

This slight increase in positive opinion might have been expected with the recent progress in arms control, especially the signing of the INF Treaty, and the apparent improvement of East-West relations through the first half of 1988. Confidence in the US might have been lowered somewhat, on the other hand, by the downing of the Iranian passenger plane which took place during the period in which the survey was being conducted.

The survey also asked about the long-term goals of the United States and the Soviet Union. In short, do Canadians think that each superpower is mainly interested in world domination or in preservation of its national security? A comfortable majority (67%) are of the latter opinion with respect to the US while one-third (32%) believe its aim is world domination. Parallel results are found concerning the Soviet Union. Approximately three in five (61%) think that the Soviet Union wants to ensure its own national security interests while two in five (39%) believe it is aiming at world domination.

This question was not asked in 1987, but a somewhat similar one was. It read as follows: "Is the United States more or less content with its power or influence in the world today, or is it trying to increase its area of influence?" The distinction between increasing influence, on the one hand, which could presumably include the overt use of military forces but not necessarily reflect global ambitions, and the striving for world domination, on the other, would seem to be important and one not missed by most Canadians. In 1987, fully 81% felt that the US wanted to extend its sphere of influence and 79% agreed regarding the USSR. In short, although most Canadians think both superpowers want to extend