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SELLING CHANGE: ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THE
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PREAMBLE

We have just lived through a remarkable period during which our country has changed status from being the world's favourite whipping boy to becoming the West's wet dream. This transformation finds brilliant expression in the business community's TV ad "You are the People". One must hasten to point out that the imagery of this type of ad (as of its famous prototype, the Coca Cola ad which has all human life sipping Cokes "in perfect harmony"), is not about giving voice to the world's dispossessed. Far from it. It's more about shopping going global. This paper is an attempt to address just such an articulation in a particular season of South African political advertisements.

I don't offer a comprehensive survey of *all* advertisements generated during the election campaign, although the ads under discussion are a representative selection. Nor do I address to any extent the question of effectiveness: whether the ads were more or less successful in convincing undecided voters to make their mark. Commonsense opinion seems to be that, as in most "Uthuru" elections, loyalties were pretty well established before the campaigns proper began. This seems to be borne out by the high correlation between the opinion polls and the final results. As early as February the *Sunday Times*/Markinor poll gave the ANC 64% and the NP 16%, while the *Star*/MMR gave them 62% and 19% respectively. The final tally at the end of April was: ANC 62,6%; NP 20,4% (*Sunday Times*, 8 May 1994). But even here inferences are bound to be unreliable. Due to the complete lack of transparency on the part of the IEC (Independent Electoral Commission), it is difficult to know whether the poll figures may be taken as an independent coordinate. It seems quite likely that poll figures were used in the mediation process around election irregularities to finalise the results. And the IEC seems to have no intention of releasing any further breakdown of figures, e.g. on a sub-regional or polling district basis. [Q: How many IEC commissioners does it take to change a lightbulb? A: We have the figures, but we're not releasing them yet.] A further problem is posed by the high illiteracy rate in South Africa, coupled with correspondingly high numbers of non-users of mass media. So many imponderables, together with the lack of detailed data, make it impossible to plot with any accuracy the effectiveness of the advertising campaigns. (For recent work on the effectiveness of political advertising, see Diamond and

Bates: 1988; Kern: 1989; Just, Crigler and Wallach: 1990; Johnson-Cartee and Copelánd: 1991; Philo: 1993.)

What I offer here is a discursive and semiotic reading of the run of ads produced by the main political parties from mid-February to April 28 1994. First, I invoke the current debate around advertising and attempt to characterise advertisements, and the political advertisement in particular, as a specific discourse type. Next, I read the ads diachronically and synchronically as indices of the image-definition and political programmes of the parties. This involves a discussion of the South African interdiscursive, the core of local and situated imagery, narrative and myth deployed in these texts. I look closely at a few symptomatic ads from each campaign, commenting on their encoding, their target audiences, and likely decodings. And in conclusion, I comment on the dual affects of this particular mode of representing politics (i.e. the political advertisement as such). It seems to communicate both function and pleasure: it provides a persuasive template of reference to the "real", and simultaneously offers the more diffuse benefits of "polyphonic" text, positioning users for change and innovation.

Most useful for my immediate purposes here is recently published British work operating in the Cultural Studies mode, which focuses on textual issues and concerns itself with the process of the encoding and decoding of ads *per se*, reading these texts as a rich and complicated locus of social, cultural and political sign systems. Goldman, in *Reading Ads Socially* (1992) observes that ads are a prime instance of the logic of the commodity form which impact both materially and ideologically, reifying and mystifying social logic, framing meanings and organising the ways we see the world. Philo's *Media, Politics and Public Belief* (1993) maps Labour's failure to capture the public imagination in the 1992 British elections, stressing the crucial role played by popular political phrases, gnomic formulations or aphorisms. These catchphrases can encapsulate coherent political ideas and work with voters as "templates", through which people may interpret their own experiences and desires as well as make sense of a plethora of incoming information, especially from media sources. He asserts that the presence or absence of such successful popular idiom may be a reliable index of the success or failure of parties in capturing the public imagination by representing (both reflecting and constructing) public concerns and consciousness. Cook's (1992) *The Discourse of Advertising* sets ads in complex interaction with the texts around them. Using contemporary theories of linguistics and poetics and working at the interface of play, power and display, he offers some fascinating hypotheses on the areas that most concern me here, namely: ads as a specific discourse type, and their role as both reference and play, contributing to social cohesion and the construction of identity. Davidson's *The Consumerist Manifesto* (1992), on

the other hand, reads ads as the symptomatic texts of the postmodern age, which have rendered obsolete earlier approaches to cultural and political value. In many ways (though in a more celebratory mood) his findings are close to those of Goldman, Philo and Cook: the "second-level", "hyper-real" (Barthes and Baudrillard) signification of ads is here to stay, as is the "aspirational consumer", and we had best apply ourselves now to understanding their strategies and dynamics as a ubiquitous contemporary genre of rhetoric and "excessive" meanings. Ads are symptomatic (act as rich indices) of the cultures which produce them. They are "relevance mythopoeically expanded".

POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS AS DISCOURSE TYPE

Much has been written on commodity advertising, but very little on specifically political ads as a sub-type. I derive my framework for this study from a free adaptation of Philo, Cook and Davidson. While they work on the whole with consumer-commodity ads, it seems feasible to treat political ads as operating with similar imperatives, fusing the rhetoric of the standard political speech with the tactics of the commodity ad. As acts of ostensive communication (Sperber and Wilson: 1984) political ads seek to alter behaviour either physically or cognitively. They occur on the periphery of attention, embedded in other discourses, and thus need to be attention-grabbing. They are usually intrusive (unsolicited by receivers). And they generate meaning in excess of the demands of reference - "an aura of extra-factual significance" (Davidson, 148). These are their more obvious features, almost understood by default.

Less obvious, perhaps, are their complexity as discourse, their particular strategies of cohesion, and their affects: their simultaneous production of information and pleasure. Like the commodity ad, the political ad is multi-modal. It manifests a dense use of verbal and iconic signs, as well as paralanguage (the non-verbal signs of photographs such as body language, gesture and facial expression; and the codes of clothing and setting *et al.*, which in turn compose the larger sub-codes of gender, race and class). Within the codes of the media itself, they are distinguished from flanking copy by their varied use of layout and letter type. They are further distinguished by their intense dependence on other discourse types, a feature both Cook and Davidson (214; 197) discern as "postmodern": i.e. ads do not originate their own materials (pastiche); they seldom "mean" what they overtly appear to be saying (irony), and they are intensely intertextual (parody). In short, ads are almost entirely parasitic - they have no unique discourse of their own. Rather, they appropriate and exist through their use of other discourses. (The political ad would, of course, be a variant here, since it *does* work with political discourse, but precisely because of this its status as advertisement

is usually obscured.) The heteroglossic images and narratives of ads merge features of public and private discourse, effecting a transition between the normally opposed spheres of authority and intimacy. Through all these features ads appear to answer a need for code-play (metaphors, riddles, puns and jokes), for display and repetitive ("poetic") language (Cook, 226-8), and for ritual boasting (Goffman: 1979). In their formal organisation ads are highly cohesive, making excessive use of intra-modal parallelisms which operate by repeating almost any feature - words, sounds, line, colour or rhythm - employing the traditional strategies of poetry, music and art. In their persistent foregrounding of connotational, indeterminate and metaphorical meanings (Barthes: 1973) they assume the character of "myth" or "second-level signification". They effect a fusion between disparate discourses and spheres of experience, offering a contemporary interdiscursive, a shared popular encyclopaedia of ritual, aphorisms, stories and frames of understanding. Ads are a postmodern ritual whose sheer ubiquity and repetition in our culture induces a sense of security and community, and is a means of confirming one's identity within the society to which the text belongs, because everyone within the society knows the same text. In many contemporary societies such widely shared texts are hard to find. Ads, by constantly repeating themselves, seem to bid for this need (Cook, 228).

SELLING CHANGE: SOUTH AFRICA'S ELECTION ADS

In applying the above description to this particular body of ads, we must begin by posing some basic questions. What, in the case of each party, is the "commodity" on offer? How is it represented (imaged, narrated and "branded")? And to whom does it seem to be addressed? It will be clear from my title that I consider the commodity to be "change". But what rapidly becomes obvious on even the most cursory reading of these ads, is that this "change" is of two distinct orders. On one level the task is persuasively to package and market rapid and widespread political, social, cultural and economic change. But at the same time it appears that each of the major parties feels an urgent need to communicate a radical *change of image*. In each case there is a concerted attempt to purge the party's image of associations which were once deliberately sought, but now prove to be inconvenient. The ANC must effect a transition from "struggle movement" (with its imagery of protest, defiance and rolling mass action) to thoughtful and responsible government-in-waiting. The NP must shed its considerable historical baggage of apartheid crimes (racial divisiveness, secrecy, violent coercion) and bid for a new multi-racial conservative vote. The DP, having yielded most of its historical "civil rights" project to the ANC, seems to have no option but to reconstitute its "watchdog" role, this time as a sort of upmarket, moral armed-response to what it sets up as a sinister NP-ANC conspiracy.

What remains to be seen is how, within this general field, each of the parties makes its play for "product differentiation" and consumer loyalty. At this point we must turn to the texts themselves.

First, I will run through the campaigns diachronically, looking at the overall trajectory of each, and identifying the gestalt and immediately accessible message of each set of ads. This will involve such aspects as the overall layout and design that makes members of each set instantly recognisable: the distinctive use of typeface, copy, logo's, straplines, slogans and repetitive imagery. A crucial early recognition is, of course, the brand name. On a first, cursory scanning (the way readers tend to use a newspaper before settling down to read selected items) what are the most obvious attention-grabbing features? What do they tell us instantly about the production offer? After this overview, I will focus more formally on a few symptomatic examples.

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC)

The ANC account was handled by Hunt Lascaris, advised by Frank Greer and Stan Greenberg, organisers of Clinton's successful 1992 presidential campaign. They suggested the ANC should avoid slurs and negativity and stick to issues and principles. Their advice seems to have set the tone of the campaign: people will be looking for a clear set of policies; "even if you don't read or can't read the details, you get the message: the ANC has a plan; it's serious" (*Weekly Mail*, 25 February 1994). As we flip through the ANC's national advertisements, certain distinguishing features are available at a glance.

First, the overall trajectory of the national campaign. Like all campaigns, it seems to be composed around the distinct "moments" identified by Diamond and Bates (1984): naming and identification; statement of policies and arguments; attacks on opponents, and the "visionary" conclusion. These may be understood as both a diachronic pattern and as organisational tropes within the individual ads.

The ANC begins with some preliminary positioning from mid to late February. The early ads (no visuals, long copy) starkly list the achievements of negotiations (ANC: 1). Embedded in this group, as light relief, is the frustrating dot matrix insert in Argus Group papers which urged readers to "LOOK THROUGH THE CHAOS TO FIND HOPE" (ANC: 2).

This is closely followed by the next phase (end-February to mid-March) which comprises the "Our Plan" ads, offering policies and arguments. These kick off with a "reconstruction" image depicting Mandela peering through a gap in a wall (ANC: 3), and a proposal for reducing crime and violence (ANC: 4). Third

comes, education, with a visual of a nailed-down pencil wrenching free (ANC: 5). In each of these a strong image is tied to text which a) sets out concrete proposals and b) deals holistically with a specific problem. For example, the fourth "Our Plan" ad (ANC: 6) lists plans for building homes, electrification, improvement of hostels, and ties these to a big close-up photograph of bricks and mortar with the caption "Our plan will lay a foundation of peace and hope ...". Women come in at number five with equal pay, representation, health care and land. In the visual a pail and mop metamorphose into microphones, with the caption: "Our plan will give women a much stronger voice" (ANC: 7). The summary ad which closes this section shows us the multi-ethnic class of 94 and takes up the keynote: "2,5 MILLION JOBS AND FREE EDUCATION" (ANC: 8). Thus the policies.

From mid-March to mid-April there is a series of attacks on the NP, with more overtly negative images. A SANCO ad lists NP atrocities on a scroll: Boipatong, Bisho, death squads, the assassination of Hani (ANC: 9). Figures on education expenditure with the strapline "WE CANNOT AFFORD MORE OF THIS" depicts schoolkids working on the floor (ANC: 10), and a column of icons of joblessness and grief signifying "WHAT THE NP IS DOING" are set against a column of "WHAT THE ANC WILL DO" (ANC: 11). A Hani memorial ad with a large photo intervenes: "IT TAKES A BRAVE PERSON TO FIGHT. BUT A TRUE HERO TO MAKE PEACE" (ANC: 12).

The final wrap-up (mid-April to election day) offers an upbeat finale. Mandela's face (which has been sparingly used) reappears, and he summarises the thrust of the campaign: "After 27 April there will be something more important than an ANC government. You." The copy stresses unity and peace ("The time for casting blame is over"), and recapitulates the basic points of the plan (ANC: 13). The final run picks up directly on the voting theme, with a COSATU ad punning on the crucial mark with the crosses of Biko, Aggett, Goniwe *et al.* asking "WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO PUT YOUR CROSS?"; a voting paper with the ANC strip in full colour (ANC: 15); an assertion of dignity (ANC: 16), and a quick recap which sets the Nats' "NO PLAN" against "OUR PLAN" (ANC: 17). Then on 27 April, a final close-up of Mandela with the visionary appeal: "SEKUNJALO! ... Let us vote in overwhelming numbers ... Today is a day like no other before it. It marks the dawn of our freedom" (ANC: 18).

The standard features of the commercial ad are in evidence in all of these texts. Name identification and the overall binding slogan are the most repeated motifs: the combined ANC name and logo (shield, spear, flag, wheel and fist) at the righthand bottom corner of each item, combined with the slogan strapline "A better life for all. Working together for jobs, peace and freedom". In terms of typeface and layout, we have a rather understated play

on black, white and grey, with prominent statements standing out in white on black. The ads are very long on copy (words) and short on iconic motifs (pictures). The general gestalt is that of the serious business ad (insurance, company report). This is clearly part of the project (see Greenberg above) of altering the image of the organisation from one of mobilisation to one of painstaking thought and planning. Before we read the long copy, this projects the campaign's "strong sustainable idea". The ads' few bold images and detailed verbal proposals suggest painstaking thoughtfulness, in the face of a history of prejudice, neglect and violence. The final summary wraps this up: "We have a plan. ... The NP has no plan. But it does have a record of failure. ... Just look around you. ..."

ANC: WESTERN CAPE

A scan of one ANC regional campaign, that in the Western Cape, supports this profile. The broad contours and phases are the same, but the whole business becomes much more personalised. The specifically regional ads are woven into the national set (they often appear on consecutive pages in the same newspaper), and serve to add immediacy and local detail to the more general promises or attacks of the national ads. Mandela's face is not used here; Alan Boesak is the kingpin. Boesak warms up at the end of February with the freshly minted regional lists and his photo inset, with "THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO WILL BRING JOBS, PEACE AND HOUSING TO THE WESTERN CAPE" (WCP: 1). The key to the sequence that follows is contained in the huge banner "JUST HOW FAIR IS THE CAPE?" (WCP: 2), as Thabo Mbeki arrives in the Cape to deal with the (for the ANC at least) unfortunate Delft crisis, where ANC-supporting black squatters have occupied houses built for "coloureds". Early on in the campaign the influential Muslim community is addressed in another long copy ad headlined: "HOW WILL THE ANC PRESERVE THE PROUD TRADITIONS OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY?" (WCP: 3). Then the national "Our Plan" issues of housing, jobs and education are given a local fix. Housing at this time is hard news in the region, so the ads are on the defensive. The first one turns on a pun: "THE ANC STANDS FOR THE PROTECTION OF ALL PEOPLE'S PROPERTY. WHICH IS WHY WE'RE STANDING IN DELFT" (i.e. "Right now, ANC marshalls are *standing guard* to prevent the illegal occupation of houses in Delft, Cape Town" (WCP: 4). The next ad supports this, promising "Over the next five years the ANC will build one million homes" under the banner: "WE CAN'T LIVE IN PEACE ... IF WE'RE ALL LIVING IN THE SAME HOUSE" (WCP: 5). Then comes jobs, with a photo of an unemployment queue, and a pun: "THE ANC WILL *CHANGE THIS PICTURE*" (WCP: 6); and education - a photo of schoolkids peering through the glass of broken windows invites a further pun: "THE ANC WON'T *FAIL OUR CHILDREN*" (WCP: 7). This completes the "policies" phase of the campaign, which complements the national ads.

The middle phase (usually the phase of "attack") consists of a run of personalised endorsements, explicitly anti-NP in content, and shot through with some sniping from COSATU. In the first COSATU squib, mugshots of Hernus Kriel and FW de Klerk associate the NP with hitsquads, the Third Force and taxi wars. Here too, puns are the order of the day: "THEY RUN GUNS AND HITSQUADS - DON'T LET THEM RUN THE WESTERN CAPE" (WCP: 8). In the Western Cape campaign "Don't betray your history" and "Don't let them ..." are used as running motifs, and these negative injunctions organise the endorsements as well. A funeral photo reminds voters of the infamous "Trojan Horse" killings of 1985: "DON'T LET THEM STAIN YOUR HANDS WITH THE BLOOD OF OUR CHILDREN" (WCP: 9). (Unfortunately the main woman in this photo turned out to be an NP supporter (*Argus*, 20 April 1984, p.10). Then more mugshots and lists of apartheid crimes: "APARTHEID'S MEN STILL WANT TO RUN THE CAPE. NOW IS THE TIME FOR YOU TO STOP THEM" (WCP: 11). Next come the glamorous studio portraits in big close-up of the endorsement run, each with an ethnic-type border. In sequence, the signed messages come from Vergotine: who promises "Ten years of quality education for all" (WCP: 12); Sonn, who appeals to "all Godfearing, decent, principled people" (WCP: 13); Balfour, who offers the Olympics plus half a million jobs (WCP: 14), and Davids, who undertakes to preserve Muslim dignity and traditions (WCP: 15).

The run is concluded during election week by a full page of endorsements (copy only) by individuals from various sectors (WCP: 16), followed by a huge banner on the next page: "UNITE THE PEOPLE OF THE CAPE. VOTE ANC" (WCP: 17). And Boesak wraps up with his own version of the Mandela message and letter, both with a strong anti-NP thrust (WCP: 18; 19).

While the general design is similar to the national ads, there is less long copy. The ads are localised, more personal, and stronger on visuals. The Western Cape is highly marginal for the ANC, and consequently the moment of "attack" is more pronounced.

A few general remarks about the ANC's press ads. If one can infer a target reader from their general design and content, this person is clearly not one of the solidly loyal African community. S/he is literate (most are long on copy); an undecided voter; self-interested and inclined to be soft on NP crimes (and feel guilty about this), and probably suspicious about "hard sell" politics. Most important of all, s/he has a prejudiced image of the ANC as a rather rash, impulsive outfit, associated in the main with guilt-inducing accusations, crowds, protests, rolling mass action and potential violence. Any imagery of this ilk is noticeably absent from the ads. If the chief task of the ANC ads is to "sell change", then this task is dual: the ads sell both a set of policies for social, political and economic change and a changed image for

the party itself. The ANC is imaged as a thoughtful party strong on organisation, careful planning and peaceful coexistence.

The ANC ads operate with higher levels of straight political rhetoric than those of the other parties. This is clearly intentional (see Greenberg, above). Although unusually heavy on copy, they are still multi-modal. Their visual images (iconic signs) are drawn from a shared local lexicon, instantly recognisable to South African readers. To be brief, I'll deal with these in three categories. First we have the portraits of "media knowns", for example, Sonn (WCP: 13); Boesak (WCP: 18); Hani (ANC: 12), and Mandela (ANC: 18). While in a sense a photographic portrait has a simple 1:1 inductive power of reference (he was there, in front of the lens, and his features have been chemically impressed on photographic paper for us to see), a lot more sign-making is obviously at work here. Each set of "known" features carries a freight of narrative (the South African media user knows their history of suffering and struggle as well as a wealth of detail about their personalities, beliefs and lives). The paralanguage of a photo (signs of skin colour, gender and age; the clothing worn with its suggestions of status; gesture and facial expression which select a prevailing mood) - all of these codes are made to work here, and within the sub-rules of the genre are firmly fixed by inter-modal repetitions. To cite just one example: the photo of Mandela chosen to conclude the campaign is not the most glamorous or youthful one available, but all its signs have been carefully chosen. It is side-lit; it exposes facial flaws; it stresses age (the grey hair), determination (the set of the mouth and jaw) and vision (the piercing off-camera gaze). These selections are "anchored" by the words: "Sekunjalo" and "the dawn of freedom". Portraits of media "knowns" always operate both as reference and as complex symbols (Barthes' "second-level signifiers" or items of myth). (The power of anchoring is even more apparent in the "attack" ads (WCP: 8; WCP: 11) where the fairly neutral images of NP leaders are re-coded by captions as mugshots of semi-criminals.)

The next mode of sign used is the documentary photo. Those used in the ANC ads are drawn from the same "struggle" lexicon as the photos of "media knowns": rundown schools (WCP: 7); funerals (WCP: 9); unemployment (WCP: 8), and aspirant all-race groups (ANC: 8). This type of photo can be guilt-inducing (for the floating voter at least) and so, although it is a dominant trope in ANC discourse, it is used sparingly here. In the ANC ads it is the aspirant "rainbow" image that takes pride of place, and together with the long copy policy proposals, their visual signs and paralanguage are inter-modally fixed to the running slogan "A better life for all".

Finally, there is the category of symbols or metonymies, in which a sign is used not as realistic reference, but to "stand in for" a whole area of experience or an abstract idea. The pencil and nails (ANC: 5) signify "freeing oppressed education"; the bricks and mortar (ANC: 6) whole homes and the housing plan; the mop and mikes (ANC: 7) the loosening of gender oppression, and the ballot paper (ANC: 15) the entire election process and democracy itself.

Throughout this run of ads readily recognisable political rhetoric articulates with the sub-rules of the advertising genre to bind the message. Highly cohesive and redundant texts are generated by repeating the same sentiment at every level of signification: visual image and paralanguage (the pictures); verbal text (detailed proposals, puns, stock phrases and aphorisms), and the ubiquitous ANC logo with its catchphrase or slogan which effects closure by conclusively "anchoring" this plethora of signs. So, although the ANC ads have chosen to be pretty austere, they do make ample use of the characteristic intertextuality and code-play of this specific discourse type in their prime task of "branding" their product and imbuing it with "excessive" connotational significance.

NATIONAL PARTY (NP)

The NP advertising account was handled by Saatchi and Saatchi's South African subsidiary, Optimum Marketing Communications. The brandname and commodity on offer from the NP is also in drastic need of redefinition and repackaging. Here we meet "the new (improved) National Party" in heady amnesiac mode. "Forgive and forget" is the organising kernel. But it is a selective amnesia. First, an overview.

The NP chooses to block its campaign in three phases, which lag slightly behind the ANC's. In the warm-up (mid-March to mid-April) the main elements are introduced. We are promised a series of endorsements by people from all ethnic groups. But more than this, we are to see a campaign which cunningly "steals" the rhetorical and aesthetic capital of the ANC and puts this to work for its main opposition. Two early ads offers a full page big close-ups of black candidates, one a woman, asserting the demand for women's rights, affirmative action and equal education in a strong economy (NP: 1; NP: 2). These ads enunciate from the start the principle of the parasitic double-take that will organise the NP campaign. Take the Nana Masango text. This is the expected profile on an ANC ad, and the effect on the average South African newspaper reader is guaranteed to be fairly dramatic. On scanning the ad, one's eye moves through the elements in the predictable order: visual (upbeat black female image), down-page to brandname and slogan (can this be right - "NP" and "BE SURE OF A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL"?). Then one scans the copy:

freedom from exploitation and abuse; laws to protect us; equal opportunity - each and every phrase lifted straight from the struggle lexicon, and now, in the time-honoured manner of advertising discourse, all to be cohesively allied to the "new" NP. Even the NP's election slogan is parodic pastiche. That is, the party does not originate its *own* slogan, but borrows this intertextually from the ANC's "A better life for all", here ironically modified as "Be sure of a better life" (always underlined). The implication being: as you read the ANC's promises and proposals, be wary. The NP is persistently characterised as the party with "experience and skills", offering a very similar package to the ANC, but *with the ability to deliver*. Other tactics are also clear early on in the NP campaign. There will be a sustained attack on communists in the ANC (a graphic of the communist wolf in sheep's clothing: "What lies beneath the ANC? Communist lies!") (NP: 3). The ANC will be blamed for the current violence (another instance of parasitism, a newsphoto of the Shell House massacre coupled with copy from the *Sowetan*) (NP: 6). The target readers will be undecided new voters, for example concerned black parents (NP: 4); and reluctant rightwingers ("I'm fed up with a Volkstaat") (NP: 5). And the "changed", "new" NP will be lauded as the party of experience, stability, economic growth and concern for the individual. The NP is obviously canvassing as the chief party of opposition, so a comprehensive "plan" is less important here.

The second phase is signalled by a long copy ad in mid-April (NP: 7). Stealing the ANC's famous "Sekunjalo" slogan, it announces: "Now is the time to make the change". This announcement introduces a long run of endorsement narratives (mid-April to election week) (NP: 8ff.). These narratives make fascinating reading, and we'll return to them in due course. The point to be made at this stage is that they cunningly contrive to conflate poignant tales of suffering at the hands of the ANC with ardent testimonials of conversion to the NP point of view. The narratives come from individuals of all colours and a wide range of occupations (NP: 9; 10; 11; 12; 13). Also from all age-groups and previous political persuasions (NP: 14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 19; 20; 21). They run right up to the beginning of election week and find a dual climax. First in the conversion of the photographer himself who photographed these ads ("I felt shamed by their courage. I had never bothered to vote or stand up for what I believed in. ... Support these brave people. Vote National party") (NP: 22). And finally a double-spread reprise of all of the witnesses (NP: 23).

One would assume from the saturation use of black and coloured faces that the NP (apart from its leader who looks a bit pale) is a traditionally multi-racial party. The summary ad of the endorsement run which forms the staple of the campaign (NP: 23) shows 33 faces of which 18 are black, 6 are coloured and only 9 are white. Apart from a couple of workers, most are professionals or

upwardly-mobile entrepreneurs. The signs of the portraits (e.g. NP: 10) are all upbeat in both text and paralanguage: thoughtful and optimistic expressions; assertive posture and gesture; neat clothing, set against the paraphernalia of their trades. The accompanying text has an "authentic" colloquial feel to it. All of the personal narratives have a similar structure. First the occupation in the strapline: "I'm a teacher; unionist; pensioner; car mechanic etc."; then the proper name. Each narrates a personal history, which involves brushes of one kind or another with the ANC, at school, at home or at work. The ANC comes out of all of these as bullying, devious, and corrupt, a source of diurnal fear and insecurity. Communist influence in the ANC is frequently criticised by the narrators, as is their lack of experience and poor organisation. Then the stories become inspirational. It takes thought and courage to "make the change" and vote NP. All of these "new" NP voters are characterised as individuals with dreams, plans and aspirations. The stories are replete with plausible personal detail and idiom, and impressively effect a transition between public and personal discourse. They give solid credence to the slogan which anchors them, extending yet further the coinage: "BE SURE OF A BETTER LIFE. WE'VE MADE THE CHANGE".

As was the case with the ANC campaign, the final week first repeats the attacks: the communist wolf puts in an encore (NP: 24) and we learn (by means of a rather crude graphic which has a coloured man being pickpocketed by the tattooed strong arm of the ANC) that the ANC's "Plan" will double tax and the cost of everything (NP: 25). Then comes the visionary finale with its return to the (also borrowed) "Now is the time" (Sekunjalo) slogan (NP: 26; 27; 28), and the statutory signed letter and portraits of de Klerk. In an interesting coda on the second day of polling, tardy voters are chastised with a checklist which acts as an *aide memoire* of the whole campaign (NP: 29).

[While I'm concentrating on press ads here, I can't resist some reference to the infamous "comic-book", a stroke of genius by the NP, and described by Franklin Sonn as "the dirtiest piece of election trickery I have seen anywhere in the world" (*South*, 8 April). About 70,000 copies of this photocomic (NP: 30) were distributed to Western Cape schools during the latter half of March, but it was soon withdrawn after complaints to the IEC. The Abrahamse family and their dog Uitsmyt agonise over their vote (NP: 31). Pa supports the new NP; son Cedric is a student with a soft spot for the ANC. Uitsmyt is a cynic with a good line in canine puns. We are led through burning schools and necklacing (NP: 32); slogans of "kill a coloured ... kill a farmer" (Uitsmyt's coinage) (NP: 33); 14 year-old communists attacking churchgoers (NP: 34), and radical coloured youth discarded as "useful idiots" by blacks (NP: 35). But

finally all is well (NP: 36): family and dog opt for de Klerk and find peace and prosperity with the new caring National Party (NP: 37).]

It is clear from the whole trajectory of the NP campaign that its main target is the conservative and aspirant black and coloured vote. The target reader one infers from the NP ads has a history of suffering at the hands of the ANC and its affiliates. S/he has been suspicious of the Nats, but is thoughtful and forgiving. And above all, s/he is hardworking, individualistic and upwardly mobile. The witnesses with whom the reader is asked to identify have a total recall of ANC excesses, but, curiously, no memory whatsoever of any of the impositions of apartheid. Nor does any of them feel a moment's resentment towards the white ruling class. In their task of "selling change" the "new NP" ads package a remarkable mix of 47 years of solid experience as an apartheid government with total amnesia as to its historical effects. This powerful "forgive and forget" project appears to have been widely effective, and whatever one's political views, one has to concede that Saatchi and Saatchi have again done their clients proud.

As to form, we have already noted the high levels of parasitism and interdiscursivity of the NP campaign. In terms of basic layout, name identification and binding slogan are clear throughout. The NP logo (a simple stylised sun) is centred at the bottom of each page in a representation of the voting strip, always with the composite straplines: "BE SURE OF A BETTER LIFE"; "Vote for FW de Klerk and the new National Party", and "We've made the change". The typical layout combines fairly long copy with strongly individualised portraits. Apart from a couple of ads using graphics (the communist wolf and the pickpocket ANC) and a couple of newsphotos (e.g. the Shell House massacre), it is the strongly personalised, aspirant individual who steals the show. As opposed to the ANC's gestalt of thoughtful and detailed planning, the NP's strong idea is: "making the change". Again, this is presented as a dual change: the change that has been brought about in the country single-handedly by the "new" NP (the end of apartheid) and the existential change, the change of heart, experienced by the NP itself (*vide de Klerk in the famous debate: "We have also cleansed ourselves from within"*). It is this second, existential, version of change that structures the testimonies which make up the main body of the campaign, and with its redemptive Christian overtones of repentance and forgiveness this discourse has considerable purchase with a churchgoing electorate. It is worth remarking that in the case of both inflections of "change", the ads depend heavily on codeplay of a particular sort. The central binding pun on "change" is borrowed from the history and rhetoric of the anti-apartheid struggle, as are a variety of additional popular slogans ("Now is the Time"; "A Better life for all", and the affinity between the rebranded "New NP" and the widely touted "New South

Africa"). The ads play on a popular South African encyclopaedia of shared aphorisms, stories and frames, and, in a cunning double whammy, exploit the aspirational power of this rhetorical set, while simultaneously refusing its context and history. That these strategies are classically those of the commodity ad is a matter that will be taken up further with reference to the DP campaign.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP)

The Jupiter Drawing Room handled the DP's advertising campaign. The DP's task was clearcut. They correctly assumed that in this election their small traditional core of white liberal support would evaporate, mostly in the direction of the "new" NP. So their campaign is two-pronged. From the start the enemy is strongly characterised. That the ANC are a party of "bullies" is the basic axiom. But the DP is campaigning for opposition, so their main opponent is the "new" NP, who must be presented as even worse. Not only do they have a rich record of apartheid crimes, but they have recently proved themselves to be a bunch of deceitful, self-serving cowards into the bargain, "in bed" with the ANC. By contrast, the DP is small, strong and principled, the only completely blameless party ("no blood on our hands"). They will "Protect you from the abuse of power". Of all the campaigns the DP's is the most overtly negative and suspicious. Of its whole run of glossy, commodity-type full-colour ads, most may be classified as "attacks".

The DP warms up from end-February to mid-March by introducing its key themes and establishing the format of its ads for rapid recognition. The prototype here is the standard commodity ad, with a glossy visual (usually in full colour) taking up the top two-thirds of the page, the lower one-third filled by copy. Punning banners are in most cases overlaid on the visuals and their critical points developed in the words below. As with the ANC and NP campaigns, the DP must begin by adopting a stance on negotiations. The keynote is struck from the start. A close-up photograph of an open prison door is overlaid with the banner "IT'S TRUE, DOORS HAVE BEEN OPENED THROUGH NEGOTIATION". The Nats and the ANC have "struck a secret deal", and in the process let loose on the unsuspecting public 10,000 criminals (DP: 1). This is the first in a series of punning captions that co-opt various well-known catchphrases and put them to work for the DP. If the NP ads borrow freely from the ANC lexicon, the DP turns the tables on the "new" NP, relentlessly debunking their plausible amnesia which links strength and experience to the key claim that they have "changed". From the start the Nats are set up as weak and cowardly, especially vis-a-vis the insurgent ANC. "WHEN IT COMES TO EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION, THE NATS HAVE SHOWN THEIR TRUE COLOURS" captions a visual of a hand waving a white flag from behind a barricade of barbed wire (DP: 1A). The "Police File" ad (DP: 2) leads with a big close-up of a TV set,

and the copy scrutinises the ANC and NP candidates' lists, exposing hordes of miscreants. But never fear, a relief map of South Africa festooned with flags and an inset photo of de Beer shows us that the DP has members everywhere (DP: 3). Then a striking BCU of a newborn babe promises a sound enterprise economy (DP: 4).

At this point we move into the protracted "attacks" phase of the DP campaign (end March to election week). This kicks off with the rather confusing exchange between DP and NP ads, both of which use the "Station Strangler" identikit photo to insist that everyone else but themselves has connived to give convicted murderers the vote (DP: 5a; 5b). The six DP negotiators (standing in circular formation, top-lit and photographed at a very high angle from above) claim to have won on more constitutional issues than the all of rest put together (DP: 6). On the issues of security we have a pink pig in a police cap. This is what the Left call the police, and how the Nats treat them: "NO WONDER THERE'S NO RESPECT FOR LAW AND ORDER" (DP: 7). Nat duplicity and untrustworthiness is taken up again in an amusing shot of de Klerk in Sotho hat and blanket holding a mike captioned "LET'S TWIST AGAIN, LIKE WE DID LAST ELECTION", with copy again alleging Nat duplicity "striking numerous deals" with and "caving in time and time again" to the ANC. (DP: 8). In the next ad in the sequence, the "dangerous liaisons" theme reaches something of an interim climax in a splendid and erotically-lit large double bed (DP: 9). The Nats "get into bed" with the ANC and we all, by implication, get screwed. Evidence is offered: the government has capitulated to the ANC on detention without trial and federalism, and was "too scared" to search ANC headquarters after the Shell House shootings. This last charge is taken up again in a full-colour newsphoto of the Shell house event with copy claiming "indisputable evidence" of the ANC's guilt and alleging a Nat "cover-up" (DP: 10). All the catchphrases of the DP campaign are in use: the NP are "scared of the ANC"; are "timid"; have again "caved in". Strategically-placed "plugs" keep the real defenders of truth and freedom in the public eye (DP: 11). Here we are told that women feature more prominently on the DP lists than any other, even though they are chosen entirely "on merit". Security issues are served by yet another pun with a visual of commuters cramming into a crowded train: "If you're frightened every time you change trains ... change your party" (DP: 12).

To summarise: the DP's "attacking" ads, while they do, by inference, cover a range of issues - education, the economy, law and order, women's rights - are all angled as an assault on the two main parties, and most especially, they strive to discredit the Nats. [If we look across campaigns for a moment, this is the point (21 April) at which the Nats respond with their "The DP is a

little, confused" ad, tabulating answers to DP attacks with a graphic identifying the slaving communist wolf as the real threat (NP: 24).]

The DP's wrap-up during election week retains the anti-Nat thrust. Two linked ads use showbiz rhetoric. A set of photo-album pics of de Klerk, Coetsee, Meyer *et al.* begins: "From the men who brought you detention without trial, crime, corruption and hitsquads...in 1989" (DP: 13) leading on, *plus ça change*, to the same old mobsters (1994) on the next page (DP: 13a). Then a double-page spread similar to that used by the NP offers a proud summary of all the ads produced for the campaign (DP: 14). In the copy here the logic is clearly spelt out: the ANC abuses power and needs a strong opposition; the NP can't provide this (we've proved they're dishonest, make secret deals and cave in); QED: trust the DP. But the true finale comes with the ad used the day before polling, which pictures the banners of most of South Africa's English press. The "experts" all support the DP. "The Nats claim we're too small ... how come then, all the major newspapers support us?" (DP: 15). What one might call the 60,000 dollar question. Only one obvious answer suggests itself.

[A quick scan of the DP's Western Cape ads. Hennie Bester meets the people (DP: 16). Education policy? Who said the "P"-word?! The best WP candidates are Democrats (DP: 17). A play on Adam Small's work *Kanna Hy Ko' Huistoe*: "It's Time to Come Home" with Three Wise Men of appropriate pigmentation (DP: 18). Everyone is tired of being pushed around by the Nats and by the ANC (not by the DP, because "They've never pushed people around, or hurt anybody") (DP: 19). And you don't have to vote Nat to stand up to the ANC; "Every 1% puts another 4 Democrats in Parliament" (DP: 20).]

The target reader one infers from the DP ads is a classical liberal strong on principle, individualism and free enterprise. S/he is sceptical of the track record of both of the major parties and flatly refuses their claims to have "changed". Civil rights and the abuse of political power are definitely high on his/her agenda, while the abuse of economic power figures not at all. S/he is also a sophisticated reader, deeply engaged in consumer culture, and with a high level of competence (both linguistic and visual) in playing the ads game.

The party's name and logo (a gold coin being swallowed by a large mouth?) is centred at the bottom of each ad with the slogan strapline: "DEMOCRATIC PARTY. PROTECTING YOU FROM THE ABUSE OF POWER". Apart from a couple of shots of de Beer and the small-but-principled DP "team", the visual images are all metonymies which combine with witty punning captions to drive home the attacking message: power bullies and corrupts, and principles are rare; the DP has them; only the DP can protect you from the abuse of power. In terms of this paper's title, the DP's ads also circle around the idea of "change". *Plus ça*

change?" is their strong idea. What's all this talk about change? The ANC and the Nats are still up to their coercive dirty tricks. The DP has no need to change. It has a clean record and a reputation for absolute integrity. [Final results: DP National 1,7%, 7 seats. QED: There are only seven just men in Israel?]

In form, as has been noted, the DP ads are closer to the standard commodity ad than those of the major parties. The close-up full colour images all have very high production values, which is to say that they are glossy, well set up, they use beautiful models, and are perfectly lit, framed and finished. Like commodity ads they are also highly redundant texts, heavy in codeplay. If one ignores the captioning and copy, several examples could serve equally well as an ad for a building society, a medical plan or life insurance (e.g. the glamorous models in DP: 4; 18; 20). We "know" this class of image only too well; we see them on hoardings and in glossy magazines every day. Even the more "documentary" images are beautifully lit and finished. The Shell House photo (DP: 10), shot from a high angle with a "tunnel" perspective is aesthetically compelling in the manner of composition that John Berger has labelled "first world obscenity" in famine photography.

The texts are strong on code-play, irony, parody and pastiche, full of metaphors, symbols, puns and jokes. A few examples must serve to illustrate these dominant tropes. In the first ad (DP: 1) an artistically-lit icon of a prison-cell door is typically combined with an intertextual joke and a pun, both aimed at the specifically South African reader. First one has to recall de Klerk's "My door is open" catchphrase and read the iconic signs, rich in suggestion. Then one must make the requisite set of transferences which hinge on the pun of the caption, to arrive at the attack-via-irony on negotiations. The whole run of DP ads qualify as "postmodern" in this heavy dependence on codeplay. They are parasitic pastiche (don't originate their own materials); ironic (don't mean what they overtly appear to say), and parodic (depend for their decoding on rich intertextual references). While these features make the ads highly attractive and entertaining, they also speak volumes about the organising codes of DP thinking, drawn as they are from commodity/consumer culture. This is worthy of a whole separate study, but we might briefly flip through a few more examples which should serve to clinch this point. In the law and order ad (DP: 7) one must be able to make inferences around the slang-word and concept "pig". The collusion ad (DP: 9) plays on the idiom "getting into bed together" and, by negative inference, "getting screwed". Rather patronisingly, the security ad (DP: 12) plays on "changing" - changing trains and changing parties. And, my personal favourite, the "Let's twist again" ad, (DP: 8), uses every element, visual and verbal, in a parodic, punning "total" joke: the unlikely garb; the paralanguage of gesture; the mike; the "known"

features of de Klerk, and the intertextual reference to a well-known song. All of these are put to work by the pun on "twisting" and transformed into irrefutable evidence of the duplicity of the National Party. Since this text is symptomatic of the DP campaign and foregrounds some of the points this paper is concerned to make concerning cognate features of commodity and political advertising, it is worth commenting on more fully. As advertising discourse it employs the full gamut of available tactics. First, the eye is caught by the incongruous clash of codes: white, westernised, erstwhile racist leader (a media "known" with neat cuffs, watch and wedding ring) rigged up in this unlikely attire. Even the spots on the blanket figure: can the leopard change his spots? Then the eye is drawn down to the caption, and one is asked to remember the Chubby Checker standard, with the mike recoded from speech prop to pop prop and back again as one's reading proceeds. The pun on "twist" both reflects back on the visual (which now serves as a metonymy for deceitfulness), and encourages one discover just how the NP has twisted (distorted) things this time around by scanning the copy. The inferences invited by "twisting" are, of course, political convenience and a cowardly and hypocritical adaptation to prevailing circumstances. The copy picks up on musical jargon: "making all the right noises", "playing second fiddle to the ANC", "one more time", and "we'll never change our tune". Like the standard commodity ad, these strategies generate a strongly cohesive and redundant text, repeating a single simple message at every available level of the discourse. The combination of a "known" set of features and the citation of a popular song sets off a ripple of codeplay through all the visual and verbal signs of the text, with the key metaphor functioning to unify and "close" the message ideologically.

But all this good clean postmodern fun seems only to have lost the DP votes. What to conclude? One hypothesis might run as follows. In most of the DP ads the dominant focus is still white power politics (in this sense it is true that they have *not* "changed their tune"). While this is probably an unavoidable function of their peculiar positioning in the electoral battle, it is worth noting that the underlying issues being played out in the ads are still (in 1994) the "white" values of honesty, reliability and consistency (the "fair-play" myth). The DP sets itself up to protect the South African public from "the abuse of power". While it is abundantly clear from a close scrutiny of the copy of the ads that the chief source of this anticipated "abuse of power" is the ANC, the expedient target for the purposes of the campaign is the National Party. The ads are thus severely restricted in their scope, merely sideswiping, in the DP's traditional fashion, the discourse and record of the old NP. While the glossiness and punning fun that ensues might have been all very well for the old South Africa (or indeed for the commercial

marketplace anywhere), their suspicious and debunking tenor and their dated narrowness failed to speak into a new, more expansive national mood.

INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY (IFP)

Mass Market Co-ordination set up the IFP ads. Nationwide they were few in number, and concentrated, due to Inkatha's late entry, in the last week of the campaign.

Early in March Buthelezi (portrait provided) throws down the cultural weapon (IFP: 1). He is holding out for a better federal deal: "We will not rest until we deliver a constitution that will ensure lasting peace for all". A week later a huge IFP logo exhorts readers to "VOTE ... WHEN THE TIME COMES" (IFP: 2). Mid-April brings us a defence of the IFP's strategy in a series of quotes from the London *Sunday Times*: South Africa is on the brink of civil war; the National Party is in a "supine rush" (a rather intriguing posture!) to give up power, and the ANC "is riding roughshod over those who stand in its way (exemplified by the Shell House slaughter)". The straplines sum it up: "The Mandela/de Klerk Fraud" and "Postpone the poll to avert civil war" (IFP: 3). The day after settlement is reached with the IFP, nationwide ads proclaim "SOUTH AFRICA We did it for YOU" (IFP: 4). The slogans "YOUR ONLY ALTERNATIVE", "YOUR ONLY GUARANTEE" AND "YOUR ONLY CHOICE" are taken up in the linked ads (on consecutive pages) published nationwide at the start of election week. These begin with: "FREEDOM FEDERALISM FREE ENTERPRISE" (IFP: 5), closely followed by a list of the IFP's battles on South Africa's behalf (IFP: 6); and the first appearance of a graphic with a shady photo of de Klerk who, it is asserted, has indeed "made the change", running down the old flag and hoisting the banner of the Communist Party (IFP: 7). And finally, the reconstructed ballot slip with the IFP displacing the Nats on the bottom line, replete with Biblical text: "So the last shall be first... Put your cross in the last block and come first" (IFP: 8). The IFP campaign has three clear, if highly compressed, phases, organised around the message: a fraud is being perpetrated and we're fighting for you; we've won our case; now get out and vote for us. Its logic is close to that of the DP, but its presentation is much more stark and concentrated.

The target reader of the IFP ads is disenchanted with the compromises struck during negotiations. Entrepreneurial, conservative and federalist, s/he looks to Buthelezi as the strongminded, doughty "outsider" for an independent line against the two bully-boys.

Layout is simple and direct. The upbeat IFP logo with its family greeting the rising sun is large and prominently placed in all the ads, underscored by the slogan "A Power for GOOD". The party's full name never appears, only the

initials IFP. Extensive use is made of bold capitalisation. Barring the striking "flags" ad, no visuals are used apart from Buthelezi's photo, the IFP logo, and the centred voting paper in the final ad.

VRYHEIDSFRONT (VF) (FREEDOM FRONT)

The Vryheidsfront's advertising campaign appears to have been handled internally by communications academic Professor Pieter Mulder. It begins in Old Testament style with a portrait of General Constand Viljoen and the text used by Verwoerd in 1958: "Cometh the hour ... Cometh the man!" (VF: 1). The priorities are simple and clear: the rejection of flawed negotiations and the demand for self-determination in a Volkstaat. After a couple of amateurish graphics involving scales (VF: 2), the ads pick up well, and offer a run of bold visuals in the form of artistically-lit close-up photographs. Each of these is a carefully selected negative image, a metonymy for the threats posed by the policies of the major parties (ANC; NP). The binding phrase is "HOW YOU CAN PREVENT ... " a range of calamities. The Afrikaans Sunday *Rapport* takes the first run, three ads on consecutive pages featuring: a wave ("... being swamped by oppressive ideologies" (VF: 3); blood being drawn ("... being financially bled to death") (VF: 4), and an ornate door - "the door being slammed shut on self-determination") (VF: 5). Placing is of interest here. The Afrikaans readers of *Rapport* are confronted with threatening ideologies, a rising cost of living, and the need for autonomy. On the same day the English *Sunday Times* also runs three linked ads, depicting title deeds being ripped apart ("your property and wealth being redistributed") (VF: 6); a boot in the face ("having your culture and lifestyle squashed") (VF: 7), and a descending gavel ("being hammered by injustice") (VF: 8). These are the same topics offered *Rapport* readers, but here rendered more "upmarket". Threatening ideologies transmute to a concern for civil rights, and concern with the cost of living becomes anxiety about wealth, property and maintaining one's lifestyle. Then the whole series is re-run in the English press generally, including self-determination (VF: 9) and oppressive ideologies (VF: 10). Election week sees the original selection being used again, and the mass-circulation *Sunday Times* runs the threats to property and wealth (VF: 11) and civil rights (VF: 12), together with a rather weak summary ad using graphics (VF: 13).

The target reader of the VF ads is clearly a supporter of the Volkstaat idea. But the ads seem to offer more than this: conservatism and "independence" in their broader sense of defending existing rights and privileges against the flood of change.

The rather attractive VF logo derives the party's initials from the sectors of a circle with the "V" doubling as a brazier emitting flames, and this is tied

throughout to a variant of the ballot strip. There is no party slogan. Design and imagery are striking, with bold motifs and minimal copy making their points starkly and dramatically. The only puzzle is why the two bracketing ads (at the beginning and end of the campaign) are so feeble. A summary collage of some of the leading images would have offered a stronger conclusion.

IN LIEU OF A CONCLUSION

In this paper I have attempted to read the ads generated in the recent South African election by highlighting some of the features shared by political and consumer ads as discourse type. We have noted the high levels of redundancy and cohesion in each run of party ads, which derives from repetition at every level of the text (visual and verbal, layout and design) of key phrases in which policies and arguments are compressed into slogan and imagery. We have also noted the mode of combative dialogue between the various sets of ads which involves compulsive intertextual borrowing, appropriation and refusal of mutual lexicons, narratives and rhetorical stock. We have considered their multi-modal nature as discourse, their disposition as "ritual boasting", and their tendency to codeplay of various kinds. What emerges from this study is a rich and heteroglossic compendium of distinctly South African voices, a shared popular stock of fears, desires, rituals, stories and frames. Do we proceed to dismiss these as mere clichés, gross oversimplifications, a once-every-five-years necessary evil of electioneering? Or do we go along with Philo's (1993) larger claim that such political phrases and images can be used to establish key elements of popular understanding:

[They] act as key elements in political consciousness. They can form a sort of template through which people interpret their own experience and desires. They can also affect how people interpret new information ... understanding what is going wrong and what should be done.

When Davidson says that ads are "relevance mythopoeically expanded" he is referring to two aspects of ads. First, in their primary task of influencing behaviour, ads have a strong vested interest in "getting it right". It is because they so painstakingly research and then so forcefully represent people's attitudes and desires, and manage to dramatise in the public domain so many of the conflicting voices of a society, that they can be taken as an accurate and suggestive index of the cultures that produce them. Second, we misread ads if we judge them by normal standards of factual or accurate representation. Ads don't sell things, but values; not products, but brands. In their drive to impress they are the most voracious of texts, seizing upon imagery and rhetoric from anywhere and everywhere. Above all, they sell transient products in terms of tangible durables, and in this process they create meaning far in excess of their proclaimed purpose. By being ritually

repeated over and over again they offer the closest thing modernity will ever get to a shared public discourse. For these reasons alone they are worth paying attention to.

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ADVERTISEMENTS

(This is not a comprehensive listing; sources are for the advertisements cited in this paper.)

Cape Town: *Cape Times*; *Argus*; *Weekend Argus*; *South*; *Sunday Times* (*Cape Metro*); *Rapport-Metro*.

Johannesburg: *Sunday Times*; *Star*; *Weekly Mail and Guardian*; *Sowetan*; *Sunday Nation*; *City Press*; *Beeld*; *Rapport*.

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (NATIONAL)

- 1 *Argus*, 19 February 1994, p.8.
- 2 *Argus*, 1 March 1994 (insert).
- 3 *Argus*, 24 February 1994, p.21.
- 4 *South*, 18 February 1994, p.7.
- 5 *Weekly Mail*, 25 February 1994, p.13.
- 6 *Sunday Times*, 27 February 1994, p.9.
- 7 *Sunday Times*, 6 March 1994, p.9.
- 8 *Sunday Times*, 13 March 1994, pp. 10-11.
- 9 *Sunday Nation*, 20 March 1994, p.4.
- 10 *Sunday Nation*, pp.16-17; *City Press*, pp.12-13; *Sunday Times*, pp.30-31, 20 March 1994.
- 11 *Sunday Nation*, 3 April 1994, p.9.
- 12 *Sunday Nation*, p.9; *Sunday Times*; *Rapport*, 10 April 1994.
- 13 *Sunday Nation*, p. 16-17; *Sunday Times*; *Rapport*, 17 April 1994.
- 14 *Weekend Argus* (*Voter Education Supplement*), p.7; *Cape Times*, 23 April 1994.
- 15 *Sunday Nation*, p.5; *Sunday Times*; *Rapport*, 24 April 1994.
- 16 *Sunday Times* (*Cape Metro*), 24 April 1994, p.17.
- 17 *Cape Times*, 27 April 1994, p.8.
- 18 *Cape Times*, 27 April 1994, p.8.

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (WESTERN CAPE)

- 1 *Argus*, 24 February 1994, p.14.
- 2 *Argus*, 25 February 1994, p.7.
- 3 *Weekend Argus*, 26 February 1994, p.7.
- 4 *South*, 4 March 1994, p.8.
- 5 *Weekend Argus*, 4 March 1994, p.11.
- 6 *South*, 25 March 1994, p.5.
- 7 *South*, 25 March 1994, p.8.
- 8 *Cape Times*, 23 March 1994, p.7.
- 9 *Sunday Times* (*Cape Metro*), 17 April 1994, p.11.
- 10 *Cape Times*, 15 April 1994, p.4.
- 11 *Cape Times*, 15 April 1994, p.5; *Sunday Times* (*Cape Metro*), 17 April 1994.
- 12 *Weekend Argus*, 26 March 1994, p.19.
- 13 *Weekend Argus*, 26 March 1994, p.17.
- 14 *Weekend Argus*, 2 April 1994, p.13.
- 15 *Weekend Argus*, 2 April 1994, p.11; *South*, 8 April 1994.
- 16 *Weekend Argus*, 23 April 1994, p.21.
- 17 *Weekend Argus*, 23 April 1994, p.19.
- 18 *Weekend Argus*, 23 April 1994, p.23.
- 19 *Sunday Times* (*Cape Metro*), 24 April 1994, pp.6-7; *Rapport*, 24 April 1994.

NATIONAL PARTY

- 1 *Sunday Times*, 13 March 1994, p.6.
- 2 *Argus*, 15 March 1994, p.8.
- 3 *Argus*, 25 March 1994, p.8.
- 4 *South*, 25 March 1994, p.4.
- 5 *Rapport*, 10 April 1994, p.11.
- 6 *Weekly Mail*, 8 April 1994, p.5.
- 7 *Sunday Nation*, 10 April 1994, p.15; *Sunday Times*, 10 April 1994.
- 8 *Argus*, 13 April 1994, p.15.
- 9 *Sowetan*, 14 April 1994, p.13; *Argus*, 15 April 1994.
- 10 *Sowetan*, 14 April 1994, p.15.
- 11 *Star*, 15 April 1994, p.8.
- 12 *Argus*, 15 April 1994, p.6.
- 13 *Cape Times*, 15 April 1994, p.7.
- 14 *Sunday Nation*, 17 April 1994, p.25.
- 15 *Sunday Nation*, 17 April 1994, p.27.
- 16 *Sunday Times*, 17 April 1994, p.26.
- 17 *Rapport*, 17 April 1994, p.13.
- 18 *Rapport*, 17 April 1994, p.11.
- 19 *Sunday Times*, 17 April 1994, p.28.
- 20 *Argus*, 22 April 1994, p.7; *Cape Times*, 19 April 1994, p.9.
- 21 *Argus*, 22 April 1994, p.7.
- 22 *Argus*, 22 April 1994, p.5.
- 23 *Sunday Nation*, 24 April 1994, pp.18-19; *Rapport*, 24 April 1994; *Argus*, 25 April 1994; *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994.
- 24 *Cape Times*, 21 April 1994, p.4; *Weekly Mail*, 22 April 1994.
- 25 *Argus*, 26 April 1994, p.15.
- 26 *Weekend Argus*, 23 April 1994, p.8.
- 27 *Rapport-Metro*, 24 April 1994, p.11.
- 28 *Sunday Nation*, 24 April 1994, p.34; *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994.
- 29 *Argus*, 28 April 1994, p.13.
- 30-37 NP Comic Book: *Winde van Verandering Waai Deur Suid-Afrika*, Market Media Uitgewers, Cape Town (1994).

DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NATIONAL)

- 1 *Argus*, 23 March 1994, p.23; *Sunday Times*, 27 March 1994.
- 2 *Sunday Times*, 6 March 1994, p.14.
- 3 *Sunday Times*, 13 March 1994, p.8.
- 4 *Sunday Times*, 20 March 1994, p.8.
- 5a *Argus*, 31 March 1994, p.6.

- 5b *South*, 8 April 1994, p.7. (NP counter-ad)
- 6 *Sunday Times*, 10 April 1994, p.18; *Rapport*, 24 April 1994.
- 7 *Rapport*, 10 April 1994, p.14.
- 8 *Argus*, 13 April 1994, p.6.
- 9 *Sunday Times*, 17 April 1994, p.22.
- 10 *Cape Times*, 20 April 1994, p.6; *Rapport*, 24 April 1994.
- 11 *Cape Times*, 21 April 1994, p.6.
- 12 *South*, 22 April 1994, p.8.
- 13a *Weekend Argus*, 23 April 1994, p.9.
- 13b *Weekend Argus*, 23 April 1994, p.11.

(13a and 13b linked ads on consecutive pages)

- 14 *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994, pp.34-35.
- 15 *Argus*, 26 April 1994, p.11.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY (WESTERN CAPE)

- 16 *South*, 12 April 1994, p.7.
- 17 *Argus*, 20 April 1994, p.22.
- 18 *Sunday Times (Cape Metro)*, 24 April 1994, p.4.
- 19 *Argus*, 25 April 1994, p.17.
- 20 *Cape Times*, 25 April 1994, p.7.

INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY

- 1 *Sunday Times*, 6 March 1994, p.11.
 - 2 *Sunday Times*, 13 March 1994, p.15.
 - 3 *Sunday Times*, 10 April 1994, p.10.
 - 4 *Argus*, 20 April 1994, p.19.
 - 5 *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994, p.16; *Argus*, 22 April 1994; *South*, 24 April 1994; *Rapport*, 24 April 1994.
- (Ads 5-8 in all these papers on consecutive pages)
- 6 *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994, p.18.
 - 7 *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994, p.20.
 - 8 *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994, p.21.

FREEDOM FRONT (VOLKSFRONT)

- 1 *Sunday Times*, 20 March 1994, p.23.
 - 2 *Rapport*, 10 April 1994, p.8.
 - 3 *Rapport*, 17 April 1994, p.8.
 - 4 *Rapport*, 17 April 1994, p.16.
 - 5 *Rapport*, 17 April 1994, p.33.
- (Ads 3-5 linked in identical page position)
- 6 *Sunday Times*, 17 April 1994, p.15; *Cape Times*, 21 April 1994.
 - 7 *Sunday Times*, 17 April 1994, p.17; *Cape Times*, 19 April 1994.
 - 8 *Sunday Times*, 17 April 1994, p.19.

(Ads 6-8 in *Sunday Times* linked on consecutive pages)

9 *Cape Times*, 18 April 1994, p.5.

10 *Cape Times*, 20 April 1994, p.10.

11 *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994, p.27.

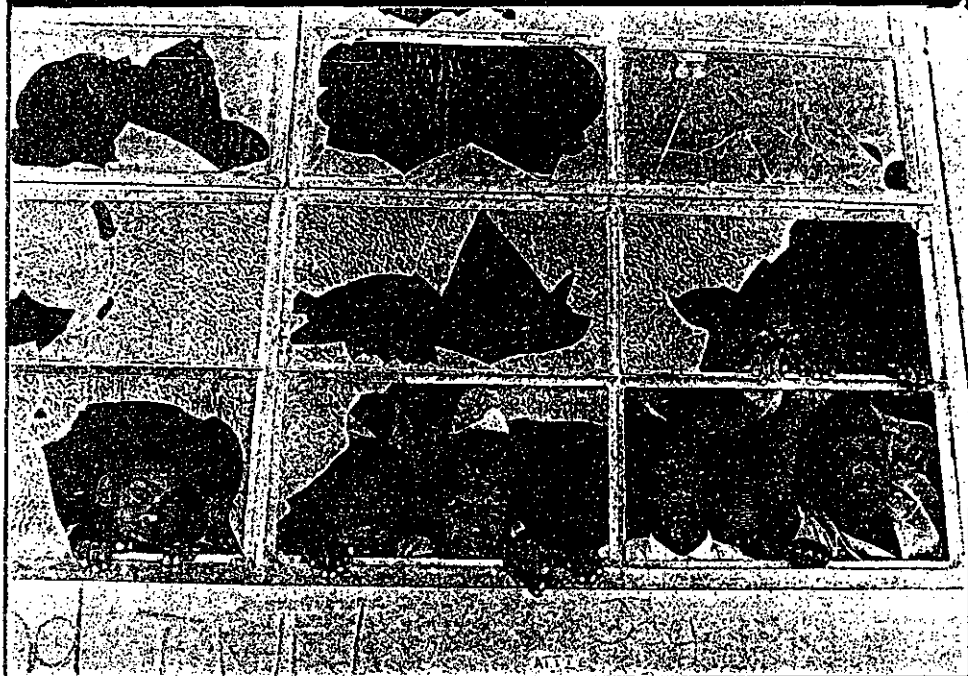
12 *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994, p.29.

13 *Sunday Times*, 24 April 1994, p.31.

(Ads 11-13 linked on consecutive pages)

The NP government spends 3 times more on educating White pupils than Coloured, African or Indian pupils.

93/94 National Budget.



THE ANC WON'T FAIL OUR CHILDREN.

There is a shortage of teachers in the Western Cape. Yet the NP recently retrenched 3 500 Coloured teachers. And this year they cut the budget for Coloured schools by 50% and the situation is just as bad in African areas. The longer this problem continues, the longer we'll have to live with unemployment and poor education.

The ANC has a plan for education. We'll provide ten years of free, compulsory, quality education to every child in South Africa.

The country can afford to pay for this plan. By streamlining

the 19 bureaucratic departments of education and ending NP corruption, there'll be enough money to give all our children a proper education.

Our children are our future. We can't afford to fail them.

Vote ANC.

The Western Cape plan for a better life for all will be discussed at our conference on March 26th.



A better life for all. Working together for jobs, peace and freedom.

ANC: 18

Page 12, Wed, 27 April 1994

ADVERTISEMENT

NOW IS THE TIME! SEKUNJALO! KE NAKO!

*"Let us vote in such overwhelming numbers
that we show everyone how
much we love our country, how much we
love our people, how much we love peace,
how much we love life itself."*



Today is a day like no other before it. It marks the dawn of our freedom..

As we travelled around every part of the country we saw your misery. We shared your hopes and dreams.

Now your day has come, because this election is about you. It is your election. It is your vote that counts.

Years of imprisonment could not stamp out our determination to be free. Years of intimidation and violence could not stop us. And we will not be stopped now.

You hold the future in your hands. And now is the time to rise to the challenge.

Standing together, let us send a message loud and clear: we will not let a handful of killers steal our democracy.

Our surest way to stop them, and to bring peace, is to cast our vote.

We will show the world that we are determined to stand up against the violence, determined to vote for a better life for all.

Nelson Mandela

Every South African knows:

Now is the time! Sekunjalo! Ke Nako!

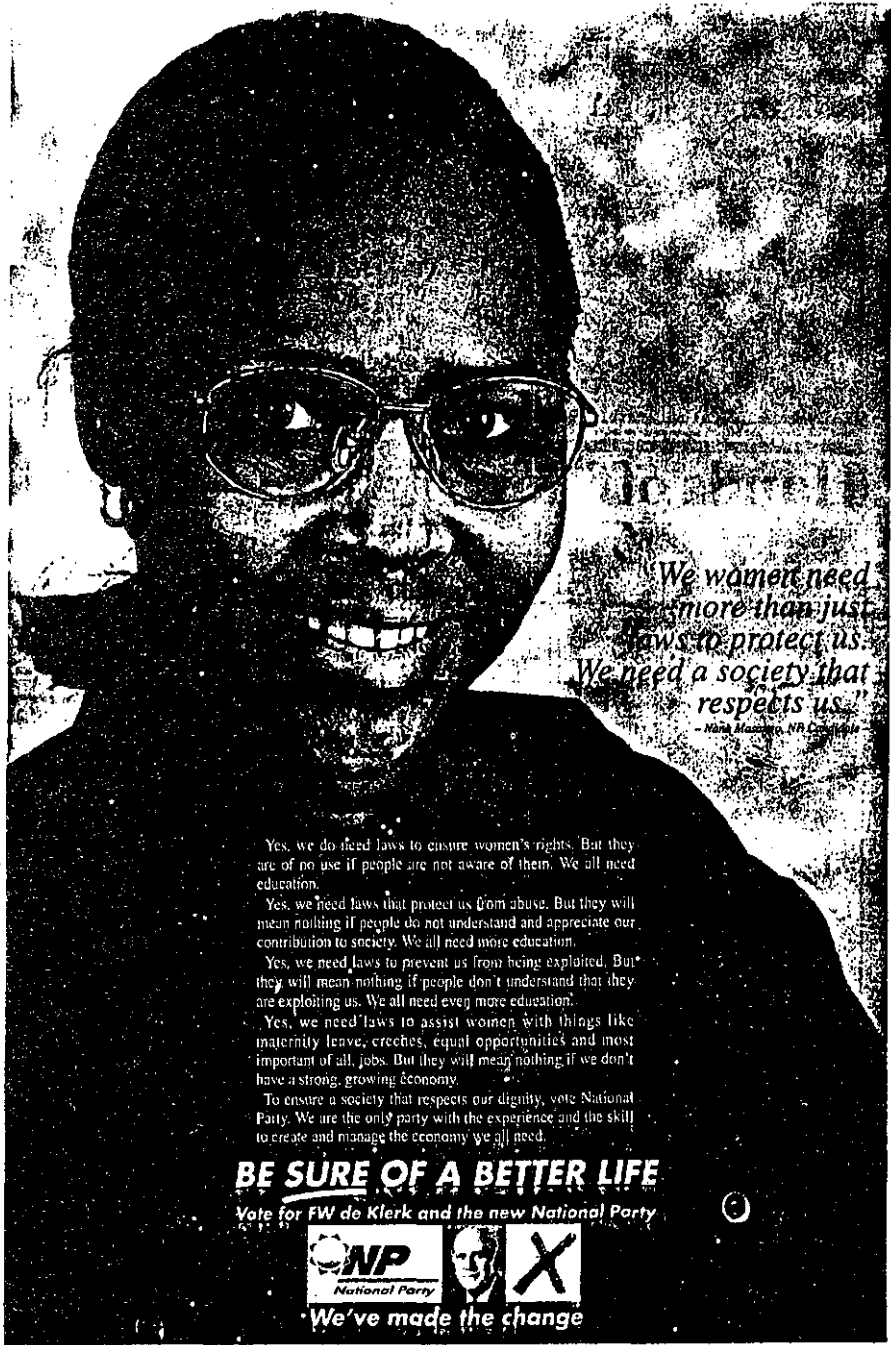


A better life for all. Working together for jobs, peace and freedom.

Image by ANC, SAP, P 12 Box 4100, Johannesburg, 2007.

XP: 1

SUNDAY TIMES, March 22 1998



*We women need
more than just
laws to protect us.
We need a society that
respects us.*
— Nana Maafo, NP Candidate

Yes, we do need laws to ensure women's rights. But they are of no use if people are not aware of them. We all need education.




Yes, we need laws that protect us from abuse. But they will mean nothing if people do not understand and appreciate our contribution to society. We all need more education.

Yes, we need laws to prevent us from being exploited. But they will mean nothing if people don't understand that they are exploiting us. We all need even more education.

Yes, we need laws to assist women with things like maternity leave, creches, equal opportunities and most important of all, jobs. But they will mean nothing if we don't have a strong, growing economy.

To ensure a society that respects our dignity, vote National Party. We are the only party with the experience and the skill to create and manage the economy we all need.

BE SURE OF A BETTER LIFE
Vote for FW de Klerk and the new National Party



We've made the change

ADVERTISEMENT

"I was with the unions, now I'm with the National Party."



"My name is Honest Shamase and I, like many other workers, will be voting National Party.

From 1986, I was strongly involved in COSATU's activities. My task as a shop steward at Pep Stores was to represent the workers when they had a problem with management. I used to negotiate with management to reinstate those members that were fired or whatsoever.

My other task was to organise for strikes, boycotts or whatever was needed. I was also in support committees which helped to organise strikes at other companies.

After 2nd February 1990, after the State President announced that apartheid was no longer, that each and every one was free in South Africa, I thought it wasn't necessary for us to keep on striking, boycotting and so on. I thought now was the time to sit and negotiate with all parties involved.

What I didn't like about COSATU was that they used to call boycotts and strikes, especially when the ANC and the Government were in dispute. So whenever the ANC was not satisfied with Government they used to use the workers to protest against them.

But the ANC never asked the workers if they would support that boycott or stay-away.

And that action has cost millions of workers their jobs. They ended up in the street. So, I didn't like that action.

And then in 1993, at a COSATU special congress in Soweto, Mandela was addressing the workers, in fact, not addressing the workers but telling them to vote for the ANC. I didn't like that because not all the members of COSATU were ANC members, but we were being forced to vote ANC. The workers too should be free to vote for who they want.

As soon as I walked out of that meeting I went straight to the National Party and joined them. Since then, I've recruited many COSATU members to the NP and they were very willing to join because they also disliked the way the ANC was using them. It is the workers who suffer when their employers deduct from their salaries or fire them for not coming to work. But all this time Jay Naidoo is sitting in his office, doing his work, getting his salary, you know.

We can see that foreign investors don't like communists so we should not vote ANC. The NP is the only party that can create the economy to provide jobs. Even after the election we will still need to work to support our families, to give our children education, to pay our bonds and so on.

I have always looked after the workers and I can tell them now that voting NP is in their interest."

BE SURE OF A BETTER LIFE

Vote for FW de Klerk and the new National Party





Have you noticed that around election time the National Party suddenly starts making all the right noises?

If you haven't, we'd like to give you an example.

In the 1989 election, the Nats ridiculed the Democratic Party for calling for the ANC's unbanning. In 1994, President de Klerk and his "new" Nats are constantly playing second fiddle to the ANC. And this isn't the only example.

For instance, in 1989 President de Klerk promised to lower personal taxes. Since then, personal taxes have more than doubled.



It would seem the National Party define a promise as "something you say to get elected".

Just look at what's happening in this election already: the "new" Nats promise to protect you from the ANC, yet they've already struck numerous secret deals with them, and have caved in to them time and again. Which all goes to show one thing.

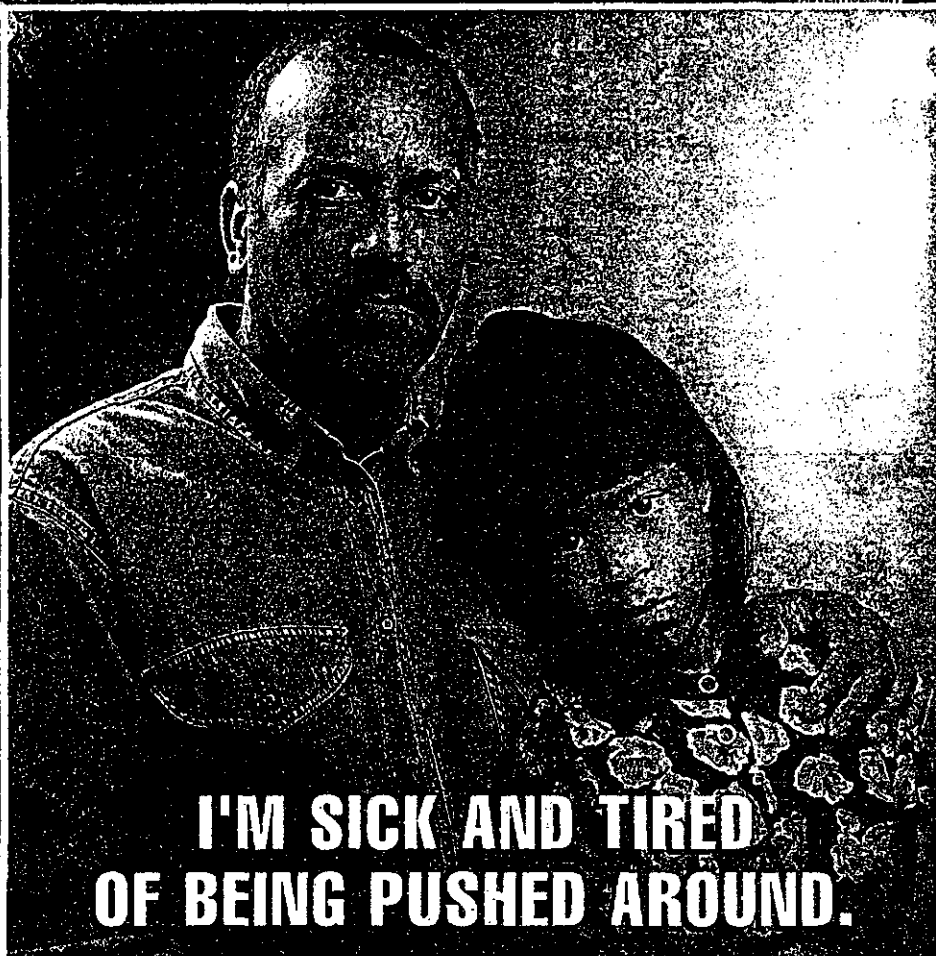
You can believe the NP's promises one more time.

Or you can vote for the Democratic Party. Because when we promise to protect you, we mean it.

And we'll never change our tune.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY. PROTECTING YOU FROM THE ABUSE OF POWER.

JOIN THE GROWING NUMBER OF PEOPLE MOVING ACROSS TO THE DP. WRITE TO BOX 1476 CAPE TOWN 8001 FOR MORE INFORMATION.



I'M SICK AND TIRED OF BEING PUSHED AROUND.

'It looks as though we've only just got rid of one bully, the NP government, when another one has taken its place.

I can hardly go to work anymore without the ANC proclaiming another stayaway for some reason or other, so my job is in danger.

These Self-Defence Units are making life in the township unbearable. I can't even say which party I support without feeling as though my life is in danger.

If the ANC are supposed to be bringing us our freedom, why do I feel even less free than I did 5 years ago? And as for the Nats: they've been pushing everybody around for the last 46 years. Asking me to

vote for them is another expression of the same old attitude: they think we're stupid, and we'll do what they tell us to.

Well I'm not stupid, and I'm not going to do what they tell me to. I'm going to vote for the Democratic Party. They've never pushed people around, or hurt anybody. And they've always fought as hard as they could for my rights, and yours.

I know my vote is safe with them. Nobody will ever know who I choose. I will be completely safe. That's why I am going to vote for the Democratic Party.

Then in my heart I will know that, after a lifetime of being pushed around, I'm finally fighting back.



DEMOCRATIC PARTY. PROTECTING YOU FROM THE ABUSE OF POWER.

FOR ELECTION INFORMATION, CALL JOHANNESBURG 493 2243, DURBAN 386 4526, PORT ELIZABETH 521776, PE CAPE TOWN 451426.

SOUTH AFRICA

We did it for

YOU



YOUR ONLY ALTERNATIVE

If you want to help us build a better future, you can do so by supporting us financially. Our account details are:

First National Bank, Greyville
Branch number 22 27 26
Account Number: 600040444
Account Name: IFP Election Fund

VOTE IFP



A Power for Good



HOW YOU CAN PREVENT
HAVING YOUR CULTURE
AND LIFESTYLE SQUASHED

VOTE

FREEDOM FRONT



Head Office: (0123) 474477/4225 Regional Offices: Eastern Transvaal (01241) 91137, Northwest (016) 481104, Northern Cape (053922) 838, Eastern Cape (041) 8076133, Western Cape (021) 5311666, Orange Free State (051) 5016666, Northern Transvaal (0123) 2590006, Free State (051) 2590006
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