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LIST PROPORTIONAL
REPRESENTATION
AND CAMPAIGNING
IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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The Administrative Officer
Centre for Social Science Research
University of Cape Town
Private Bag
Rondebosch, 7701
Tel: (021) 650 4656
Fax: (021) 650 4657
Email: kforbes@cssr.uct.ac.za

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Bridges and Bonds: List Proportional Representation (PR) and Campaigning in South Africa

Abstract

It is argued in this paper that the list proportional representation (PR) electoral system encourages parties to campaign using racially divisive themes in South Africa. A content analysis of party campaigning in 1994 and 1999 demonstrates the extent to which the various parties espoused messages that sought to mobilise groups on the basis of their race. A comparison of the main parties indicates that those parties that invoke exclusive 'us and them' messages do better than those that attempt an inclusive 'catch-all' strategy. The list PR electoral system is identified as the key explanatory variable for this phenomenon. List PR encourages the growth of a centrifugal party system where parties aim to racially 'outbid' each other for the votes of the groups they purport to represent. In such a system, parties that 'bond' with the social cleavage they represent are rewarded, while those that attempt to 'bridge' historical divisions are punished. It is suggested that over time, parties will 'learn' that the most successful means of mobilising voters is to play on the fears and aspirations associated with their race, with potentially disastrous consequences for racial reconciliation and democratic consolidation in South Africa.

1. Theoretical Background

The debate within the constitutional engineering school between Horowitz and Lijphart presents us with two competing views of the best electoral systems to attenuate racial and ethnic conflict in divided societies. Lijphart and more recently, Reynolds, have argued that list PR is the most suitable electoral system for a divided society chiefly on the grounds that it allows for minority representation in the legislature (Lijphart and Grofman, 1984: 7; Lijphart, 1987: 5; 1990: 6; 1991: 72; Reynolds, 1995; 1997; 1999). It is claimed that the inclusivity of list PR means that fewer groups are likely to resort to anti-system measures, thus aiding the consolidation of democracy.

Secondly, Reynolds argues that list PR encourages parties to create ethnically diverse lists, resulting in few incentives for candidates to make ethnically exclusive appeals for support (1999: 97). Elsewhere (1997) he points out that the national lists in the South African 1994 election allowed parties to present ethnically heterogeneous groups of candidates with cross-cutting appeal. However, party lists in South Africa have not been as diverse as suggested by Reynolds. Parties are routinely criticized for having homogeneous lists and in many instances where members from across the racial divide are included, it is a result of tokenism¹ or of the personal politics of a particular MP², rather than a reflection of a party's commitment to racial accommodation. In any event, there is no reason why a black ANC candidate, for example, would have less incentive to make racially exclusive appeals when campaigning in African townships just because a few whites were included on the ANC's party list. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and Peter Mokaba, for instance, have become notorious for their racially inflammatory statements on the campaign trail.³ Furthermore, few voters are aware of the demographics of the party lists, aside from the party leadership. Extra-parliamentary movements during apartheid (ANC, PAC and IFP) all have black leaders at the helm, while those that engaged in, and have their roots in, apartheid structures (NP, DP and FF) are all led by whites.

Thirdly, it is claimed by the consociational school that the fragmentation of the party system allowed by PR makes it likely that parties will need to form coalitions across racial lines in order to achieve their electoral objectives, thereby furthering inter-racial co-operation (Lijphart, 1987: 5). The assertion that list PR leads to multi-ethnic governing coalitions is however tenuous, as list PR on its own does not *guarantee* sufficient party proliferation to necessitate a governing coalition (Horowitz, 1991: 173; Deschouwer and Jans, 1998: 183). In a country where one party obtains more than half of the national vote, it can govern alone, whatever electoral system is in place.⁴ Furthermore, if no clear winner emerges from an election, the resulting coalition or 'seat pooling' arrangement is likely to fall apart as there is no incentive to compromise over ethnic or racial issues (Horowitz, 1991: 171).

¹ David Malatsi's position as an NNP candidate in 1999, for instance.

² Joe Slovo, for example, was hardly elected on to the ANC list to placate white fears.

³ Mokaba was responsible for popularizing the slogan: "Kill the farmer, kill the boer." Madikizela-Mandela told black voters in 1999 that white farmers were killing each other to provoke retaliatory attacks on blacks (*Sowetan*, March 23 1999).

⁴ In South Africa, the ruling African National Congress (ANC) garnered 62% and 65% in the 1994 and 1999 elections respectively. The constitutionally mandated power-sharing government fell apart after two years and there is no provision for a governing coalition in the Final Constitution. The presence of the IFP in the national cabinet is a trade off for ANC seats in the KwaZulu-Natal provincial executive.

Horowitz proposes the alternative vote (AV) electoral system to encourage parties to form alliances before the election takes place. The AV electoral system uses a preferential ballot and voters are asked to rank-order their preferred candidates. Under this system, parties are reliant on each other for electoral support, forcing them to adopt moderate policy stances and campaign messages. The parties that are the most moderate on ethnic and racial issues are likely to pick up the most support since they will be rewarded by securing the most second preferences of voters. As Horowitz puts it: 'Voters of one group could provide the margin of victory for a candidate of another group, who might then be responsive to their concerns.' (1991: 173) These preferential systems thus have a very different incentive structure to list PR systems where incentives to appeal to voters of other racial and ethnic groups are absent and voters are 'locked wholly within their ethnic party' (Horowitz, 1991: 172).

While it is true that the inclusiveness of list PR is desirable in a divided society, it is important for constitutional engineers to look beyond the effect that the electoral system has on the composition of the legislature. This is especially important in a dominant party system such as South Africa, where one party is able to govern without the need of forming a coalition across racial lines.

Party campaigning and the message that politicians send out to the electorate play an important role in a divided society. As Schrire notes:

'In fragile democracies, both the ruling and opposition parties may have the capacity to destroy democracy itself. Thus both the balance of political forces and the respective party strategies will be critical in shaping political developments' (2001: 27).

In a society where politics is largely segmented along racial lines, party strategies that entrench division along existing conflictual cleavages have an inimical effect on democracy. Parties playing the race card to cement their support base, seriously hinder the ability of new democracies to overcome historical divisions. If these divisions are not surmounted, then politics is likely to take on a zero sum character whereby one group is seen to rule at the expense of others. It is therefore imperative that measures are adopted that counteract the tendency for politicians to play the race card. The only way to achieve this is to promote the development of inclusive or 'catch-all' parties that do not direct their electoral appeals at some groups at the expense of others.

Lijphart's primordial view of race and ethnicity means that he accepts racial mobilisation as an inevitable and permanent feature of a divided society (1977: 4-5; 1987: 5). Instead of devising means of diminishing the salience of

ascriptive identities, he is satisfied with proposing a system that encourages many parties (defined along ethnic lines) to be represented in the legislature.⁵

A constructivist approach to ethnicity on the other hand allows us to propose measures that may counteract the tendency of parties to sound racially divisive themes. Whereas primordialists hold that ethnicity is a given from birth and thus immutable (Geertz, 1963: 109), constructivists argue that ethnic identities are imagined or constructed. Ethnic or racial boundaries are formed as groups 'seek to defend their interests or increase their advantages by restricting recruitment and access to membership of the group' (Schlemmer, 1999: 33). In other words, a key reason for the persistence of race as a salient factor in politics is due to the messages of political elites who seek to meet their electoral goals.

If political affiliations in a divided society are constructed, they have the potential to become fluid. In this case, an electoral system must, if possible, encourage this fluidity by creating incentives for politicians to seek support across racial lines. This is what Horowitz believes AV will achieve in a divided society.⁶

Evidence from countries that use the AV and another preferential voting system, the single transferable vote (STV) is encouraging. Architects of the 1997 Constitution in Fiji sought 'constitutional arrangements [to] promote the emergence of multi-ethnic governments' (Lal, 1999: 276) in order to overcome the country's history of ethnic division between the indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians. Following the proposal of Horowitz,⁷ the AV system was used for the 1999 election. Reilly notes that political parties from both sides of the ethnic divide reacted to the changed incentives by making pre-election alliances with the election being fought between two large multi-ethnic coalitions rather than between monoethnic parties as in the past (Reilly, 2002a: 163). As a result, the election campaign was the first in Fiji's history not to be dominated by race. Lal referred to the election as:

'...the most relaxed in living memory. Trading preferences with other parties dampened what would have been a fiery campaign. For once,

⁵ This view has led Lijphart to develop his consociational package of which PR is an integral component. The other consociational institutions are segmental autonomy, grand coalition and mutual veto in the executive. However, even without the other consociational measures, he recommends PR as the best electoral system for a divided society.

⁶ Note: Horowitz is not an ethnic primordialist although he is often wrongly associated with this position. Horowitz argues that politicians play a key role in creating ethnic conflict and that a shift in context or institutional change may create new identities (1985: 291; 1991: 44, 47). See Du Toit (1999) for an exposition of the view that Horowitz is not a primordialist.

⁷ Horowitz served as a consultant to the Fijian Constitution Review Commission. (Horowitz, 1999: 24)

race was relegated to the background because both coalitions were multiracial' (Lal cited in Reilly, 2001: 143).

Unfortunately, a coup resulted in military rule being restored in Fiji in May 2000, in large part due to the imbalanced Parliament resulting from the disproportionality of AV (Reilly, 2002a: 164). The experience of the extremely ethnically diverse Papua New Guinea with AV in 1964, 1968 and 1972 is more encouraging. AV was successful in motivating candidates to campaign for second preferences among rival groups thus greatly moderating ethnic appeals. AV also led to pre-election alliances between rival groups, urging voters to cast reciprocal preferences (Reilly, 2002a: 165; 2002b: 139). At independence in 1975, AV was replaced by a first-past-the-post plurality system leading to escalating ethnic conflict as elections were reduced to zero-sum contests between rival tribal groups. In January 2002, Papua New Guinea's Parliament voted for a return to preferential voting in an attempt to quell ethnic tensions. Reilly also notes the success of STV in encouraging parties to moderate their positions in order to attract lower-order preferences in Northern Ireland in 1998 (Reilly, 2002a: 160).

There is therefore some (limited) evidence that preferential voting systems do perform according to Horowitz's theory and dissuade elites from stirring up ethnic tensions and instead encourage running moderate campaigns. Of course, the electoral system alone cannot ensure the success of democracy and any constitutional engineer will readily admit that electoral system design is not a panacea. The experience of Fiji illustrated above shows that the type of electoral system chosen cannot alone ensure democratic success.

What is clear is that electoral systems do play a role in modifying campaign behaviour. Proponents of PR have extolled its virtues largely on the basis of its inclusiveness as well as the unconvincing claims that it encourages parties to produce ethnically divisive lists and form multi-ethnic coalition governments. While the argument that PR will encourage parties to campaign more moderately is implicit in their work, little attempt has been made to measure the effects of PR on campaign behaviour. Critics of the consociational school have been quick to point out that list PR mirrors social cleavages in the legislature, with such parties likely to continue to espouse a message that appeals to 'their' constituents at the exclusion of others (Lardeyret, 1991: 35; Lodge, 1999; Sisk, 1993: 83; Quade, 1991: 36-7). However, little work has been done to demonstrate that PR directly encourages the continued salience of ascriptive cleavages.

Pippa Norris has put forward the case that PR electoral systems encourage 'bonding' parties that campaign in a manner that strengthens their ties with their established support base:

'Bonding parties bring together citizens who are homogeneous in certain important respects, whether sharing class, faith, or ethnic identities, or bound together ideologically by common beliefs about capitalism and socialism, environmentalism or nationalism. Bonding parties are sticky organisations, promoting the interests of their own members, and developing tightly knit social networks and clear one-of-us boundaries...Bonding parties maintain strong ties with social cleavages in the electorate and enduring party loyalties' (Norris, 2003:5).

In electoral systems where the electoral threshold is low, she reasons that we can expect to see bonding parties since 'it is often easier to mobilise niche sectors with specific social and ideological appeals that are distinctive to each party, rather than trying to attract the mass public on consensual issues advocated by many parties' (Ibid.).

Majoritarian electoral systems on the other hand promote 'bridging' strategies which:

'...involve dissolving traditional boundaries between "us" and "them", adopting whatever ideas and policy proposals seem more practical and effective regardless of their ideological origins, encouraging fuzzy, inclusive and consensual party platforms...Bridging strategies trample upon sacerdotal principles and traditional one-of-us boundaries' (Norris, 2003: 3).

Majoritarian systems demand bridging strategies since they require higher electoral hurdles, as parties need a simple plurality or a majority of votes in each district to win. Parties that aim at attracting a narrowly defined sectional interest will be unlikely to gain the 50% + 1 votes necessary to secure election.

From the work of Norris, as well as a *prima facie* observation of South African elections, we can hypothesise that parties in South Africa do use racial mobilisation as an electoral strategy. The low threshold for representation means that parties are not forced to appeal to a wide section of interests to gain election, and they can opt for the easier and less risky option of targeting a niche sector. Using Norris's concept of bridging and bonding⁸, the following analysis

⁸ Note: This concept has been adapted from the literature on social capital (see Putnam, 1995).

ascertains the degree to which parties used racial or ethnic appeals in South Africa in their election campaigns in 1994 and 1999.

Before moving to the analysis of the campaigns, it is important to clarify the distinction between a racist party and one that engages in an electoral strategy of racial mobilisation. A racist party is one that has an ostensibly racist agenda founded on the belief that the group they represent has an innate superiority to others. Using a strategy that consciously or unconsciously mobilises a group or groups on the basis of their race is not necessarily racist in motivation. Parties are generally concerned with vote maximisation above all else and will tend to adopt measures that they believe will be politically profitable. If success at the polls means making appeals to some groups at the expense of others it is likely that a party will embark on such a strategy and deal with the consequences of such a campaign later.

In South Africa, most parties assert their non-racial credentials. The African National Congress (ANC), Democratic Party (DP), National Party (NP), Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and United Democratic Movement (UDM) all claim to be non-racial organisations. In fact, no party in South Africa campaigns on a racist platform. It will be shown that racial mobilisation does however remain a key electoral strategy for the main parties.

2. The Content Analytic Method

All parties are to some degree schizophrenic in their appeals and Norris notes that in practice the distinction between bridging and bonding parties involves over-simplification and that most parties blend both elements in their campaigns (Norris, 2003: 5). The only way to uncover the dominant tendency is to use a quantitative assessment of party campaigns. For the purpose of ‘counting’ the amount of bridging and bonding themes, a content analysis of the main parties’ campaigns in 1994 and 1999 was undertaken. The ANC, DP, NNP, IFP, PAC and FF's campaigns were examined since these parties were the main players in both the 1994 and 1999 elections, allowing for systematic comparison.

The Cape Argus, Cape Times, Daily Dispatch, Natal Mercury, Diamond Fields Advertiser, The Star, Citizen and the Sowetan were searched for reports on party meetings in the three months prior to each election.⁹ This period was chosen to

⁹ The aim was to use newspapers that are published across South Africa. The Cape Times and the Cape Argus are Cape Town based, the Sowetan, the Star and the Citizen are published in Gauteng, the Natal Mercury is published in KwaZulu Natal, the Daily Dispatch is published in the Eastern Cape and the Diamond Fields Advertiser is based in the Northern Cape. The Sowetan has a predominantly black readership and the Citizen has a mainly

make absolutely certain that the formal campaign period was analysed in its entirety. The use of newspaper reports to uncover the themes touched upon most by parties has its advantages and disadvantages. One possible objection is that these reports are subject to the selection bias of the reporter covering the event as well as other gatekeepers such as sub-editors and news editors. As a consequence, not all themes touched on at a meeting are likely to be reported. The use of a large and diverse sample of newspapers aims to counter any biases in certain newspapers and often the same meeting was covered by a number of newspapers. Systemic biases in the media, are harder to identify and therefore harder to counter. It must therefore be borne in mind that the sample consists of reports on party meetings rather than party meetings per se and must be accepted as a limitation of this study. Another possible limitation of the study is the focus on party meetings to the exclusion of other campaign media such as posters, pamphlets and newspaper advertisements.

There are some advantages to this approach. Newspaper reports provide easy access to information and are usually fairly succinct, addressing the key themes. This speeds the work of the researcher who avoids getting bogged down in reams of party speeches, enabling more meetings to be analysed. This approach also provides us with a sample of meetings that were deemed to be important in some way. They therefore impacted on a larger audience through being published in the newspaper. So, while only 60 people may turn out to see a politician in their local town hall, thousands may read a report on the meeting the next day.

Approximately 1440 newspapers were searched for reports on party meetings. Only reports on party meetings where a member of a political party addressed members of the general public were included. Press conferences, speeches to parliament and interviews were not included in the sample. The 388 suitable meetings found were then summarised in point form. The data was then used to generate a coding grid containing the universe of campaign messages. A portion of the coding grid is reproduced here:

Table 1: A portion of the coding grid

<i>Code</i>	<i>Message</i>
15	ANC fought for freedom/Liberation struggle an ANC struggle
16	ANC government inefficient
17	ANC had a record of human rights abuses/ violent
18	ANC had brought change

conservative white readership. The other titles have a more diverse readership and occupy the moderate centre politically.

This grid was then applied to the point form summary of each meeting. For example, Thabo Mbeki telling voters in the Transkei in 1999 that the ANC will continue Chris Hani’s struggle was coded as 15 (ANC fought for freedom/Liberation struggle an ANC struggle). Once a party’s whole campaign had been analysed by assigning codes to the campaign messages, a theme breakdown of the party was created. Here is a portion of the ANC's theme breakdown in 1994:

Table 2: Example of a theme breakdown

<i>Code</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
76	NP a white party/ party of apartheid / Old nats/ racist	37
198	Right-wing will be dealt with by force	18
115	Black empowerment	17
194	Reconciliation/ Racial Unity	17

Each message was then categorised according to whether it formed part of a bonding, bridging or neutral theme. The concepts of bridging and bonding were operationalised according to Table 3 that sets out the rules for classifying the campaign messages. The content analysis undertaken here combines a qualitative and quantitative approach. Inter-coder reliability is therefore likely to be lower than a pure quantitative analysis. However, this approach has been necessary given the contextual nature of campaign rhetoric. It is hoped that the articulation of hard and fast rules combined with a transparent method will enable the reader to see clearly the rationale for the decisions taken.¹⁰

¹⁰ The raw data (i.e.: summary of party meetings), the coding index as well as the theme breakdown for each party are available from the Data First Resource Unit at the University of Cape Town.

Table 3: Typology of bridging and bonding themes

<i>Message type</i>	<i>Bridging</i>	<i>Bonding</i>
Reference to race groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reconciliation - All in it together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Division/separation - Us and them
Reference to party or other parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are representative/ They are not representative like us - All parties should cooperate for the good of all (non-racial cooperation) - Political tolerance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We represent your group's interests/ They can't represent your group's interests as we can - Let's join forces to fight another party (racial alliances) - Political intolerance
Reference to policy issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interest of all - Reference to a policy issue that is pertinent to a group across the racial divide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narrow, sectional interest - Reference to a policy issue that is pertinent only to party's core group.

The first type of message is one that refers directly to matters of race. Any message referring to the theme of reconciliation or non-racialism was coded as bridging, while any message that fostered racial division was coded as bonding. Also, a message welcoming groups from across the racial divide was coded as bridging, while a message that was explicitly aimed at a party's traditional support base was coded as bonding. Such a categorisation necessitates that we label each party according to the race group they principally represent. The ANC, PAC and IFP are all considered here as black parties, while the NP, DP and FF are classified as white parties according to the following three criteria: party history, party leadership and support base. The ANC, PAC and IFP were all engaged in extra-parliamentary activity during the apartheid era,¹¹ while the NP, DP and FF were all involved in, or have their roots in, apartheid institutions. The ANC, PAC and IFP all have black leaders, while whites lead the NP, DP and FF. The three black parties all had an overwhelmingly black support base going in to both the 1994 and 1999 elections, while the DP and the FF had a predominantly white support base. The NP's support base going in to the 1999 election was approximately half white, with the other half predominantly

¹¹ The role of the IFP during the apartheid era is ambiguous as although the movement was formed with the aim of furthering the interests of Zulus and with the ANC's blessing, it has also been linked to furthering the interests of the apartheid regime (see: Hamilton and Maré, 1994: 76)

coloured, but including some blacks and Indians.¹² However, the perception of the NP as a 'white' party, its association with apartheid and its white leadership was enough to classify it a white party for our purposes.

The second type of message is one that refers to a party's own or another party's character and measures what Horowitz (1985) refers to as racial or ethnic outbidding. An attempt by a party to show the electorate that it can represent a group's interests better than another party is an instance of racial outbidding. The ANC asserting that the UDM were apartheid collaborators, or the DP claiming that the NP was in league with the ANC, are examples of outbidding. The aim here was to show voters that the ANC and the DP are more committed to their respective constituencies than the UDM and the NP, their respective rivals. All instances of ethnic or racial outbidding were coded as bonding since the aim is to strengthen the party's link with a social cleavage. Moderate outbidding, on the other hand, is a bridging strategy in which parties attempt to show the electorate that they are more inclusive, representative or non-racial than another party. One example would be the NNP telling white voters that the DP is leading voters into a whites-only cul-de-sac and that white voters should join hands with other South Africans by voting NNP.

The third type of campaign message is policy proposals and criticisms of existing policies. References to policy can be tricky to code in terms of whether they are bridging and bonding, since some policy proposals, while ostensibly non-racial, may benefit certain groups at the expense of others. In order to avoid the accusation of viewing South African politics through a racial lens, it was decided to err on the side of neutrality when coding policy proposals. References to economic growth, crime, housing, education, unemployment for example, could all be construed as benefiting some races over others. For our purposes however, unless proposals in such areas were *explicitly* aimed at one race group over another, they were coded as neutral. Accusations that another party was inefficient or corrupt were coded as neutral, as well as references to ideological positions such as liberalism and communism. White parties calling for the eradication of poverty was coded as bridging since blacks are by far the poorest group. White parties calling for merit-based employment policies were coded as bonding since the aim is to evoke fears of minority exclusion. Black parties calling for the redistribution of land were coded as bonding as such a policy has clear distributional consequences determined by race.

The extract from the ANC's theme breakdown for 1994 illustrated above in Table 2 will serve to illustrate how a party's campaign was analysed in terms of bridging and bonding. Codes 76, 198 and 115 were all classified as being part of a bonding theme. Labelling the NP as the party of apartheid or as a white party

¹² For estimates of the racial breakdown of party support in 1994 and 1999 see: Reynolds, 1994; 1999b

(76) clearly aimed to convince blacks that the NP would continue to oppress blacks should it come to power. Talk that the ANC would use violence against the right wing (198) was also bonding since it aimed to evoke an 'us and them' dimension. Promises of black empowerment (115) 'bonded' the ANC to its black supporters by pledging redress of disadvantages arising from apartheid. Calls for reconciliation and racial unity (194) on the other hand, were clearly part of a bridging theme, since the aim was to dissolve racial boundaries entrenched during apartheid.

One major difficulty at the outset was deciding how to code appeals made to coloured and Indian voters. An ANC politician telling coloured or Indian voters that they should not fear the ANC, or that they were welcome in the ANC was coded as bridging, since it aimed to convince non-ANC voting coloured and Indian voters that they had a home in the ANC. If an ANC politician told coloured and Indian voters that they must unite with Africans to fight white privilege, it was coded as bonding since the aim was to invoke a racially divisive 'oppressor vs. oppressed' dimension. Similarly, the DP or the NP appealing to coloureds and Indians by referring to the exclusion of minorities by the ANC was coded as bonding as the aim was to bond these groups into a fearful minority bloc.

3. Results

Before reporting on the results of the content analysis, it is worth briefly reiterating the debate over list PR and campaigning. According to Reynolds, list PR encourages parties to publish racially diverse party lists and therefore less incentive for parties to engage in racial mobilisation. Also, according to Lijphart and Reynolds, the need to form alliances across racial lines in order to govern should also dissuade parties from playing the race card. According to the PR proponents then, closed list PR should mitigate the incidence of ethnic and racial appeals. It is presumed that over the course of a few elections held under closed list PR, political actors will refrain more and more from bonding messages as they 'learn' the incentive structure of the electoral system.

Critics of list PR argue that the system does nothing to prevent parties from mobilising voters on the basis of their race. Instead, list PR 'freezes' the (racialised) party system. Norris adds that the low threshold for election under list PR means that parties can afford to be risk averse and target a niche sector, instead of attempting to win new support across traditional cleavages. According to Horowitz and other critics of closed list PR, we would expect a bonding strategy to be dominant under this system, with parties realising the benefits of such a strategy after a couple of elections.

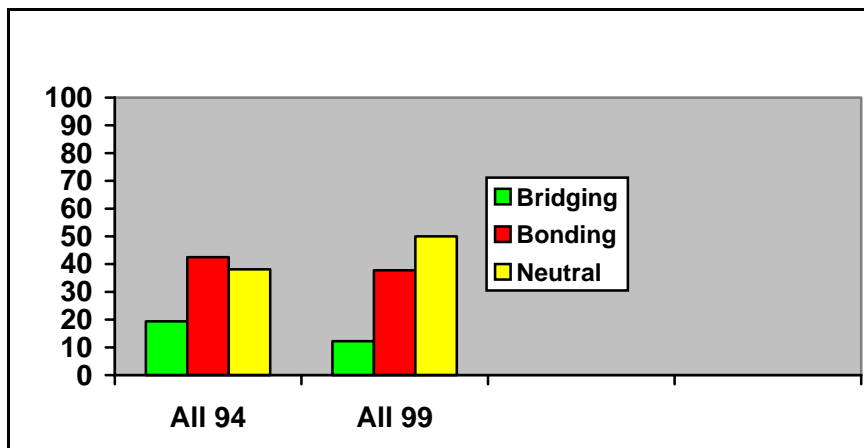
3.1. Comparison of Both Elections Overall

The results of the content analysis (shown in Table 4 and Figure 1 below) show that bonding and bridging messages were, in general, more prevalent in 1994. The 1999 campaign was more neutral overall than 1994.

Table 4: Comparison of 1994 and 1999 election overall

	1994	1999
Party meetings	164	224
Campaign messages	1091	1451
Bridging messages	212	178
Bonding messages	464	548
Neutral messages	415	725

Figure 1: Comparison of overall campaign themes in 1994 and 1999



As an 'Uhuru' or liberation election, it is perhaps unsurprising that politicians, in general, were more likely to refer to issues of race in 1994, whether to espouse reconciliatory messages or to evoke South Africa's tortured not-too-distant past.

3.2 Intra-Party Comparisons

3.2.1 African National Congress

The ANC has a proud history of non-racial struggle against the apartheid regime. As the largest party, the ANC spends the most time and energy

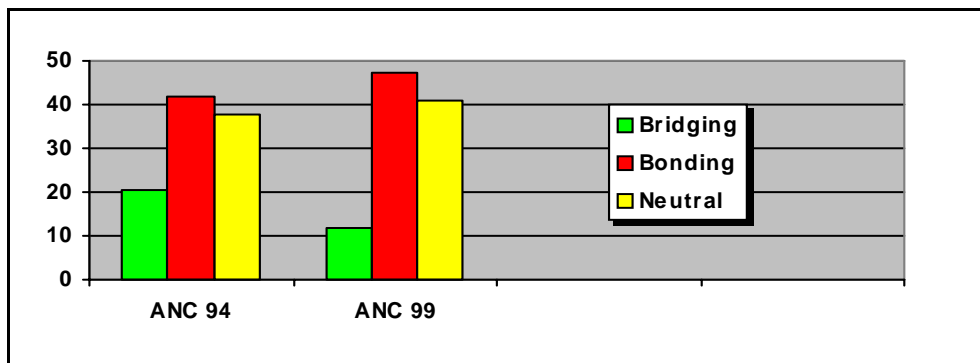
campaigning and also attracts the most press coverage. Table 5 shows the results of the content analysis on the ANC for 1994 and 1999:

Table 5: Content analysis results for the ANC

	<i>1994</i>	<i>1999</i>
Party meetings	53	91
Campaign messages	461	574
Bridging messages	95	69
Bonding messages	192	271
Neutral messages	174	234

Figure 2 breaks down the proportion of bonding to bridging to neutral themes into percentages to see at a glance how the two campaigns were fought:

Figure 2: Comparison of ANC's strategy in 1994 and 1999



The results of the content analysis show that the ANC was more prepared to evoke black nationalist themes in 1999 than in 1994. This is somewhat surprising since ‘Uhuru’ elections are generally held to be contests in which the main issue is freedom from colonial repression. The ANC’s intelligence in 1994 however convinced ANC strategists to refrain from relying too heavily on the liberation factor. Surveys and other research conducted by the ANC prior to the 1994 election showed that voters needed reassurance that the ANC was capable of governing and that the National Party had been quite successful in presenting itself as a reformed multi-racial party. One of the ANC’s US advisors, Stanley Greenberg, thus recommended that it would be more rewarding to reassure people about the future than remind them about the past (Lodge, 1994: 29). Lodge notes however that ANC speeches in 1994 were less inhibited in attacking the National Party than the campaign literature although ANC leaders were careful to address white fears (1994: 36-37). This is reflected in the amount of bridging messages (approximately one-fifth of the total) counted in the

content analysis for 1994. The issue-based nature of the campaign is also reflected in the content analysis with neutral messages accounting for nearly two-fifths of the total. However, ANC speakers did revert to bonding themes the most (42%), especially with accusations that the NP was the party of apartheid, that the ANC would deal with the right wing by force, black empowerment in the new South Africa and reminding voters that the ANC fought for freedom.

In 1999, the ANC sought to consolidate the large share of the vote it garnered in 1994 (62%), and perhaps advance in some areas where it had failed to gain a plurality in 1994, such as the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal (Lodge, 1999: 70). The campaign again was largely issue-based although, as Lodge notes, campaign meetings usually consisted of derisory comments about the opposition (1999: 73). Voters were reminded of white parties' role in apartheid and the UDM was denounced often as being made up of apartheid collaborators. ANC campaigners often reminded voters that it was the party that fought for freedom and that white supremacy was never coming back. Again, the ANC did offer some assurances to minorities that it would not change the constitution if it got a two-thirds majority and encouraged whites to join hands with the majority. Coloureds and Indians were also welcomed into the party, but often the strategy of the ANC was to appeal to these groups by asserting that they must unite to fight white privilege.

One major problem facing the party was the perception that the ANC had not delivered on the election promises made in 1994. There was a danger that the rescinding of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and the slow pace of delivery would signal that the ANC was no longer serious about rectifying inequalities inherited from apartheid. In order to counter this perception, the ANC promised to speed up change or asserted that the ANC had laid the foundation for change, both neutral messages. However, the ANC also aimed to convince voters that the legacy of apartheid was preventing the ANC from delivering—a bonding message since it implied that it was white privilege, rather than the government's own shortcomings that were responsible for delivery failure.

The content analysis shows that the ANC was more prepared to sell itself as the party of liberation and black aspiration in 1999 than 1994. Nearly half of its messages can be classified as bonding, while only 12% aimed to bridge the racial divide through appeals for reconciliation. The most plausible reason for this renewed focus on the ANC as liberators was to cover over perceptions that the party was failing to deliver on its 1994 promises. A renewed interest in race was apparent in the ANC's discourse from 1998. In May 1998 in a speech to open a National Assembly debate on reconciliation and nation building, Mbeki said that South Africa was a country divided into two nations:

'One of these nations is white, relatively prosperous, regardless of gender or geographic dispersal... the second and larger nation is black and poor, with the worst affected being women in the rural areas, the black rural population and the disabled' (Mbeki, 1998a: 71-72).

This tendency of the post-Mandela ANC government to rely on race is noted by Marks Chabedi who argues that the ANC continues to see itself as the 'mouthpiece of an "oppressed nation"', leading it to downplay intra-black inequalities and to emphasise the relative wealth of whites' (Chabedi, 2001: 2).

3.2.2 Democratic Party

The DP was born out of the liberal tradition in South African politics, formed in 1989 as an amalgam of white parliamentary opposition to the left of the ruling National Party.

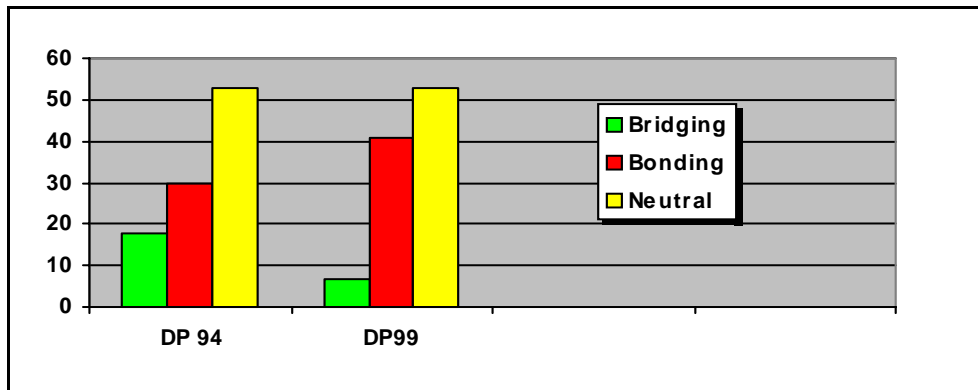
The DP's 1999 campaign was more vigorous than in 1994 and the increase in meetings covered by the press in 1999 shows that either the DP had more meetings or that they simply attracted more media attention. Table 6 shows the increase in reported DP activity in 1999:

Table 6: Content analysis results for the DP

	<i>1994</i>	<i>1999</i>
Party meetings	16	43
Campaign messages	135	337
Bridging messages	24	22
Bonding messages	40	137
Neutral messages	71	178

It is particularly noteworthy that the amount of bridging messages declined by 2 for the 1999 election, although messages recorded overall increased by 202. Figure 3 illustrates the increase in proportion of bonding to bridging themes by the 1999 election:

Figure 3: Comparison of DP's strategy in 1994 and 1999



The amount of neutral messages in both campaigns remained virtually constant, allowing us to clearly see the increase of bonding messages and decline of bridging messages in 1999. In 1994, bridging messages accounted for under 18% of the parties overall message and was reduced to a mere 6.5% in 1999. By contrast, the amount of bonding messages increased from 30% in 1994 to 40% in 1999 and bonding themes approached neutral messages as the favoured theme of the DP's campaign.

In 1994, the DP had found itself in a precarious position. The new inclusive dispensation had little need for a party to defend the interests of blacks, as Helen Suzman had done as an MP for the Progressive Federal Party (forerunner of the DP) during apartheid. Also, the reforms initiated by de Klerk, effectively stole the DP's thunder. As both the ANC and the NP moved closer to a liberal democratic way of thinking, the DP was in danger of being squeezed out. Welsh notes that the DP opted to attack both the NP and the ANC on their records, principally in respect of human rights and of economic management (Welsh, 1994: 110). This is reflected in the results of the content analysis, with the main bridging theme for the DP in 1994 being attacks on the NP for being a white party and the party of apartheid. The most predominant bonding theme was references to the ANC as a dangerous party.

On the whole, the DP's campaign in 1994 was mainly neutral, with the DP touting itself as a strong opposition, based on its track record of opposing the National Party. Other popular themes included championing free enterprise over communism and state intervention as well as calls for federalism.

The DP's dismal result in the 1994 election (1.7% of the vote) was attributed to the party's failure to break out of its white suburban and predominantly English-speaking support base. Welsh blamed the result on the party's 'cerebral approach' to politics where 'carefully worked out, rational policies, lack mass

appeal in a political system where calls to racial and ethnic “blood” are the stock-in-trade of politicians on the stump’ (Welsh, 1994: 115).

After the 1994 election new party leader Tony Leon announced that the DP could not afford to be too ‘fastidious, precious or prissy’ if it wanted to ‘attract the numbers (we) need to make a difference’ (Leon, 1998). The 1999 fight back campaign that evolved from these sentiments was an adversarial one justified as necessary to keep an increasingly powerful government in check. It also quickly became evident that the DP was not concerned how their support was increased, even if vote maximisation meant a strategy that was widely interpreted as reactionary and conservative, if not racist, in tone.

The most prevalent message at party meetings in 1999 was that the ANC sought a two-thirds majority to change the Constitution. The ruling party was accused of growing authoritarianism and re-racialising society. Affirmative action was also a favourite message and DP campaigners proposed the scrapping of racial quotas and the re-introduction of merit as the sole criteria for employment. The mantra that minorities were being excluded under an ANC government was clearly designed to extend the DP’s support to conservative whites, as well as coloureds and Indians who felt threatened under a black government. This extension of support however must not be seen as a bridging strategy. A bridging strategy is a catch-all strategy where a party appeals to *all* groups on the basis of racially neutral appeals. The 1999 fight back campaign however, represented an attempt by the DP to bond whites, coloureds and Indians into a fearful minority bloc.

3.2.3 The National Party

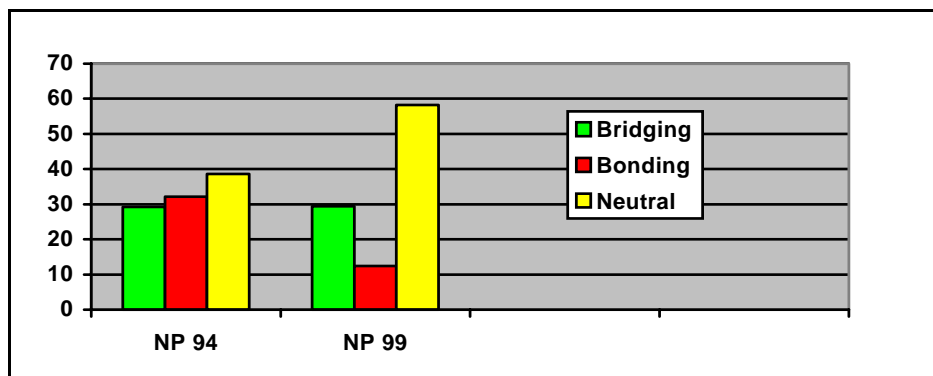
The National Party entered the 1994 election as the hitherto dominant force in South African politics and the party responsible for apartheid. As Table 7 shows, there was less reported NP activity in 1999 than in 1994.

Table 7: Content analysis results for the NP

	<i>1994</i>	<i>1999</i>
Party meetings	48	33
Campaign messages	267	201
Bridging messages	78	59
Bonding messages	86	25
Neutral messages	103	117

The comparison of party strategy in Figure 4 shows that the NP (renamed the New National Party or NNP) re-oriented its strategy for the 1999 election. In 1994, the NP had campaigned with a nearly equal proportion of bonding to bridging themes. In 1999, the amount of messages that played on minority fears decreased markedly.

Figure 4: Comparison of NP's strategy in 1994 and 1999



Research carried out by the NP in 1993 showed that 60% of black respondents had ‘no negative feelings’ towards the NP and 28% ‘felt good’ about the NP, while only 24% realised that the NP had changed over the past five years (Giliomee, 1994: 55). Accordingly, the NP spent a great deal of electioneering in 1994 attempting to convince voters that it was responsible for the sweeping changes that made the election possible (Meredith, 1994: 153). The claim that the NP ended apartheid—often accompanied by an apology for apartheid—was accompanied with a message that depicted the ANC as a ‘dangerous party’ (Giliomee, 1994: 56). The twin strategy of demonising the ANC and distancing itself from apartheid was confirmed in our content analysis. The top three ‘bonding’ themes in 1994 were that the ANC was violent, that it was authoritarian and that the ANC was not politically tolerant. The top three bridging themes in 1994 were that the NP ended apartheid and/or apologised for apartheid, the NP welcomed blacks and that the NP welcomed all race groups.

In 1999, the NNP actively sought to attract black, coloured and Indian voters by preaching racially inclusive and cooperative politics. As Willie Breytenbach notes: ‘The NNP’s repositioning under van Schalkwyk was indeed an attempt to make it more inclusive, as the election of David Malatsi as deputy leader, testified.’ (Breytenbach, 1999: 123) The new image of the NNP was apparent in van Schalkwyk’s speech to the National Assembly debate on the final report of the TRC:

‘The pain and suffering, the injustice of the apartheid era, we must never allow to happen again. Therefore it calls for a pact between the responsible leaders of today, to close the book on past conflict and

despair and to open a new book for future hope' (*Financial Mail*, March 5, 1999).

The desire to be seen as the most representative party is apparent from the NNP's 1999 Manifesto. In it, the NNP professes to be the 'most multi-racial party in South Africa'. They state that the NNP's membership is the most multi-racial ('to the embarrassment of the ANC and other fringe parties'), that the NNP stands for 'genuine tolerance and respect for diversity', 'represent a broad and inclusive South African patriotism that transcends race, language and religion', 'make co-operation between communities work' and internally 'reflect unity and our nation's cultural diversity' (New National Party, 1999: 213).

On the campaign trail, the NNP did alert voters to what it saw as the authoritarian tendencies of the ANC—the most common 'bonding' message apparent in reports of NNP meetings. The most favoured 'bridging' themes were that the NNP represented all race groups, that the NNP believed in inclusive and cooperative government, that the DP was a white party, the importance of racial unity and that other white parties wanted to separate whites. The overall decrease in the proportion of bonding messages in 1999 confirms that the NNP's rhetoric had become more inclusive since the 1994 campaign, which was itself far less exclusive than commonly thought.

3.2.4 The Freedom Front

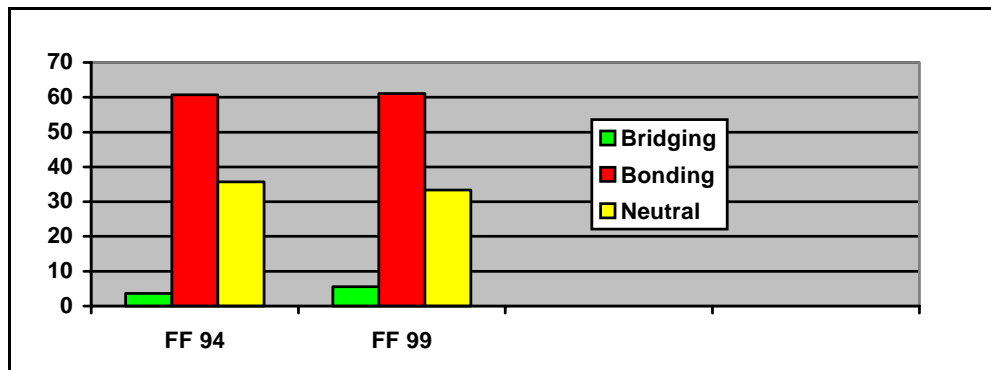
As could be expected from a party that takes its *raison d'être* to be the establishment of an Afrikaner homeland or *volkstaat*, the FF did not communicate many bridging themes and focused mainly on bonding in 1994 and 1999.

Table 8: Content analysis of the FF

	1994	1999
Party meetings	12	18
Campaign messages	56	90
Bridging messages	2	5
Bonding messages	34	55
Neutral messages	20	30

Figure 5 clearly shows how little the strategy of the party changed over both elections:

Figure 5: Comparison of FF's strategy in 1994 and 1999



In 1994, Constand Viljoen registered the FF for the election twenty minutes before the deadline. This move was deeply unpopular among many of his erstwhile colleagues in the Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF), who had staunchly refused to participate in the election (Van Rooyen, 1994: 95). The participation of a conservative, Afrikaner nationalist party in the election was more down to Viljoen's pragmatism than acceptance of the new dispensation. As Van Rooyen noted:

'Throughout the FF's election campaign, the party emphasised that although it had (reluctantly) agreed to participate within the system, it still regarded the constitution as fatally flawed, and was only participating to prove support for a *volkstaat*' (Van Rooyen, 1994: 100).

Our content analysis showed that the FF's dominant bonding message in the 1994 election was indeed calls for a *volkstaat*, followed by claims that the ANC was authoritarian. The only messages that could be classified as bridging were expressions of solidarity with the plight of Zulus that also wanted some territorial autonomy.

The FF's campaign in 1999 was strikingly similar to 1994 and the party continued to target Afrikaners with calls for a *volkstaat*—again by far the most discernible theme from reports on party meetings. Viljoen blamed this on the poor showing of the party in 1999:

'Afrikaners must have got the impression that we as a party are only concerned about self-determination and nothing else. We have only ourselves to blame' (EISA, 1999: 321).

3.2.5 Pan Africanist Congress of Azania

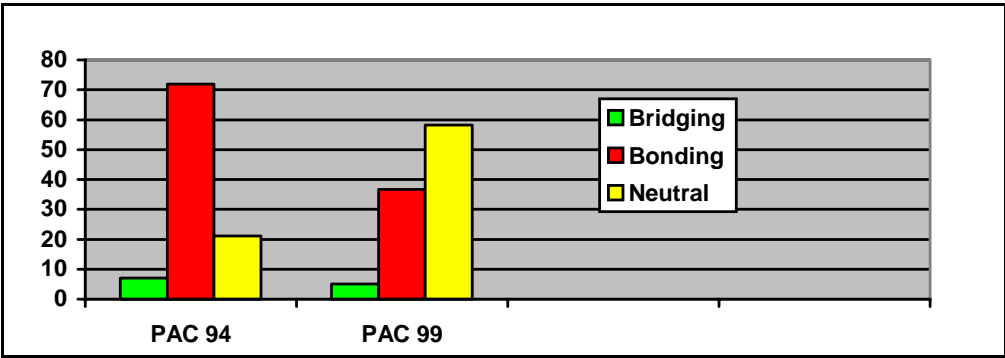
The PAC was founded in 1959 by a group of ‘Africanists’ in the ANC who had become disgruntled with the alliance with other political groups, particularly the white Congress of Democrats. Shortly after its formation, the PAC, under the leadership of Robert Sobukwe, initiated the pass law campaign that led to the Sharpeville massacre. The PAC was banned along with the ANC in 1960.

A glance at the message breakdown in Table 9 and Figure 6 shows that bridging messages were rare in 1994 and 1999:

Table 9: Content analysis of PAC meetings

	1994	1999
Party meetings	21	17
Campaign messages	114	98
Bridging messages	8	5
Bonding messages	82	36
Neutral messages	24	57

Figure 6: Comparison of PAC’s strategy in 1994 and 1999



There is however a discernible shift away from bonding messages and towards more racially neutral rhetoric in 1999. In 1994, under the leadership of Clarence Makwetu, the PAC had attempted to cast itself as the party of militant black nationalism that could achieve black liberation where the ANC had failed. The power-sharing agreement of the Interim Constitution was seen as a sell out by the ANC and the PAC argued that the final liberation of blacks could only come about when majority rule had been achieved. The militancy of the PAC was also expressed in its derogatory references to whites and ‘white’ parties. As one analyst wrote: ‘(The PAC’s) lapse into rhetoric, more often wild and of the “one

bullet”¹³ and “whites must leave” variety, and historically based claims of legitimacy, were the most common features of its campaigning in the run-up to the election’ (Cooper, 1994: 117). The content analysis showed that the most common bonding message was the call for the redistribution of land, followed by claims that the PAC was the only true Africanist party, the rejection of a volkstaat and an end to white domination. Bridging themes were far less frequent and included messages that claimed the PAC to be representative of all race groups, calls for peace and that whites can also be African if they pledge their allegiance to Africa. This last message was however a weak attempt to play down the party’s ‘Africanism’ in certain circles. Cooper noted that ‘despite carefully intellectualised arguments about the definition of an African as a person owing allegiance to the soil rather than skin colour, nearly all whites fear the PAC’ (1994: 118).

Under the leadership of Rev. Stanley Mogoba in 1999, the PAC aimed to reverse its public image as an organisation bent on avenging the suffering of black people (Maseko, 1999: 126). Evidence from the content analysis confirms that the PAC did wage a more neutrally oriented campaign in 1999. The most common messages on the campaign trail in 1999 were references to crime. Other popular neutral messages included references to education, corruption and unemployment. In 1999, the most common bonding themes were land redistribution, uplifting the poor, that the ANC did not care about ‘ordinary’ people, the PAC was a black party and that the majority continues to lose out to the minority. Such bonding messages were however far less prevalent in 1999 than they had been in 1994. Bridging messages were again rather muted and consisted of appeals for racial unity and that Africanness was based on a sense of belonging rather than skin colour.

3.2.6 Inkatha Freedom Party

Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi formed Inkatha in 1975 as a 'cultural liberation movement' in the homeland of KwaZulu with the aim to politicise and unify Zulu ethnicity (Hamilton and Maré, 1994: 77). Angered at the perceived bilateralism between the Nationalist government and the ANC at Codesa¹⁴, Buthelezi only agreed to participate in the 1994 election a week before it took place. This was only once he had secured certain concessions including a kingdom for the Zulu monarch.

As Table 10 shows, campaign activity was low in 1994, a result of the IFP’s reluctance to take part.

¹³ i.e.: 'One settler, one bullet'.

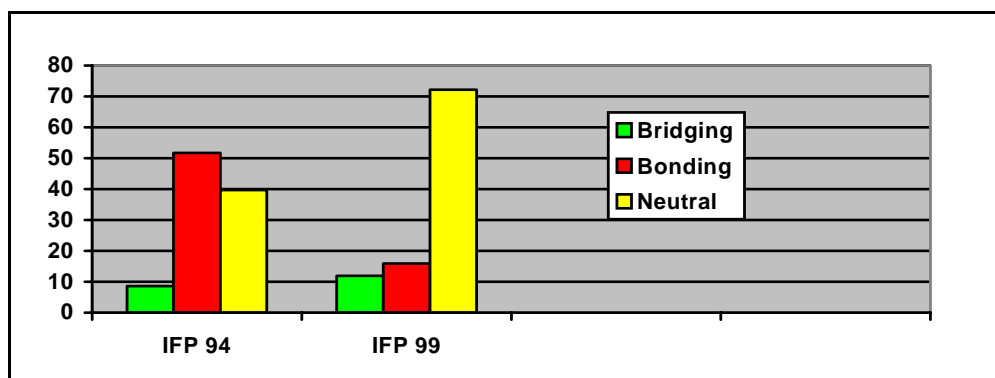
¹⁴ Convention for a Democratic South Africa.

Table 10: Content analysis of IFP meetings

	1994	1999
Party meetings	14	22
Campaign messages	58	151
Bridging messages	5	18
Bonding messages	36	24
Neutral messages	57	109

While campaign activity increased dramatically in 1999, the number of bonding messages actually decreased. The swing from a bonding campaign in 1994 to a mainly neutral one in 1999 is shown in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7: Comparison of IFP's strategy in 1994 and 1999



In 1994, the most common bonding messages were calls for provincial autonomy (effectively a Zulu province), that the ANC and the NNP were partners, that the ANC was a violent party, that the IFP had fought in the struggle and that the IFP was prepared to use violence to achieve its ends. These results are not surprising in light of the flare-up in ANC-IFP violence that had occurred during the transition and IFP threats that it would not participate in the election. Few bridging messages were found for the 1994 campaign and the most common neutral messages were statements that affirmed the IFP's commitment to a free market economy.

By 1999, relations between the ANC and the IFP had improved dramatically as a result of alliances formed at national and provincial level. The IFP's Lionel Mtshali addressed the ANC conference in December 1998. Thabo Mbeki made a speech to the IFP's Annual General Conference in July of that year where he stressed the importance of African solidarity due to the shared experience of oppression at the hands of the apartheid regime (Mbeki, 1998b: 3). Mbeki and Buthelezi signed a peace pact in Durban in May, while supporters of both parties

chanted: 'Woza Woza ANC! Woza Woza IFP!' (Come on ANC! Come on IFP!). Lionel Mtshali said: 'It is a day of reconciliation. It is hopefully a day marking the start of a process that in time will play itself out in the complete normalisation of relations between us' (Daily Dispatch, May 15 1999).

The conciliatory stance of the IFP to the ANC—what Schrire has termed 'cooptive opposition' (2001: 31)—hindered the IFP in campaigning on a blatant Zulu nationalist ticket. Stirring up old tensions would have compromised the power-sharing agreement between the two parties. Evidence from the content analysis indicates that the IFP did largely refrain from attacking the ANC and mobilising Zulu identity in 1999. Campaigning under the election slogan, 'a revolution of goodwill', Buthelezi typically rattled off a 'wish list' of ethnically-neutral policy issues such as crime, unemployment, corruption, education and service delivery. Bonding messages decreased dramatically, although some references to provincial autonomy were still in evidence. The proportion of bridging messages increased marginally as the IFP sought to convince voters that the IFP was most effective as a partner of the ANC.

A journalist noting the shift in IFP campaign rhetoric made the following observation:

'This is a different Buthelezi. A far cry from the tense, belligerent man who refused to take part in the 1994 elections and took KwaZulu-Natal to the brink of a civil war before finally joining the race with only seven days to the April 27 polls' (*The Star*, May 27 1999).

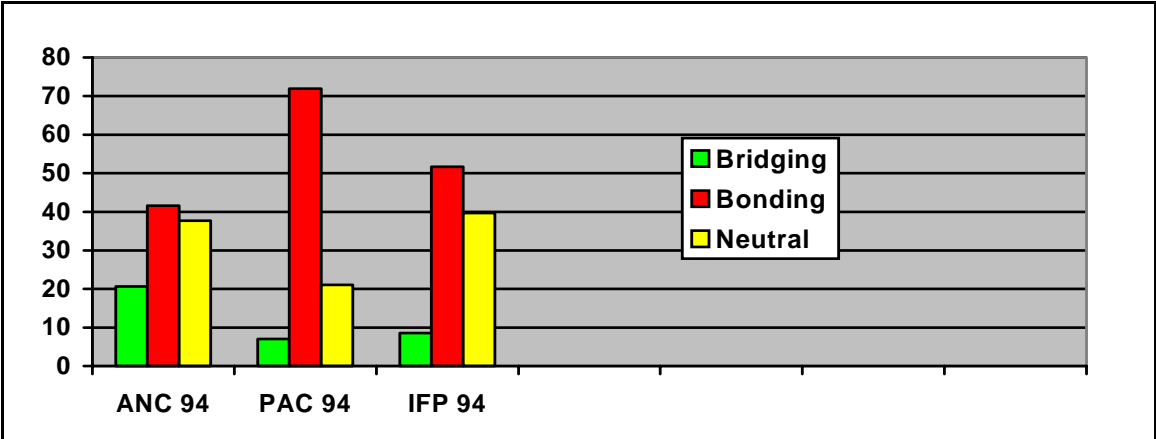
In 1999 the IFP eschewed stoking up Zulu nationalist sentiment in favour of continuing to play a role in national politics through its agreement with the ANC. The benefits of maintaining a national profile, through 'cooption', could however bear heavily on the very survival of the party, a point made by Gerhard Maré:

'The IFP is caught in a dilemma. On the one hand its strongest card has always been the combination of speaking for 'all Zulu' and controlling the traditional leaders of the Zulu nation, the *amakhosi*, and on the other hand it is being absorbed into the ANC as the overwhelmingly strong national party' (Maré, 1999: 111).

3.3 Inter-Party Comparisons

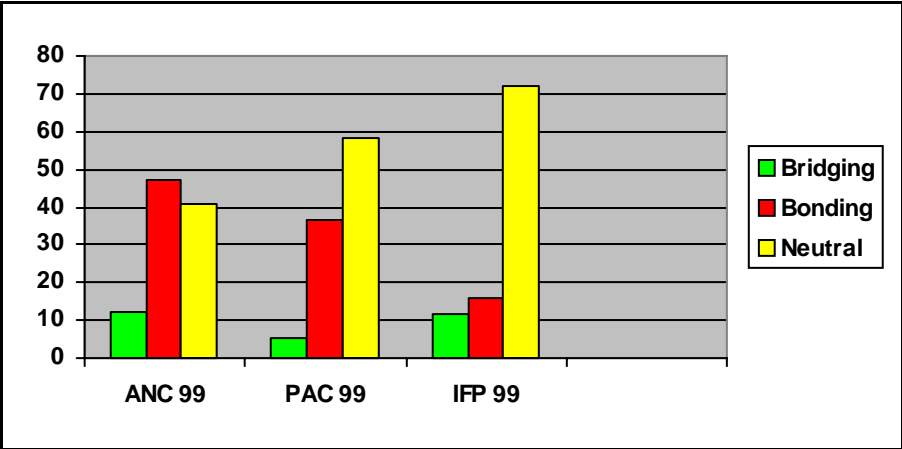
Having discussed the evolution of each party’s electoral strategy, we are in a position to demonstrate how each party compared with its main rivals in each election. We shall start by comparing those with a predominantly black support base. Figure 8 shows how the ANC, PAC and IFP campaigned in 1994:

Figure 8: Comparison of ‘black’ parties’ strategies in 1994



In 1994, all of the three main black parties espoused mainly bonding themes, especially the PAC. The ANC used the least amount of bonding themes and the most bridging themes. As the premier liberation movement, the ANC won the election overwhelmingly with 62.65% of the vote, while the IFP gained a respectable 10.54%. The PAC only managed 1.25%.

Figure 9: Comparison of ‘black’ parties’ strategies in 1999



In 1999, only one black party, the ANC, embarked on a campaign that was mainly bonding in orientation. The PAC and IFP largely dispensed with their

militant rhetoric and focused instead on neutral policy issues. The ANC’s strategy allowed it to increase its vote share from 62.65% to 66.35%. The PAC’s support dropped from 1.25% to 0.71% and the IFP’s from 10.54% to 8.58%. Despite a growing perception that the ANC had not delivered, the party was still able to consolidate its nation-wide support by continuing to posit itself as the true liberator of black Africans. The ANC’s bonding strategy was useful in convincing voters to turn out and vote, especially when coupled with the assertion that an ANC two-thirds majority would enable the party to speed up change and reverse the legacy of apartheid quicker.

Winning the election in the Western Cape also increased the ANC’s overall vote share. The unwillingness of the ANC to convince coloureds that they had a place in an ‘African’ party and the NP’s willingness to wage a *swart gevaar* campaign in 1994 is cited as a key reason for the success of the NP in the Western Cape in that election (Eldridge, 1997: 139-140). In 1999, the ANC was more prepared to play the race card in the Western Cape by stressing the importance of African-coloured solidarity to fight white privilege. The NNP on the other hand, was more reluctant in 1999 to use the racially divisive tactics it had used profitably in 1994.

A comparison of the strategies of the main ‘white’ parties in 1994, reveals that the party that espoused the most bonding themes was the right-wing Freedom Front. The DP and the NP had similar strategies, although the NP was more concerned with demonstrating solidarity with black South Africans and apologising for apartheid.

Figure 10: Comparison of ‘white’ parties’ strategies in 1994

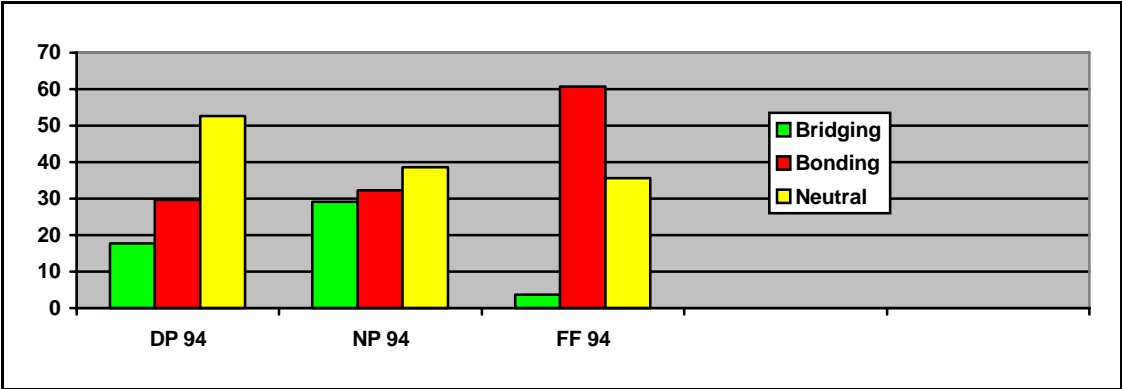
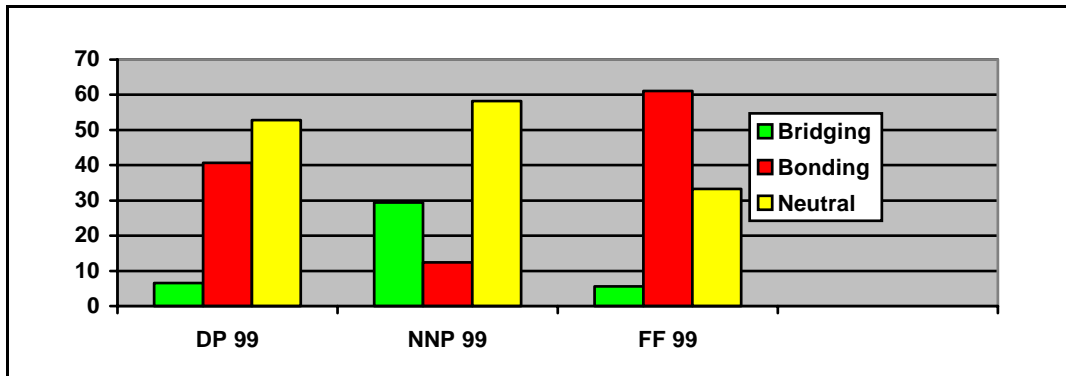


Figure 11 shows that in 1999, the DP positioned itself to play on the fears of minorities who felt excluded under a black government, using a considerably greater proportion of bonding to bridging themes than it had in 1994. In contrast, the NNP adopted an overt catch-all strategy in 1999. The FF’s strategy remained the same as it had done in 1994.

Figure 11: Comparison of 'white' parties' strategies in 1999



The contrast between the DP and the NNP's campaign in 1999 is striking. As the DP sought to position itself as the protector of minority interests, the NNP sought to bridge the racial divide. The NNP asserted that whites should join hands with their black compatriots and should not be misled by the exclusive campaigning of the DP. In 1999 the DP's national support base grew from 1.73% to 9.56%, while the NNP's declined from 20.39% to 6.87%. The FF's vote share declined from 2.17% to 0.8%, although their strategy remained essentially the same. It is likely that the DP was responsible for poaching some FF voters and some FF politicians had defected to the party early in the campaign (*The Star*, February 15 1999). FF leader Constand Viljoen conceded that the DP had been successful in picking up some conservative Afrikaner votes, attributing this to their 'white style of politics' and claiming that the Freedom Front was 'more African-like' (*Cape Argus*, March 12 1999).

The failure of the FF to garner a substantial amount of votes illustrates the limitations of bonding strategies. In order to be successful, a party must bond a constituency that has common ground and can become a force in politics. The DP's bonding of Indians, coloureds and white English and Afrikaans-speakers as the 'excluded minority' was a masterstroke, since it maximised vote share without the need to dilute its stance by adopting a true catch-all strategy. The FF on the other hand is limited by its concentration on the conservative Afrikaner vote.

Evidence indicates that most of the DP's support in 1999 came from disaffected NNP voters. The NNP lost to the DP at every voting station in its former stronghold of Centurion. This pattern was repeated in Vereeniging, Heidelberg, Randburg and Potchefstroom. The DP emerged triumphant in strongly Afrikaans-speaking neighbourhoods, with majorities in such traditional NNP terrain as Krugersdorp North, Johannesburg's Mondeor, Vereeniging's Drie Riviere and Pretoria's Lynwood Ridge (EISA, 1999: 342). In the traditionally

conservative areas of Ventersdorp and Potchefstroom, the DP emerged second to the ANC, suggesting that it beat the NNP in gaining the ‘white’ vote here (EISA, 1999: 358). The DP emerged as the main contender to the ANC in coloured and Indian areas, with a 25% share of the vote in such communities. Gains in these areas had not been at the expense of the ANC, but from conservative coloureds who had voted NNP in 1994 (EISA, 1999: 341). The DP also did well in urban coloured areas around Port Elizabeth and achieved some of its highest levels of support in rural coloured areas in the far western districts of the Eastern Cape (EISA, 1999: 328).

A comparison of the racial breakdown of support for the NNP and the DP in 1999 shows the emerging popularity of the DP among white voters:

Table 11: Racial breakdown of NNP and DP support in 1999

	<i>DP vote share</i>	<i>% of DP support</i>	<i>NNP vote share</i>	<i>% of NNP support</i>
Black	180 000	12%	200 000	18%
White	1 200 000	77%	340 000	31%
Coloured	75 000	5%	480 000	44%
Indian	90 000	6%	80 000	7%
Total	1 545 000	100%	1 100 000	100%

Source: Adapted from Reynolds, 1999: 183-185

The DP managed to attract over three and a half times more white votes than the NNP with white voters accounting for over three quarters of the DP’s 1999 support base. White voters made up less than a third of the NNP’s support base in the 1999 election. Despite attaining 445 000 less votes in total, the NNP still managed to gain 20 000 more black voters than the DP and 405 000 more coloured voters, who now accounted for the greatest share of the NNP’s support base. These figures contrast greatly with results of the 1994 election where the NP received nearly two million white votes and the DP only 280 000 (Reynolds, 1994: 194, 196).

The inter-party comparisons suggest that in 1999 the ANC and the DP were able to position themselves as the true parties of black aspiration and protector of minority interests respectively. Between them, they account for just over three-quarters of the national vote. The unwillingness of other black parties to adopt a bonding strategy in 1999 explains how the ANC was able to consolidate its electoral superiority. The DP was able to emerge as the official opposition, outbidding the NNP for the votes of disaffected minorities. It is an unfortunate reality that in South Africa, voters imbued with the historical experience of

apartheid, react more favourably to parties that are the most convincing as the protector of their group’s interests.

3.4 Analysis and Implications

The results of the content analysis show our original hypothesis to be only partially correct as the role of list PR is apparently not as mechanical as originally thought. Not all parties in South Africa rely on racial mobilisation as their principal campaign strategies. With a closed list PR electoral system in operation in 1994 and 1999, many parties attempted to wage largely neutral campaigns (the DP and NNP in 1994, and the PAC and IFP in 1999) and the NNP waged a predominantly bridging campaign in 1999. Bonding was the dominant strategy in only half of the campaigns under examination. What does emerge from the content analysis however, is that parties that attempt a ‘catch-all’ strategy are punished at the polls, while those that use racially divisive tactics profit.

3.4.1 The Correlation of Bonding Strategies and Electoral Success

The correlation of an increase in bonding messages and increase in vote share can be most clearly seen if we construct a bonding index for each party. The bonding index is the increase (or decrease) in bonding to bridging themes in each election. Table 12 shows each parties’ bonding index in percentages, holding neutral themes constant:

Table 12: Bonding Index of each party in 1994 and 1999

	<i>1994</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>Bonding increase/decrease</i>
ANC	+20	+35.2	+15.2
DP	+11.8	+34.2	+22.4
NNP	+3	-17	-20
IFP	+43.1	+4	-39.1
PAC	+64.9	+31.6	-33.3
FF	+57.1	+55.5	-1.6

Table 13 shows the net increase or decrease in vote share over the two elections and the correlation with bridging and bonding.

Table 13: Correlation of bonding and electoral success

	<i>1994</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>Vote share increase/decrease</i>	<i>Bonding Index increase/ decrease</i>
ANC	62.65%	66.35%	+3.7%	+15.2
DP	1,73%	9.56%	+7.83%	+22.4
NNP	20.39%	6.87%	-13.52%	-20
IFP	10.54%	8.58%	-1.96%	-39.1
PAC	1.25%	0.71%	-0.54%	-33.3
FF	2.17%	0.80%	-1.37%	-1.6

Tables 12 and 13 demonstrate the correlation of an increase in voter support and an increase in the proportion of bonding to bridging messages. The ANC and the DP both managed to increase their vote share through appealing to a segment defined in racial terms. For the DP this meant a message that promised protection of minorities (whites, Indians and coloureds) against the majority. The ANC cast itself as the party of the previously oppressed majority (blacks, coloureds and Indians) who continue to lose out due to the legacy of apartheid. The other four parties all decreased their bonding messages in 1999 and all saw a decrease in their vote share.

Having established a correlation of racially exclusive (bonding) campaigning and electoral success, two tasks remain. The first is to explain the role of the electoral system in encouraging parties to campaign exclusively. The second is to consider, and rule out, other variables that may explain the success of the ANC and the DP in 1999.

3.4.2 The Role of List PR in Encouraging Bonding Strategies

List PR creates a political system in which societal and ethnic cleavages are mirrored in the legislature. Parties based on ethnic and racial fault lines are likely to continue to espouse a message that appeals to ‘their’ constituents at the exclusion of others. In a divided society where ascriptive cleavages remain deeply embedded, it is tempting for parties to mobilise groups along these divisions. An electoral system in such a society should therefore encourage parties to campaign moderately or even to seek support across historical divisions. List PR in South Africa does nothing to encourage parties to refrain from mobilising racial cleavages.

In addition, through fragmenting the party system, list PR has a centrifugal effect on the party system as more extremist parties, such as the FF and the PAC are able to gain entry into parliament. In order to consolidate existing support, 'moderate' parties such as the ANC and the DP, must convince their supporters that they can best represent their interests by using bonding strategies that involve racial mobilisation. Parties that are able to racially outbid their rivals will therefore be the most successful in the election. Parties that attempt to campaign by casting their net more widely tend to lose out in the bidding war, as their strategy is likely to be viewed as a weakness by voters whose race consciousness has been heightened by the divisive campaigning of other parties.

In sum, list PR does nothing to curb the inherent tendencies of parties in a divided society to mobilise along ascriptive lines. Furthermore, through allowing for more extremist parties to enter into the legislature, list PR may actually create a party system where exclusive parties are rewarded and inclusive parties punished.

Of course, not all voters are mobilised by racial concerns. Some DP voters no doubt still see the party as their liberal home and many ANC voters are still attracted to the party because of its tradition of non-racial struggle. However, to borrow the words of Kinder and Sanders, 'voters are to some degree captives of the choices and the campaigns they are presented' (1996: 196). Even voters who are not mobilised according to racial considerations may still find themselves voting for a party that uses racially divisive themes in its campaigning. In this way, old anti-apartheid liberals who continue to vote for the DP find themselves supporting a party that uses a strategy comparable to the *swart gevaar* campaigning of the old National Party.¹⁵

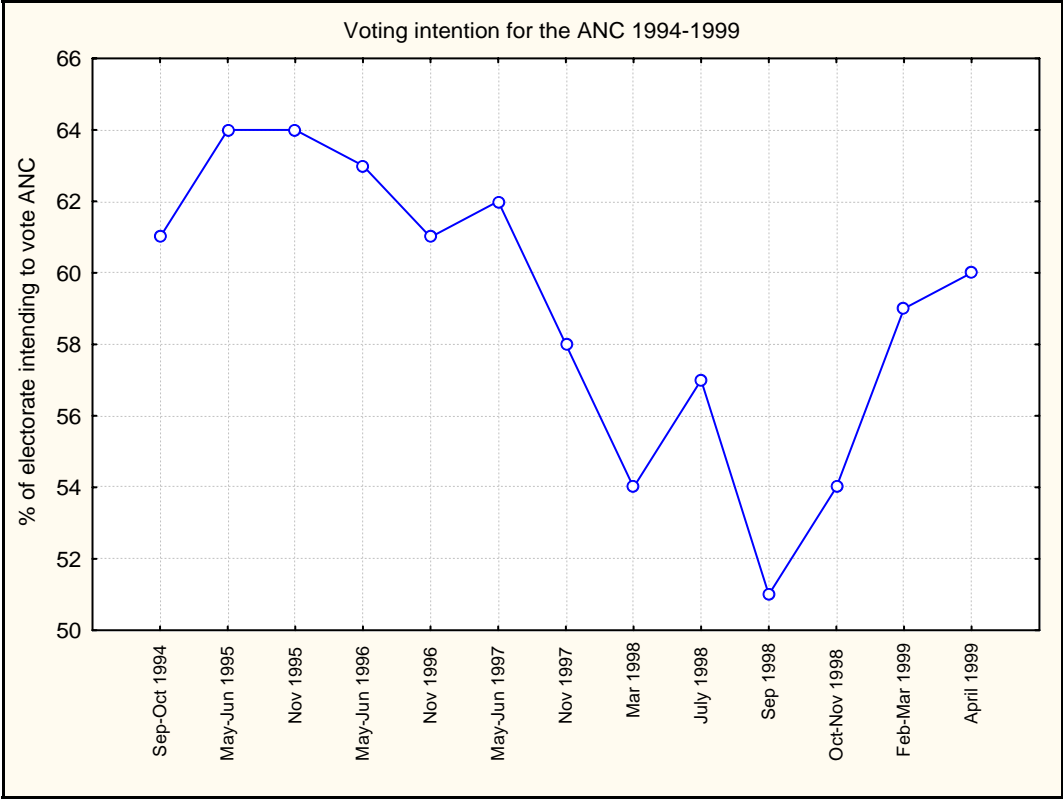
3.4.3 Bonding as an Explanatory Factor for Electoral Success

That not all voters are mobilised according to racial concerns serves to highlight a potential criticism of the argument put forward. It is possible that the correlation of bonding strategies and electoral success is fortuitous and that other factors can account for the increase in the ANC and the DP's support. It may be argued for instance that the deepening of ANC patronage networks may have allowed the party to do even better in 1999 and that perhaps the ANC's dominance may have tempted voters in 1999 to 'support the winning team'. While such speculations may be valid and could marginally weaken the

¹⁵ This is captured well by a report on a DP meeting where a long-standing supporter complained that the DP had the guts to fight back, but did not seem to have the guts to put up Xhosa posters (Addis, 1999).

argument put forward here, evidence does suggest that the ANC’s campaign in 1999 was responsible for convincing its supporters to turn out and once again vote for the party of black liberation. Figure 12 demonstrates how voting intention for the ANC had waned dramatically by the end of 1998:

Figure 12: Voting intention for the ANC 1994-1999



Source: Taylor, Mattes and Africa, 1999

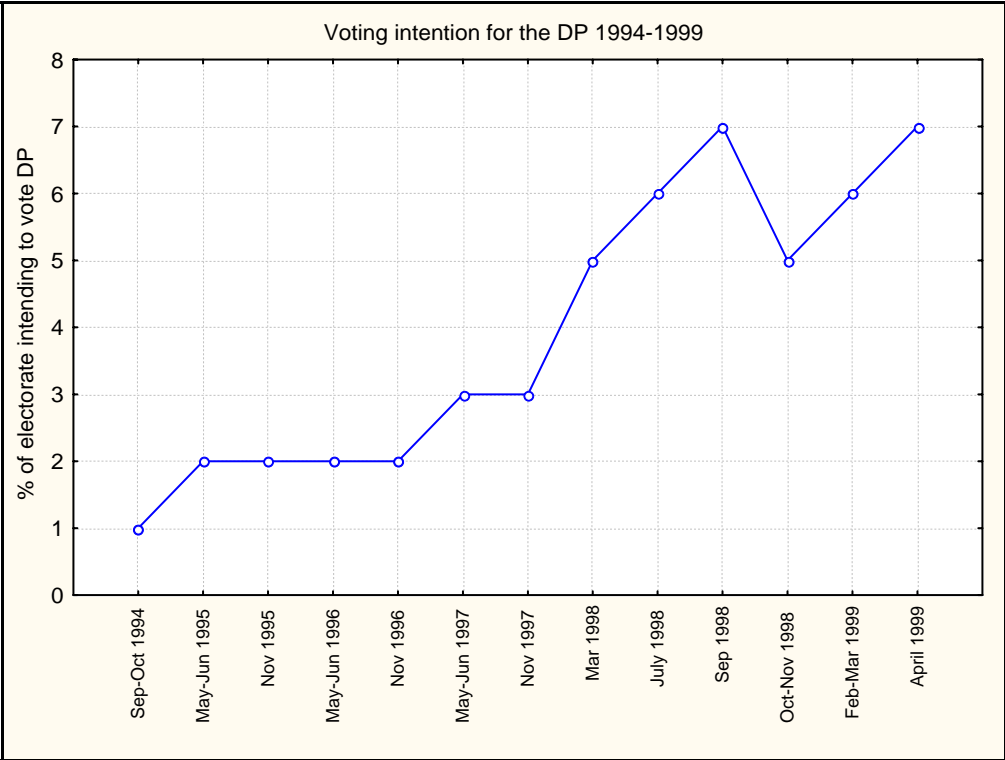
Only 51% of all voters in September 1998 said that they would vote for the ANC 'if there was an election tomorrow' (Taylor, Mattes & Africa, 1999). While 67% of black voters in September 1998 said that they would vote for the ANC, only 46% of black voters surveyed said they *identified* with the ANC—down from 75% in September 1994 (*ibid.*, 1999). This suggests that black voters at this point did not feel especially close to the ANC, but would vote for them for the lack of a credible alternative. It therefore became crucial for the ANC to prevent any other party emerging as credible in the eyes of black voters. It is also quite possible that the timing of Mbeki’s ‘two nations’ speech was designed to buoy up support for the ANC among black voters at this juncture.

In January 1999, the ANC released a document urging people to vote for the ANC for it to continue its emancipatory project (ANC, 1999). Opposition parties are described as counter-revolutionaries, with the sole aim of defeating the democratic movement as a whole, and the ANC in particular. These parties are derided for being opponents of 'the fundamental transformation of our country

into a non-racial and non-sexist democracy' (*ibid.*, 1999). In contrast, the ANC is posited as the liberator of the oppressed (black) masses, requiring the renewed mandate of its people to continue with transformation. This strategy is straightforward: encourage black voters to turn out and vote by stressing racial solidarity in the face of opponents bent on reversing the gains made by the ANC since 1994.

Support for the DP (mainly among whites) had increased steadily since 1994, although only 1% of black voters surveyed in April 1999 said that they would vote for the party. Figure 13 shows the steady increase in voting intention for the DP:

Figure 13: Voting intention for the DP 1994-1999



Source: Taylor, Mattes and Africa, 1999

Plausible arguments could be made that the DP was able to usurp the NNP for the white vote because of what Schrire has termed 'robust opposition', an adversarial Westminster-style politics cultivated by the DP. As he writes:

'Certainly the dramatic growth in the DP's support since 1994 must be directly attributed to what it characterised during the 1999 election as its "fight back" campaign and a public perception that the party is a tough and fearless critic of the ANC' (Schrire, 2001: 31).

The NNP, in contrast, began to be seen as a weak opposition to the ANC and it was reported in *Finance Week* that the DP, with its seven MPs, had asked almost as many questions as the NNP (with its 82 MPs) during question time in the National Assembly between 1994 and 1998 (Camay and Gordon, 1999: 170). The replacing of popular NP leader FW de Klerk with the relatively inexperienced Marthinus van Schalkwyk also probably had a bearing on public perceptions of the party. The poor performance of the NP in the Government of National Unity and subsequent resignation from the power-sharing cabinet could also have alienated voters.

To view the DP's rise and NNP's concomitant fall as purely down to party performance however, is to ignore the racial dynamics of a divided society like South Africa. A 'weak' opposition in a segmented party system could only be perceived as one that does not have the ability to adequately protect its (racially defined) constituents' interests. Furthermore, the argument that the DP's adversarial style alone was responsible for their surge of support relies on the dubious assertion that in general, whites are more receptive to this style of politics than blacks.

There can be no doubt that the DP's campaigning in 1999 sent out the message to all voters that a vote for the DP was a vote for the protection of minorities who were being excluded under a black government. This is why conservative NP voters and even right-wingers switched allegiance to the DP. It is also why the party was unable to extend its support to black voters. As Mattes wrote after the election:

'... the DP must have guessed how this message would be seen in the black community... they must have foreseen that it would be perceived as a fundamental attack on the competence and integrity of the black government as well as on keys to black advancement such as affirmative action and government intervention in the workplace' (*Mail & Guardian*, May 21-27 1999).

If the DP's campaigning and rhetoric was racially neutral, we should surely expect their support among black South Africans to be higher. However, a party that largely ignores black townships on the campaign trail, has an overwhelmingly white leadership and takes minority exclusion as the key theme of its campaign, alienated the vast majority of black voters.

In contrast, the NNP sent out the message to the electorate that it was the party for all. The inclusiveness of the party was confirmed by the overt catch-all strategy that the NNP adopted for the 1999 election. Unfortunately for the NNP, the party failed to hold on to its white support base that had become estranged

from a party that failed to protect its interests. The strategy was also hardly convincing to most black voters who no doubt saw the NNP's new inclusiveness as a cheap election ploy from the party responsible for apartheid.

Over time, parties will realise that, under list PR, they are able to maximise support through resorting to a bonding strategy, as the ANC and the DP did in 1999. It is for this reason that consideration should be given to devising an electoral system that encourages parties to adopt bridging strategies in order to break down the segmental nature of South African politics. The plurality systems used in most commonwealth countries could possibly encourage smaller parties to broaden their appeal, since the threshold for election is much higher. However, the exaggeration of majorities due to vote wastage, in such systems (Rae, 1967) would exclude many parties from participation and could lead to discontent among minority groups. The preferential system proposed by Horowitz, as well as the Single Transferable Vote system used in Ireland and Australia are more likely to succeed in encouraging the growth of catch-all parties. These systems could possibly counter the divisive nature of list PR, but without excluding groups from political participation. In light of the consequences of list PR demonstrated here, it is important that further research is conducted into the viability of adopting such systems in South Africa.

4. Conclusion

The analysis of party campaigning has shown that the ANC and the DP (now Democratic Alliance) have emerged as the dominant party and official opposition through their willingness to sound racially divisive themes in their appeals to voters. To promote democratic stability in South Africa, parties must break out of their narrow, racial support bases. In order to do this, parties must be encouraged to campaign by appealing to all voters. One way of encouraging more inclusive campaigning is to adopt an electoral system that provides incentives for parties to attract votes across the racial divide.

Unfortunately, the current closed list PR system in South Africa does not offer any incentives for parties to campaign inclusively. List PR encourages parties to play the race card as the fragmentation of the party system allows for the ascendance of ethnic or racial outbidders. This puts pressure on 'moderate' parties to mobilise voters along racial lines in order to keep their support base intact. The success of parties that concentrate on making narrow, sectional appeals indicates why parties in the future may be inclined to campaign by using a bonding strategy.

Diminishing the salience of race as a category of political mobilisation is unlikely to occur through changing the electoral system alone. It is also

dependent on the will of politicians to refrain from adopting racially exclusive and inflammatory tactics. This political will is most likely to come about however, when politicians are rewarded at the polls for inclusive campaigning and punished for drumming up racial fears.

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