for the armed forces and legal system which declined slightly. The most significant rise in confidence was for parliament due to the inclusion of Indians in the political system. They had considerably less confidence in parliament than blacks, more than coloureds, and considerably more than whites (consistent with the hypotheses).



- General pattern

Overall, it is quite obvious that blacks, coloureds, and Indians did not identify with institutions in which they had largely no part during the apartheid era (consistent with the hypotheses). The average confidence levels of all the population groups for 1981 and 1995 indicate that churches scored the highest levels of confidence. This trend reflects the high level of religious belief among all South Africans. Major companies (with a greater degree of market autonomy following the transition) and the police force (with a more representative composition) also scored relatively high in 1995. The institutions accorded the least confidence by the South African population were parliament (1981) (i.e., because of its exclusive character), the armed forces (1981 and 1995) (i.e., in 1981 the armed forces were seen as a apartheid institution, and in 1995 the transformation process was only just beginning) trade unions (1981 and 1995) (i.e., trade unions are sometimes perceived to be disruptive forces) and the press (1995) (i.e., multi-racial, independent coverage has not yet been realised). Confidence scores improved for most institutions, except for the legal system and trade unions. The overall average in confidence levels toward parliament and the police have improved the most significantly from 1981 to 1995.

### 3.1.3 Factor analysis

A factor analysis, for 1981, 1991 and 1995, with varimax rotation produces a solution with two factors, (see Appendix). All of the institutions have factor loadings greater than the cut-off point of 0.3 (rule of thumb) on the first factor for both periods. On the first factor, political institutions items generally have the strongest loadings (higher than 0.5) whereas social institutions items have somewhat weaker loadings in 1981. The second factor is dominated by social institutions items (loadings greater than 0.3). The political institutions items in the second factor are not as strongly loaded as on the first factor, and have the lowest factor loadings.

On the first factor for 1995, the strongest loadings are for parliament, the civil service, trade unions and the press in descending order. The loadings for political institutions on the single dimension load weaker than the 1981 factor loadings. In the second factor, churches had the strongest loading during 1995. The legal system and civil

service have weaker loadings in the second factor than in the first factor, while the armed forces and police have stronger loadings.

It therefore seems that there is no clear-cut distinction between the two sets (private and public) of institutions as was expected, with the 1981 loadings proving the exception. This pattern can be interpreted as a reflection of the extensive social control of the NP government during apartheid. Confidence toward institutions was polarised, reflecting an individual's position in the system. The system of racial repression was systematically dismantled from 1990 onwards, ensuring that institutions began to function more autonomously. Furthermore, the 1991 survey was paralleled by the promise of a new dispensation which would probably account for their higher levels of confidence toward public institutions among the 'non-whites'. The implication being that as perceptions grew so their interests could now also be represented by public institutions, whereas previously they could only rely upon private institutions. The confidence schism between public and private institutions thus slowly blurred as the political atmosphere changed fundamentally.

### 3.2 Confidence in institutions with political party preference as the independent variable.

#### 3.2.1 Means

Table 13 reports the means and standard deviations (in brackets) of public confidence in each institution with political party preference as the independent variable for 1981, and in Table 14 for 1995. Overall, only churches had a positive average mean (1.8)<sup>8</sup> in both 1981 and 1995. The lowest average mean levels for both periods were recorded by trade unions; in 1981 (3.2) and 1995 (3.3). All listed institutions received relatively low average mean levels of confidence for both 1981 and 1995, but scores for 1981 were lower than they were in 1995.

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<sup>8</sup> Two is the mid-point.

**Table 13: Confidence in institutions with political party preference as the independent variable, 1981 : Means (standard deviations)**

	ANC	NP	IFP	PFP	Right-wing	Average
Armed forces	2.6 (1.5)	1.6 (1.0)	2.9 (1.5)	3.4 (1.6)	1.6 (1.2)	2.3 (1.5)
Legal system	2.2 (1.2)	1.7 (.8)	2.5 (1.3)	2.8 (1.7)	2.4 (1.3)	2.2 (1.2)
Police	2.5 (1.3)	1.4 (.7)	3.2 (1.4)	4.0 (1.3)	2.0 (1.5)	2.4 (1.5)
Parliament	3.2 (1.3)	1.6 (.8)	3.4 (1.5)	4.1 (1.2)	3.1 (1.6)	2.7 (1.5)
Civil service	3.2 (1.3)	2.2 (1.2)	2.9 (1.3)	3.4 (1.4)	2.8 (1.6)	2.7 (1.3)
Churches	2.3 (1.4)	1.4 (.8)	1.8 (1.2)	2.4 (1.5)	2.0 (1.4)	1.8 (1.2)
Press	3.3 (1.2)	3.4 (1.1)	2.1 (1.2)	2.8 (1.4)	3.4 (1.3)	3.0 (1.3)
Trade unions	3.4 (1.4)	3.6 (1.1)	2.6 (1.4)	2.8 (1.3)	3.4 (1.3)	3.2 (1.3)
Major companies	2.9 (1.3)	2.5 (1.2)	2.3 (1.4)	3.6 (1.3)	3.5 (1.4)	2.7 (1.3)

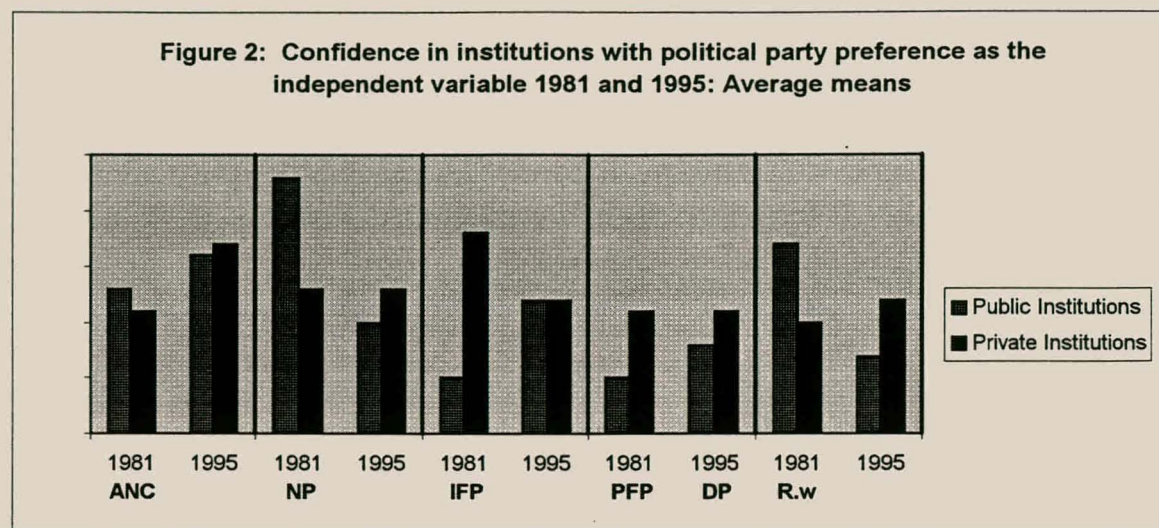
Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all.

**Table 14: Confidence in institutions with political party preference as independent variable 1995 : Means (standard deviations)**

	ANC	NP	IFP	DP	Right-wing	PAC	Average
Armed forces	2.8 (1.4)	3.0 (1.3)	2.9 (1.3)	3.1 (1.2)	3.3 (1.2)	2.8 (1.3)	2.9 (1.3)
Legal system	2.5 (1.3)	3.1 (1.3)	2.7 (1.4)	3.2 (1.2)	3.4 (1.3)	2.9 (1.4)	2.8 (1.4)
Police	2.3 (1.3)	2.4 (1.2)	2.5 (1.4)	2.9 (1.2)	2.4 (1.2)	2.3 (1.3)	2.4 (1.3)
Parliament	2.0 (1.1)	3.4 (1.2)	3.0 (1.4)	3.4 (1.1)	3.9 (1.1)	2.4 (1.3)	2.7 (1.4)
Civil service	2.6 (1.3)	3.3 (1.3)	3.2 (1.4)	3.5 (1.1)	3.5 (1.2)	2.8 (1.3)	2.9 (1.3)
Churches	1.7 (1.1)	1.7 (1.1)	2.2 (1.3)	2.5 (1.2)	1.5 (.9)	2.4 (1.4)	1.8 (1.2)
Press	2.5 (1.3)	3.2 (1.1)	3.1 (1.3)	3.3 (1.1)	3.6 (1.1)	2.3 (1.1)	2.9 (1.3)
Trade unions	2.8 (1.4)	3.8 (1.2)	3.5 (1.4)	4.0 (1.1)	4.0 (1.1)	2.3 (1.3)	3.3 (1.4)
Major companies	2.3 (1.4)	2.4 (1.1)	2.4 (1.4)	2.1 (.8)	2.3 (1.1)	2.2 (1.2)	2.3 (1.3)

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all.

The mean confidence average generally remained unchanged between 1981-1995, with the greatest improvement for major companies, and a marginal improvement for the press. The mean average declined slightly for trade unions and the civil service, and slightly more for the armed forces and the legal system. Within each category there is considerable variation in confidence levels as is indicated by the standard deviations.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand. R.w=Right-wing

Figure Two reports the average mean for confidence in public and private institutions with political party preference as the independent variable for 1981 and 1995. In 1981, respondents who identified with the NP, ANC and right-wing parties displayed higher confidence levels for public institutions than they did for their private counterparts. Those identifying with the IFP and PFP policies expressed low levels of confidence in public institutions. Respondents who felt close to IFP policies had the most confidence in private institutions, whilst those relating to the right-wing and the PFP had the least confidence in private institutions during 1981.

In 1995, the majority of political party supporters accorded private institutions more confidence than public institutions, the IFP supporters had equal levels of confidence in both sets of institutions. Right-wing supporters had the least confidence in the public institutions closely followed by DP supporters. The NP supporters expressed low confidence in public institutions during 1995. The ANC and PAC supporters had the most confidence in private institutions.

From 1981 to 1995, confidence levels in public institutions have improved among the ANC, IFP and PFP/DP supporters. Confidence levels for public institutions have dropped quite significantly among right-wing and NP supporters. Confidence in private institutions has increased significantly among ANC supporters, and slightly among right-wing supporters. Confidence in private institutions has decreased among IFP



supporters, whereas confidence for private institutions among PFP/DP and NP supporters has remained constant.

Having looked at the mean levels of confidence in public and private institutions, the confidence gap between the institutions in the two sectors in 1981 and 1995 can now be assessed. The biggest variance in confidence between public and private institutions for 1981 is found among those identifying with the IFP and, in 1995, among the right-wing supporters. The lowest levels of variance in confidence levels between the sets of institutions for both 1981 and 1995 was found among those identifying most closely with the policies of the ANC. Overall, once again, there is a much larger discrepancy in confidence levels between the two sets of institutions in 1981 than in 1995. Moreover, these findings suggests that those identifying with the winning party have, in general, more confidence in institutions as opposed to those identifying with the opposition. The hypothesis, that the 'losers' will be less satisfied with political institutions than the 'winners' is thus affirmed.

### 3.2.2 Cross-tabulation

Table 16 reports confidence in institutions in a cross-tabulation format with political preference as the independent variable for 1981; and Table 17 shows the same results for 1995. The church was the institution that enjoyed the highest degree of confidence among all the respondents, and will therefore not be mentioned again in the analysis which follows.

Whether institutions include or exclude certain groups is a fundamental determinant of attitudes toward institutions. Inclusivity is defined in racial terms, but is closely related to party affiliation (because of deep ideological divisions emanating from apartheid and correspondence with political parties). It is therefore expected that the confidence levels (and the sources thereof) of the different racial groups will generally be reflected by the racial breakdown of party support. Reynolds (quoted in Breytenbach 1997:70-71) offers the racial break-down of party support as revealed in the 1994 election outcome:

- FF: 100% white support;

- PAC: 99% black support;
- ANC: 94% black support (6% was non-African<sup>9</sup>)
- IFP: 85% black support (15% was non-Zulu, mainly white); and,
- NP: 49% whites, 30% coloureds, 14% blacks, 6% Indians - the only party that drew substantial “mixed” support.

The ANC has succeeded in aggregating a multitude of interests, i.e., of trade unionists, black entrepreneurs, communists and black moderates. However, political parties still struggle to bring interests together across racial and ethnic barriers as the racial support of the major parties in Table 15 indicates:

*Table 15: Estimated “racial” basis of votes for major parties (%) in the 1994 elections*

	Black	White	Coloured	Indian
ANC	94	0,5	4	1,5
NP	14	49	30	7,0
IFP	85	5	N/A	N/A

Source: Welsh quoted in Sadie (in Venter 1998:263)

In an analysis of each party the following patterns came to the fore:

- ANC pattern

The institutions that enjoyed the highest degree of confidence during 1981 among those feeling closest to ANC’s policies was the legal system and in 1995 parliament. During 1981 parliament, trade unions, the civil service, and the press were given a vote of no-confidence. The lowest scores for 1995 were for the armed forces and trade unions. Overall, individuals identifying with the ANC in 1981 were very critical of state institutions, failing to identify with institutions in which they largely had no part. This pattern was reversed in 1995 when these same individuals were the least critical of state institutions and identified very strongly with institutions in which they now have a large role. There was a significant improvement in confidence scores, during 1981-1995 in private institutions, notably trade union and the press. The increase in confidence for trade unions can be explained by the raise of social movement unionism during apartheid serving as an instrument to challenge the status

<sup>9</sup> It must be taken into consideration that this 6% includes a high percentage of coloureds/Indians, because the ANC won with such a huge majority, 6% represents a substantial number of voters.

quo. With regard to the press, the increase in confidence was probably the result of the biased nature of news coverage during apartheid shifting to more equal treatment following democratisation. Confidence has declined somewhat for the legal system because despite changes by 1995, there were still very few black people involved in the administration of justice.

**Table 16: Confidence in institutions with political party preference as the independent variable 1981**

		ANC	NP	IFP	PFP	Right-wing	Average
<b>Armed forces</b>	1	31.6%	62.3%	25.0%	20.0%	62.5%	42.6%
	2	26.3%	29.5%	25.0%	15.0%	25.0%	25.7%
	3	26.3%	4.9%	30.0%	20.0%	-	16.2%
	4	15.8%	3.3%	20.0%	45.0%	12.5%	15.5%
<b>Legal system</b>	1	27.8%	43.5%	30.0%	33.3%	22.2%	35.3%
	2	50.0%	48.4%	30.0%	23.8%	44.4%	40.0%
	3	16.7%	8.1%	37.5%	14.3%	22.2%	18.7%
	4	5.6%	-	2.5%	28.6%	11.1%	6.0%
<b>Police</b>	1	27.8%	65.1%	17.5%	5.0%	50.0%	38.9%
	2	38.9%	30.2%	27.5%	15.0%	25.0%	28.2%
	3	27.8%	4.8%	32.5%	20.0%	12.5%	17.4%
	4	5.6%	-	22.5%	60.0%	12.5%	15.4%
<b>Parliament</b>	1	11.8%	47.6%	17.1%	4.8%	14.3%	27.5%
	2	23.5%	44.4%	17.1%	14.3%	28.6%	29.5%
	3	41.2%	6.3%	34.1%	28.6%	28.6%	22.1%
	4	23.5%	1.6%	31.7%	52.4%	28.6%	20.8%
<b>Civil service</b>	1	11.8%	28.6%	12.5%	14.3%	28.6%	20.3%
	2	23.5%	42.9%	40.0%	19.0%	28.6%	35.8%
	3	47.1%	25.4%	35.0%	42.9%	28.6%	33.1%
	4	17.6%	3.2%	12.5%	23.8%	14.3%	10.8%
<b>Church</b>	1	33.35%	72.1%	55.0%	42.1%	50.0%	57.4%
	2	38.9%	21.3%	27.5%	21.1%	25.0%	25.3%
	3	16.7%	6.6%	12.5%	26.3%	12.5%	12.3%
	4	11.1%	-	5.0%	10.5%	12.5%	4.8%
<b>Press</b>	1	5.3%	4.8%	34.1%	19.0%	-	14.6%
	2	26.3%	27.4%	41.5%	38.1%	37.5%	39.1%
	3	57.9%	51.6%	19.5%	23.8%	37.5%	38.7%
	4	10.5%	16.1%	4.9%	19.0%	25.0%	13.2%
<b>Trade unions</b>	1	12.5%	4.8%	28.2%	10.0%	-	12.3%
	2	18.8%	22.2%	28.2%	50.0%	28.6%	28.1%
	3	43.8%	50.8%	33.3%	25.0%	42.9%	41.1%
	4	25.0%	22.2%	10.3%	15.0%	28.6%	18.5%
<b>Major companies</b>	1	16.7%	18.0%	38.5%	5.0%	14.35	21.4%
	2	38.9%	50.8%	30.8%	25.0%	14.3%	38.6%
	3	33.3%	26.2%	23.1%	35.0%	42.9%	28.3%
	4	11.1%	4.9%	7.7%	35.0%	28.6%	11.7%

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all.

- **NP pattern**

Those individuals identifying most closely with NP policies had the most confidence in public institutions during 1981 (consistent with the hypotheses), although by 1995



these figures were recorded for major companies. In both 1981 and 1995 trade unions and the press were given a clear vote of no-confidence. The low confidence levels expressed toward trade unions was probably due to the perception of trade unions as disruptive forces of the economy, and for the press as they perceived themselves excluded from the main-stream press. Confidence toward institutions among NP supporters has generally declined significantly from 1981 to 1995. The most notable drop of confidence was for public institutions, especially parliament, since the NP negotiated their exit from power. Although confidence in the police have also dropped from 1981 to 1995 it remains quite high overall.

**Table 17: Confidence in institutions with political party preference as the independent variable: 1995**

		ANC	NP	IFP	DP	Rightwing	PAC	Average
Armed forces	1	20.7%	11.7%	9.0%	6.6%	9.4%	16.6%	15.2%
	2	35.5%	36.9%	49.8%	37.2%	29.3%	36.3%	36.0%
	3	30.0%	39.8%	20.4%	46.0%	42.3%	38.9%	34.4%
	4	13.8%	11.6%	20.8%	10.2%	19.0%	8.3%	14.4%
Legal system	1	25.2%	9.4%	26.6%	7.3%	7.0%	12.8%	17.6%
	2	41.8%	35.2%	32.4%	34.2%	29.0%	43.0%	37.9%
	3	21.2%	38.3%	24.8%	43.3%	41.7%	22.3%	29.3%
	4	11.9%	17.1%	16.2%	15.2%	22.3%	21.8%	15.2%
Police	1	32.5%	24.8%	22.7%	9.6%	20.0%	31.1%	27.3%
	2	38.8%	45.5%	47.8%	44.2%	51.7%	39.4%	41.8%
	3	20.9%	21.6%	11.5%	33.4%	20.0%	17.6%	22.5%
	4	7.8%	8.0%	18.0%	12.7%	8.3%	11.9%	8.4%
Parliament	1	37.2%	8.0%	14.6%	1.0%	5.7%	27.1%	23.6%
	2	42.9%	27.8%	35.0%	33.9%	12.6%	39.6%	34.9%
	3	16.9%	44.6%	30.7%	51.1%	46.7%	26.6%	29.1%
	4	3.0%	19.7%	19.7%	14.0%	35.1%	6.8%	12.4%
Civil service	1	21.9%	9.2%	9.7%	2.6%	4.5%	12.4%	14.9%
	2	41.8%	30.0%	37.0%	26.9%	29.0%	46.5%	36.9%
	3	26.3%	42.6%	23.7%	52.0%	38.5%	26.5%	33.2%
	4	9.9%	18.2%	29.6%	18.5%	28.0%	14.7%	15.0%
Church	1	63.5%	53.3%	37.5%	23.3%	66.3%	40.5%	56.4%
	2	21.7%	31.4%	33.3%	38.6%	22.7%	22.6%	25.8%
	3	10.6%	12.6%	24.0%	33.1%	10.4%	28.9%	13.5%
	4	4.2%	2.7%	5.2%	5.0%	0.6%	7.9%	4.3%
Press	1	24.8%	6.1%	11.5%	2.6%	3.8%	17.6%	16.0%
	2	39.1%	31.4%	33.0%	34.8%	25.1%	57.0%	35.6%
	3	29.3%	53.1%	36.2%	53.4%	49.2%	20.2%	38.8%
	4	6.8%	9.4%	19.4%	9.2%	21.9%	5.2%	9.6%
Trade unions	1	22.8%	5.6%	9.3%	3.5%	3.4%	41.3%	14.4%
	2	33.9%	17.9%	30.0%	13.5%	13.6%	25.6%	25.4%
	3	27.0%	34.9%	23.5%	43.9%	24.4%	27.9%	30.1%
	4	16.3%	41.6%	37.2%	39.2%	58.5%	5.2%	30.1%
Major companies	1	36.5%	17.2%	27.9%	17.5%	16.0%	29.0%	27.4%
	2	33.1%	55.7%	40.1%	67.2%	63.2%	43.8%	43.7%
	3	18.8%	21.6%	18.8%	14.6%	13.5%	22.7%	19.6%
	4	11.6%	5.5%	13.2%	0.7%	7.4%	4.5%	9.3%

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all.

- IFP pattern

Respondents feeling the closest to IFP had the most confidence in the press in 1981 overall, with high levels of confidence in major companies in 1995. In 1981, parliament and the police force were given a vote of no-confidence which was extended in 1995 to trade unions. Those identifying with the IFP were especially critical of state institutions, unable to identify with institutions in which they largely had no part. The reason for their lack of confidence in trade unions is probably due to trade unions having close ties with the ANC, the IFP's opposition. Although the IFP does have its own trade unions, they are relatively small. However, confidence in the parliament and the police force has gained ground from 1981 to 1995. Confidence declined slightly for the legal system, civil service and major companies. The most significant drop in confidence levels was for the press and trade unions.

- PFP/DP pattern

The people identifying most closely to the PFP's policies had the most confidence in trade unions in 1981 and major companies in 1995. Trade unions got a clear vote of no-confidence in 1995. These patterns are probably due to a high level of confidence in major companies leading to a perception of trade unions as disturbing economic operations. A contributing factor is probably, once again, Cosatu's alliance with the ANC and SACP.

Respondents identifying with the PFP were one of the most critical groups in 1981, demonstrating the least confidence of all the parties in public institutions. This criticism extended to the NP government, even to the extent that these respondents were even more negative toward the government than banned organisations.

Confidence in churches, armed forces, the police, parliament and major companies has increased among PFP/DP supporters from 1981 to 1995 (although it remained relatively low) and have dropped significantly for trade unions during the same period.

- Right-wing pattern

Respondents identifying with the right-wing parties had the most confidence in the armed forces and the police in 1981, whilst trade unions, major companies, and the press were given a vote of no-confidence. Overall, these respondents had very high levels of confidence in public institutions, in particular institutions of order; the armed forces and police. The 1995 data shows that the right-wing party<sup>10</sup> sympathisers were generally the most negative towards institutions, excluding churches and the police. Confidence levels to all institutions except major companies and churches declined from 1981 to 1995. The most significant decline was toward the armed forces, legal system, trade unions, parliament and the civil service. Although confidence levels toward the police and armed forces have dropped, they have remained comparatively high.

- General pattern

The average confidence levels for 1981 with political party preference as the independent variable indicate that churches scored the highest in the confidence ladder followed by the legal system. In 1995 churches, major companies and the police were accorded the most confidence. Parliament (1981), the armed forces (1981 and 1995), the police (1981), trade unions (1981 and 1995) and the press (1995), scored the lowest. Scores improved for most institutions, except for the armed forces, press and trade unions and a slight decrease for churches. Overall confidence levels in parliament and the police force have improved the most from 1981 to 1995, probably the result of the more open political society and efforts to make the police more representative of the demographics of the country.

#### **4. From transition to democracy: 1991-1995**

The composition of the sample of the two surveys are comparable in all respects as both samples consisted of urban and rural blacks, whites throughout South Africa, coloureds living in Cape Town and Indians living in Durban.

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<sup>10</sup> The right-wing parties are the only political parties that have remained exclusively white following the transition to a post-apartheid South Africa.

#### 4.1 Confidence in institutions with race as the independent variable

##### 4.1.1 Means

Table 18 reports the means and standard deviations of public confidence in each institution with race as the independent variable during 1991 and 1995. Examining the average means of the race groups combined reveals that the average mean confidence for any civil or political institution over the period of 1991-1995 was relatively low. Overall, only churches had a relatively high mean average confidence level in 1991 (1.9) and in 1995 (1.7). The lowest average mean of confidence for 1991 was recorded for trade unions (3.1), and in 1995 the press (3.0). The mean averages of confidence for the other listed institutions were all closer to the mid-point on the scale than to the no-confidence extreme (4.0). Overall, the mean average of confidence has improved somewhat during 1991-1995 for churches, trade unions, police, parliament, civil service and major companies. The mean average has declined somewhat for the armed forces, the legal system and the press. Within each category, there were considerable variations in confidence levels which are also indicated by the standard deviations.

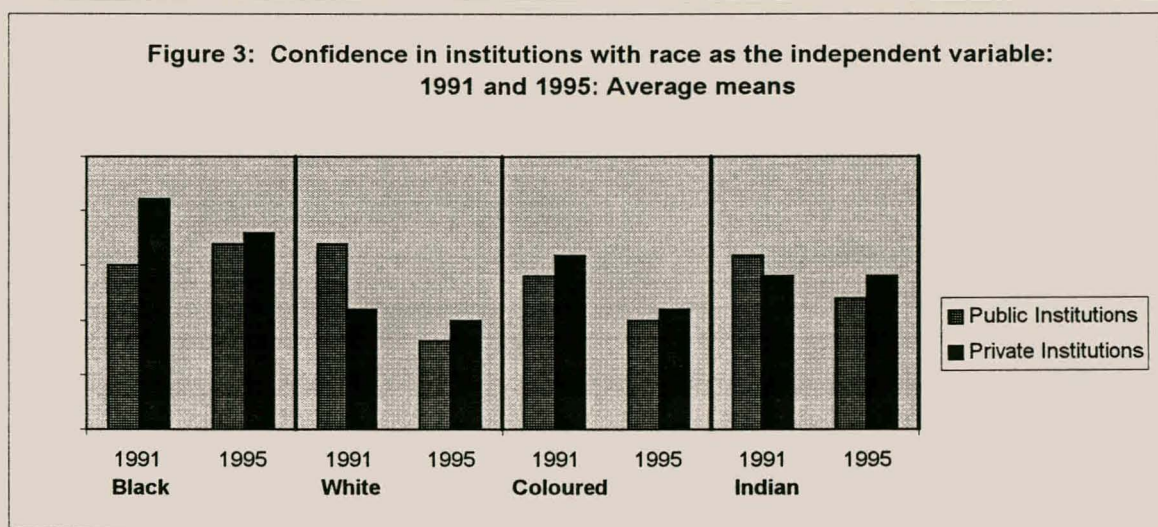
**Table 18: Confidence in institutions with race as independent variable 1991 and 1995: Means (standard deviations)**

	1991					1995				
	Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Avg.	Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Avg.
Armed forces	2.9 (1.4)	1.8 (.8)	2.8 (1.3)	2.3 (1.3)	2.3 (1.3)	2.7 (1.5)	3.2 (1.6)	3.2 (1.6)	2.9 (1.6)	2.8 (1.6)
Legal system	2.2 (1.2)	2.2 (1.1)	2.5 (1.1)	2.3 (1.3)	2.2 (1.2)	2.3 (1.4)	3.3 (1.6)	3.2 (1.6)	3.0 (1.6)	2.5 (1.5)
Police	2.7 (1.4)	2.0 (1.0)	2.6 (1.1)	2.3 (1.3)	2.4 (1.3)	2.1 (1.4)	2.5 (1.4)	2.6 (1.6)	2.5 (1.6)	2.2 (1.4)
Parliament	2.4 (1.4)	2.5 (1.2)	2.6 (1.1)	2.6 (1.3)	2.5 (1.3)	2.0 (1.3)	3.8 (1.5)	3.3 (1.6)	2.9 (1.6)	2.3 (1.5)
Civil service	2.5 (1.3)	3.0 (1.2)	2.8 (1.1)	2.5 (1.3)	2.8 (1.3)	2.5 (1.5)	3.6 (1.5)	3.1 (1.6)	3.0 (1.5)	2.7 (1.6)
Churches	1.6 (1.1)	2.1 (1.2)	1.5 (.9)	2.4 (1.5)	1.9 (1.2)	1.6 (1.2)	2.1 (1.4)	1.4 (.9)	2.2 (1.5)	1.7 (1.2)
Press	2.4 (1.3)	3.4 (1.1)	2.7 (1.1)	2.7 (1.3)	2.9 (1.3)	2.7 (1.6)	3.7 (1.5)	3.8 (1.5)	3.0 (1.6)	3.0 (1.6)
Trade unions	1.9 (1.2)	4.1 (.9)	2.8 (1.2)	2.9 (1.3)	3.1 (1.4)	2.7 (1.6)	4.0 (1.4)	3.3 (1.6)	3.1 (1.6)	2.9 (1.6)
Major companies	1.9 (1.2)	2.3 (1.0)	2.8 (1.1)	2.7 (1.3)	2.2 (1.1)	2.0 (1.4)	2.2 (1.2)	3.1 (1.6)	2.3 (1.4)	2.2 (1.4)

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all. Avg=Average.



Figure Three reports the average mean for confidence in public and private institutions with race as the independent variable for 1991 and 1995. In 1991, whites and Indians accorded public institutions higher confidence than private institutions, whereas blacks and coloureds accorded private institutions with more confidence than public institutions. Coloureds had the least confidence in public institutions in 1991, followed by blacks. Blacks had the most confidence in private institutions, and coloureds the least. In 1995, all race groups had more confidence in private institutions than in public institutions. The lowest levels of confidence in public institutions were found among whites and coloureds. In 1995, blacks had the most confidence in private institutions and whites the least.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

From 1991 to 1995 confidence in public institutions has only improved among the black population. Confidence levels for public institutions have dropped quite significantly among whites, and to a lesser extent among Indians and coloureds. This finding suggests that the general hypotheses only holds true for blacks whose confidence in public institutions has increased and for whites, whose confidence has decreased in public institutions. Confidence in private institutions has decreased among blacks, whites and coloureds whilst remaining constant among Indians.

Having looked at the mean levels of confidence in public and private institutions, the confidence gap between the institutions in the two sectors in 1981 and 1995 can be

assessed. In 1991, the biggest variance between confidence for public and private institutions was among whites and blacks, and was smallest among Indians and coloureds. In 1995, the biggest gap in confidence between the two sets of institutions was found among whites, and least among blacks and coloureds. Overall, the disparity of confidence levels between the two sets of institutions was far larger in 1991 than in 1995. This relates to the dimensionality of confidence discussed in Chapter One where strong cleavages during apartheid implied that institutions were in greater conflict with each other, and that following democratisation these divisions would lessen.

#### 4.1.2 Cross-tabulation

Table 19 reports confidence in institutions in a cross-tabulation format with race as the independent variable for 1991 and 1995. Once again, race groups accorded churches the highest confidence scores, albeit for different reasons. These high confidence scores reflect the high level of religiosity among all South Africans during apartheid, and the post-apartheid era.

In an analysis of each group the following patterns come to the fore:

- Black pattern

Trade unions were accorded the highest scores among blacks in 1991. Interestingly, the most significant drop of confidence from 1991 to 1995 was for trade unions. Whereas blacks perceived trade unions in 1991 as a vehicle to mobilise against the political and economic power of the apartheid government, the opening up of political society following the transition meant interests and needs could be legitimately addressed through political parties. This has also resulted in declining membership of trade unions. However, trade unions still retain their support mainly from the black population explaining why they still accord trade unions the highest levels of confidence compared to other race groups.

The highest level of confidence in 1995 was recorded for public institutions (in accordance with the hypotheses) and major companies. The police and armed forces scored the lowest of the public institutions, but were still relatively high. Overall, blacks accorded all institutions relatively high confidence in 1991. In 1995, blacks had

the most confidence in all nine institutions: reflecting the shift of their status in the system. Comparing confidence levels over this time period reveals a marked improvement for all institutions and in particular public institutions, especially parliament.

**Table 19: Confidence in institutions with race as the independent variable 1991 and 1995**

		1991					1995				
		Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Avg	Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Avg
Armed forces	1	18.4%	40.1%	16.8%	31.7%	29.4%	20.3%	9.9%	10.9%	20.0%	17.8%
	2	32.3%	50.1%	37.1%	37.1%	41.2%	40.1%	37.3%	33.3%	32.9%	38.9%
	3	30.3%	8.8%	37.7%	23.1%	20.3%	27.6%	40.0%	38.6%	35.0%	30.7%
	4	18.9%	1.0%	8.4%	8.1%	9.1%	12.1%	12.7%	17.2%	12.1%	12.6%
Legal system	1	31.3%	25.1%	15.8%	34.3%	27.6%	30.6%	7.8%	12.1%	13.4%	24.8%
	2	42.3%	53.0%	50.9%	34.8%	47.3%	40.8%	33.5%	31.6%	39.9%	38.8%
	3	18.7%	19.4%	31.6%	23.8%	20.2%	19.4%	38.6%	39.0%	34.4%	24.7%
	4	7.7%	2.5%	1.8%	7.2%	4.9%	9.2%	20.1%	17.3%	12.3%	11.8%
Police	1	25.2%	29.7%	10.2%	39.4%	27.2%	34.6%	19.5%	25.2%	30.3%	31.3%
	2	31.0%	53.4%	57.5%	28.5%	42.9%	42.8%	50.6%	38.5%	36.7%	43.5%
	3	26.6%	15.2%	25.3%	26.4%	21.3%	17.1%	22.3%	26.6%	27.0%	19.0%
	4	17.1%	1.7%	7.0%	5.7%	8.5%	5.6%	7.6%	9.8%	6.1%	6.3%
Parliament	1	30.9%	17.0%	11.7%	26.1%	22.9%	39.6%	4.4%	10.1%	15.5%	30.8%
	2	35.1%	50.1%	53.2%	34.4%	43.1%	41.9%	22.8%	34.0%	40.6%	38.1%
	3	23.4%	26.7%	29.2%	31.1%	25.8%	14.0%	47.3%	40.6%	35.0%	22.2%
	4	10.6%	6.2%	5.8%	8.3%	8.1%	4.5%	25.4%	15.2%	8.9%	9.0%
Civil service	1	23.2%	8.0%	8.3%	23.6%	15.2%	23.9%	5.3%	13.8%	11.6%	19.4%
	2	41.9%	38.7%	48.3%	39.9%	40.6%	42.8%	27.2%	33.2%	44.8%	39.2%
	3	25.0%	43.2%	37.9%	29.8%	34.7%	23.9%	45.2%	37.5%	35.6%	29.2%
	4	9.9%	10.1%	5.5%	6.7%	9.5%	9.4%	22.3%	15.5%	8.0%	12.2%
Church	1	65.0%	38.4%	69.2%	39.7%	51.6%	62.6%	44.2%	69.0%	39.4%	59.6%
	2	20.4%	36.0%	20.7%	24.0%	27.7%	23.2%	33.4%	24.5%	27.2%	25.0%
	3	10.9%	19.5%	8.6%	23.5%	15.4%	11.0%	19.4%	5.7%	20.0%	12.1%
	4	3.8%	6.1%	1.5%	12.8%	5.2%	3.2%	3.1%	8%	13.1%	3.2%
Press	1	27.0%	2.7%	8.9%	21.5%	14.0%	20.0%	4.1%	5.5%	12.8%	15.8%
	2	39.9%	30.5%	53.6%	34.3%	36.0%	41.3%	29.6%	27.0%	43.8%	38.1%
	3	24.8%	54.1%	33.3%	39.8%	40.2%	30.2%	51.2%	57.9%	36.1%	36.4%
	4	8.3%	12.7%	4.2%	4.4%	9.8%	8.5%	15.1%	9.6%	7.3%	9.7%
Trade unions	1	44.9%	1.4%	9.5%	13.0%	20.1%	19.4%	2.0%	11.8%	12.9%	15.4%
	2	35.6%	10.2%	44.5%	39.1%	24.4%	32.4%	12.5%	25.9%	30.4%	28.2%
	3	14.3%	49.4%	40.1%	36.7%	34.0%	27.1%	32.9%	36.0%	34.8%	29.1%
	4	5.2%	38.9%	5.8%	11.2%	21.6%	21.1%	52.6%	26.3%	21.9%	27.3%
Major companies	1	44.9%	13.7%	7.7%	19.4%	26.7%	40.2%	16.9%	14.9%	25.8%	33.6%
	2	34.9%	62.8%	49.7%	37.1%	48.8%	35.7%	63.9%	35.3%	46.8%	40.9%
	3	16.0%	20.5%	37.1%	32.9%	20.4%	15.8%	15.2%	38.1%	20.9%	17.7%
	4	4.2%	3.0%	5.6%	10.6%	4.1%	8.3%	4.0%	11.7%	6.5%	7.8%

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1= a great deal, 2= quite a lot, 3= not very much, 4=none at all.

Avg= Average.

- White pattern

The institutions which enjoyed the highest degree of confidence among whites were the armed forces in 1991. Other public institutions were also accorded high scores



consistent with the hypotheses. The armed forces received the highest confidence from whites, being perceived as a force for stability and a means of keeping the ANC in check.

In 1995, major companies scored very highly which is probably a reflection of confidence in the ability of these institutions to mediate between the state and the market. At this time, major companies were controlled primarily by whites. Trade unions (in 1991 and 1995) were again given a vote of no confidence by whites. These figures demonstrate whites were the most negative in their assessment of institutions during 1995. However, confidence levels have improved slightly for churches and major companies from 1991 to 1995. However, confidence has declined significantly for all public institutions (in accordance with the hypotheses) and trade unions from 1991 to 1995. Overall institutions were rated poorly, in particular trade unions which recorded very low levels of confidence.

- Coloured pattern

All the listed institutions scored very moderate ratings among the coloured community in 1991. The highest score was for the legal system in 1991, although it was relatively low, and the police in 1995. The lowest scores were recorded for public institutions (in accordance with the hypotheses) in 1991, although overall they were judged quite moderately. The press and trade unions were given the lowest scores in 1995.

A comparison of the confidence levels of coloureds shows a declined from 1991 to 1995. Scores for all institutions were lower, except for churches (which is the highest in comparison with the rest of the racial groups), while confidence in the police force remained virtually unchanged. This is quite surprising given the fact that they are now offered equal opportunities in the political system. One can speculate, however that although the new system is not as oppressive as it was during apartheid, the coloured population still feel relatively isolated because of their numerical inferiority. There is also no political party wholly concerned with coloured interests *per se* and it seems, when taking the racial composition of parties during the 1994 election in to account, they feel a stronger bond with traditionally 'white' parties as opposed to 'black'

parties. Coloureds may perceive the system as marginalising them, and although new players govern, it still is 'exclusion' of a different, but less extreme manner. This pattern is not consistent with the hypotheses.

- Indian pattern

Generally, Indians assigned the lowest scores for the institutions in 1991. The legal system and major companies scored relatively high in 1991 and 1995 respectively. Trade unions scored relatively poorly in 1991 and 1995 with low membership levels among Indians. When confidence levels are compared it is clear that most institutions have not been accorded with substantially more confidence since the transition. Confidence levels dropped for all public institutions (thus not in accordance with the hypotheses) including trade unions, except for the police force. This pattern is similar to that of the trend in coloured confidence. The only institutions which were accorded higher confidence levels than in 1991 were churches and major companies, probably due to their successful role in mediating between the state and market.

- General pattern

The average confidence levels indicates that churches (1991 and 1995) scored the highest among the whole of the population. In both 1991 and 1995 the press, and trade unions scored the lowest. Scores improved for most institutions, except for the armed forces, legal system and trade unions. The overall average of churches and the police have improved most significantly from 1991 to 1995.

## 4.2 Confidence in institutions with political party preference as the independent variable

### 4.2.1 Means

Table 20 reports the means and standard deviations of public confidence in each institution with political party preference as the independent variable for 1991. Table 21 records these figures 1995. Overall, churches had the highest positive average mean confidence level in 1991 (1.9) and 1995 (1.7). The lowest average mean levels of confidence were recorded for trade unions in 1991 (3.1), and in 1995 (3.2). Although both 1991 and 1995 were marked by low average mean levels, they were generally

modest and most were closer to the mid-point on the scale rather than to the no-confidence extreme (4.0). The mean average has generally remained the same from 1991 to 1995, with confidence improving marginally for the police, parliament, the civil service, press and churches. The mean average has declined slightly for the armed forces, legal system and trade unions, and has remained unchanged for major companies. Within each category there is considerable variation in confidence levels, which was also indicated by the standard deviations.

**Table 20: Confidence in institutions with political party preference as the independent variable 1991 : Means (standard deviations)**

	ANC	NP	IFP	DP	Right-wing	PAC	Average
Armed forces	3.0 (1.4)	1.7 (.9)	2.4 (1.3)	2.4 (1.0)	1.5 (.6)	3.0 (1.4)	2.3 (1.3)
Legal system	2.3 (1.3)	2.0 (1.0)	2.3 (1.2)	2.4 (1.0)	2.3 (1.1)	2.9 (1.3)	2.2 (1.2)
Police	3.0 (1.4)	1.9 (.9)	1.8 (1.0)	2.7 (1.1)	1.8 (.9)	2.9 (1.6)	2.4 (1.3)
Parliament	2.6 (1.4)	2.1 (1.0)	2.1 (1.3)	2.8 (1.1)	3.1 (1.3)	3.1 (1.6)	2.5 (1.3)
Civil service	2.6 (1.3)	2.8 (1.2)	2.7 (1.4)	3.5 (1.1)	2.9 (1.2)	2.4 (1.4)	2.8 (1.3)
Churches	1.7 (1.1)	2.0 (1.2)	2.0 (1.3)	2.5 (1.3)	1.9 (1.2)	2.1 (1.4)	1.9 (1.2)
Press	2.4 (1.3)	3.2 (1.1)	3.0 (1.3)	3.0 (1.1)	3.8 (1.0)	2.6 (1.3)	2.9 (1.3)
Trade unions	1.9 (1.1)	4.0 (1.0)	3.2 (1.5)	3.9 (1.0)	4.0 (1.0)	2.1 (1.1)	3.1 (1.5)
Major companies	2.0 (1.2)	2.2 (1.0)	2.1 (1.1)	2.4 (1.0)	2.4 (1.1)	2.5 (1.3)	2.2 (1.1)

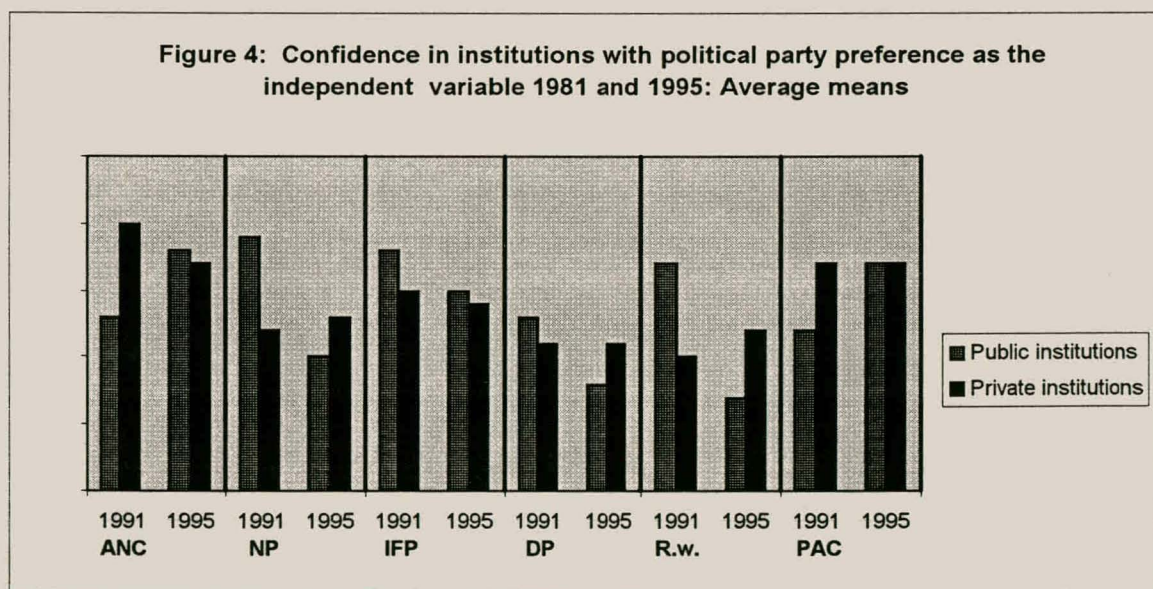
Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all.

**Table 21: Confidence in institutions with political party preference as the independent variable 1995 : Means (standard deviations)**

	ANC	NP	IFP	DP	Right-wing	PAC	Average
Armed forces	2.6 (1.3)	3.0 (1.3)	2.8 (1.3)	3.1 (1.2)	3.3 (1.3)	2.5 (1.4)	2.8 (1.3)
Legal system	2.3 (1.3)	3.1 (1.3)	2.3 (1.2)	3.2 (1.2)	3.4 (1.3)	2.4 (1.5)	2.5 (1.3)
Police	2.1 (1.2)	2.4 (1.2)	2.3 (1.3)	2.9 (1.2)	2.4 (1.2)	2.2 (1.2)	2.2 (1.2)
Parliament	1.9 (1.1)	3.3 (1.3)	2.4 (1.3)	3.4 (1.1)	3.9 (1.1)	2.1 (1.2)	2.4 (1.3)
Civil service	2.5 (1.3)	3.2 (1.3)	2.9 (1.3)	3.5 (1.1)	3.5 (1.2)	2.6 (1.4)	2.7 (1.3)
Churches	1.6 (1.1)	1.8 (1.1)	1.8 (1.0)	2.5 (1.2)	1.5 (.9)	2.0 (1.2)	1.7 (1.1)
Press	2.6 (1.3)	3.2 (1.1)	3.0 (1.2)	3.3 (1.1)	3.6 (1.1)	2.4 (1.2)	2.8 (1.3)
Trade unions	2.8 (1.4)	3.8 (1.2)	3.6 (1.4)	4.0 (1.1)	4.0 (1.1)	2.7 (1.5)	3.2 (1.4)
Major companies	2.2 (1.3)	2.3 (1.1)	2.3 (1.2)	2.1 (.8)	2.3 (1.1)	2.1 (1.2)	2.2 (1.2)

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all.

Figure Four reports the average mean for confidence in public and private institutions with political party preference as the independent variable for 1991 and 1995. In 1991, most political party supporters had more confidence in public institutions than in private institutions, with the exception of those identifying with the ANC and PAC's policies. In 1991, those feeling closest to the PAC had the least confidence in public institutions, followed by those respondents identifying with the policies of the ANC, DP and smaller parties. In 1991, those identifying with the ANC had the most confidence in private institutions, and those identifying with the right-wing the least. In 1995, only ANC and IFP supporters had more confidence in public institutions than in private institutions. Supporters of the PAC had equal levels of confidence in the two sets of institutions. Right-wing supporters had the least confidence in public institutions, followed closely by the DP in 1995. Although the NP supporters also displayed low levels of confidence in public institutions in 1995, these levels were higher than among right-wing and DP supporters. In 1995, the ANC and the PAC displayed the highest confidence levels toward private institutions.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

From 1991 to 1995, confidence in public institutions has only improved among those feeling closest to the ANC and PAC, whilst falling quite significantly for those respondents identifying with the policies of the right-wing and the NP. Confidence in



private institutions has increased slightly among those relating to the NP and right-wing, whilst decreasing only slightly among those feeling close to all the other parties listed. Confidence in private institutions among respondents identifying with the DP and PAC have remained the same.

Having looked at the mean levels of confidence in public and private institutions, the confidence gap between the two sectors during 1991 and 1995 can be assessed. In 1991, biggest variance in confidence was evident among respondents relating to the ANC, NP and right-wing. During 1995 this variance was evident among respondents identifying with the policies of the right-wing. The lowest variance in confidence levels was found among respondents relating to the ANC and IFP during 1995. Overall, there was a larger discrepancy between confidence in the two sets in 1991 than in 1995.

#### 4.2.2 Cross-tabulation

Table 22 reports confidence in institutions in a cross-tabulation format with political party preference as the independent variable for 1991. Table 23 reports the same confidence levels during 1995. The church was once again the most highly rated institution by all groups and will not be referred to in this rest of the analysis.

In an analysis of each group, the following patterns come to the fore:

- ANC pattern

The institutions which enjoyed the highest degree of confidence among respondents identifying with ANC policies included trade unions (used as anti-apartheid vehicle) in 1991, and parliament in 1995. Overall, respondents identifying with the ANC in 1991 were rather critical, especially of state institutions, and did not identify with institutions in which they largely had no part. Taken together, these respondents were the least critical of state institutions in comparison with all other political party supporters and clearly identified very strongly with institutions in which they played a major role during 1995. When confidence was compared for 1991 and 1995, a positive trend emerges for the churches, and public institutions consistent with the hypotheses. Confidence in the legal system has remained relatively static, whereas it declined slightly towards major companies and the press. The press probably received a lower

score due to perceptions that the press are too critical of government actions, programmes and performance.

There was a significant drop in confidence towards trade unions as, with democratisation, trade unions have steadily lost their status as the primary vehicle for expressing political views, instead turning their focus more to workers' rights. Although confidence has dropped in trade unions, it remains relatively high; confidence among respondents identifying with ANC policies expressed the highest levels of confidence of all the political parties.

**Table 22: Confidence in institutions with political party preference as the independent variable 1991**

		ANC	NP	IFP	DP	Right-wing	PAC	Average
<b>Armed forces</b>	1	17.2%	44.1%	27.9%	14.7%	47.7%	17.4%	29.5%
	2	31.6%	46.6%	37.7%	57.5%	48.9%	30.4%	41.6%
	3	31.5%	8.1%	27.9%	25.4%	3.4%	39.1%	20.0%
	4	19.6%	1.2%	6.6%	2.4%	-	13.0%	8.9%
<b>Legal system</b>	1	30.5%	30.5%	27.0%	15.9%	21.8%	17.4%	27.6%
	2	40.8%	53.0%	44.4%	57.1%	51.5%	30.4%	47.4%
	3	20.1%	14.9%	22.2%	25.0%	21.8%	43.5%	20.1%
	4	8.6%	1.6%	6.3%	2.0%	4.9%	8.7%	5.0%
<b>Police</b>	1	20.0%	32.3%	42.2%	7.4%	40.6%	30.4%	25.9%
	2	28.9%	55.5%	45.3%	54.1%	47.2%	17.4%	43.2%
	3	31.5%	10.6%	9.4%	33.9%	10.7%	30.4%	21.8%
	4	19.6%	1.6%	3.1%	4.7%	1.5%	21.7%	9.1%
<b>Parliament</b>	1	27.9%	25.0%	40.0%	3.5%	10.9%	26.1%	22.0%
	2	33.6%	58.3%	33.3%	53.1%	35.3%	17.4%	43.7%
	3	27.2%	14.1%	21.7%	37.8%	39.5%	30.4%	26.0%
	4	11.4%	2.7%	5.0%	5.5%	14.3%	26.1%	8.3%
<b>Civil service</b>	1	20.6%	10.4%	19.3%	2.4%	10.5%	30.4%	14.4%
	2	40.0%	46.2%	38.6%	28.5%	42.2%	34.8%	40.4%
	3	28.9%	37.3%	28.1%	49.8%	38.8%	26.1%	35.2%
	4	10.4%	6.0%	14.0%	19.3%	8.5%	8.7%	9.9%
<b>Church</b>	1	62.6%	43.5%	47.7%	26.3%	49.6%	52.2%	50.4%
	2	21.1%	36.1%	27.7%	37.3%	28.5%	17.4%	28.5%
	3	12.6%	15.9%	18.5%	25.5%	18.1%	21.7%	16.0%
	4	3.8%	4.5%	6.2%	11.0%	3.7%	8.7%	5.1%
<b>Press</b>	1	27.5%	3.8%	13.6%	3.9%	3.1%	21.7%	13.6%
	2	40.7%	36.2%	35.6%	43.5%	16.9%	39.1%	35.9%
	3	24.9%	51.1%	33.9%	46.7%	56.5%	30.4%	40.6%
	4	6.9%	8.9%	16.9%	5.9%	23.5%	8.7%	9.8%
<b>Trade unions</b>	1	46.4%	2.1%	18.0%	1.6%	3.7%	31.8%	20.6%
	2	36.0%	14.1%	24.0%	17.6%	10.2%	45.5%	23.4%
	3	13.6%	48.7%	34.0%	49.8%	46.9%	22.7%	33.9%
	4	4.0%	35.1%	24.0%	31.0%	39.2%	-	22.1%
<b>Major companies</b>	1	42.2%	14.7%	32.3%	11.9%	15.1%	21.7%	26.3%
	2	34.3%	65.4%	43.5%	63.1%	56.3%	47.8%	50.1%
	3	19.0%	16.7%	21.0%	23.0%	23.4%	17.4%	19.7%
	4	4.5%	3.1%	3.2%	2.0%	5.2%	13.0%	3.9%

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all.

- NP pattern

Respondents identifying with NP policies held the most confidence in 1991 toward public institutions, and in 1995 towards major companies. The NP is strong among white capitalist interests, the white, and emerging coloured and Indian bourgeoisie, and

**Table 23: Confidence in institutions with political party support as the independent variable 1995**

		ANC	NP	IFP	DP	Right-wing	PAC	Average
<b>Armed forces</b>	1	21.6%	12.1%	8.8%	6.6%	9.4%	27.7%	17.8%
	2	38.9%	37.0%	53.7%	37.2%	29.3%	34.5%	38.9%
	3	27.6%	39.5%	19.6%	45.9%	42.3%	26.3%	30.7%
	4	11.9%	11.4%	17.8%	10.2%	19.0%	11.5%	12.6%
<b>Legal System</b>	1	30.6%	11.0%	28.4%	7.4%	7.0%	35.1%	24.8%
	2	40.7%	35.2%	45.4%	34.1%	29.0%	34.8%	38.8%
	3	19.1%	37.5%	18.2%	43.2%	41.7%	11.6%	24.7%
	4	9.7%	16.3%	8.0%	15.2%	22.3%	18.6%	11.8%
<b>Police</b>	1	35.7%	25.5%	29.4%	9.6%	20.2%	30.1%	31.3%
	2	41.9%	45.6%	42.9%	44.4%	51.6%	47.8%	43.4%
	3	16.9%	21.4%	17.6%	33.4%	20.0%	14.3%	19.0%
	4	5.4%	7.6%	10.0%	12.5%	8.2%	7.9%	6.3%
<b>Parliament</b>	1	41.6%	8.8%	25.6%	1.0%	5.5%	35.9%	30.9%
	2	39.9%	29.8%	43.6%	34.0%	12.6%	41.2%	37.9%
	3	14.8%	42.9%	18.5%	51.2%	46.9%	14.3%	22.2%
	4	2.3%	18.6%	12.3%	13.9%	35.1%	8.7%	9.0%
<b>Civil service</b>	1	25.5%	10.1%	12.9%	2.6%	4.4%	22.8%	19.5%
	2	40.8%	29.5%	43.1%	26.9%	28.9%	42.2%	39.2%
	3	24.8%	43.0%	29.2%	52.0%	38.7%	20.1%	29.2%
	4	9.5%	17.4%	14.8%	18.5%	28.0%	14.9%	12.1%
<b>Church</b>	1	64.3%	52.4%	46.3%	23.3%	66.2%	45.9%	59.6%
	2	21.5%	32.4%	39.8%	38.6%	22.8%	32.8%	25.0%
	3	11.4%	12.6%	11.8%	33.1%	10.4%	17.1%	12.1%
	4	2.8%	2.5%	2.1%	5.0%	.6%	4.2%	3.2%
<b>Press</b>	1	20.8%	6.0%	5.5%	2.6%	3.8%	22.1%	15.8%
	2	39.9%	33.5%	44.2%	34.8%	25.1%	45.0%	38.1%
	3	31.2%	51.5%	38.3%	53.5%	49.2%	28.8%	36.4%
	4	8.2%	9.0%	12.0%	9.2%	21.9%	4.2%	9.7%
<b>Trade Unions</b>	1	20.4%	6.0%	4.7%	3.5%	3.4%	30.8%	15.5%
	2	34.8%	18.5%	30.9%	13.6%	13.6%	23.6%	28.2%
	3	26.7%	34.8%	22.1%	43.7%	24.4%	29.0%	29.2%
	4	18.2%	40.6%	42.2%	39.2%	58.5%	16.6%	27.1%
<b>Major companies</b>	1	40.9%	20.0%	30.5%	17.4%	16.0%	33.8%	33.7%
	2	32.9%	54.2%	40.4%	67.4%	63.1%	45.0%	40.9%
	3	17.2%	20.5%	22.6%	14.6%	13.6%	11.8%	17.7%
	4	9.0%	5.3%	6.5%	.7%	7.4%	9.4%	7.8%

Note: Confidence in all institutions is scored on a 4 point scale where 1=a great deal, 2=quite a lot, 3=not very much, 4=none at all.

the police. Trade unions and the press were given a vote of no-confidence in 1991 and in 1995. Confidence among these respondents has declined from 1991 to 1995 toward all institutions except for churches. The most significant drops in confidence was



towards parliament as the NP became the opposition<sup>11</sup> in the 1994 elections, and the armed forces. Although confidence declined for the police and major companies, they still received relatively high scores overall.

- IFP pattern

During 1991, respondents identifying with the IFP's policies had more confidence in the police, armed forces and parliament than any other of the parties supported by the black population. This may be the result of 'third force' violence, where military training was given to anti-ANC blacks. There was probably a perception among these respondents that the government trusted them more than they did the ANC. Major companies scored quite high in 1995.

In 1991, low confidence scores were accorded to trade unions who were given a vote of no-confidence in 1995. This is probably due to the trade unions having close ties with the ANC, the IFP's opposition. Although the IFP does have its own trade unions, they are relatively small. Comparing confidence scores among these respondents during 1991 and 1995, reveals that confidence dropped slightly for most institutions. Confidence levels have not improved significantly since the transition which is probably a reflection of the rivalry between the ANC and the IFP (i.e., violent conflict in Kwazulu-Natal and their desire for federalism in South Africa). Whilst churches and the legal system benefited from increased confidence, trade unions experienced a significant drop of confidence.

- DP pattern

Major companies (the DP is strong among white capitalist interests, the white, and emerging coloured and Indian bourgeoisie) scored the highest in 1991 and 1995 respondents identifying with DP policies. Trade unions and the civil service (forming part of the public institutions which was first controlled by the NP in 1991, and by the ANC after 1995) received a vote of no-confidence for both 1991 and 1995. Confidence in institutions has generally declined among these respondents, except for

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<sup>11</sup> Despite the fact that the NP was a minor party in the GNU, the perception may have been that the ANC in reality controlled the policy-making process.

that towards major companies. Scores for the armed forces and legal system have dropped the most significantly, perhaps because both of these institutions are public institutions controlled by their opposition.

- Right-wing pattern

Those respondents who identified with the right-wing parties accorded the most confidence to the armed forces and police force in 1991 and 1995. Trade unions received a vote of no-confidence in 1991 and 1995, and parliament in 1995, probably as they are perceived as being dominated by the black population. Overall, these respondents had the most confidence in 'law and order' institutions (armed forces and the police), a reflection of their militancy and interests in protecting minority rights. The 1995 data reveals that the right-wing parties were generally the most negative towards the majority of institutions, except for churches and police which both scored highly among their supporters. Confidence levels have generally declined, except towards major companies, churches and the press. The most significant decline was towards public institutions now controlled by an ANC-dominated government, and trade unions. Although confidence toward the police and armed forces has dropped, it has remained relatively high.

- PAC pattern

Respondents identifying with the PAC rated the trade unions most highly in 1991, with similar confidence being exhibited in 1995 towards major companies and the police. All public institutions were given quite low scores in 1991. These findings suggest that those parties who did not identify with state institutions, as they had virtually no part in them, did not identify strongly with them. Trade unions were given the lowest score in 1995. Comparing confidence levels from 1991 to 1995 reveals that confidence towards most institutions has improved, with the exception of a significant drop for trade unions. The most significant improvement in confidence was for parliament, the police and the legal system.

## 5. 1995 and beyond

In order to assess the prospects of building stronger confidence in all institutions of society, it may be insightful to look into recent trends in the restructuring of institutions, and general concerns of institutional performance that may influence public perceptions. A topical consideration which has ensued following the transition period, based on the experiences of society under the ANC-led government, is the type of relationship the government envisions between itself and institutions. Questions mainly concern the 'watchdog' role institutions are designed to fulfil in a democracy, and more specifically, which institutions the government consider appropriate for this role. Indeed, some remarks by the leadership in the ANC have sent shock-waves to those committed to democracy and may even hint at elements from South Africa's authoritarian past.

There is global concern concerning the future of parliamentary government in new democracies such as South Africa. This concern, according to Hibbing and Patterson (1994:598), is based on the chasm between citizens' expectations and actual parliamentary performance. One commentator (quoted in Hibbing and Patterson 1994:599) said that "...public expectations of the parliament are running so high, ... it is a reasonable assumption that even a perfect legislature would not satisfy them".

Parliament does not appear to have been chosen as a watchdog by the government as ANC policies have frequently been compromised in this arena. Attempts by Parliament to transform the private standing committee system into a portfolio committee system that evokes public response, holding bureaucrats and ministers to account, is not operating so effectively in practice as theory would suggest (Reitzes 1997:19). One example is that "...from the first time Health Minister Nkosazana Zuma was able to bypass Parliament's health committee in a direct appeal to the president when the opposition parties wanted to ask all sorts of awkward questions about *Sarafina 2*, Parliament's committees have been a shadow of the rigorous and critical watchdogs of the executive that they were meant to be" (*The Star* 7 June 1998).

As far as the armed forces are concerned, integration and rationalisation of the force will only be completed by 1999 (South African Survey 1996:88). Steady reductions in the defence budget, which was halved in real terms between 1989 and 1996, were made possible by the removal of conventional external threats, but there has been a temporary increase in numbers serving the force while the new SANDF is created (Barber in Venter 1998:322). A progress report to parliament in August 1995 indicated that 16 450 of the estimated 35 000 former members of the 'liberation' army were incorporated into the SANDF; this process was complicated by the low levels of training among guerrilla armies, resignation of instructors and illiteracy. Most SANDF instructors were white at the time, a result of public service regulations and criteria which made it difficult for former guerrillas (who mostly had only informal training) to attain high positions in the ranks (South African Survey 1996:88).

This process of integration increased the number of soldiers in the SANDF to almost 100 000 by May 1997 (South Africa Survey 1998:77). Downsizing was proposed to ensure that the defence force would not only be representative of the population, but that both former statutory and non-statutory forces would be given equitable representation. Table 24 shows the composition of the SANDF on 1 May 1997 by former force of origin (including civilians), and the proposed downsizing formula.

**Table 24: Composition of the SANDF by force of origin (1 May 1997)**

	Actual numbers	Proposed numbers after down-sizing
SADF	64 516	37 759
Umkhonto we Sizwe	11 919	10 604
Azanian People's Liberation Army	4 239	4 122
Former 'independent' and non-independent defence forces	9 108	8 461
Kwa-Zulu self-protection forces	1 459	1 958
Members and civilians employed by SANDF	8 422	7 795
<b>Total</b>	<b>99 663</b>	<b>70 699</b>

Source: South Africa Survey (1998:78)

The SANDF announced in May 1997 that it intended to reduce the armed forces by 30 000 members during the period 1997-1999. At this time, the SANDF was composed of 57 450 blacks, 30 340 whites, 11 300 coloured and 910 Indian personnel. It was proposed that the future force would be reduced to 42 739 blacks, 17 217 whites,

7 225 coloured and 530 Indian personnel (South Africa Survey 1998:79). The restructuring and reorganisation of the SANDF only gained momentum in February 1997 when changes in the top levels of the force were announced (Allie 1997:18). Broader representivity would be facilitated by accelerated affirmative action as well as gender sensitive programmes (Pienaar 1997:15). Ronnie Kasrile, the Deputy Minister of Defence, announced in June 1997 that at that time the majority (69%) of members in the SANDF were black, and that about 22% officers of the SANDF were black and more than 11% were women. Fourteen black generals have been appointed since 1994 (South African Survey 1998:265).

The police force were despised and feared by the black populace during apartheid. The SAPS is taking a number of steps to alter its image, i.e., the establishment of a community relations division to better relations between the community and the police (Race Relations Survey 1994:302). The past dispensation was characterised by an antagonistic relationship between police and communities, but recent "...surveys show that people are happy to see police units in their areas" (Holtzman quoted in Tshenye 1996:30). This may be in part due to "...the new corporate identity of the police which is representative of the demographics of the country" (Tshenye 1996:30). The aim of civilian supervision of the police force is to ensure a transparent and accountable service (Mufamadi quoted in van Wyk 1995:14).

It was announced in November 1997 that the SAPS aimed to ensure that by the year 2000, more than half of the positions within the force would be occupied by blacks, that women would make up some 30% of police force membership, with disabled people composing some 2% of the force (South Africa Survey 1998:60). Clearly ways must be found whereby confidence will be generated; confidence in the police depends on part on the public's perception of its efficiency and effectiveness. Scott and Heymann (1998:1) note that "...part of that task entails racial integration of the police force itself and bringing black police officers into positions of influence".

Crime prevention is regarded as one of the biggest challenges facing post-apartheid South Africa. The primary issues facing the SAPS are thus fundamental reform

together with the reduction of crime (Stremlau 1997:39). The identity of the police force following democratisation should be seen in "...the context of a radical shift from law and order to [the] safety and security..." of all (Holtzman quoted in Tshenye 1996:24). Given the high crime rate, the government has to deal decisively with violence if the public is to have confidence in the police force. If public confidence in the police is low, people may resort to alternative strategies, i.e., the actions of PAGAD in the Western Cape. Sufficient confidence levels in the police force may lead to support for other governmental reforms (Stremlau 1997:38).

The present government places a priority on the rationalisation and restructuring of the civil service to build an unified, representative, integrated, and more efficient instrument to implement government policies and meet the needs of the public (Ncholo 1996:221; South African Survey 1996:268). The aim is to increase productivity, accountability and efficiency.

The racial make-up of the civil service as of 30 September 1996 is summarised in Table 25 with regard to gender composition, 49% of personnel were male and 51% female. The figures indicate that in comparison with demographic figures blacks are under-represented with 65% employed in the civil service despite the fact that they comprise 76% of the population. Whites are over-represented, making up 23% of the civil service and only constituting 13% of the population. The percentage of coloureds and Indians compares favourably in comparison with their percentage of the population. By 1996, the transformation process had resulted in a reduction of the dominance of whites in the higher management echelons (Theunissen in Venter 1998:112).

Black	65%
White	23%
Coloured	9%
Asian	3%

Source: Theunissen (in Venter 1998:112)

If the new civil service produces in terms of its objectives of equity and cost-effectiveness, perceptions of the new democratic civil service will be positively influenced (*Finance Week* 14-20 December 1995:10). The challenge of the civil service

is to promote a high standard of professional ethics thereby tackling widespread fraud and corruption (*Finance Week* 8-16 August 1996:14). To achieve the objective of cost-effectiveness restructuring plans for the civil service already go a long way towards streamlining and rationalising its operations. The number of national and provincial government departments will be substantially reduced, as well as the number of public sector staff (*Finance Week* 8-16 August 1996:14). The difficulty in determining precise personnel requirements are the result of the legacy of apartheid with the GNU inheriting 11 different public service administrations which had to be amalgamated to form a cohesive, unified whole (Hilliard 1997:2). Table 26 shows the breakdown of the civil service sector employment by race in September 1996 and 1997.

**Table 26: Civil service employment by race: September 1996 - September 1997**

	September 1996	Proportion of total	September 1997	Proportion of total
<b>African</b>	952 982	50.1%	944 161	50.7%
<b>Coloured</b>	187 415	9.8%	185 332	9.9%
<b>Indian</b>	24 635	1.3%	24 884	1.3%
<b>White</b>	431 970	22.7%	413 117	22.2%
<b>Unspecified</b>	305 785	16.1%	296 459	15.9%
<b>Total</b>	1 902 787	100.0%	1 863 953	100.0%

Source: South Africa Survey (1998:239).

The lack of legitimacy accorded to the legal system among the black population can be reversed by involving more black people in the administration of justice (Consultus 1991:3). By the end of 1988, there were 27 black, 54 coloured, 28 Indian and 847 white people serving as prosecutors (excluding the homelands), although magistrates were all white (excluding homelands) (Race Relations Survey 1990:149). By May 1997, there were 571 black magistrates, compared with 1 019 white magistrates; 846 black prosecutors (including senior prosecutors) compared with 821 white prosecutors; 51 black advocates compared with 170 white advocates (South Africa Survey 1998:264). Twenty five black people had been appointed as permanent judges to the High courts by January 1997 (South Africa Survey 1998:67).

Following South Africa's transition the churches that supported apartheid could play a conciliatory role by confessing to the moral credence wrongly given to the apartheid policies (Venter 1998:18). A full confession of the NG church, the largest single



denomination under Afrikaners (38% are members), will "...almost certainly lead to a conciliatory attitude from the black community" (Venter 1998:19).

The ANC leadership has repeatedly called for a change in ownership within the media. This process only started in earnest in 1996-1997 with mergers and take-overs of the previously white-owned media (de Beer 1997:118). It is argued that the press is both the cause of social breakdown, and the ideological 'glue' that keep society together. The press therefore has an important role in shaping people's perceptions of institutions, particularly in a racial-conflict ridden society like South Africa (de Beer 1997:111). De Beer (1997:111-113) applies Wilson and Gutiérrez's five-stage press developments experienced in the USA to the South African context.

The first phase is an exclusionary phase which relates to the racially exclusive reporting during apartheid, where even the liberal press perceived blacks as part of the 'native question'. Even in the post-apartheid era, blacks feel that there is a shortcoming in press views about the black community. Many whites (especially Afrikaners), on the other hand feel excluded from the new societal structures.

The second phase is the threatening-issue phase. During apartheid the perceived threat of blacks was based on white fears of being surrounded by the black majority. In post-apartheid South Africa, racial polarisation is again reinforced by news reports creating the perception that the high crime is principally caused by the black population, thereby exasperating white fears and new racial strife.

The third phase is that of confrontation where blacks were 'outside' the system during apartheid. Many whites now feel the same way, and much of the news is perceived as "us versus them".

Fourth is the stereotypical selection phase. The democratisation of South Africa implied that a post-conflict period needed to be developed. Black society argues that the press is not dealing 'naturally' with topics that affect them, while whites feel

endangered because they perceive themselves to be at the receiving end of violent crime.

The last phase is that of multi-racial coverage and if it is to be realised in South Africa, prejudice and racism must be removed from the ranks of the press. The press must report from the perspective that “us” is representative of all South African citizens. In sum, it seems that the present situation in South Africa is a reflection of all these stages. Exclusionary coverage, threatening issues, confrontation and stereotypical selection are obstacles in the way of a fully developed multi-racial form of coverage.

An argument put forward by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki is that the press wrongly assumes that they are necessarily adversaries of the government. Although such an approach was correct within the apartheid context, he said that with the removal of apartheid this “...anti-system attitude was no longer appropriate” (de Beer 1997:118). Similarly, in President Mandela’s address to the ANC’s conference in Mafikeng in 1997, he stated that the media was part and parcel of a conspiracy against the government (*The Star* 7 June 1998). Many argue that “...the media can best serve [South Africa] at this time of [its] history and transformation, by practising responsible journalism” instead of adversarial criticism (*The Star*, 2 December 1996 quoted in de Beer 1997:122). This argument holds that it is in South Africa’s interest if the press help to build rather than destroy the fragile societal balance.

Economic interest, too, has “...an important role to play in consolidating democracy but this role is not automatic” (Friedman 1996:93). Economic institutions mediate between the state and the market. Big business is still controlled in the main by a small group of white companies. It is clear that notwithstanding democratisation, a more equal distribution of political power has not meant a redistribution of economic power and benefits (Schoeman in Venter 1998:308). However, a degree of market autonomy and ownership diversity is imperative for the independence and vibrancy of civil society if it is to contribute to democracy (Linz and Stepan 1996:21). Thus, the assumption is that greater distribution via the state and companies will lead to greater support of companies as legitimate actors in furthering social goals.

A number of contemporary controversies regarding the role of major companies form part of an ongoing economic and policy debate. Their relationship with the state, whether they include or exclude citizens in decision-making, and the degree of power they should have in representing particular interests is debated (Friedman 1996:83-4). The influential role of big business in directing emerging government policies is undisputed. The amount of influence that they have is not easy to determine (Booyesen and Erasmus in Venter 1998:237).

Friedman (1996:89) argues that the current business leadership in South Africa, is not as sensitive to public opinion as business in more established democracies. While business, as Friedman (1996:86) notes, "...does have some experience in dealing with other sections of civil society, it is used to a far more passive reaction from other interests than it has encountered in the past few years. While it has done some adjusting to these new realities, it may well have some way to go before it has fully adapted".

If major companies want to take public opinion seriously it might be necessary for them to support general causes such as sport development and environmental protection (Friedman 1996:89). This will make it possible for them to project themselves as institutions that promote the well-being of the whole society, and in so doing increase sales and at the same time as encouraging support for business activities.

Strong economic interests are in Friedman's (1996:92) words "...a guarantor, not an unpleasant consequence, of democracy". The existence of a mixed market economy prompts the flow of these interests and provide resources to private actors that are not dependent on the state. It is these resources that ensure that civil society institutions have enough power to act as a counterweight to the state.

Major companies can play a role in the consolidation of democracy. There has to be a willingness to commit to democratic constraints, and they have to explore avenues in order to relate to both state and society (Friedman 1996:94). However, it appears as

though the government does not view big business as an appropriate watchdog, perhaps because of "...the commonly held belief in ANC circles that business, by its very global nature, is in essence anti-nationalist" (*The Star* 7 June 1998).

Civil society institutions are not only autonomous from the state, but also from political society. Cosatu has explicitly aligned itself with the ANC. As a result of this, unionists and workers who do not support the ANC have formed rival union federations (Friedman 1996:82). Friedman (1996:82) claims that institutions do "...not entirely sacrifice their independence when they align themselves to parties". He cites the example of disputes between the government and Cosatu over macro-economic policy. This illustrates that "...belonging to the tripartite alliance has not turned Cosatu into a rubber stamp for ANC policy" (Friedman 1996:82). Institutions in civil society may "...form alliances with parties, but if they become captured by parties, or hegemonic with them, they thereby move their primary locus of activity to political society and lose much of their ability to perform certain mediating and democracy-building functions" (Diamond 1994:7).

Although civil society institutions who align themselves to political parties do not necessarily undermine democracy, these types of alliances do have costs (Friedman 1996:82). Firstly, they may lead to divided loyalties as choices have to be made between members' interests and the interests of the party they are aligned to. Secondly, civil society may be weakened by limiting the institutions' ability to attract members who may support their goals but not the party to which they are aligned.

Ultimately the decision to align is not an issue of principle, rather it is a strategic choice. Friedman (1996:83) believes that these "...decisions reflect, rather than cause, some of the outcomes which their opponents decry: if large interest groups in a polarised society align themselves with particular parties, this may reflect the realities of the society, not the propensity of civil society associations to make undemocratic choices". Since South Africa's democratisation, labour has been one of the strongest critics of the GNU (Adler in Mittleman 1996:135).

Friedman (1996:94) suggests that trade unions have yet to adjust to the realities of a complex democratic environment, in which both state and market need to be strengthened and where a variety of legitimate interests contend for influence.

The interplay between public institutions and civil society is central to the manner in which power is exercised. While democratisation results in stronger access to the state, the capacity to use it has not been made easier (Reitzes 1997:19). The route to a stronger civil society in South Africa may lie in maximising state accessibility to the widest possible public influence (Reitzes 1997:19). Friedman (1996:90) argues however that South Africa's democracy is not as accessible to grassroots opinion as leaders would like people to believe. Public debate, for example, is conducted in English which is the second or even third language of many. South Africa's apartheid history has also contributed to differential access, resources, and funds; institutions do not have an equal opportunity to influence public opinion (Reitzes 1997:19). Citizens may have strong opinions on some policy issues but because they lack the ability to make themselves heard the full range of societal interests are not reflected in civil society (Friedman 1996:90; Reitzes 1997:20). By excluding sectors of the public from participating in public life, their sense of effectiveness and commitment to democratic participation is compromised (Friedman 1996:91).

There is also an added danger that any "...outspoken criticism of the new order will quickly translate into an anti-South Africanism, where critics of government policy will be dismissed as unpatriotic and destructive" (Van Zyl and Kantor quoted in de Beer 1997:124). Clearly the new government will have to accept that criticism does not equal disloyalty (Johnson quoted in de Beer 1997:124). Political activity in South Africa implies much more than a simple homage to the image of the government, otherwise there would be no need for watchdogs at all (*The Star* 7 June 1998).

## **6. The way forward**

How can confidence toward institutions be fostered? To answer this question one has to consider the importance that the strength and autonomy of the state may have on public confidence toward institutions. A state's strength is vital for democracy, as institutions and practices are embedded within the state's institutional network and

expressed through high levels of compliance, participation and legitimacy (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:56). The viability and stability of democracy are indeed intimately linked to the strength and character of political institutions (Diamond et al. 1997:xxii). In order to consolidate democracy, the state must garner deep legitimacy among significant actors as well as the population at large, as legitimacy is a crucial factor for successful social control (du Toit 1995:341; Diamond et al. 1997:xxii).

A distinction can be made between strong states and weak states. Whereas a strong state has the capacity to retain its control over society when social organisations compete to exercise control over society, a weak state does not (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:56). In a divided society, partisanship tends to be ascriptively defined and the challenge of the state is to deliver public goods equitably (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:57). Two types of strong state can emerge in an ethnically divided society where there is a contest for hegemony: either an ethnically neutral (autonomous) state or a partisan ethnic state (du Toit 1995:46). The dominant ethnic group in an ethnic state merge into a single hegemonic unit where their own views (matters pertaining to the membership of the state, regime format and societal autonomy) dictate to the ethnic losers so that the emergence of democratic regimes and of civil society is precluded, or is systematically dismantled (du Toit 1995:47). The partisanist character of the state under apartheid created the grounds for social control (communal, economic, and political), which in turn served as an ideal environment to implement apartheid policies (du Toit 1995:341). As the state became unable to sustain its ideology, its strength of social control weakened among all groups except whites (the beneficiaries of state action). A similar amount of control could not be exercised over the majority of the population as they did not perceive the system to be legitimate.

It is legitimacy which is the key feature in social control (du Toit 1995:341). Confidence toward institutions in the future will thus firmly rest upon the public's perceptions of the character of political institutions as being ethnically neutral. Legitimacy and confidence toward institutions following the transition may be the result of a reaction to the abuse of an authoritarian past, but in order for it to be

lasting, there needs to be a degree of effective governance by the new democratic institutions (Diamond et al. 1997:xxii). The political system is judged by the citizenry not only upon what it delivers economically, but also the degree to which valued public goals (i.e., freedom, accountability, representativeness and overall efficiency) are achieved (Diamond 1997:xxii).

State autonomy, independence of the government and political society from particular social groups must be achieved (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:63). During apartheid, the state could not in any way be described as autonomous. In reality, a strong ethnic state must be strengthened to ensure that the value of citizenship surpasses other contending loyalties such as that of the ethnic group (du Toit 1995:49), the state must be made ethnically neutral in its allocation of public goods. This is a key feature in the building of an autonomous strong state which "...can emerge only when the shared notion that there should be an autonomous set of state interests exists, and when bureaucrats believe those interests coincide with their own" (Migdal quoted in du Toit 1995:51).

According to the liberationist view (see Chapter Three), democracy entails the empowerment of those oppressed under apartheid. Empowerment refers not only to the capturing of political power in state institutions, but also to administrative control through the civil service (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:62). State autonomy is thereby severely compromised by the newly appointed civil servants and by the demands of political and communal solidarity; where community loyalty overrides loyalty to the institutional functions and interests of the state (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:63). In such instances, 'democratic empowerment' is equated with acting in accordance with the interests of the community; thereby the domain of public responsibility is dedicated to community interests. This was the situation under apartheid with the resulting corruption of the public administration. According to Gagiano and du Toit (in Kotzé 1996:63) "...the logic of Afrikaner empowerment was not so different from that of black empowerment and the implications for state autonomy may be similar".



In order to achieve consolidation of democracy, it is necessary that the autonomy of both state and civil society be supported by the rule of law (Linz and Stepan 1996:53; Diamond et al. 1997:xxxii). According to Shils (quoted in du Toit 1995:36), "...the state lays down laws which set the outermost boundaries of the autonomy of the diverse spheres and sectors of civil society; so, civil society from its side lays down limits on the actions of the state". The state is obligated to maintain the autonomy of civil society as well as to protect it from encroachment (political, economic, societal), thus becoming the guardian of the boundaries between the public and the private (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:55). When the state respects and/or honours civil rights, the autonomy of civil society is exercised (Gagiano and du Toit in Kotzé 1996:56).

A robust civil society is necessary in the post-apartheid state in order to resist any reversal of democracy, assist in democratic consolidation and the deepening of democracy (Linz and Stepan 1996:9). Civil society (in a democratic state) must inaugurate and sustain a democratic regime. The survival of the state is dependent on its ability to act as a nurturing force in the growth of civil society and the establishment of the democratic regime, and to guard them both (du Toit 1995:30-31). However, it is not only the strength of state that is important; society too must be strengthened. Society will be strengthened by rebuilding those communities who succumbed under the strain of apartheid and the revolt against it. A typical problem arising after a transition is that the 'primacy' of institutions in civil society "...inevitably declines after the transition, as the authoritarian state disappears, [and] political parties and more established interest groups take centre stage, and people turn to more private concerns" (Diamond et al. 1997:xxxi).

The Constitution is an obvious source of strength for the South African state. A potential weakness is that minorities may perceive themselves to be threatened by the domination of the majority. If this occurs, the state may be weakened by strategies of 'ungovernability' (du Toit 1995:393). In the final instance, democratic practices will be judged in terms of resilience and persistence (du Toit 1995:399).

## 7. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to present and interpret the data. A general conclusion can be drawn that in 1981 whites and those respondents identifying with the NP, considering their position in society, had the highest degree of confidence in institutions, and especially public institutions. Blacks, coloureds and Indians were, on the other hand, quite critical of institutions and especially public institutions. The conclusion can now be made that churches appeared to be the only institution that enjoyed any extensive credibility among the different race groups during 1981. This was the result of the majority of the population perceiving the system to be illegitimate. The scores for all other institutions were relatively low. Examining the scores for 1981 by political party preference show that the only institutions that enjoyed relatively high scores included the churches, armed forces, legal system and the police.

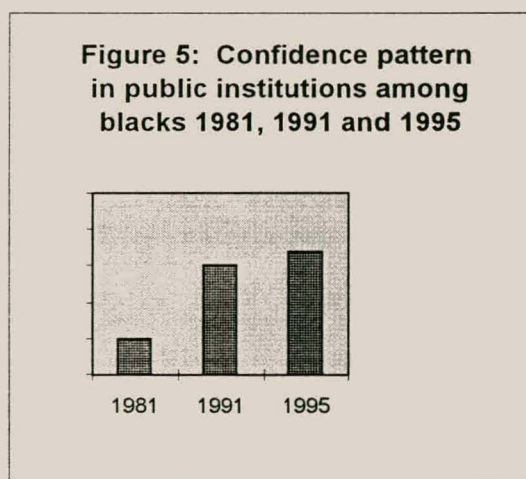
In 1991, whites again recorded the most confidence in public institutions. Blacks, coloureds and Indians (and the predominantly black parties) were less critical of institutions as they perceived the government to be moving decisively towards a new dispensation. In 1991, the majority of institutions, except for the press, trade unions and the civil service, were given relatively high scores. The remainder of the listed institutions had relatively low to moderate scores.

Following the transition in 1995, whites expressed considerably less confidence toward institutions. The development among blacks was towards increased confidence in institutions. Coloureds and Indians have remained relatively critical of all public institutions. In 1995, churches, the police and major companies were accorded positive scores by the South African population. The churches, legal system, police, parliament and major companies were given positive scores in the more comprehensive survey in 1995. The scores for all institutions, although not very high, tend towards moderate more than low. This implies that South Africans are relatively sceptical of institutions rather than distrustful. It therefore does not indicate a serious threat to democracy, although increased confidence would be more favourable in the democratic

consolidation process. The practical conclusion for South Africa is very simply to defend, nourish and build upon its institutions.

With regard to political party preference, the general conclusion is that parties excluded from political society or having a small role were the most negative towards institutions. It should also be taken into account that South Africa's polarised history has forced people into distinct groups. Friedman (1996:90) notes that this makes it "...less likely that they will switch party loyalties, even if they are dissatisfied with government policy or performance".

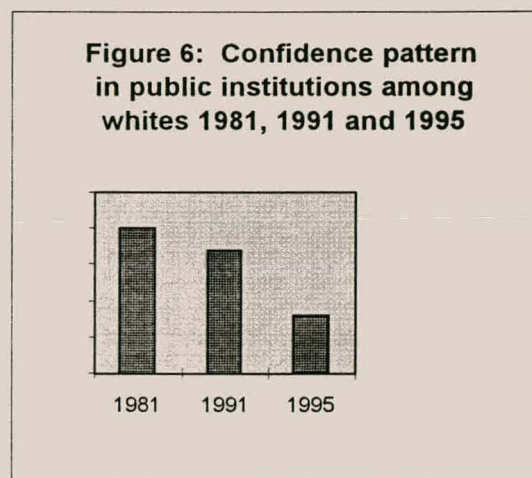
Figures Five, Six, Seven and Eight plots the confidence pattern by the average mean scores of race groups towards public institutions in 1981, 1991 and 1995, clearly illustrating confidence patterns over time. These must be viewed within in the context of the fact that the 1981 survey excluded rural blacks, whereas the 1991 and 1995 surveys included them. Figure Five provides the confidence pattern in public institutions of blacks from the apartheid era to the post apartheid era.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

The pattern among blacks from 1981 through to 1995 shows a positive trend in confidence levels towards public institutions. The figure demonstrates a marked improvement in confidence scores for public institutions. Consistent with the speculations of previous chapters, confidence in public institutions is low considering their exclusion from the political system during apartheid. The improvement of

confidence levels in 1991 was probably the result of their changing status with political, social and economic 'reforms' by the apartheid government, as well as the promise of a new dispensation. The 1995 trend, shows that blacks had the most confidence in public institutions at this time, a reflection of the reins of power shifting from white to black.



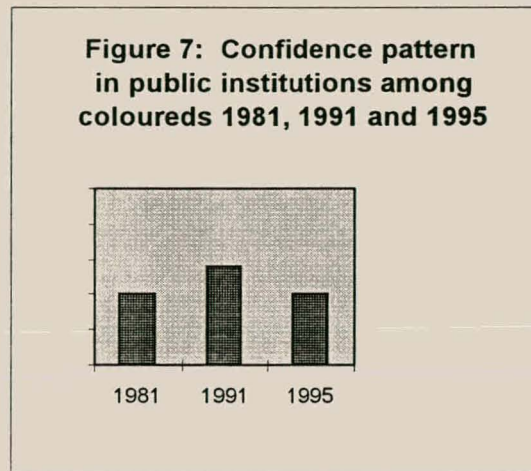
Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

Figure Six indicates the pattern of confidence levels among whites from the apartheid era to the post apartheid era. It is clear that whites had quite a lot of confidence in public institutions during 1981, probably the result of their dominant status at the time, and the state's protection of their interests and privileges. The pattern in 1991 indicates slightly less confidence in public institutions, probably the result of some whites being opposed to the government's programme of reform and fears of a black-dominated system. It might also have been the result of changing perceptions about apartheid policies, as more ills of government were exposed at this time. Confidence levels among whites in public institutions during 1995 have decreased quite dramatically. It is clear that whites, having lost their dominant position, do not have much confidence in the public institutions of the post-apartheid state.

Figure Seven reports the confidence scores in public institutions among the coloureds in 1981, 1991 and 1995. Coloured confidence levels show that they did not have much confidence in public institutions during 1981. Confidence in public institutions

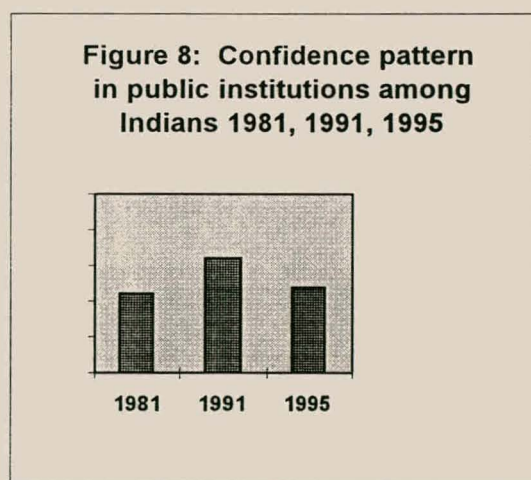


improved significantly by 1991, probably due to the structure of the Tricameral Parliament, their limited incorporation into some public institutions, and the apartheid government's promise of a new dispensation. Confidence toward public institutions in the post-apartheid era had decreased by 1995, falling to 1981 levels. This trend among



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

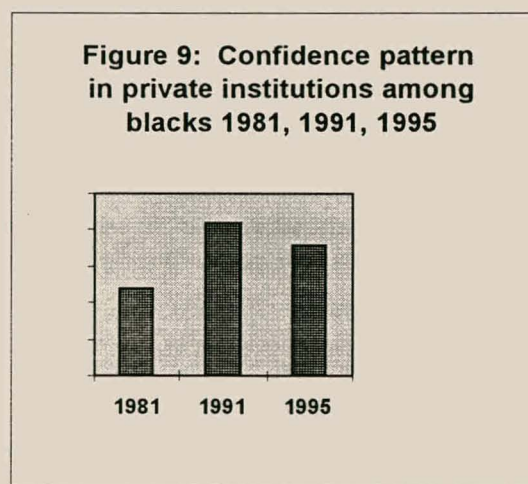
coloureds demonstrates that they generally hold the same relatively low confidence in a black-dominated state as they had for the former white-dominated apartheid state.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

Figure Eight shows the trends in the confidence levels of Indians towards public institutions. The Indian population did not have significant confidence in public

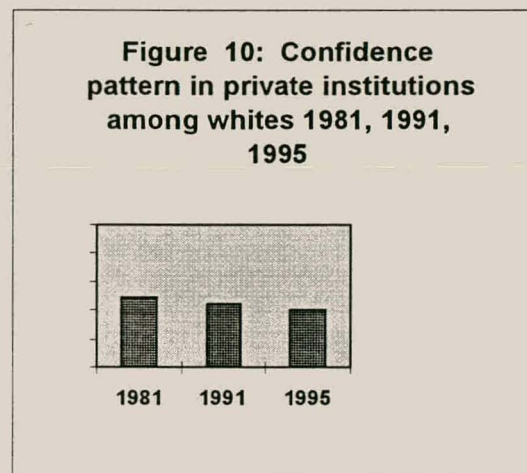
institutions during 1981. In 1991 they again had more confidence in public institutions than blacks and coloureds, but again less than whites. Confidence levels in 1991 improved, probably because of their inclusion in the Tricameral Parliament, their jobs in some state institutions, and the promise by government of a democratic political system. Confidence levels toward public institutions in the post-apartheid era dropped from 1991 to 1995, and have only improved very slightly from the 1981 figure. It is clear that the post-apartheid phase had different implications Indians and coloureds than it did for blacks. Their status in society, despite the democratisation process, did not change their perceptions as might have been expected and they remain the marginalised groups in the post-apartheid South Africa. Many Indians and coloureds feel excluded from government policies such as affirmative action. It seems to them that they were not 'white' enough for the previous government, and are not 'black' enough now.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

Figures Nine, 10 and 11 report confidence patterns of different racial groups in private institutions during 1981, 1991 and 1995. Figure Nine indicates black confidence in private institutions. Blacks did not have very much confidence in private institutions in 1981, although they recorded less towards public institutions. There was a marked improvement in confidence levels for private institutions in 1991, probably the result of relatively high levels of confidence in trade unions as an instrument to air their political

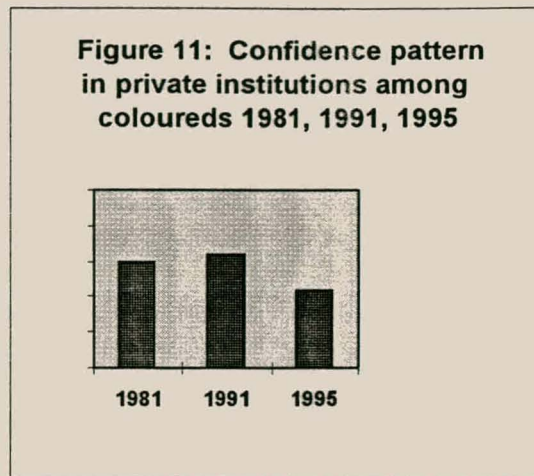
views. The apartheid government also did not have such a strong influence over public institutions with the onset of the transition phase. Confidence in private institutions among blacks has decreased slightly from 1991 to 1995, perhaps the result of the opening of political society and the fact that the black populace did not have to rely so strongly on private institutions to the same extent that they had to during apartheid. Although black confidence levels towards private institutions have dropped slightly, they still have the most confidence of all the racial groups in the post-apartheid era.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

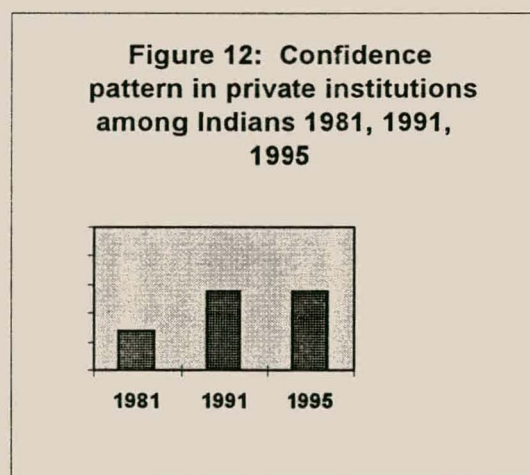
Figure 10 reports the pattern of confidence among whites, who recorded low levels of confidence towards private institutions during 1981. Confidence in private institutions decreased slightly from 1981 to 1991, and again from 1991 to 1995. Whites have the least confidence of all the race groups in private institutions in the post-apartheid era.





Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

Figure 11 reports the coloureds' confidence levels in private institutions in 1981, 1991 and 1995. Coloureds had the most confidence in private institutions of all the race groups during 1981. Confidence among coloureds in private institutions increased very slightly from 1981 to 1991, and decreased from 1991 to 1995. After whites, coloureds have the least confidence toward private institutions in the post-apartheid era.



Note: Confidence levels are given in the reverse to make the graph clearer to understand.

Figure 12 reports Indians' confidence pattern in private institutions in 1981, 1991 and 1995. Indians did not have very much confidence in private institutions during 1981, in fact they had the least confidence in private institutions at this time. Confidence in private institutions among Indians improved somewhat from 1981 to 1991 whilst remaining static from 1991 to 1995.

The findings of this study should be viewed as tentative and exploratory due to the fact that levels of confidence may fluctuate, especially in public institutions, until democratic consolidation has been achieved or until public institutions are perceived as more autonomous of the ANC-led government.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusions**

Having attempted to provide a general theoretical and historical background and frame of reference for this study, and following analysis and interpretation of the data, some conclusive comments can now be made. It has been argued throughout this study that the periods of the surveys are remarkably well aligned with important periods in South Africa's history namely: the apartheid era, the onset of the transition and the post-apartheid era. This forms a broad historical process from exclusion to inclusion.

Institutions were defined as being either public or private in order to provide order in the polity, integrate action and co-ordinate interests. Private institutions (institutions of civil society) were conceptualised as those institutions that are "...autonomous from the state but interrelated with it ... that interact with the state but do not want to take it over." (Chazan quoted in Friedman et al. 1996:59) Public institutions (state institutions) are institutions that formulate rules, that control, guide and regulate society. These institutions carry out particular goals, purposes or objectives and can be defined by their consequences (i.e., the maintenance of social order).

The focus of this study was the effect of independent variables (population group, political party preference and time) on confidence in nine institutions. Data were drawn from three surveys conducted under the auspices of Markinor and Market and Opinion Surveys. Confidence towards institutions was compared by contrasting two extreme periods in South Africa's history: firstly the levels of confidence toward institutions during apartheid (1981) were compared with confidence levels toward institutions with the onset of transition (1991); then confidence levels toward institutions were compared from the onset of transition (1991) and during the post-apartheid era (1995). Means, cross-tabulations and factor analysis were used to analyse and interpret the data.

The main hypothesis of this study is that those excluded from institutional representation and/or participation, during apartheid would have less confidence towards institutions than

those who were included in the system. The expectation was that confidence toward institutions in the post-apartheid era would be less polarised. The hypothesis is thus that the 'losers' would be less satisfied with public institutions than the 'winners' because democratic institutions have different consequences for the winners and losers of the democratic game. As argued throughout this study individuals' perceptions of institutions are primarily based upon their position in the political system as well as institutional performance.

Generally the data have revealed that the hypothesis holds true for some groups in society at different times in the period under study, but not necessarily for all groups at the same time. During the apartheid era, whites accorded public institutions relatively high confidence scores whereas the other groups accorded them relatively low scores. This finding thus confirms the general hypothesis; those included (whites) in institutional representation and/or participation during apartheid had much more confidence toward institutions than those excluded (blacks, coloureds and Indians).

When comparing the results from 1981 to 1995 it is clear that confidence in public institutions has significantly improved among blacks, has dropped quite significantly among whites, dropped slightly among Indians, and remained relatively static among coloureds. Thus, whereas whites had the most confidence in public institutions during apartheid, there was a shift in this trend among the black population. This finding suggests that the general hypothesis only holds true for blacks and whites.

The data for 1991 (onset of transition) and 1995 (post-apartheid era) reveals a trend among blacks of much improved confidence levels in public institutions. However, confidence levels in public institutions have dropped quite significantly among whites, and to a lesser extent among Indians and coloureds. This finding suggests once again that the general hypothesis only holds true for blacks whose confidence has increased in public institutions, and for whites whose confidence has decreased in public institutions.

Patterns in the coloured population's confidence levels show a lack of confidence in public institutions during 1981, which improved somewhat by 1991. Confidence toward public institutions in the post-apartheid era has decreased from 1991 to 1995, and in fact fell to the same level as it was in 1981. This trend among coloureds shows that they generally have the same relatively low confidence in a black-dominated state as they had in the white-dominated state. The most surprising finding is that the post-apartheid phase did not have the same impact on institutional confidence among Indians and coloureds, as it did for blacks. Their status in society, despite the democratisation process, did not change their perceptions as might have been expected and, they remain a marginalised group in post-apartheid South Africa. Many Indians and coloureds feel excluded from government policies, i.e., affirmative action. They feel that they were not 'white' enough for the previous government and are now not 'black' enough.

As far as confidence in private institutions is concerned, the general trend among blacks and whites are relatively higher scores from 1981 to 1991 with a slight decrease in confidence among blacks in 1995 and a slight increase among whites during the same period. Confidence towards private institutions among coloureds and Indians increased slightly from 1981 to 1991, decreasing among coloureds in 1995 whilst remaining the same among Indians.

These findings suggest that most private institutions are membership supported. The assumption of dimensionality of confidence toward institutions can therefore be asserted. This assumption suggests that confidence towards institutions is harmonious; confidence in one institution is equal or leads to confidence toward another institution. However, confidence in institutions may also be conflictual; confidence in one does not necessarily imply confidence towards other institutions especially in such a divided society as South Africa. Generally, the findings of this study have suggested that although confidence toward institutions in South Africa is not equal across different racial groups, individuals appear to be attached to the political social system through some, if not all institutions.

The fundamental element that democracy provides is a formal open 'political society'; the primary sphere in which the public should indicate their preferences to public representatives (Reitzes 1997:18). The reformed institutions of the democratic South Africa have created a competitive political system where once there was none and they provide society with incentives to participate in the political process. Accountability and transparency are two of the main requirements of democratic political life whereby elected officials are held accountable by the public for their duties and decisions. The most important advantage that public institutions provide that civil society does not, are representativeness and accountability to citizens (Reitzes 1997:18). This is because civil society's operates in a voluntary and diverse realm.

South Africa's transition entailed the transformation of both state (restructuring state institutions) and civil society (expanding its autonomy). Whereas the state during the apartheid era was used as an instrument to advance and protect white interests, the objective of the state in post-apartheid South Africa is to secure individual freedom and welfare for the society as a whole. The state must be strengthened to ensure its ethnic neutrality; thus autonomous (referring to the independence of the government and political society from particular social groups) in order to deliver public goods equitably and govern effectively. State strength is expressed by high levels of compliance, participation and legitimacy. The state must be strengthened to ensure that the value of citizenship surpasses other contending loyalties such as those of the ethnic group that may compromise state autonomy.

South Africa's democratisation process created the necessary conditions for a strong civil society. The state must maintain the autonomy of civil society as well as protect it from political, economic, societal encroachment. However, a coercive state will undermine the autonomy of civil society as these institutions become more than the conveyer belts for unrepresentative state policies (Chandhoke 1995:10, Narsoo quoted in Friedman et al. 1996:63). The survival of the institutions of civil society is determined by an inclusive constitution, a representative democracy, political tolerance and a legitimate state and



government. But, to realise the “utopia” of civil society South Africa still needs to develop a democratic culture of rights, citizen participation in democratic discourses and practices; political tolerance and normative consensus (Reitzes 1997:18). Where polarisation was characterised by the overlapping of spheres of society, depolarisation implies at least the attenuation, if not the complete decoupling of this linkage in order to prepare the ground for legitimacy, and economic and social fairness (McDonough et al. 1994:351,353). The interplay between public and private institutions is thus central to the way in which state and society exercise their power. The practical conclusion for South Africa appears to be that it must defend, nourish and build upon existing institutions.

Overall, it seems that the South African population is neither fully confident of nor actively distrustful of institutions in society. This study has noted that is difficult to set absolute standards for what should be considered high or low confidence levels. The findings of this study may be interpreted as a tentative and discreet warning for the popular standing of institutions in South Africa. It appears that the nature of trends in confidence reflects the prevailing political and racial divisions of South African society. It seems that there is a connection between the levels of confidence and the perceived interests of different groups in society, and that increases in confidence may well be due to public perceptions that interests are being protected and promoted.

It must however be stressed that the findings of this study should be regarded as tentative and exploratory. Levels of confidence in institutions may fluctuate sharply over time, especially until democratic consolidation has reached an equilibrium that will stabilise confidence to a degree.

Future research on public perceptions of institutions is important in consolidation of democracy in South Africa. South Africa is dealing with emerging institutions, and therefore perceptions of institutional performance play an important part in the stability of the country. Confidence toward institutions is vital as it may prevent the mobilisation of anti-democratic demagogues, especially considering prevailing ethnic divisions (rank

power and dominance) in South African society. Future research on this subject will also be increasingly important for public policy-makers in order to serve as an indicator of public perceptions - so that they might assess which sectors of society have confidence in particular institutions, and for what reasons.

## Appendix 1

*Factor analysis of confidence items: 1981. Entries are factor loadings from varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.*

1981			1995	
Confidence items	First factor	Second factor	First factor	Second factor
Armed forces	.79		.38	.61
Legal system	.59	.47	.56	.47
Police	.86		.35	.51
Parliament	.85		.76	
Civil service	.72	.41	.70	.33
Churches	.38			.80
Press		.81	.67	
Trade unions		.84	.68	
Major companies	.47	.62	.49	
Eigen value:	1	1	1	1
Total variance:	37.4%	25.2%	31.7%	19.2%
N=884			N=10160	

*Factor analysis of confidence items: 1981 and 1995. Entries are factor loading from varimax with Kaiser Normalisation*

1991			1995	
Confidence items	First factor	Second factor	First factor	Second factor
Armed forces	.79		.47	.54
Legal system	.62	.35	.60	.47
Police	.83		.43	.46
Parliament	.68	.41	.71	
Civil service	.57	.52	.72	
Churches		.42		.86
Press		.77	.64	
Trade unions		.82	.69	
Major companies	.35	.55	.60	
Eigen value:	1	1	1	1
Total variance:	30.0	26.1	33.7	17.9
N=2063			N=1629	

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