

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: NELSON MANDELA'S 1990 VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: RHETORIC(S) OF THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

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Nelson Mandela's 1990 visit to the United States of America was a victory tour for Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement in America given the significant role that everyday Americans played to secure his release from prison. In this dissertation, I ask how Mandela's 1990 visit underscored the historic, visual, and ideographic rhetoric of the anti-apartheid social movement in America. To find answers, I examine Mandela's rhetoric as expressed in the black power salute, his address to Congress, and solidarity with regional anti-apartheid groups. The anti-apartheid movement in America mirrored the civil rights movement with its myriad protest strategies. Under the umbrella of the Free South Africa Movement (FSAM), boycotts, sanctions, and divestment strategies were implemented at the national and state level to end apartheid. FSAM members hosted Mandela's 1990 visit during which he used the tools of rhetoric to reach directly to the American people to seek solidarity and support for continued sanctions against the South African apartheid

regime. Mandela's display of the visual gesture of the black power salute contributed to a cultural change in the denotative meaning of the gesture. Once the symbol of radical nationalist black politics, the black power salute became a symbol of black pan-African unity and solidarity.

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by

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Dedication

To my husband, Kingsley, for his love and support, and to our children – Michael, Raphael, and Gabriella – the strength of my youth!

Acknowledgements

I owe the successful completion of this dissertation to God, my husband, my children, my parents, and my siblings. This dream is a reality because of their unwavering support for my academic pursuits.

My advisor, Dr. Trevor Parry-Giles, was instrumental in shaping the contours of this project. His instruction in graduate seminars and feedback during the editing process have made me a better researcher and confident academic. I sincerely thank the members of my committee for their support at various points during my years of graduate education and research. Nelson Mandela symbolically led a movement for equality from a remote prison cell. During his years of imprisonment, his then-wife, Winnie Madikizela Mandela, kept the memory of him alive by seeking foreign support for their joint struggle for freedom. Winnie Mandela's legacy shaped my life.

My parents, Olga and Wilfred Okafor, named me after Winnie Mandela whose stalwart advocacy against apartheid they admired. It comes as no surprise that my academic interests have led me back to Nelson Mandela, the man, and, the cause for which Winnie Mandela suffered at the hands of the South African apartheid regime.

I owe the successful completion of this dissertation to you all.

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List of Abbreviations

AAM	Anti-apartheid Movement
ACOA	American Committee on Africa
AFSCME	American Friends Service Committee
ANC	African National Congress
BDS	Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions
BPP	Black Panther Party
CAAA	Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act
CBC	Congressional Black Caucus
FSAM	Free South Africa Movement
NSSM	National Security Study Memorandum
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PAC	Pan-African Congress
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACP	South African Communist Party
SASP	Southern African Support Project
SNCC	Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
WOA	Washington Office on Africa

Chapter1: Nelson Mandela's Rhetorical Tour of the U.S. and U.S. Foreign Policy toward the Republic of South Africa

On February 11, 1990, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela exited Victor Vester Prison as a free man for the first time in twenty-seven years after having served unjust imprisonment for his role in the armed struggle against apartheid. The day Mandela was released from prison, he left behind the isolation of prison life and walked into a crowd of anti-apartheid supporters – both locally, in the streets of South Africa, and globally, as allies/fans/supporters cheered for the momentous occasion which was televised on media outlets worldwide. His supporters from different segments of society – diplomats, celebrities, foreign policy analysts, and leaders of the black diaspora – would eventually come together to form a host committee to welcome Mandela on a visit to the United States. It was not a state visit but rather a celebratory visit to mark the occasion of Mandela's release.

The Mandela Welcome Committee planned meetings and stops during his eight-city tour that blurred the lines between an official diplomatic visit and an unofficial engagement with the American public. Mandela and his African National Congress (ANC) delegation visited New York, Boston, Washington D.C., Atlanta, Miami, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Oakland, in that order. His visit to the United States was filled with many high-profile events – in New York, he marched in a parade through Manhattan; in Boston, he had dinner with the Kennedy family; in Washington, D.C., he addressed a Joint Session of Congress; in Atlanta, he laid a wreath at the grave of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and in Los Angeles he met with Hollywood celebrities. These mostly ceremonial events were punctuated with

political business such as his address to the United Nations General Assembly in New York and meeting with President George H. W. Bush in Washington, D.C. Both the U.N. and White House visits placed Mandela, as a private citizen, into unusual, quasi-diplomatic situations.

There were myriad entities responsible for hosting Mandela, and multiple goals for his visit. One of the primary goals for Mandela and his ANC delegation was to keep the pressure on U.S. businesses to continue divestment so as “to apply economic pressure on the white South African government until all apartheid is abolished.”¹ Also, as a newly unbanned political party, the ANC sought to raise funds to register eligible black South African voters for upcoming elections. Mandela’s itinerary was packed with meetings and events where he crossed paths with leaders at every level of diplomatic status. Mae Ngai, deputy director of the New York Welcoming Committee, observed that Mandela’s tour was a logistical nightmare because of the official-unofficial nature of the visit. He said, “We’re running a visit on the level of a head of state, but without being a state, so we don’t have the resources, infrastructure.”² The U.S. State Department provided security because Mandela was regarded as an international guest of the United States, but national and local welcome committees handled the rest of the logistics.

¹ “Everyone Wants Piece of Mandela’s Visit,” *Atlanta Daily World* (Atlanta, GA), June 7, 1990. During his visit, Mandela asked President Bush for financial assistance for the ANC. However, the State Department informed Mandela that the U.S. would not contribute directly to a political party. For additional sources on Mandela’s visit, see: Joe Davidson, “Mandela Thanks Congress for Sanctions but Repeats Request for Aid to the ANC,” *The Wall Street Journal* (New York, NY), June 27, 1990. For research on the impact of sanctions, see: Bronwen Manby, “South Africa: The Impact of Sanctions,” *Journal of International Affairs* 46, no. 1 (1992): 193-217.

² John Kifner, “Preparations are Hectic for Mandela’s U.S. Tour,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), June 18, 1990.

Given the intriguing case of Mandela's life, imprisonment, and worldwide anti-apartheid advocacy, the central question of this dissertation is how did Nelson Mandela's 1990 visit to the United States express and emphasize the historic, visual, and ideographic rhetoric of the anti-apartheid social movement in America? To answer this question, I begin with a discussion of Mandela as a historical figure and an important rhetor in the late stages of the apartheid regime in South Africa. I also outline the rhetorical history of relations between the United States and South Africa. Since that history is most succinctly contained in the foreign policy rhetoric of American presidents, I will examine the speeches, talks, and policies from President Harry S. Truman to President Ronald Reagan. As the discourse on apartheid evolved over four decades, three different periods emerged in the relationship that signaled the changes in relations between the U.S. and South Africa. Despite the official exchanges, the most attractive rhetorical arguments against apartheid are present in Mandela's discourse during his 1990 visit to the United States.

As this project reveals, Mandela expressed a quasi-diplomatic rhetoric that aligned local anti-apartheid goals with foreign expectations, achieved momentum toward democracy, and argued for the restoration of the rights of black South Africans, all while operating in the U.S. as a mere citizen (albeit with a considerable amount of celebrity adhering to his public persona). With no official role in the apartheid government, Mandela had no standing to engage in official diplomatic negotiations on behalf of his nation. Yet, given the plight of black South Africans who existed as second-class citizens, Mandela was morally obligated, during his

forays into official diplomatic spaces, to offer unofficial representation for the disenfranchised majority in his home country to which he belonged.

About Mandela

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born in Mveso in rural Transkei on 18 June 1918 to his mother, Nosokeni Fany, the third wife of his father, Gadla Hendry Mandela.³ The older Mandela was a local chief in Mveso. Nelson Mandela was born into the Thembu royal house of the Xhosa nation; a nation whose customs of respect, education and community justice revolve around the clan. As a member of the Madiba clan, Mandela was born and groomed to counsel the rulers of the tribe as part of the Left Hand House, *Ixhiba*. The office was predicated on a strong oral tradition that required the skill of oratory. One can surmise that Mandela's strong oratory skills would have begun in his training to fulfill this chieftaincy position.⁴ Once Mandela's father lost his chieftainship and wealth due to his insubordination to a white magistrate, Mandela's mother moved to Qunu to be close to her family.

Mandela would spend the remainder of his childhood with his maternal family in Qunu still a part of the Xhosa nation. Mandela lived a humble, agricultural, rural life along the rolling hills of Qunu on what would have been state-owned land based on the 1913 Native Land Act.⁵ At that time, industrial development pushed the men of the village to work in cities like Johannesburg in the emerging gold fields industry or on industrial farms. While men were away earning a wage in organized labor

³ Nelson R. Mandela, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait* (Highlands North: Wild Dog Press in Association with Blackwell, 2006), 13.

⁴ Nelson R. Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela* (London: Abacus, 1994), 4.

⁵ Hermann Buhr Giliomee and Bernard K. Mbenga, *Nuwe Geskiedenis Van Suid-Afrika* (Kaapstad: Tafelberg, 2007), 232-233.

fields, women and children stayed home to look after the fields.⁶ Surrounded by his maternal family, Mandela served as a herd-boy looking after sheep and cattle in what he has called an “idyllic” childhood.⁷ His father’s loss of status instilled honor, dignity in victory and the importance of avoiding the infliction of humiliation on an opponent in Mandela.⁸

The Xhosa nation practiced a form of African Traditional Religion (ATR) with rituals, taboos, and cyclical practices. His Xhosa upbringing taught him the principles of *ubuntu* or shared humanity, lessons he learned from Chief Jongintaba, a Thembu regent who assumed guardianship of Mandela after the death of his father.⁹ Mandela remained a ward of Thembu Chief Jongintaba who taught Mandela the ways of traditional consensus leadership.¹⁰ Mandela described the Chief’s influence as follows:

As a leader, I have always followed the principles I first saw demonstrated by the regent at the Great Place. I have always endeavored to listen to what each and every person in a discussion had to say before venturing my own opinion. Oftentimes, my own opinion will simply represent a consensus of what I heard in the discussion. I always remember the regent’s axiom: a leader, he said, is like a shepherd.¹¹

While in the regent’s care at Mqhekezweni, Mandela witnessed the equal interaction between chiefs, white officials, and tradesmen; an upbringing that exposed him to notions of equality among the races.¹² Xhosa tradition favored an oral history of

⁶ Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 10.

⁷ Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 11.

⁸ Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 12.

⁹ Mandela, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait*, 14.

¹⁰ Daniel Lieberfeld, “Nelson Mandela: Partisan and Peacemaker,” *Negotiation Journal* 19, no. 3 (2003): 235.

¹¹ Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 25.

¹² Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 38.

storytelling and oratory to pass on the lesson on the past into the present. The oral tradition was dynamic, adapting to present situations, yet staying rooted in past traditions.¹³ Mandela's mother converted to Christianity, baptized him in the local Wesleyan Methodist Church, and sent to school at the instigation of the Wesleyan brother.¹⁴ His exposure to Christianity prepared Mandela for a life of engaged interaction with Westerners.

Mandela's Education

Mandela's persona as the son of a rural leader gave him the ethos to speak on behalf of his people. Despite his rural upbringing, he benefited from the knowledge of Western education. At the age of seven, a young Mandela began receiving western education from the local Wesleyan mission school. As part of the British "civilizing" education, Mandela was also given a Western name, Nelson.¹⁵ At 16 years of age, Mandela entered adulthood after his Xhosa initiation and soon thereafter he attended Clarkebury Institute, a Wesleyan mission school, and training college. After success at Clarkebury, Mandela attended the Wesleyan College of Healdtown near Fort Beaufort, a boarding school with a diverse student body.¹⁶

Mandela furthered his education at University College of Fort Hare, the sole tertiary institution available to black students at that time.¹⁷ While at Fort Hare, he made strong ties with other black students who would become lifetime partners in the

¹³ Russell Kaschula, *The Bones of The Ancestors Are Shaking: Xhosa Oral Poetry in Context*, (Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd, 2002), 24.

¹⁴ Mandela, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait*, 13. See also: Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 15. Mandela's father remained a practitioner of African Traditional Religion.

¹⁵ Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 16.

¹⁶ Mandela, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait*, 20.

¹⁷ Mandela, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait*, 21-22. See also: Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 51.

struggle for a free South Africa.¹⁸ At the point where he was one year away from attaining his degree, Mandela was embroiled in student government scandal. He was up for election on the Student Representative Council (SRC) but in an act of protest, the student body decided to boycott the SRC elections that year. A few students did vote, however, and Mandela was elected to the SRC *in absentia*. Since most of the student body did not vote, the six elected to the SRC decided to resign. In a repeat vote, the same six students were once again elected. While the other five accepted the results, Mandela remained resolute and resigned leading to his expulsion from Fort Hare.¹⁹ Chief Jongintaba was disappointed with Mandela's dismissal. To help him learn responsibility, the Chief informed Mandela that he would soon be married to a woman of the Chief's choosing.²⁰ To evade this situation, Mandela moved to Johannesburg, a bustling metropolis with greater diversity. While in Johannesburg, he worked as a night watchman before eventually acquainting himself with Walter Sisulu who helped him gain a clerkship with the law firm of Witkin, Sidelsky, and Eidelman. Mandela completed his undergraduate degree in law through a correspondence course at the University of South Africa,²¹ and his LLB in Law at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits). His education equipped him with the appropriate credentials and set him apart with the necessary credibility to become the future face of the anti-apartheid movement.

¹⁸ Mandela got acquainted with Oliver Tambo and other African intellectuals (Professors Jabavu and Matthews) who helped to share his ideas of the black freedom movement. For insights on Mandela's intellectual formation, see: T. R. H. White, "ZK Matthews and the Formation of The ANC Youth League at The University College of Fort Hare," *African Historical Review* 27, no. 1 (1995): 124-144. Cynthia Kros, "The Ghost of Equality: The Public Lives of DDT Jabavu of South Africa 1885-1959 by Catherine Higgs," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 31 no. 3 (1998): 697-699.

¹⁹ Mandela, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait*, 22-23. Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, 60-61.

²⁰ Mandela, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait*, 24.

²¹ Mandela, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait*, 31.

Mandela's Ubuntu Values

Ubuntu is an African moral philosophy which celebrates communal responsibility, “humanity,” “humanness,” or even “humaneness.” The concept is scattered throughout Mandela’s rhetoric to express economic inclusivity. *Ubuntu* means the recognition that an individual comes from a community and the worth of the individual’s life is derived from their communal identity.²² *Ubuntu* is about “the very essence of what it means to be human and to know that you are bound up with others in the bundle of life.”²³ For South Africans, *ubuntu* is a one-size fit all philosophy as “it is both a factual description and a rule of conduct of social ethics.”²⁴

A 1997 South African Governmental White Paper on Social Welfare officially recognized *ubuntu* as:

The principle of caring for each other’s well-being...and a spirit of mutual support...Each individual’s humanity is ideally expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs in turn through a recognition of the individual’s humanity. Ubuntu means that people are people through other

²² Dana Gluckstein, *Dignity: In Honor of The Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Power House, 2010). National Government of South Africa, “White Paper for Social Welfare,” (Western Cape Government, 1997), https://www.westerncape.gov.za/your_gov/61/documents/white_papers/1997. Augustine Shutte, *Ubuntu: An Ethic for A New South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001). Thaddeus Metz and Joseph BR Gaie, “The African Ethic of Ubuntu/Botho: Implications for Research on Morality,” *Journal of Moral Education* 39, no. 3 (2010): 273-290. Elza Venter, “The Notion of Ubuntu and Communalism in African Educational Discourse,” *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 23, no. 2-3 (2004): 149-160. Dirk J. Louw, “Ubuntu: An African Assessment of The Religious Other,” Revised Version of Paper Presented at The *Annual Meeting of The American Academy of Religion* (22-25 Nov. 1997, San Francisco, USA). Anja Aga Ulvestad, “Ubuntu In African Traditional Religion,” Master’s Thesis (University of Oslo, 2012). Julius Mutugi Gathogo, “The Relevance and Influence of African Religion in Post Apartheid South Africa and Beyond – Part 1,” *Churchman* (2007): 164. David Chidester, Chirevo Kwenda, Robert Petty, Judy Tobler, and Darrel Wratten, *African Traditional Religion in South Africa: An Annotated Bibliography* (London: Greenwood Press, 1997), 2.

²³ “Archbishop Desmond Tutu: The Essence of What It Means to Be Human,” *The Conversation*, October 19, 2017. For other definitions and applications of *ubuntu*, see also: Timothy Murithi, “Practical Peacemaking Wisdom from Africa: Reflections on Ubuntu,” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 1, no. 4 (2006): 28.

²⁴ Dirk J. Louw, “Ubuntu and the Challenges of Multiculturalism in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” *Quest Online Journal* 15 (2002):15.

people. It also acknowledges both the rights and the responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being.²⁵

Mandela applied *Ubuntu* principles to extend the benefits of humanity to all South Africans. In his denunciation of the racist system of apartheid, Mandela did not demonize the white-minority leaders. Instead Mandela “called for an end to racism” and a more humane world for all people.²⁶ Without regard for race or skin color, Mandela dedicated his life to fighting for the freedom of his South African kin “of all colors against the institution of apartheid.”²⁷ As a former revolutionary, Mandela would have been justified in focusing his advocacy solely on the advancement of black South Africans, but he opened wide the doors of freedom and justice to all. Despite Mandela’s favorable inclusion of white South Africans in the promise of a new South Africa, many whites insisted that they were different from and superior to black inhabitants of the land.²⁸ The end of apartheid would mean that white South Africans had to rethink how they fit into the broader South African community.²⁹ Njabulo Ndebele suggested that if white South Africans are to find a legitimate way of belonging in South Africa, they will have to engage critically with their whiteness. One way is for white South Africans to redefine as African.³⁰ Nevertheless,

²⁵ National Government of South Africa, “White Paper for Social Welfare,” (Western Cape Government, 1997), https://www.westerncape.gov.za/your_gov/61/documents/white_papers/1997.

²⁶ Sue Leeman, “President Mandela Calls for A More Humane World,” *Network Journal* (New York, NY) August 31, 1996.

²⁷ Claire E. Oppenheim, “Nelson Mandela and The Power of Ubuntu,” *Religions* 3, no. 2 (2012): 369-388.

²⁸ Sally Matthews, “Becoming African: Debating Post-Apartheid White South African Identities,” *African Identities* 9, no. 1 (2011): 1-17.

²⁹ Njabulo Ndebele, “Iph’indlela? Finding Our Way into The Future,” *Social Dynamics* 26 no. 1 (2000): 52.

³⁰ Max Du Preez, “Proud to Be African,” *Daily News* 4 (2005): 14. For research on multi-ethnic identity and individual claims to Africa, see also: Y. Kemp Spies, “I Am White And An African And Nobody Has The Right To Take Away This Birthright,” *Cape Times* (Johannesburg, SA), May 31, 2007.

Mandela's rhetoric never side-lined white South Africans; instead, he included them in the future promise of a non-racial, democratic nation.

Mandela's Ambiguous Status

When Mandela visited the United States in 1990, he was not an elected official of the Republic of South Africa. Rather, he was a newly released citizen whose rights were abrogated by racist laws. His visit to the U.S. did not fit into the typical mold of an official state visit since he was not officially representing the apartheid South African government. Even though Mandela held no official status in the apartheid government, millions of black South Africans viewed him as their symbolic leader because of his activism before imprisonment and his election as Deputy President of the African National Congress (ANC) political party on April 2, 1990.

Official diplomacy is at play whenever representatives of any two or more nations meet in an official capacity to influence each other on certain policy goals. Official diplomacy once took precedence on the world stage but as the world's problems have become more complex and nuanced, perspectives and practices on diplomacy have evolved. Second-track or unofficial diplomacy is a perspective that takes into account the experiences and expertise of ordinary citizens as credible agents to address international conflict. Edy Kaufmann and John Davies define second-track diplomacy as:

Bringing together of professionals, opinions leaders or other currently or potentially influential individuals from communities in conflict, without official representative status, to work together to understand better the dynamics underlying conflict and how its transformation from violence (or

potential violence) to a collaborative process of peace building and sustainable development might be promoted.³¹

As an unofficial emissary from a non-governmental dimension of South African politics, Mandela engaged in a discourse of second-track diplomacy when he visited the U.S. in 1990; a type of “public diplomacy” that manifested an exchange between governments and representatives of a wider public of foreign nations.

For instance, Mandela frequently shared stories about his time in prison and the personal toll it took on him – the loss of his dignity, deteriorated physical health, time away from his family, and loss to the entire nation. The personal perspective of the second-track diplomat reduces the tension one would experience in official diplomacy which encourages grandstanding and posturing as members try not to lose any ground in the negotiation process.

By engaging in person-to-person outreach on a local and global stage, second-track diplomats harness the power of interpersonal relationships, charisma, and social media to influence supporters. A listening attitude is an essential part of successful interpersonal relationships. Listening is “the foundation for all effective public diplomacy.”³² Because of the personal nature of the negotiations and the lack of pressure to present official talking points, citizens in a foreign land, like Mandela, can practice selfless listening – listening without regard for self-interest. It follows that

³¹ John L. Davies and Edward (Edy) Kaufman, *Second Track/Citizens' Diplomacy: Concepts and techniques for Conflict Transformation* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 2. The concept of second track diplomacy was first pioneered by Edward Azar in his unpublished works. The editors put together Azar's thoughts in chapter one of their volume. For insights on the origins of the concepts, see: Edward Azar, “Protracted Social Conflicts and Second Track Diplomacy,” *Second Track/Citizens' Diplomacy: Concepts and Techniques for Conflict Transformation* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 15-30.

³² Nicholas J. Cull, “Public diplomacy: Lessons from the Past,” *CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy* 2, no. 19 (2009): 10.

such unofficial emissaries would have to be expert listeners who combine compassionate listening with personal charisma to enable effective representation.³³

Mandela's Public Address

Whether in official or unofficial diplomacy, speech is one of the mainstays of diplomacy and foreign policy. Mandela's 1990 visit was filled with many occasions to deliver public addresses to various gatherings of people. Some gatherings were small and intimate while others were large as people filled stadiums and coliseums to hear Mandela speak. In New York alone, he addressed a special gathering of the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid and a crowd of New Yorkers at the Yankee Stadium. These high-profile addresses do not include the brief remarks at a tree-planting ceremony in Harlem, fundraising dinners, church appearances, and other private meetings.

Mandela's discourse fulfilled several rhetorical functions in the process of delivering foreign policy public address: a ceremonial function, a domestic function, and an international function. The speeches delivered by citizens in an official setting require the citizen to adapt to the ceremonial requirements of the address. For instance, when Mandela was invited to address a joint session of Congress, he skillfully used diplomatic epideictic rhetoric, which confirmed his credibility, and his choice of words reflected certain ideographs that engendered America's rich history of democracy.³⁴ Nonetheless, Mandela's address was constrained because he had to

³³ Marie Pace, "The Compassionate Listening Project: A Case Study in Citizen Diplomacy and Peacemaking," PhD diss., Syracuse University, 2005.

³⁴ Michelle Murray Yang, "President Nixon's Speeches and Toasts during His 1972 Trip to China: A Study in Diplomatic Rhetoric," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 14, no. 1 (2011): 5

abide by genre expectations of the other rhetors who had spoken in Congress before him – presidents, popes, heads of state, and other dignitaries.

Mandela participated in a ritual wherein foreign policy officials present policy alternatives to the people, local leaders, and foreign adversaries. Since they are part of a nation but not officially part of their nation's government, their public address serves a dual function: speaking the language of government but carefully distancing themselves from official government representation. When speaking to domestic audiences, citizen diplomats rely on vernacular words that draw the audience in. Mandela's use of "Amandla!" which means "Power!" was a vernacular expression that endeared him to domestic audiences. His speeches were also watched around the world as global supporters looked to him for directives on the future of the movement. If at any point during his 1990 visit to America Mandela had suggested that sanctions be lifted, the global community would have seen that as a green light to lift sanctions as well. But Mandela insisted that sanctions be continued thus alerting the global community of the strategy of continued economic resistance.

The strength of unofficial diplomacy, as practiced by Nelson Mandela in 1990, lies in its ability to connect directly with the people of a foreign nation. The connection comes in the form of visual symbols, gestures, and other modes of emotional identification through words. In the anti-apartheid case, the visual symbol of the black power salute became a visual symbol that helped to unite supporters and raise consciousness about the plight of black suffering. The symbol circulated throughout American society and appeared on posters, pamphlets, t-shirts, and other paraphernalia. The black power salute, a protest symbol appropriated by the anti-

apartheid movement, stirred emotional memories of the civil right movements. Once the mainstay of black protest culture from the Black Panther Party to black athletes to the nationalist black politics of Malcolm X, the black power salute regained prominence with its appropriation by the anti-apartheid movement. Mandela's embodiment of the gesture further extended the effectiveness of the symbol, in reaching out to wider audiences and communities. His use of the words "Power!" enabled him to identify with supporters at home and abroad who felt empowered to challenge the apartheid regime.

To view Mandela's 1990 visit as an act of unofficial, second-track diplomacy requires placing his visit in the context of the state of foreign relations between the United States and the Republic of South Africa. The next section of this chapter will delve into official diplomatic rhetoric between the United States and South Africa as expressed in presidential speeches, Congressional bills, memos, and national security strategy (NSS) documents. These official diplomatic exchanges between the United States and South Africa, which spanned decades, laid the groundwork for Mandela's advocacy as an unofficial emissary for the people of South Africa in their changing political and diplomatic context.

U.S. Acceptance of Apartheid

The diplomatic relationship between the United States and South Africa spans many decades. In the years before apartheid, it was a relationship sustained by favorable trade agreements. During the apartheid years, Eric Morgan argued that America was guilty of the sin of omission regarding South Africa's apartheid policy

as it largely ignored the race problem.³⁵ During this period, from 1948 onward, presidential rhetoric about South Africa was simplistic in the face of organized and systematic segregation and oppression of black South Africans. In this period, the context underlying American foreign policy toward South Africa was characterized by the acceptance by leaders in both countries of the legitimacy of white rule.

To understand this period, it is necessary to understand the origins of apartheid in South Africa. Apartheid began in South Africa after the National Party gained power in the 1948 national election. Prime Minister Jan Smuts was defeated by D.F. Malan who replaced the *de facto* segregation with a purposeful system of segregation. As urban-dwellers' fears grew due to whites losing their jobs and Afrikaners moving into the city, the National Party capitalized on the situation by campaigning on the platform of *swart gevaar* or "black peril," a move to drive blacks out of the urban centers.

The National Party was a racist organization. Many of its elites, including future Prime Minister B.J. Vorster, were educated in Germany during the height of Nazism in the 1930s. During his time in Germany, Vorster embraced Nazi ideology and was notably "detained during the Second World War for pro-Nazi activities."³⁶ Vorster's rhetoric emphasized a separate but equal doctrine, popular in his time, which he noted in a speech about the dignity of every human person that:

The Black man...is also a human being created by God, just as we are...[there is] one thing you have no right to do, and that is touch the right of human dignity of anybody, be he black or white. And if he comes to you and says, I want political rights, then I say to him you may have political rights but not in

³⁵ Eric J. Morgan, "The Sin of Omission: The United States and South Africa in the Nixon Years," PhD. diss, Miami University, 2003.

³⁶ Michael B. Bishku, "Review Work: The Unspoken Alliance: Israel's Secret Relationship with Apartheid South Africa by Sasha Polakow-Suransky," *Middle East Journal* 64, no. 4 (2010): 665.

my territory. I have stated my view to the Black leaders very clearly...and I have never hesitated to say to them: Look, we are different to you, we have our land and you may have your land, you will have no say whatever over my land and my children.³⁷

After several white students like Vorster returned to South Africa from studies in Europe and took on leadership positions, the racial rift widened. By 1948, white South Africans seemed poised to separate themselves from the majority of blacks in the country. In May 1948, after his party's victory, Malan noted, "For the first time, South Africa is our own. May God grant that it always remains our own."³⁸ The 1948 election ushered in policies that led to *de facto* and *de jure* separation of the races. Black South Africans were increasingly barred from entering white spaces and thus relegated to a ghetto existence.

By 1948, and the advent of official apartheid, U.S. President Harry Truman sought to strengthen American diplomacy in the face of growing Soviet influence. Thomas Noer argued that Truman adopted a middle-road strategy to encourage containment while strengthening relations with the white minority governments of South Africa.³⁹ America depended on South Africa for raw materials like gold, chromium, vanadium, ferrochrome metals manganese, and the non-ferrochrome metals – resources necessary in the production of nuclear weapons among many other goods,⁴⁰ Truman refused to speak out overtly against apartheid. These raw materials

³⁷ B. J. Vorster, "Speech by Balthazar Johannes "BJ" Vorster at Naboomspruit" on June 17, 1971. Reprinted in *Select Speeches* ed by. B.J. Vorster and O. Geyser (Bloemfontein: INCH, 1977), 142-143. For discussions of the Nazi influence on South Africa, see: L. H. Gann, "South Africa and the Third Reich," *The International History Review* 14, no. 3 (1992): 523.

³⁸ Leonard Thompson, *A History of South Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 186.

³⁹ Thomas J. Noer, "Truman, Eisenhower, and South Africa: The 'Middle Road' and Apartheid," in *Race and U.S. Foreign Policy During the Cold War*, ed. Michael L. Krenn (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1998), 131.

⁴⁰ Ben Fine, *The Political Economy of South Africa: From Minerals-Energy Complex to Industrialisation* (London: Routledge, 2018).

enriched America in the development of weapons, especially during the Korean War.⁴¹ America's demand for natural resources rationalized its need for cooperation with the white minority government in South Africa.⁴²

President Dwight D. Eisenhower continued Truman's policy and did not make attempts to confront the apartheid regime in South Africa. Even as Cold War tensions increased, America maintained strong relationships with the apartheid, anticommunist white South African government.⁴³ During Eisenhower's second term in office, the civil rights movement gained momentum and put pressure on the American foreign policy establishment to adopt a more sensitive posture toward apartheid in South Africa.⁴⁴ The Sharpeville Massacre of 1960 caused tension between the anti-apartheid leaning State Department and the apartheid-apologist Eisenhower. On March 21, 1960, Robert Sobukwe and fellow comrades of the Pan-African Congress (PAC) launched a movement to protest pass laws, which required all blacks and colored peoples in South Africa to carry passes that placed restrictions on their movement. If anyone without a pass was caught in the wrong part of town, they would be arrested. Sobukwe and thousands of PAC members marched through Sharpeville, a suburb of Johannesburg, to protest the law. They marched to the police station where several of them were met with gunfire from armed police officers. Sixty-seven people were killed in the shootings and the global community was outraged.⁴⁵ Without permission

⁴¹ Thomas Borstelmann, *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 183-184.

⁴² Borstelmann, *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle*, 92.

⁴³ Gaddis Smith, *Morality, Reason and Power: American Diplomacy in the Carter Years* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1986), 143.

⁴⁴ Noer, "Truman, Eisenhower, and South Africa," 75. Noer observed that continued racial separatism in South Africa mobilized those opposed to apartheid to pressure Eisenhower for direct action against the government in Pretoria.

⁴⁵ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 210.

from the Eisenhower White House, a State Department representative expressed “regret” for “the tragic loss of life resulting from the measures taken against the demonstrators in South Africa.”⁴⁶ When Eisenhower heard that the State Department had issued a statement expressing regret about the Sharpeville Massacre, “the president said that if it were his decision, he would ‘find another post’ for the individual and recommended that the department apologize immediately to the Nationalist government for the ‘breach of courtesy between two nations.’”⁴⁷

In response to the Sharpeville Massacre, the United Nations Security Council, in its first action on South Africa, adopted Resolution 134 “deploring the policies and actions of the South African government in the wake of the killing of 69 peaceful African protesters in Sharpeville.”⁴⁸ The U.N. called on the South African government to abandon its policies of apartheid and racial discrimination. After this statement by the U.N. and a letter from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., stating his gratefulness that “our State Department has protested the mass killings of our South African Brothers,”⁴⁹ Eisenhower refrained from withdrawing the apology. The Sharpeville Massacre incident demonstrated the split reaction of the American foreign policy establishment – denouncement from the State Department and placation from the White House.

⁴⁶ Dana Adams Schmidt, “Police Violence in South Africa Criticized by U.S.,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), March 23, 1960.

⁴⁷ Ryan M. Irwin, *Gordian Knot: Apartheid and the Unmaking of the Liberal World Order* (London: Oxford University Press, 2012), 77.

⁴⁸ UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 134 (1960) [Question relating to the situation in the Union of South Africa], 1 April 1960, S/RES/134 (1960), available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f1893c.html> [accessed 16 July 2019].

⁴⁹ Martin Luther King, Jr., “To Dwight Eisenhower,” *The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project*, March 26, 1960, http://okra.stanford.edu/transcription/document_images/Vol05Scans/26Mar1960_ToDwightD.Eisenhower.pdf.

President John F. Kennedy's administration has been called "the best of both worlds," concerning anti-apartheid policies.⁵⁰ It was a smarter but deceiving move because it combined a sympathetic approach toward the Third World and a pragmatic stance toward apartheid. Yet, Kennedy was found to have practiced "benign neglect."⁵¹ Some scholars have revised this perspective and now believe that Kennedy's administration did not neglect apartheid but rather practiced a dual policy in South Africa.⁵² Kennedy famously imposed an arms embargo on South Africa to stop U.S. citizens from selling military equipment to South Africa,⁵³ even as the Ambassador to the U.N. Adlai Stevenson admonished the Security Council that any new sanctions on South Africa would be bad policy. A general acceptance of apartheid in Kennedy's administration is evident from the lack of consistent rhetoric and sanctions against the apartheid regime. At the U.N., Stevenson expressed a desire for the U.N. to "build a bridge of communication, discussion, and persuasion" with Pretoria over the apartheid issue.⁵⁴

The presidency of Lyndon Johnson was filled with more awareness of the ongoing issues in apartheid South Africa, but America's foreign policy was still one of

⁵⁰ Thomson, *US Foreign Policy towards Apartheid South Africa, 1948-1994: Conflicts of Interests* (New York: Springer, 2008), 31.

⁵¹ Arthur Gavshon, *Crisis in Africa: Battleground of East and West* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981), 153. For more details on Kennedy's foreign policy, see: James N. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1991); Helen E. Purkitt, "A Problem-Centered Approach for Understanding Foreign Policy: Some Examples from U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Southern Africa," in Stuart S. Nagel, ed. *Handbook of Global International Policy* (New York: Marcel Dekker, 2000).

⁵² Thomas J. Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation: The United States and White Rule in Africa, 1948-1968* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1985).

⁵³ "Statement by Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson, United States Representative, in the Security Council on the South African Question," *United States Mission to the United Nations Press Release* no. 4233, August 2, 1963. Cited in Sean Gervasi, "The Breakdown of the Arms Embargo against South Africa," *African Studies Review* 7, no. 4 (1977): 27.

⁵⁴ "Statement by Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson, United States Representative, in the Security Council on the South African Question."

general acceptance. A draft policy document from the Johnson administration noted the increased levels of anti-apartheid activism at home in the form of letters from colleges, civil rights leaders, and other civil society groups who indicated a growing degree of dissatisfaction with American ambivalence toward South Africa.⁵⁵ In 1966, members of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) held a sit-in at the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C, as a demonstration of discontent and a forerunner to the Free South Africa protests that were renewed in 1984.⁵⁶

As civil rights legislation took shape at home, Johnson sought to provide a similarly consistent view of equal rights for blacks abroad. In May 1966, in a speech marking the third anniversary of the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Johnson declared:

The foreign policy of the United States is rooted in its life at home. We will not permit human rights to be restricted in our own country. And we will not support policies abroad which are based on the rule of minorities or the discredited notion that men are unequal before the law. We will not live by a double standard – professing abroad what we do not practice at home, or venerating at home what we ignore abroad.⁵⁷

The timing of this speech coincided with Senator Robert Kennedy's historic visit to South Africa. Senator Kennedy had long been a supporter of civil rights at home and the anti-apartheid movement abroad while Johnson had stalled until the last minute to lend his voice to the concerns of anti-apartheid activists. Johnson's remarks can be

⁵⁵ "Briefing for NSC Standing Group: South Africa and South West Africa," Africa – General, Memos & Misc. [1 of 2], box 76, Country File – Africa, National Security File, *Lyndon Baines Johnson Library* (Austin, TX, March 1964). Cited in: Eric J. Morgan, "Into the Struggle: Confronting Apartheid in the United States and South Africa," PhD diss., University of Colorado, 2009.

⁵⁶ James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985).

⁵⁷ Lyndon B. Johnson, "Remarks of President Lyndon B. Johnson at a Reception Marking the Third Anniversary of the Organization of African Unity," *U.S. Presidency Project*, May 26, 1996.

read as a rival commentary given that Kennedy was planning to run against him for president in 1968. Robert Kennedy's intention to run for president was well-known as well as his rivalry with Johnson. When granting his visa, the South African government lamented that Kennedy would transfer his visit "into a publicity stunt...as a buildup for a future presidential election." Additionally, a week before Kennedy's departure for Johannesburg, Johnson decided "it was time to look at the area as a whole...to lay the foundation for a Johnson Doctrine for Africa...to splash big headlines" and ultimately to steal some of the thunder from Kennedy's trip.⁵⁸ Johnson's 1966 speech made history as the first time a sitting U.S. president made an address dedicated to African issues.⁵⁹

Notably, the Rivonia trial that sentenced Mandela and his cohort took place during the Johnson administration. Charles Fahy, a former U.S. solicitor general, was dispatched to observe the trial of Mandela and his fellow accused South Africans in 1964.⁶⁰ The Johnson administration had an interest in observing the trial to craft policy responses that promoted greater justice in South Africa. Much like Kennedy's "best of both worlds" approach, the Johnson administration occupied a "middle ground" between support and punitive sanctions.⁶¹ While not overtly sanctioning the white minority government, Johnson's administration did more to acknowledge the burgeoning civil rights movement around the issue of apartheid.

⁵⁸ Cited in Jeff Shesol, *Mutual Contempt: Lyndon Johnson, Robert Kennedy and the Feud that Defined a Decade*, (New York: WW Norton & Company, 1998), 300.

⁵⁹ Thomson, *US Foreign Policy towards Apartheid South Africa, 1948-1994*, 49.

⁶⁰ "U.S. Judge observes Trial in South Africa," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), April 29, 1964.

⁶¹ "Briefing for NSC Standing Group," on March 10, 1964 cited in Thomson, *US Foreign Policy Towards Apartheid South Africa, 1948-1994*.

Most scholars characterize the administrations of President Richard Nixon and President Gerald Ford as a “tilt” toward white rule in South Africa in U.S. foreign policy.⁶² A copy of the 1969 National Security Council report, National Security Study Memorandum number 39 (NSSM39), stated that “the whites are here to stay...” in South Africa.⁶³ NSSM39 also concluded that the U.S. has “no vital security interest in the region,” and proposed five objectives for future U.S. involvement:

To improve the U.S. standing in black Africa and internationally on the racial issue. To minimize the likelihood of escalation of violence in the area and risk of U.S. involvement. To minimize the opportunities for the USSR and Communist China to exploit the racial issue in the region for propaganda advantage and to gain political influence with black governments and liberation movements. To encourage moderation of the current rigid racial and colonial policies of the white regimes. To protect economic, scientific and strategic interests and opportunities in the region, including the orderly marketing of South Africa’s gold production.⁶⁴

Evidence from the Nixon and Ford years points to a desire to placate black activists at home while also protecting economic interests abroad. The NSSM did not attempt to enforce strict sanctions for human rights and other humanitarian concerns. Thus,

⁶² Terence Smith, “U.S. Widens Ties to African Whites,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), April 2, 1972. For interpretations of “tilting” or “embracing,” see: Jack Anderson, “Henry Kissinger’s First Big ‘Tilt,’” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), October 11, 1974: D19; Murrey Marder, “Secret Memo Bares U.S. ‘Tilt’ in Africa,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), October 13, 1974: A1 and A11; Maxine Isaacs Burns, “Tilting Toward South Africa,” *Africa Report* no. 2 (1976): 7-11; and William J. Pomeroy, *Apartheid, Imperialism and African Freedom* (New York: International Publishers, 1986).

⁶³ Cited in: A. El-Khawas and Barry Cohen, eds. *The Kissinger Study of Southern Africa: National Security Study Memorandum 39* (Westport: Lawrence Hill, 1976), 105. For research on the “tilt” in U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa’s white regime, see also: Edgar Lockwood, “National Security Study Memorandum 39 and the Future of United States Policy Toward Southern Africa,” *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 4 no. 3 (1974).

⁶⁴ “National Security Study Memorandum 39,” *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976* volume xxviii (Office of the Historian, 1969), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v28/d6>.

Nixon and Ford's presidencies showed a "tilt" toward acceptance of the white-minority government.

President Jimmy Carter's administration does not fit perfectly into the category of general U.S. acceptance of the apartheid regime. Carter's four-year term began the turn toward consideration for humanitarian concerns in foreign policy. Carter sought to squelch apartheid through rhetorical and symbolic overtures to anti-apartheid supporters. His appointment of civil rights leader Andrew Young as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations was a symbol of solidarity with Africans and African-Americans.⁶⁵ Despite Young's appointment, the U.S. still stood against sanctions of the South African apartheid regime using Young as a "Point Man" to voice moderate sentiments on apartheid at the United Nations.⁶⁶ Carter's opposition to punitive economic sanctions were based on four interlocking arguments: "The White House believed that such measures simply would not work; that isolation would only serve to build a *laager* mentality amongst whites; that there was uncertainty over whether black South Africans wanted action of this kind; and that punitive strategies would only hinder progress already being made in the Republic."⁶⁷ Carter's administration was marked by a humanitarian approach to foreign policy which made him seem sympathetic to the anti-apartheid cause. Yet, his opposition to sanctions that came to be viewed disapprovingly by anti-apartheid activists placed

⁶⁵ Piero Gleijeses, "A Test of Wills: Jimmy Carter, South Africa, and the Independence of Namibia," *Diplomatic History* 34, no. 5 (2010): 853-891.

⁶⁶ Bartlett C. Jones, *Flawed triumphs: Andy Young at the United Nations* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1996), 36.

⁶⁷ Thomson, *US Foreign Policy Towards Apartheid South Africa, 1948-1994*, 103. For example, see the statement of Stanley J. Marcus before the House subcommittees on Africa, and on international economic policy and trade, "United States Private Investment in South Africa: Hearings," *U.S. Congress*, August 10, 1978.

Carter in the threshold of the change from common acceptance to constructive engagement.

Constructive Engagement with Apartheid

America's foreign policy toward South Africa entered the era of constructive engagement during the Reagan presidency. Had Carter won reelection, it is arguable that a human rights approach to foreign policy would have come to dominate American diplomacy toward South Africa. However, Reagan's win ushered in the era of constructive engagement led by Reagan's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker.⁶⁸ Secretary Crocker laid out the policy in a 1980 *Foreign Affairs* article where he stated that

The timetable and the blueprint for change in South Africa are not for outsiders to impose... Washington will need a sustained and nimble diplomacy, responsive to the pragmatic instincts of regional leaders. ...[Thus] constructive engagement in the region as a whole is the only basis for Western credibility.⁶⁹

Crocker did not flesh out the meaning of constructive engagement in that article, but after years of practice, scholars defined the policy of constructive engagement as "encouraging change in the apartheid system through a quiet dialogue with that country's white minority leaders."⁷⁰ This era of American foreign policy toward South Africa was largely confined to the Reagan presidency'.

Reagan's rhetoric was predominantly concerned with the threat of Soviet communism at home and abroad. He honed this message on the campaign trail and

⁶⁸ Joanne E. Davies, *Constructive Engagement?: Chester Crocker & American Policy in South Africa, Namibia & Angola, 1981-1988* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007).

⁶⁹ Chester Crocker, "South Africa: Strategy for Change," *Foreign Affairs* 59, no. 2 (1980): 345, 346.

⁷⁰ Sanford J. Ungar and Pete Vale, "South Africa: Why Constructive Engagement Failed," *Foreign Affairs* 64, no. 2 (1985): 234.

enacted it during his presidency. As Cold War tensions drove the world into two blocs, most conflicts in Africa were viewed as “extensions of superpower competition”⁷¹ and Reagan responded with strong rhetoric to these threats.⁷² In his first inaugural address on January 20, 1981, Reagan directly addressed the foreign policy threats facing the nation.⁷³ He mentioned the threat of Soviet communism as he readied the American people to do battle against the “malignant” ideology. Bolstering the American people’s resolve against communism, he noted, “As for the enemies of freedom, those who are potential adversaries, they will be reminded that peace is the highest aspiration of the American people. We will negotiate for it, sacrifice for it; we will not surrender for it, now or ever.”⁷⁴ Reagan’s uncompromising rhetorical stance in the inaugural address becomes a theme in his presidency and is regarded as the Reagan Doctrine of anti-Sovietism. Within the same address, Reagan pledged support to allies who would join America in defense of democracy:

To those neighbors and allies who share our freedom, we will strengthen our historic ties and assure them of our support and firm commitment. We will match loyalty with loyalty. We will strive for mutually beneficial relations.

⁷¹ George V. Wright, “US Foreign Policy and Destabilization in Southern Africa,” *Review of African Political Economy*, no 45.46 (1989): 159-68.

⁷² David Carleton and Michael Stohl, “The Foreign Policy of Human Rights: Rhetoric and Reality from Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 7 (1985): 205.

⁷³ Reagan’s 1981 address is typical of the inaugural genre whereby the president praises the orderly transfer of power and the commonplace occurrence of democracy. What was uncommon about Reagan’s inaugural was his targeted focus and vision for tackling the evil of communism/Sovietism. For research on genre theory, see: Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Deeds Done in Words: Presidential Rhetoric and the Genres of Governance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, “Inaugurating the Presidency,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (1985): 394-411. Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, “Rhetorical Hybrids: Fusions of Generic Elements,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68, no. 2 (1982): 146-157. Lee Sigelman, “Presidential Inaugurals: The Modernization of a Genre,” *Political Communication* 13, no. 1 (1996): 81-92. Fang Liu, “Genre Analysis of American Presidential Inaugural Speech,” *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 2, no. 11 (2012): 2407.

⁷⁴ Ronald Reagan, “Inaugural Address,” *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, January 20, 1981. Ronald Reagan, “Inaugural Address, January 21, 1985.

We will not use our friendship to impose on their sovereignty, for our own sovereignty is not for sale.⁷⁵

Reagan was committed to building, developing, and maintaining an alliance with countries that supported freedom and democracy. Yet, the Reagan administration would struggle to articulate an effective foreign policy of democratic inclusion for nations like South Africa where the ideological leaders of the anti-apartheid movement were sympathetic to communism. Reagan's administration viewed the white minority government as an ally in democracy while trying to distance themselves from the internal politics of segregation.

Reagan's strident anti-communist message alienated many and resulted in inconsistencies in democracy promotion abroad. Historian Robert Dallek in *The Politics of Symbolism* has argued that Reagan's foreign policy was preoccupied with the Soviet threat:

[T]he organizing principle of Ronald Reagan's defense and foreign policies is anti-Sovietism – the need to confront and overcome the Soviet communist danger in every part of the globe... Reagan looks forward to the day when the west "will transcend communism. We will not bother to denounce it," [Reagan] said in a 1981 speech, "We'll dismiss it as a sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages are now being written."⁷⁶

Reagan's fervent denunciation of communism was evident in all his political discourse, so it was no surprise that he acted slowly in response to legislation to sanction South Africa's apartheid regime. Additionally, Anthony "Tony" Dolan, one of Reagan's chief speechwriters, explained that Reagan's foreign policy rhetoric from 1981 to 1983 displayed the "evolution of a counter-strategy to the Soviets," whereby

⁷⁵ Ronald Reagan, "Inaugural Address," January 21, 1985.

⁷⁶ Robert Dallek, *Ronald Reagan: The Politics of Symbolism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 129.

moral candor and reconciliation, tough rhetoric and diplomatic engagement were employed simultaneously.⁷⁷

Rather than impose stringent sanctions on South Africa, Reagan adopted a policy of constructive engagement towards South Africa. The policy of constructive engagement was in effect throughout the first half of the 1980s. It was deemed “disingenuous support for South Africa,” and later deemed to be a failure because it did not result in any material changes in the lives of black South Africans.⁷⁸ Given the failures of constructive engagement, Reagan experienced pressure from the anti-apartheid lobby to impose sanctions on South Africa. On February 6, 1985, Representative Ronald Dellums (a member of the Congressional Black Caucus) introduced H.R. 997 in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, a bill “to prohibit United States persons from making or holding any investment in South Africa...”⁷⁹ H.R. 997 would have done the following: “Prohibition of present or future investments in South Africa and an import and export trade embargo. It would also deny South African aircraft landing rights on U.S. soil, ban the importation of South African Krugerrands, and prohibit tax credits or deductions on any taxes paid to the South African government.”⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Martin J. Medhurst, “Writing Speeches for Ronald Reagan: An Interview with Tony Dolan,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 1, no. 2 (1998): 247.

⁷⁸ Bernard Megumbane, “Constructive Engagement or Disingenuous Support for Apartheid,” *African Issues* 12, no. 3/4 (1982): 8-10.

⁷⁹ “H.R. 997 – A Bill to Prohibit United States Persons from Making or Holding Any Investment in South Africa and for Other Purposes,” 99th Congress, February 6, 1985.

⁸⁰ “H.R. 997 – A Bill to Prohibit United States Persons from Making or Holding Any Investment in South Africa and for Other Purposes.”

Critics of H.R. 997 argued that Dellums' bill was extreme and would adversely hurt black South Africans. In a memo seeking co-sponsors for H.R. 997, black South African freedom fighter Steve Biko wrote:

The argument is often made that the loss of foreign investment would hurt blacks in the short run, because many of them would stand to lose their jobs. But, it should be understood in Europe and North America that foreign investment supports the present economic system of political injustice...If Washington is really interested in contributing to a development of a just society in South Africa, it would discourage investment in South Africa. We blacks are perfectly willing to suffer the consequences. We are quite accustomed to suffering.⁸¹

Archbishop Desmond Tutu also voiced support for H.R. 997, calling for "punitive economic sanctions against South Africa."⁸² Even though H.R. 997 failed to pass in committee, the harshness of this potential legislation inspired Reagan to issue an executive order with minor sanctions. To avoid signing a stringent sanctions bill against South Africa, on September 9, 1985, Reagan expediently signed Executive Order 12532, *Prohibiting Trade and Certain Other Transactions Involving South Africa*. Reagan used the power of the executive branch to act on the situation. Despite Reagan's executive order, by the end of the legislative session in 1985, a strong resistance had formed among members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) against his policy of constructive engagement.

The U.S. and Apartheid's End

A new American position toward apartheid emerged in 1986 and was defined by a battle between the executive and the legislative branches of the U.S. government

⁸¹ "Letter from Ron Dellums to Colleagues on H.R. 997 and Disinvestment from South Africa," Howard University Digital Archive Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.

⁸² Alan Cowell, "Tutu Urges More Sanctions Against South Africa," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), April 3, 1986.

to impose sanctions on South Africa. Representative Ronald Dellums urged that constructive engagement be replaced with a policy of “total, not partial, not compromised, not perverted, not distorted, not prostituted – total abhorrence to a system that flies in the face of democratic principles.”⁸³ By 1986, the tide had turned, and both houses of Congress passed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) to impose sanctions on the apartheid regime of South Africa.

Several events occurred leading to the passage of the sanctions bill. The pressure from civil society groups, tightening ethics standards for private businesses, and divestment endeavors from state and local governments created an environment conducive for the American rejection of apartheid. The six Sullivan principles that were developed by Reverend Leon Sullivan, a black Philadelphia clergyman who served as a director of General Motors, also laid the groundwork for government sanctions. Sullivan developed guidelines for U.S. companies engaged in good business practice within the apartheid regime of South Africa.⁸⁴ Sullivan who had grown up in West Virginia and was a veteran of the American civil rights struggles recalled his childhood pledge and decided to fight South Africa’s policy of racial separation from within the corporate power structure.⁸⁵ Sullivan’s original six principles were as follows:

1. Nonsegregation of the races in all eating, comfort, locker rooms, and work spaces.

⁸³ Ronald V. Dellums, “Statement of Hon. Ronald V. Dellums A Representative in Congress from the State of California,” in *Legislative options and United States Policy toward South African hearings and markup before the Committee on Foreign Affairs and its subcommittees on International Economic Policy and Trade and on Africa*, 99th Congress, 2nd Session on H.R. 997 and H.R. 4868 (April 9, 16; June 4, 5, 1986).

⁸⁴ “Sullivan Principles for U.S. Corporations in South Africa,” *International Legal Materials* 24, no. 5 (1985): 1496-1499.

⁸⁵ Lindsey Gruson, “South Africa Job Code is Fruit of one Man’s Battle against Bias,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), September 8, 1985.

2. Equal and fair employment practices for all employees.
3. Equal pay for all employees doing equal or comparable work for the same period of time.
4. Initiation and development of training programs that will prepare Black, Coloureds, and Asians in substantial numbers for supervisory, administrative, clerical, and technical jobs.
5. Increasing the number of Blacks, Coloureds, and Asians in management and supervisory positions.
6. Improving the quality of employees' lives outside the work environment in such areas as housing, transportation, schooling, recreation, and health facilities.⁸⁶

As companies that did business in South Africa, like General Motors where Sullivan served, began to implement Sullivan's principles, there was a discernable change in the business culture in South Africa. These changes further inspired the divestment movements and bolstered U.S. congressional efforts to sanction South Africa. As debates in the public sphere raged about the appropriate response to the apartheid problem, Reagan eschewed comprehensive sanctions but publicly favored the implementation of the Sullivan principles.⁸⁷

On May 21, 1986, Representative William H. Gray introduced H.R. 4868, the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986, after it had passed in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. The bill outlined the policy of the United States with respect to ending apartheid. H.R. 4868 was built on the proposal first outlined in H.R. 997 which failed to advance to a vote the previous year. During congressional debates about the economic impact of the H.R. 4868 (sanctions bill), Representative Dellums again responded to the specific critique that economic sanctions would hurt blacks in South Africa the most. Dellums quoted Archbishop Tutu about the hypocrisy of that

⁸⁶ Edward J. Perkins and Connie Cronley, *Mr. Ambassador: Warrior for Peace* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 358.

⁸⁷ Robert Fatton, "The Reagan Foreign Policy toward South Africa: The Ideology of the New Cold War," *African Studies Review* 27 no. 1 (1984): 57-82.

excuse since “two recent surveys of black opinion show that more than 70 percent of urban blacks supported economic sanctions.” Tutu further stated,

I hope that those who use this argument would just stop it quietly, would drop it quietly and stop being so hypocritical. It is amazing how everybody has become so solicitous for blacks and become such wonderful altruists. It is remarkable that in South Africa the most vehement in their concern for blacks when economic sanctions are proposed have been the whites. Yet when blacks are killed by the dozens in confrontations with the police I have heard hardly a squeak from the whites who claim they are concerned about black suffering.⁸⁸

During the legislative debate, the question at hand was not whether to impose sanctions on South Africa but how harsh the sanctions ought to have been. Dellums argued for the harshest of sanctions because blacks in South Africa do not have any rights and are not able to participate in the democratic process, and they do not have “the freedom to travel, to marry, to raise families in a normal fashion...incredibly high infant mortality rate caused by lack of concern, neglect, poor health care, and a government.”⁸⁹ The quality of life of the majority black population was already very poor and Dellums’ advocacy stemmed from anxiety that those conditions threatened to stay the same or get worse if Congress did not act immediately. Congress did act and the CAAA bill was passed in both the House and the Senate.

On September 26, 1986, President Reagan vetoed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. In his veto message to Congress, Reagan insisted that his constructive engagement policy and veto of the anti-apartheid bill would ensure that black South Africans do not suffer from lack of employment and other economic woes which would directly target the “labor intensive industries.” If signed into law, Reagan

⁸⁸ Desmond Tutu, “Statement by Archbishop Desmond Tutu,” cited in: Dellums, “Statement of Hon. Ronald V. Dellums,” 1986.

⁸⁹ Dellums, “Statement of Hon. Ronald V. Dellums,” 1986.

claimed, the bill would have implemented “punitive measures” on the South African government in the form of economic sanctions which would, in turn, hurt the majority black population that the bill was trying to help:

Punitive economic sanctions would contribute directly and measurably to the misery of people who already have suffered enough. ...Black workers – the first victims of apartheid would become the first victims of American sanctions.⁹⁰

Implicit in Reagan’s veto was the chief concern to stop the spread of communism and curb black nationalist terrorism at all cost.⁹¹ Reagan’s rhetoric indicates his greater concern with the economic stability of the anticommunist white South African government and the communist ties of the African National Congress than with the segregationist policies of the apartheid regime. He was more supportive of the provisions of H.R. 4868 which called upon the “African National Congress (ANC) to reexamine its Communist ties and...report on the activities of the Communist Party in South Africa and the extent to which it has infiltrated South African political organizations...to condemn the practice of ‘necklacing’ and terrorism.”⁹² Reagan’s administration was in agreement on these points but disagreed with Title III of H.R. 4868 which, they argued, would “seriously impede the prospects for a peaceful end to apartheid and the establishment of a free and open society for all in South Africa.”⁹³ Regardless, Reagan argued against sanctions as he rhetorically questioned his audience asking,

⁹⁰ Ronald Reagan, “Message to the House of Representative Returning Without Approval a Bill Concerning Apartheid in South Africa,” *Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Paper Book II* (Published Paper 1278, 1986).

⁹¹ Marco Rimanelli, “U.S. Foreign Policy towards South Africa, 1961-1982,” *Rivista Di Studi Politici Internazionali* 50, no. 2 (1983): 253-87. Paul Rich, “United States Containment Policy, South Africa and the Apartheid Dilemma,” *Review of International Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 179-194.

⁹² Reagan, “Message to House of Representative,” 1986.

⁹³ Reagan, “Message to House of Representative,” 1986.

Do we truly wish to be directly responsible for increased suffering, and perhaps starvation, in southern Africa? Do we truly wish our action to be the rationale Pretoria invokes for expelling these workers? Do we truly wish to trigger a cycle of economic sanctions and counter-sanctions that end up crippling the economy of South Africa and devastating the economies of the frontline states? What sense does it make to send aid to those impoverished countries with one hand while squeezing their economics with the other?⁹⁴

Reagan insisted that extreme economic sanctions would create greater unemployment and hurt our relationship with the South African government which was an ally of the United States.

On October 2, 1986, Reagan's veto was overridden by Congress and the sanctions contained in CAAA were enacted. It was the first time in the twentieth century that a presidential veto on a foreign policy issue had been overturned. Reagan issued a terse response to the veto override: "I deeply regret that Congress has seen fit to override my veto of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. Punitive sanctions, I believe, are not the best course of action; they hurt the very people they are intended to help ... [T]his will not solve the serious problems that plague that country."⁹⁵ Several members of the House of Representative including members of the Congressional Black Caucus ensured that Reagan's veto was overridden in that chamber. According to the *Washington Post* headline "House Easily Overrides Veto of South Africa Sanctions"; it was an easy vote as it passed by 313-to-83 votes.⁹⁶ The Senate followed suit by voting 78-21 to override the veto.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Reagan, "Message to House of Representative," 1986.

⁹⁵ Sagar Jethani, "The Surprising Republican Civil War that Erupted over Nelson Mandela and Apartheid," *Mic.com* (New York, NY), December 5, 2013.

⁹⁶ Edward Walsh, "House Easily Overrides Veto of South Africa Sanctions," *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), September 30, 1986.

⁹⁷ Andrew Glass, "House Overrides Reagan Apartheid Veto, September 29, 1986," *Politico.com* (Arlington, VA), September 29, 2010.

Soon after the enactment of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, the South African economy began to feel the effect of the sanctions. President Botha declared a national state of emergency which placed South Africa under martial law. The optics of this move posed serious challenges to Reagan's policy of constructive engagement, further exposing it as a failed policy for the promotion of democracy and human rights.⁹⁸ Botha's government faced mounting pressure as the economy began to collapse. Botha resigned from office due to health concerns opening the door to President Fredrik Willem de Klerk who won an election based on his commitment to a "non-racial South Africa."⁹⁹ Within one month of the inauguration of De Klerk's presidency, in 1989, the ban was lifted on the ANC, the Pan African Congress (PAC), the South African Communist Party (SACP), and other formerly censured political organizations in South Africa. De Klerk also released political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela.¹⁰⁰ Citing the effectiveness of the sanctions in securing his release, Mandela "urged continued sanctions against his country's government and financial help for his organization, which is beginning the massive task of reestablishing itself as a political entity inside South Africa."¹⁰¹

Conclusion

Years of official diplomacy between the United States and the Republic of South Africa produced slow change within the apartheid regime as the American

⁹⁸ Richard J. Payne, "Black Americans and the Demise of Constructive Engagement," *Africa Today* 33, no. 2/3 (1986).

⁹⁹ Mandla P. Mncwabe, *Post-Apartheid Education: Towards Non-Racial, Unitary and Democratic Socialization in the New South Africa* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1993).

¹⁰⁰ David B. Ottaway, "South Africa lifts Ban on Anti-Apartheid Groups; Nelson Mandela to be Freed, ANC Legalized, DeKlerk Says," *Washington Post Foreign Service* (Washington, DC), February 2, 1990.

¹⁰¹ Scott Krapf and Tracy Wilkinson, "Throngs Cheer Mandela as Trip to U.S. Begins," *The Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), June 21, 1990.

foreign policy establishment espoused policies that oscillated from acceptance to rejection of RSA's racism. The do-nothing policy or acceptance operated in deference to the legitimacy of the white-minority apartheid government. Couched in the rhetoric of national sovereignty, U.S. presidents refused to offend the commercial relationship with South Africa by mostly avoiding the topic of apartheid. When the policy switched to one of constructive engagement, the U.S. implemented a middle-road policy that sought to impose sanctions without terribly hurting the South African economy in order to prop up what appeared to be an ally in democracy against perceived ANC communist agitators. Finally, with the passage of strict sanctions against the RSA during the Reagan years, South Africa experienced the effect of the most strident U.S. proposals against the regime. After years of soft treatment of the apartheid government in South Africa, members of the CBC, anti-apartheid movement, and other civil society groups had become fed up with the slow progress toward democracy. The grievances of these groups manifested in the form of organized social movement activity which led to the passage of sanction bills at the national and state level.

One could argue that the sanctions brought about by years of official diplomacy led to the release of Mandela and other political prisoners. A few weeks after his release, Randall Robinson the founder of the Free South African Movement (FSAM) acknowledged the role of sanctions in securing Mandela's release.¹⁰² With the U.S. in the lead on sanctions, other nations and international organizations followed suit. The moral framework of the Sullivan Principles together with the

¹⁰² Arelya Mitchell, "Mandela Free!" *Tri-State Defender* (Memphis, TN), February 21, 1990.

political pressure of legislative sanctions brought about change in South Africa. Companies that wanted to be viewed as doing business ethically aimed to achieve one-hundred percent compliance with the Sullivan Principles thus elevating blacks and other racial minorities within the workplace.

The joint pressure of the Sullivan Principles and CAAA produced notable changes that led to Mandela's release. The pressure of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) was felt mostly in terms of lost financial investment. The CAAA was a monetary divestment and disinvestment policy which signaled to the world that South Africa was bereft of moral standards and therefore did not warrant foreign investments. Despite the effectiveness of these sanctions brought about by official diplomacy, the role of Mandela in securing the full benefits of democracy for his people cannot be overemphasized. It is arguable that without Mandela's advocacy for continued sanctions during his 1990 visit to the United States, there would have been an untimely reversal of the policy thus inhibiting the widespread impact of the democratic reforms caused by sanctions. Mandela famously pleaded with America and Americans to continue their sanctions and boycotts until every last pillar of the apartheid regime had fallen. He noted, "To lift sanctions now would be to run the risk of aborting the process toward ending apartheid."¹⁰³ Mandela's simple but consistent advocacy for continued sanctions made a big difference in the timeline of U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa as federal sanctions were maintained until 1993 when they were officially ended. With the passage of H.R. 3225 – South African

¹⁰³ Quoted in Gary C. Hufbauer, Jeffrey J. Schott and Kimberly A. Elliott, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered: History and Current Policy*, 2nd Edition, (Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics, 1990), 233.

Democratic Transition Support Act of 1993, the provisions of the CAAA were totally repealed. The passage of H.R. 3225 also signaled to state, local governments, and private entities in the United States “to rescind any restrictions on economic interactions with South Africa.”¹⁰⁴

In this chapter, I have established the context for Mandela’s 1990 visit to the U.S. and offered historical background on official diplomacy between the United States and South Africa. In Chapter Two, I examine the visual rhetoric of Mandela’s black salute as an embodied display of solidarity with anti-apartheid supporters. I engage the origins and historical meaning of the black power salute, Mandela’s embodiment of it, and the resultant ubiquity of the gesture. In Chapter Three, I engage the rhetorical theory of ideographs to analyze Mandela’s speech to a joint session of the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C. In Chapter Four, I examine the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) rhetoric that led to legislative action by the U.S. Congress and California State legislature, specifically. And in Chapter Five, I draw out some implications from this study by highlighting the influence of Mandela’s 1990 visit on the creation of lasting legislative victories at home and abroad.

¹⁰⁴ H.R.3225 – South African Democratic Transition Support Act of 1993, *103rd Congress (1993-1994)* accessed on April 12, 2019, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/house-bill/3225>.

Chapter 2: Visual Rhetoric of Mandela's Black Power Salute

When Mandela arrived at the John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York on June 20, 1990, he was not an elected official yet he received a stately welcome. As Juan Williams of *The Washington Post* stated, "IT'S NOT A state visit [sic]. He is not a head of state. But when African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela arrives in New York Wednesday, he will be treated with deference normally reserved for the most powerful world leaders."¹ And so it was. An official delegation was present to welcome him. At the greeting line at the Kennedy Airport, he was met by New York Governor Mario M. Cuomo (D), New Jersey Governor Jim Florio (D), Representatives Charles B. Rangel (D-N.Y.) and Major Owens (D-N.Y.), Jesse L. Jackson, singer Harry Belafonte, and actor Bill Cosby.

Mayor David Dinkins, the first black mayor of the city, staged a hero's welcome for Mandela and his ANC delegation. New Yorkers lined the streets to catch a glimpse of Mandela as he rode through the streets in a bulletproof vehicle nicknamed by New York police as the "Mandelamobile." It is estimated that 750,000 people in New York saw Mr. Mandela at one point or another and he greeted these supporters by pumping his fist in the air, displaying the black power salute as shown in figure 1.² The procession that led Mandela through New York' featured marches and bands representing Africans, Italians, Irish, Arab Americans, Germans, Polish, Chinese, Greeks, Brazilians, Scandinavians, Haitians, Dominicans, Kurds, and

¹ Juan Williams, "Mandela In America: The Risks of Adulation," *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), June 17, 1990.

² John Kifner, "The Mandela Visit; Mandela Takes His Message to Rally in Yankee Stadium," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), June 22, 1990.

Sikhs.³ Additionally, thousands of people poured into Harlem's Africa Square to hear Mandela speak at the same podium where Malcolm X had demanded Mandela's release several decades earlier. Later on in the program, New Yorkers packed Yankee stadium to hear Mandela speak during which he received a Yankee jacket from Mayor Dinkins. He thanked the mayor and the audience for the jacket by saying, "You now know who I am. I am a Yankee." This was greeted with cheers, applause, and chants of Amandla! Amandla! [Power! Power!].⁴ It is estimated that about 200,000 people attended the rally at the Yankee stadium.



Figure 1. Nelson Mandela gives the black power salute surrounded by Winnie Mandela, Mayor Dinkins, and Mrs. Joyce Dinkins. Photo credit: Mayor's Office.⁵

Both secular and religious events to welcome Mandela and his delegation were well-attended. At the Riverside Church, religious leaders and members of the local Free South Africa Movement (FSAM) chapter attended a luncheon where the ANC received a \$200,000 donation "to be used for schools, housing, medicine, and

³ Howard Kurtz, "N.Y. Embraces Mandela," *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), June 21, 1990.

⁴ Kifner, "The Mandela Visit," 1990.

⁵ Image culled from Mayor's Office by Nicole Brown, "Nelson Mandela: See Photos of the South African Leader," *AM New York* (New York, NY), July 18, 2016, <https://www.amny.com/news/nelson-mandela-see-photos-of-the-south-african-leader-1.12056240>.

refugee assistance in South Africa.”⁶ Further marking the historic moment, at a Harlem intersection where the streets are named for Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Mr. Mandela planted a tree with soil from Soweto, the black township near Johannesburg, to symbolically honor “the umbilical cord that ties us together.” Mandela hailed the Harlem Renaissance by noting, “Harlem signifies the glory of resistance.”⁷ He proceeded to name the heroes of the resistance in America – Sojourner Truth, Dr. King, Marcus Garvey, Paul Robeson, Rosa Parks, Mr. Powell, and Malcolm X – to roaring applause.

Mandela brandished the black power salute everywhere he went as a sign of his solidarity with anti-apartheid supporters who showed up to welcome him. From the moment of his release from jail in South Africa to his visits to New York and Atlanta, Mandela frequently displayed the black power salute to greet his audiences. From his first day in New York, the black power salute was a staple of Mandela’s public appearances. Surprisingly, the black power salute was notably absent during his address to Congress. Nevertheless, both the presence and absence of the black power salute are noteworthy and give insight into Mandela’s ambiguous status during his visit.

Mandela’s abundant display of the black power salute on the streets of Soweto, New York, and Atlanta is the focus of this chapter. In this chapter, I ask: how did Mandela’s display of the black power salute connect him to anti-apartheid supporters in America and establish his persona in solidarity with American

⁶ Kifner, “The Mandela Visit,” 1990.

⁷ Kifner, “The Mandela Visit,” 1990.

audiences? To answer this question, I trace the origins of the gesture and contextualize the optics of Mandela's black power salute as it relates to the literature on visual rhetoric. Further, I analyze the circulation of the image of Mandela displaying the black power salute. And finally, I offer perspective on the absence of the black power salute in the House chamber of the U.S. Congress.

Origins of the Black Power Salute

Stokely Carmichael popularized the term "Black Power" in a June 1966 address, "March Against Fear" where he asserted that "Everybody owns their own neighborhood except us... We outnumber the whites in this country; we want black power." He repeated the phrase again, "That's what we want. Black Power!"⁸ Carmichael continued, "The only way we gonna stop them white men from whuppin' us is to take over. We been saying freedom for six years and we ain't got nuthin'. What we gonna start saying now is Black Power!"⁹ Carmichael defined black power as "the vehicle for achieving radical democracy in America," and a transcendent call for a new general of black activists to achieve political self-determination.¹⁰

The Black Panther Party (BPP) was a black nationalist organization that exercised their second amendment right to bear arms for self-defense and as a

⁸ Peniel E. Joseph, *Stokely: A Life* (New York: Basic Civitas, 2014), 115.

⁹ Stokely Carmichael with Ekwueme Michael Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)* (New York: Scribner, 2003), 507. After years of activism and FBI surveillance, Carmichael changed his name to Kwame Ture to honor two African heroes – Kwame Nkrumah (the first president of independent Ghana), and Sékou Touré, the president of Guinea, the country that welcomed him as an honored citizen.

¹⁰ Joseph, *Stokely: A Life*, 115. For more research on Carmichael, see: Charles J. Stewart, "The Evolution of a Revolution: Stokely Carmichael and the Rhetoric of Black Power," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 83, no. 4 (1997): 429-446. Wayne E. Brockriede and Robert L. Scott, "Stokely Carmichael: Two Speeches on Black Power," *Communication Studies* 19, no. 1 (1968). Victoria J. Gallagher, "Black Power in Berkeley: Postmodern Constructions in the Rhetoric of Stokely Carmichael," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 87, no. 2 (2001): 144-157.

symbolic display of “black power” against systemic oppression. Founded by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale around 1966 in Oakland, California, the BPP was a group who sought to end white supremacy by any means possible.¹¹ Given that the State of California at the time allowed for the open carry of weapons for self-defense, the BPP exercised that right as a means to end police brutality and harassment.¹² In fact, the full name of the group was “the Black Panther Party for Self Defense” and No. 7 of the BPP platform demanded “an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black people.”¹³ They were mostly black activists who were “motivated by frustration with mainstream black politics and the glacial pace of societal change...[they] forged a defiant and uncompromising brand of black resistance and used media and culture to disseminate their message.”¹⁴ The group strongly encouraged members to carry weapons for self-defense, and actively fought for their right to do so.¹⁵ Interestingly, Mandela began his journey toward statesmanship as a revolutionary who viewed, favorably, the use of violence to overthrow the oppressive apartheid regime.

The founders of the BPP were partially influenced by the black nationalist philosophy of the Nation of Islam one of whose prominent leaders, Malcolm X, was

¹¹ Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005). Ogbar argues that the Nation of Islam and the Black Panther Party were the foremost organizations in the Black Power nationalist movement.

¹² Jessica C. Harris, “Revolutionary black nationalism: The black panther party,” *The Journal of Negro History* 86, no. 3 (2001). See also: Regina Jennings, “Poetry of the Black panther party: Metaphors of militancy,” *Journal of Black Studies* 29, no. 1 (1998): 106-129 . Eldridge Cleaver, “On the ideology of the Black Panther Party,” Vol. 1. *Ministry of Information, Black Panther Party*, 1970.

¹³ JoNina M. Abron, “Serving the People”: The Survival Programs of The Black Panther Party,” *The Black Panther Party [Reconsidered]* (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998), 180.

¹⁴ Jane Rhodes, *Framing the Black Panthers: The Spectacular Rise of a Black Power Icon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017), 12.

¹⁵ Ogbar, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity*, 85-88.

an advocate of the separateness of the races.¹⁶ Part of the Black Panther Party's "Ten-Point Program," states, "We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community."¹⁷ The Ten-Point Program also enumerated demands for equal access to housing, education, fair income, jury representation, and an end to incarceration and police terror.¹⁸

Black consciousness-raising was a pan-African experience. The black power salute heightened awareness among pan-African blacks of the need to organize for equality. Under the banner of black consciousness, blacks in the diaspora used the black power salute to identify with the civil rights movement in America and to demand equal rights in their own nation. The salute was co-opted by freedom movements around the world. In South Africa, the experience of black consciousness was organized by the "Black Consciousness Movement of Azania."¹⁹ The black consciousness movement in South Africa was credited with creating "a heightened awareness among the masses of their potential to rebel."²⁰ With Stephen Biko as a stalwart leader of the black consciousness movement in South Africa, the nation experienced "the strongest force of dissidence the country experienced in its three

¹⁶ Although Malcolm X was assassinated in 1965, a year before Carmichael popularized the term "black power," X is viewed as a pioneering black power activist because of his willingness to use "any means necessary" to fight white supremacy. Seale and Newton admired Malcolm X's ideas and leadership but rejected his Muslim theology. See: McCartney, *Black Power Ideologies*, 183-186. Cedric Johnson, *Revolutionaries to Race Leaders: Black Power and the Making of African American Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 188.

¹⁷ Michael C. Dawson, *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 114.

¹⁸ Dawson, *Black Visions*, 114.

¹⁹ Rozena Maart, "Rebels with A Cause Giving Voice to Dissidence by Focusing on The Mind: The Rise of The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa," in *Dissidene Et Identite Plurielles* (Paris: Universitaire De Nancy, 2008).

²⁰ Maart, "The Rise of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa," 2.

hundred and sixteen years of colonization, since 1652.”²¹ For Biko, black consciousness was a kind of “mental renaissance of the black intellect.”²² He defined black consciousness in this way:

Black Consciousness is an attitude of mind and a way of life. ...Its essence is the realization by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression - the blackness of their skin - and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude. It is based on a self-examination which has ultimately led them to believe that by seeking to run away from themselves and emulate the white man, they are insulting the intelligence of whoever created them black. This philosophy of Black Consciousness, therefore, expresses group pride and the determination of the black to rise and attain the envisaged self. ...On his own...the black man wishes to explore his surroundings and test his possibilities - in other words, to make his freedom real by whatever means he deems fit. At the heart of this kind of thinking is the realization by blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.²³

Biko’s description of the black consciousness movement is not unique to his South African homeland. The precepts of the movement apply to blacks in the diaspora as well. In fact, black consciousness was a global phenomenon and led to civil rights victories at home and decolonization abroad.²⁴

Given the origin and history of the gesture, Mandela’s display of the black power salute at once signified armed opposition to apartheid and solidarity with the black consciousness movement in South Africa. After his release from prison, Mandela dropped his support for militant opposition to the apartheid regime but

²¹ Maart, “The Rise of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa,” 2. See Also, Steve, Biko, *I Write What I Like: A Selection of His Writings* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1978).

²² Robert Fatton, *Black Consciousness in South Africa: The Dialectics of Ideological Resistance to White Supremacy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), 78.

²³ Steve Biko, “Black Consciousness and The Quest for A True Humanity,” *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 8, no. 3 (1978): 87-98.

²⁴ Mgwebi Snail, “The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa: A Product of The Entire Black World.” *Historia Actual Online* 15 (2008): 51-68.

continued to display the black power salute to greet supporters. One could argue that just as Mandela experienced an ideological transformation during his years in prison, the gesture of the black power salute underwent a metamorphosis into a benign symbol of discontent as many of its ardent users had come to disavow violence. By the time of Mandela's visit in 1990, anti-apartheid leaders had dropped their adherence to violence and instead adopted an attitude of nonviolence while continuing to embrace the black power salute as an expression of solidarity with supporters at home and in the diaspora.

Nevertheless, the perception of violence was difficult for Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement to overcome. Despite Mandela's denunciation of violence, many conservatives still viewed him as an agitator. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher notably stated, "When the ANC says that they will target British companies, this shows what a typical terrorist organization it is." Tory MP Terry Dicks once taunted Thatcher when she was told publicly by Mandela not to visit South Africa, Dicks asked, "How much longer will the Prime Minister allow herself to be kicked in the face by this black terrorist?"²⁵ In the U.S., Mandela remained on the terror watch list until 2008.²⁶ Gestures and symbols have meaning and the violence that the black power salute connoted made the gesture a controversial one.

Mandela's Black Power Salute

There are three ways to study Mandela's black power salute: 1) As a gesture that signified dissent, solidarity, and raised black consciousness, 2) As a visual

²⁵ Andy McSmith, "Margaret Thatcher branded ANC 'terrorist' while urging Nelson Mandela's release," *Independent* (London, UK), December 9, 2013.

²⁶ Caitlin Dewey, "Why Nelson Mandela was on a terrorism watch list in 2008," *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), December 7, 2013.

argument against apartheid, and 3) As a visual image that circulated globally through the media to garner support for the anti-apartheid cause. First, Mandela's black power salute can be studied as a gesture of dissent, solidarity, and black consciousness. Mandela's display of the black power salute signified dissent with the racist policies of the time while unifying the members of his audience to take decisive action against the regime. The racist policies stripped black South Africans of power. So when thrusting the fist in the black power salute, Mandela would shout "Amandla!" which means "Power!" A way of reclaiming power back from the regime. By dissenting with racist policies, Mandela and his supporters were also bonding in solidarity against racism.

Gestures are important within the context of embodied protests. Leila Steinberg asserts that "hand signals help facilitate a discursive praxis of egalitarianism within the context of a speech exchange system suited to a large outdoor deliberative body."²⁷ Adam Kendon defines gestures as "the visible bodily action that has a role in such units of action."²⁸ We gesture when we speak to buttress our verbal point, and both verbal and visual actions constitute a single system.²⁹ Hand gestures and embodied semiotic signals can be found in a wide range of communicative activities. Formalized hand gestures are present in sports, traffic-direction, classrooms, combat, music, and industrial trades and so on. Each activity calls for a specific type of hand signal along with an accompanying set of rules of

²⁷ Rebecca Lila. Steinberg, "The Occupy Assembly: Discursive Experiments in Direct Democracy," *Journal of Language and Politics* 13, no. 4 (2014): 702-731.

²⁸ Adam Kendon, *Gesture: Visible Action As Utterance* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 7.

²⁹ David McNeill, "So You Think Gestures Are Nonverbal?," *Psychological Review* 92, no. 3 (1985): 350. David McNeill, *Hand And Mind: What Gestures Reveal About Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

engagement. In formal settings, for instance, hand gestures represent action such as voting ‘yay’ or ‘nay.’ In large deliberative demonstrations like rallies, hand gestures are deployed as a means to direct the crowd and maintain order. The benefit of hand gestures in a public setting is that “it can be used even while the speaker is speaking, without interrupting ongoing talk...hand gestures amplify verbal stances and enable participants as listeners.”³⁰

Gestures are expressions of our spoken language. Hand gestures promote diversity within unified movements. Audience members can take individuated stances, “rather than being a single homogenous entity,” through the use of varied hand gestures. Gestures, when used in the context of public deliberation, are a way for collectives and individuals to navigate the relationships between personal and political meaning.³¹ During the ongoing public discourse, audience members can use codified hand gestures to express alignment, affiliation, and disagreement. By employing different kinds of gestures, audiences may disagree or agree without producing an auditory disruption.³² Marina Sitrin describes this diverse use of gestures as “a way of shouting out, without the shouting.”³³ Gestures also belong within the five canons of rhetoric, in the same category as delivery which involves bodily expression.³⁴

³⁰ Rebecca Lila Steinberg, “The Occupy Assembly: Discursive Experiments in Direct Democracy,” *Journal of Language and Politics* 13, no. 4 (2014): 723.

³¹ Charles Goodwin, “Action and Embodiment within Situated Human Interaction.” *Journal of Pragmatics* 32 (2000): 1489–1522.

³² Steinberg, “The Occupy Assembly: Discursive Experiments in Direct Democracy,” 702-731.

³³ Marina Sitrin, *Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2006).

³⁴ Sigrid Streit, “Gesture and Rhetorical Delivery: The Transmission of Knowledge in Complex Situations,” Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 2011.

Throughout history, the black power salute has been adapted to various rhetorical situations to express dissent. In sports, the black power salute was displayed to show dissent for the treatment of black Americans during the civil rights era. After having won the gold medal in the 200 meters track event in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, Tommie Smith displayed the black power salute during the award ceremony. In a 1993 interview about the experience, Smith explained why it was important for him to display dissent in that way:

A lot of people knew then something was needed but didn't want to put up the collateral. But a group of black athletes were willing to do something at the pinnacle of their careers because they knew something was wrong. There are those who are willing to say now that what we did needed doing. But where were they then? Those were the times of the beginning. Now is the time of the ending of the beginning because people know what happened. Of course, there was Jackie Robinson and Satchel Paige. And Jesse Owens had his contributions. We were another generation, a generation of movers. Nothing was going to change unless someone made a step to do so. We could have done it before Mexico City, but I had to make it to Mexico City, and I had to medal. It was a silent gesture heard 'round the world.³⁵

Despite the silence of the gesture, Smith clearly intended his demonstration to be seen and “heard” by the world as a significant protest against racism.

A silent gesture like the black power salute is polysemous, open to a variety of interpretations. Polysemy is a rhetorical concept that indicates multiple meanings, “a bounded multiplicity, a circumscribed opening of the text in which we acknowledge diverse but finite meanings.”³⁶ A silent gesture elicits the silent feedback from the audience that leads to interactional meaning-making. The black power salute functions as an example of what Kenneth Burke calls a “symbolic merger” – a

³⁵ Robert Lipsyte, “BACKTALK; Silent Salute, Ringing Impact,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), October 17, 1993.

³⁶ Leah Ceccarelli, “Polysemy: Multiple Meanings in Rhetorical Criticism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84, no. 4 (1998): 398.

semiotic signal that acts for the demonstrator as a charismatic “vessel” for the concerns expressed.³⁷ To give the black power salute is to speak without speaking, a silent gesture that speaks volumes.

Moreover, whenever Mandela and his supporters inserted words into the performance of the display of the gesture, the effect was one of unity and solidarity. Where the words “Amandla!” or “Power!” were spoken as the black power salute was displayed, the gesture could be read as an exercise in black consciousness-raising; a physical expression of the political will to take back power. The audiences’ acknowledgment of the gesture is evident in the fact that they joined Mandela in displaying the black power salute as a way of witnessing to the moment and “shouting back” their approval. In the audiences’ reciprocal display of the black power salute to greet Mandela, a shared understanding developed between them that freedom is theirs to enjoy together.

Second, Mandela’s black power salute can be studied as a visual argument against apartheid. Mandela never failed to display the black power salute throughout his political career. From the moment of his release from prison up until the time of his first visit to America in 1990, his display of the black power salute served as an argument against apartheid. When he walked out of Victor Vester prison on February 11, 1990, he greeted supporters by pumping his raised fist into the air. John Burns of *The New York Times* described that moment when he walked out of jail like this:

At 4:14 P.M. on a sun-warmed day – 27 years, six months and one week after his arrest on Aug. 5, 1962 – Mr. Mandela stepped from the car that drove him to the last guard post at the Victor Vester prison. From there, smiling gently, he passed under a raised barrier and flicked his right hand quickly out from his

³⁷ Kenneth Burke, *Attitudes Toward History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 329.

body in greeting. He then raised his right arm several times in the bolder, black nationalist salute, his left hand holding the hand of his wife, Winnie, and walked to the point where the prison entrance road abuts the highway running through the undulating wine country of the Western Cape. It was a walk of perhaps 70 yards, through a corridor of policemen, and as he made it, Mr. Mandela said not a word, at least none that could be heard by any in the crowd of 5,000 blacks and whites chanting his name. But to those who have come to know Mr. Mandela in the only way that was possible under the total ban that the South African Government threw around the black leader in prison – through his speeches and writings of a generation ago – there was no mistaking the symbolism involved in beginning his life outside jail on foot.³⁸

Figure 2 displays the iconoclasm of Nelson and Winnie Mandela as they are seen holding hands while they greet the crowd with raised fists. The picture captures a sense of joy and triumph as both Mandelas walked hand in hand for the first time in decades. At the same time, the sense of triumph suggests a renewed commitment to tackle the oppression of the apartheid regime.

Gestures can function as an enthymematic argument by implying an action that the audience interprets without the use of words and overt syllogistic logic. Sara Newman defines gestural enthymemes as “arguments about and using movement to capture or express the moments within which life, through the embodied gesture, resides.”³⁹ James Fredal explains that the enthymeme works because the listener supplies the missing piece, “the enthymeme is well known in rhetorical theory as a three-part syllogism from which one premise has been elided.”⁴⁰ David Birdsell maintains that visual argument functions enthymematically in connection with the

³⁸ John F. Burns, “South Africa’s New Era; On Mandela’s Walk, Hope and Violence,” *New York Times* (New York, NY), Feb 12, 1990.

³⁹ Sara Newman, “Gestural Enthymemes: Delivering Movement In 18th- And 19th – Century Medical Images,” *Written Communication* 26, no. 3 (2009): 275.

⁴⁰ James Fredal, “Is the Enthymeme A Syllogism?” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 51, no. 1 (2018): 24.

immediate visual, verbal, and cultural context.⁴¹ Just as an enthymeme is effective in persuasive argument because the audience supplies the missing premise, so too, is a visual enthymeme powerful in delivering a persuasive argument. Without stating a major premise, minor premise, and a conclusion, the visual image combines these syllogistic steps into one powerful gestural enthymeme that communicates several premises, ideas, and conclusions all at once.

On the day of his release from prison, Mandela addressed a Cape Town audience where he reflected on his life's struggle against apartheid and shed some light on the meaning of black power in a speech to supporters.



Figure 2. ANC Leader Nelson Mandela upon his release from Victor Vester prison pumps his fist in a black power salute with wife, Winnie Mandela, by his side (© Bouvet De Keerle/Getty Images).⁴²

⁴¹ David S. Birdsell and Leo Groarke, "Toward A Theory of Visual Argument," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 33 (1996): 1-10.

⁴² Nelson Mandela Released from Prison, *Getty Images*, February 11, 1990. Used with permission from Getty Images, order number 2059626466.

Mandela gave a speech to supporters gathered at the Cape Town City Hall where he spoke in Xhosa, one of the major languages spoken by black South Africans.

Mandela cheered,

Amandla! Amandla! I-Afrika, mayibuye! [Power! Power! Africa, it is ours!]
My friends, comrades and fellow South Africans, I greet you all in the name of peace, democracy and freedom for all. I stand here before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people.⁴³

This speech right after his release was a powerful comeback and a reentry into the conversation about black power in South Africa. The feeling of power was significant for a man who had just spent twenty-seven years of his life as a powerless prisoner of the state. His display of the black power salute after release from prison was an awakening to a new dimension of the struggle for equal rights. When he displayed the black power salute in Cape Town, it was as if he had been frozen in time since his imprisonment in 1964 and “woke up” in 1990 to pick up from where he had left off. For a people so oppressed, nothing could have sounded more promising than the hope of gaining access to political power in their homeland.

The visual image of Mandela’s black power salute as captured in pictorial form also functioned as a visual argument for freedom from oppression. The ability of images, symbols, and gestures to argue is a key assumption of visual rhetoric.⁴⁴ The image of Mandela displaying the black power salute captured all the years of brutal imprisonment. Without the use of words in the form of a major or minor premise, the image of Mandela’s black power salute portrayed freedom, self-expression,

⁴³ “South Africa’s New Era; Transcript of Mandela’s Speech at Cape Town City Hall: ‘Africa It Is Ours!’” *New York Times* (New York, NY), Feb 12, 1990.

⁴⁴ Sonja K. Foss, “Theory of Visual Rhetoric,” in *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods, and Media* (2005): 141-152.

confidence, emotion, and power. One could interpret from the image also that black South Africans beheld Mandela as an embodiment of the dehumanization of the apartheid system.

Several assumptions and conclusions can be drawn from beholding the image; as they say, a picture is worth a thousand words. The role of the audience is an essential part of completing the visual argument because by simply looking at a picture of Mandela, the audience can fill in the various portions of the argument as they see the gesture in the image. According to Anthony Blair, there is a strong relationship between rhetoric, argument, and the visual:

To be effective, the visual properties of a visual argument must resonate with the audience on the occasion and in the circumstances. The visual symbolism must register immediately whether consciously or not. The arguer must know and relate not only to the beliefs and attitudes of the intended audience, but also to the visual imagery that is meaningful to it. The arguer needs also to be sensitive to the surrounding argumentative “space” of the audience, because so much of the argument must remain tacit or unexpressed.⁴⁵

The argument inherent in a visual image is heavily dependent on the audience, space, and context of the event captured in the image. The cultural context plays a role in determining what arguments are being advanced. In the case of the black power salute, the pan-African culture that informs the image suggests that the Mandelas are making the visual argument for black equality and freedom from oppressive powerlessness.

⁴⁵ J. Anthony Blair, “The Rhetoric of Visual Arguments,” In C. A. Hill & M. Helmers (eds.), *Defining Visual Rhetorics* (Mahwah: Erlbaum, 2004), 52.

Circulation and Reception of the Black Power Salute

Mandela's use of the black power salute, as captured as a visual image captured in pictorial form, circulated to a mass audience ostensibly to garner continued global support for the anti-apartheid cause. It commented on the on-going conversation about black power and the life of black South Africans under the apartheid regime. The image of Mandela walking out of prison with the black power salute circulated throughout the global press. The media coverage and circulation of the image of Mandela's release implies that the visual impression of a free Mandela was more important than the controversy of displaying the black power salute.

One of the ways to study the effect of an image is to study its circulation. The circulation of an image can bring about changes in cultural attitudes about an issue.⁴⁶ A scholar can study visual images in terms of their "production, composition, reproduction, circulation, and reception."⁴⁷ In their study of the circulation of iconic images, Robert Hariman and John Lucaites observe that the public's reception of an image contributes to its circulation.⁴⁸ Furthermore, regarding the power of iconic images, Paul Lester remarked, "Interestingly, moving films shown to television audiences were made at the same time...but it is the powerful stillness of the frozen, decisive moment that lives in the consciousness of all who have seen the photographs.

⁴⁶ Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites. "Public Identity and Collective Memory in US Iconic Photography: The Image Of" Accidental Napalm," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20, no. 1 (2003): 35-66.

⁴⁷ Cara Finnegan, "Studying Visual Modes of Public Address: Lewis Hine's Progressive-Era Child Labor Rhetoric," In Shawn J. Parry-Giles and J. Michael Hogan (eds.) *The Handbook of Rhetoric and Public Address* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 251.

⁴⁸ John Louis Lucaites and Robert Hariman, "Visual rhetoric, Photojournalism, and Democratic Public Culture," *Rhetoric Review* 20, no. 1/2 (2001): 37-42. See source on iconic images: Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, "Public Identity and Collective Memory in US Iconic Photography: The Image of Accidental Napalm," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20, no. 1 (2003): 35-66.

The pictures are testaments to the power and the sanctity of the still, visual image.”⁴⁹

The power of the visual image depends on the subject of the image. For instance, an image of children doing manual labor in Lewis Hine’s 1908 photographs sparked conversation about the progressive era’s child labor practices. The 1972 picture of the Napalm girl taken during the Vietnam War sparked a national conversation about the loss of human life in Vietnam. These pictures contributed significantly to the public policy debates of their time by showing a visual portrayal of the tolls of war.

Visual images undergo a variety of interpretations as they circulate through the public sphere. Scholars who explore circulation grapple with the problem of appropriation of the image they are tracking since, “circulation does important cultural work, including creating interpretive communities and constituting publics.”⁵⁰ Visual images are complex and unstable articulations, particularly as they circulate across topic, media, and texts, and thus are open to successive reconstitution by and on behalf of varied public and political interests. The meaning and effect of an iconic image is likely to be established slowly, shift with changes in context and use, and be fully evident only in a history of both official and vernacular appropriations.⁵¹

Lisa Sturken and Marita Cartwright define appropriation as “the act of borrowing, stealing, or taking over others’ meaning to one’s own ends.”⁵² Given the long history

⁴⁹ Paul Martin Lester, *Photojournalism: An Ethical Approach* (London: Routledge, 1991), 120.

⁵⁰ Cara Finnegan, “Studying Visual Modes of Public Address: Lewis Hine’s Progressive-Era Child Labor Rhetoric,” In Shawn J. Parry-Giles and J. Michael Hogan (eds.) *The Handbook of Rhetoric and Public Address* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 257.

⁵¹ Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, “Public Identity and Collective Memory in US Iconic Photography: The Image of ‘Accidental Napalm,’” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20, no. 1 (2003): 37-38. On image vernacular, see: Cara A. Finnegan, “Recognizing Lincoln: Image Vernaculars in Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 8 (2005): 31-58.

⁵² Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of looking* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 350. On appropriation, see also Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, “Problems and Prospects in the Study of Visual Culture,” *Review of Communication* 8 (2008): 16-20.

of the black power salute, starting with the BPP in 1966, it makes sense that by 1990, the long history of the black struggle for civil rights could be appropriated to achieve other goals – anti-apartheid activism, environmental justice and so on.

The circulation of Mandela's black power salute was not limited to South Africa but spread to America even as the image took on meaning as it moved through various media spheres. The day after his release, the American public would have encountered Mandela's iconic pose in the form of a visual image on the front page of *The New York Times* (see Figure 3). And South Africans would have encountered the same image on the front page of *The Star* (see Figure 4). The image in figure 4 was accompanied by an article about Mandela's first public appearance where the author observed,

Freed ANC leader Mr Nelson Mandela has rededicated himself to the intensification of the struggle against apartheid - but expressed hopes for a climate conducive to a negotiated settlement of South Africa's problems. Making his first public address after 27 years in jail, he made it clear to the crowd estimated at more than 100,000 on the Grand Parade that the struggle against apartheid would still have to include armed struggle and increased international pressure.⁵³

During his maiden address out of prison, Mandela noted to his local and international audience that, "To lift sanctions now would be to run the risk of aborting the process of the eradication of apartheid."⁵⁴ In all, the article that appeared in *The Star* combined the picture of Mandela's black power salute with a message of Mandela's demands for freedom.

⁵³ Peter Fabricius, "The Struggle Must Continue," *The Star*, (Johannesburg, SA), February 12, 1990.

⁵⁴ Fabricius, "The Struggle Must Continue."

Similarly, John F. Burns writing for *The New York Times* noted the elegance in Mandela's steps outside of prison as well as his "eloquent militancy,"

When Nelson Mandela made his walk to freedom today, he did it with the same simplicity and command of occasion that made him a leader among millions of South African blacks when his imprisonment began more than 10,000 days ago. At 4:14 P.M. on a sun-warmed day - 27 years, six months and one week after his arrest on Aug. 5, 1962 - Mr. Mandela stepped from the car that drove him to the last guard post at the Victor Vester prison.

From there, smiling gently, he passed under a raised barrier and flicked his right hand quickly out from his body in greeting. He then raised his right arm several times in the bolder, black nationalist salute, he left hand holding the hand of his wife, Winnie, and walked to the point where the prison entrance road abuts the highway running through the undulating wine country of the Western Cape.

Mr. Mandela's voice sounded firm and his words as eloquently militant as when he defended violence as the ultimate recourse at his political trial in 1964. ...Mr. Mandela gave no evidence that his militant opposition to apartheid had been tempered by the more than 10,000 days he spent in confinement. ...In Washington, President Bush rejoiced over the release of Mr. Mandela, spoke to him by telephone and invited the anti-apartheid leader to visit the White House.⁵⁵

Both articles were published on the same day and both authors seem to equivocate Mandela's black power salute with militancy. They both furthered the assumption that the armed resistance against apartheid would be resumed by Mandela and his ANC compatriots.

Numerous images of Mandela's black power salute filled newspaper publications, videos, pictures, magazines and journal publications. The visuals of foreign policy events are essential to U.S. policymakers and as David Perlmutter observed, images of situations abroad tend to affect elite public opinion in America.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ John F. Burns, "On Mandela's Walk, Hope and Violence," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), February 12, 1990.

⁵⁶ David D. Perlmutter, *Photojournalism and Foreign Policy: Icons of Outrage in International Crises* (Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1998).

The image of Mandela and the reality of his release informed foreign policy elites in America of the momentous event as President Bush branded it as “a sign of positive leadership;” Senate Democratic leader Georgia Mitchell called it a “the beginning of change that will lead to the end of apartheid;” and Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia stated that “This is a big day. In effect, the South African government is beginning to take down their own Berlin Wall.”⁵⁷ The image of Mandela displaying the black power salute at his release sparked conversation about the future of South Africa and conversation about the need for continued sanctions.

Technology plays a role in the circulation of images. When Mandela was released in 1990, old media – television, radio, newspapers, and magazines – were the predominant mode of circulation. However, in today’s media environment, social media plays a significant role in the circulation of images. One disadvantage of the circulation of images via technologically mediated social media is that images move too fast and thus prevent contemplation.⁵⁸ The lack of contemplation makes audiences blind to the subtleties of significant cultural moments. Old media led to the “slower” dissemination of information and thus allowed for the contemplation of the historic event of Mandela’s release from prison and its significance for the people of South Africa.

⁵⁷ World Staff Writers, “Thousands of Africans Applaud Mandela’s Release from Prison,” *Atlanta Daily World* (Atlanta, GA), Feb 13, 1990.

⁵⁸ Kevin Michael DeLuca, “The Speed of Immanent Images,” *Visual Communication: Perception, Rhetoric, and Technology* (2006): 76-90.

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Late Edition

New York: Today, light snow, becoming partly sunny. High 38. Tonight, clear, breezy late. Low 30. Tomorrow, partly cloudy, windy. High 49. Yesterday: High 48, low 32. Details, page C8.

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NEW YORK, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1990

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Associated Press
Mike Tyson applying a cold towel to his swollen eye during a news conference after the fight.

Boxing Officials Could Overturn Defeat of Tyson

By PHIL BERGER

James (Buster) Douglas knocked out Mike Tyson this weekend and won the world heavyweight championship in one of the greatest upsets in boxing history. But Douglas's victory in Tokyo may be undone by a raucous dispute over a long count on Tyson's knockdown of Douglas in the eighth round.

Two of boxing's major governing bodies, the World Boxing Association and the World Boxing Council, suspended the result of the fight yesterday pending hearings into the controversy. The third major group that recognized Tyson as the champion, the International Boxing Federation, said it now considers Douglas to be the champion.

Tyson's career had protested that Douglas received a long count, and, according to the W.B.C., a formal protest was later lodged by Japanese boxing authorities.

The result of the bout, fought Sunday in Tokyo (Saturday night in the United States), could ultimately be deter-

U.S. INVITES IDEAS FROM THE SOVIETS ON STRATEGIC CUTS

AN ADMINISTRATION SHIFT

Moscow's Earlier Suggestions
on Reducing Nuclear Arms
Have Been Spurned

By MICHAEL R. GORDON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 — In a shift of position, the Bush Administration has told Moscow that it is now prepared to receive Soviet proposals about reductions in long-range nuclear arms that go beyond the emerging strategic arms treaty, Administration officials disclosed today.

Until recently, the Bush Administration has rebuffed Moscow's suggestions that the two sides open discussions on a possible second arms treaty that would make deeper reductions in long-range nuclear weapons, like ocean-spreading ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and bombers, than does the arms treaty now under negotiation.

But Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d told Soviet leaders in Moscow last week that the Administration is now ready to entertain new Soviet ideas on what sort of subsequent reductions in long-range nuclear arms should be carried out after the current Strategic Arms Reduction Talks are concluded.

Thinking of 'Next Phase'

"Up to now we have not been willing to discuss the Soviet ideas on Start-2 on the ground that we still have work to do on Start-1," said a senior Administration official. "Now we are saying you can raise your ideas if you want to. We are getting to the point where we need to think a little bit about the next phase."

The question of whether to seek further reductions in long-range nuclear weapons after an agreement is reached has been a contentious one for the Bush Administration. Some Admin-

MANDELA, FREED, URGES STEP-UP IN PRESSURE TO END WHITE RULE



AP Wirephoto
Nelson Mandela leaving Victor Verster prison yesterday after spending 27 years in South African jails.

SPEECH IS RESOLUTE

He Asks Other Nations
Not to Lift Sanctions
Against Pretoria

By CHRISTOPHER S. WREN

Special to The New York Times

CAPE TOWN, Feb. 11 — After 27 and a half years in prison, Nelson Mandela finally won his freedom today and promptly urged his supporters at home and abroad to increase their pressure against the white minority Government that had just released him.

"We have waited too long for our freedom," Mr. Mandela told a cheering crowd from a balcony of Cape Town's old City Hall. "We can wait no longer."

"Now is the time to intensify the struggle on all fronts," he said. "To relax our efforts now would be a mistake which generations to come will not be able to forgive." [Transcript of the address, page A15.]

First Speech Since '64

Mr. Mandela's 20-minute speech, which he prepared before leaving prison today, constituted his first remarks in public since before he was sentenced in June 1964 to life imprisonment for conspiracy to overthrow the Government and engage in sabotage.

He asked the international community not to lift its sanctions against South Africa, despite the recent changes introduced by President F. W. de Klerk, which culminated in Mr. Mandela's release.

"To lift sanctions now would be to run the risk of aborting the process toward ending apartheid," he said.

An Eloquent Militancy

Mr. Mandela's voice sounded firm and his words as eloquently militant as when he defended violence as the ultimate means of achieving freedom.

On Mandela's Walk, Hope and Violence

By JOHN F. BURNS

Special to The New York Times

PAARL, South Africa, Feb. 11 — When Nelson Mandela made his walk to freedom today, he did it with the

and walked to the point where the prison entrance road abuts the highway running through the undulating wine country of the Western Cape.

It was a walk of perhaps 70 yards,

Mr. Kennedy, used a phrase that became the title of a book of Mr. Mandela's speeches and writings. The book has been passed hand to hand in dog-eared copies among South Africans.

Figure 3. Front Page of The New York Times on February 12, 1990.

'No new US sanctions'
 WASHINGTON — The release of Mr Nelson Mandela has killed moves in the United States to impose additional sanctions on South Africa. Democratic Senator Paul Simon, in charge of proposed Senate legislation for additional sanctions against South Africa, admitted yesterday that the release of Mr Mandela, and earlier steps taken by President de Klerk, had stopped the momentum for new sanctions.

MONDAY
 February 12 1990
 Johannesburg

The Star

South Africa's largest daily newspaper.
 Established 1857.



MORNING SPECIAL

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I greet you in the name of peace, democracy and freedom, Mandela tells 100 000 jubilant supporters

'The struggle must continue'

By Peter Fabricius, Political Correspondent
 Cape Town

Freud ANC leader Mr Nelson Mandela has re-dedicated himself to the intensification of the struggle against apartheid — but expressed hopes for a climate conducive to a negotiated settlement of South Africa's problems.

Making his first public address after 27 years in jail, he made it clear to a crowd estimated at more than 100 000 on the Grand Parade that the struggle against apartheid would still have to include the armed struggle and increased international pressure.

"We have no option but to continue," he said to loud cheers. "But we express the hope that a climate conducive to a negotiated settlement will be created soon, so that there may no longer be any need for the armed struggle to continue."

Mr Mandela called on the international community to intensify its efforts to isolate South Africa.

To lift sanctions now would be to run the risk of aborting the process of the eradication of apartheid.

Speaking from a podium in front of the City Hall, he said the

● See Pages 3, 8, 10, 12 and 13.

forces which justified his armed struggle in the 1960s still existed. "I greet you all in the name of peace, democracy and freedom for all," were the opening words of his first public address for more than three decades.

A deafening roar from 100 000 throats greeted the neatly grey-suited Mr Mandela as he took the microphone. Jubilant youths clambered up the podium to grab at him.

The organisers took several minutes to calm the crowd. Mr Mandela arrived just in time to save what looked like becoming an ugly situation. The crowd had begun gathering early, and by the time he was supposed to speak, people were hot, thirsty, impatient and, in many cases, angry.

A stream of people who fainted were passed over the crowd for first-aid treatment.

Round the perimeter, police were engaged in running skirmishes with apparently unruly elements who pelted them with bottles from rooftops.

The police fired back, apparently with rubber bullets and birdshot. There were reports of serious injuries and even deaths. Breakaway elements ran amok in surrounding streets, smashing windows.

"I am a loyal and disciplined member of the African National Congress. I am therefore in full agreement with all of its objectives, strategies and tactics," said Mr Mandela.

He was taken into the side entrance of the City Hall at 7 30 pm.



Figure 4. Front Page of The Star on February 12, 1990.



*Figure 5. Crowds along ticker tape parade route for Nelson Mandela, June 20, 1990. Mayor David N. Dinkins Photograph Collection, NYC Municipal Archives.*⁵⁹

Furthermore, anti-apartheid supporters engaged in the work of “reception” when they displayed the black power salute to greet Mandela. Another way to study images is to analyze the reception of the image across time. Cara Finnegan asserts that “studying reception enables the critic to locate other potential interpretations that might have been missed, because one working at a distance from the time period will never have full access to the historical contingencies of any given moment.”⁶⁰ In the absence of direct interviews of supporters who lined the parade route, the visual

⁵⁹ Alexandra Hilton, “Freedom Tour: Nelson Mandela in NYC,” *NYC Department of Records & Information Services*, July 20, 2017, <http://www.archives.nyc/blog/2017/7/20/freedom-tour-nelson-mandela-in-nyc>.

⁶⁰ Finnegan, “Studying Visual Modes of Public Address,” 259.

image presented in figure 5 can be read as an enthusiastic reception and replication of Mandela's iconic stance.

The most prominent supporter pictured in figure 5 is a black man whose display of the black power salute is a bodily reception of the pan-African image of the black power salute. He is holding a bright yellow sign; a sign of his commitment to a "Free South Africa." That commitment inspired him and many other American anti-apartheid supporters to appear in person to receive Mandela along the parade route in New York City. By displaying the black power salute to greet Mandela, he inserted himself into the conversation about apartheid. He contributed his body and defiant gesture to an ongoing discourse about race, power, and privilege. Many supporters throughout the parade route showed their emotional support for Mandela by replicating and reciprocating the black power salute with enthusiasm and gusto, portraying the wide reception of the gesture through their embodiment of it.

In figure 5, black Americans, some of whom might have rallied, boycotted, and divested to secure Mandela's release from prison and many of whom would have seen the image of Mandela walking out of prison with a raised fist, joined in displaying the black power salute – a sign of the widespread reception and replication of the gesture. The unifying effect of the display promoted solidarity among members of the anti-apartheid movement, many of whom took up the cause of Mandela's freedom as a personal call.

Absence of the Black Power Salute

Despite the centrality of the black power salute to Mandela's visual persona, the gesture was notably absent during his speech to Congress. Mandela displayed the black power salute at every city he visited except during his speech in the House chamber of the U.S. Congress. So notable was the absence of Mandela's black power salute while greeting Members of Congress gathered to hear his speech that Edwin Chen of the *Los Angeles Times* commented, "Not once during his appearance [in Congress] did Mandela raise a fist, as he has at virtually every stop since he landed in New York last Wednesday morning. Instead, he simply smiled and waved repeatedly."⁶¹ Rather than pumping a raised fist in a black power salute, Mandela greeted the Members of Congress with an open arm wave. His open arm wave was welcomed with a standing ovation by the audience.⁶² The absence of the black power salute in an official diplomatic space denotes Mandela's deftness in code-switching as he performed competing roles on his tour of the U.S.

Mandela had the privilege of entering an official diplomatic space – the U.S. Capitol. He was bound by the decorum of that space which called for diplomatic rhetoric. Diplomatic rhetoric promotes the bilateral relationship between nations in the international community; it fosters cooperation and camaraderie among nations. It is the standard mode of engaging in diplomacy to prevent conflicts from escalating into violence. The House chamber is typically reserved for the State of the Union

⁶¹ Edwin Chen, "Mandela Speech Draws Cheers from Congress: South Africa: A Reference to American Heroes Brings Standing Ovation. He Cites 'Thirst' For Human Rights," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), June 27, 1990.

⁶² "Archives: Remembering Nelson Mandela," *United Press International* (Washington, D.C.), accessed on February 6, 2019, https://www.upi.com/News_Photos/Archives/Archives-Remembering-Nelson-Mandela/8041/ph5/.

address and addresses by foreign heads of state. Activists are typically not given the opportunity to address a joint session of Congress. The *Congressional Record* notes that the purpose of a Joint Meeting is for “Congress to hear an address from an important figure – generally a visiting foreign leader.”⁶³ The expectation of speakers in official diplomatic spaces is governed by the “lingering expectation that diplomats will hail from the upper echelons of their societies, and will have the easy social ways of the naturally superior.”⁶⁴ A breach of decorum could be alienating and thus expose those “who are, and are not legitimate subjects of international politics,”⁶⁵ since being a diplomat is about being civil, tactful, modest, loyal, and discerning.⁶⁶

The feeling of alienation for lack of conformity to what are traditionally European norms of decorum led Sam Okoth Opondo’s call to decolonize diplomacy. Opondo argues that we need to “raise questions about the conditions under which colonized subjects and people are considered diplomatic or non-diplomatic and the differential treatment accorded to peoples or places that were considered external to the European diplomatic milieu.”⁶⁷ Mandela’s second-class citizen status of South Africa positioned him as a diplomatic outsider and member of a colonized class whose standing rendered him suspect in an official diplomatic space. Having been

⁶³ “Joint Meetings and Joint Session Addresses Before Congress by Foreign Leaders & Dignitaries,” *Congressional Directory* and *Congressional Record*, <https://history.house.gov/Institution/Foreign-Leaders/Joint-Sessions/>.

⁶⁴ Iver B. Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats: Inside a European Foreign Ministry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 11.

⁶⁵ Fiona McConnell, “Performing Diplomatic Decorum: Repertoires of “Appropriate” Behavior in the Margins of International Diplomacy,” *International Political Sociology* 12, no. 4 (2018): 367.

⁶⁶ Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy: A Guide to the Conduct of Contemporary Foreign Affairs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963).

⁶⁷ Sam O. Opondo, “Decolonizing Diplomacy: Reflections on African Estrangement and Exclusion,” In Costas Constantinou and James Derian (eds.) *Sustainable Diplomacies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 41.

branded a terrorist by some, a radical by others, Mandela sought to reduce anxieties about his ability to perform in an official diplomatic space. Diplomatic decorum is most concerned with channeling emotions to avoid conflict, “tamping down emotions and contributing reasonableness and rational thought to the process of communication between states.”⁶⁸

The emotional restraint required to be successful as an official diplomat contributed to the absence of the black power salute during Mandela’s speech to Congress. Emotional restraint is a virtue in the international order; in the international arena, the right words spoken at the right occasion can further a cause while the wrong words can cause conflict.⁶⁹ According to Ben Limb in “Speech: The Life of a Diplomat,” diplomacy is “above all a profession of words –written and spoken.”⁷⁰ When the wrong words are spoken, “the consequences are immediate, most unpleasant, and often serious. Later explanations never quite catch up with the original *faux pas*.”⁷¹ Similarly, the wrong gesture offered at the wrong time could cause conflict. In order to minimize *faux pas*, the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations was created with the goal to train representatives from the “large numbers of new, post-colonial, states who had no experience of the essentially *de facto* rules operated by the older states system.”⁷² From the perspective of black anti-apartheid supporters, such a code could be viewed as unfair since the full

⁶⁸ Donna M. Oglesby, “Diplomatic Language.” In *Sage Handbook of Diplomacy*, edited by Costas Constantinou, Pauline Kerr, and Paul Sharp, 242–54, (London: SAGE, 2016), 245.

⁶⁹ Todd H. Hall, *Emotional Diplomacy: Official Emotion on the International Stage* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).

⁷⁰ Ben C. Limb, “Speech: The Life of a Diplomat,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 43 (1957): 57.

⁷¹ Limb, “Speech: The Life of a Diplomat,” 59.

⁷² Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration*, (London: Routledge, 1995), 2.

expression of black power is tempered. But for the sake of a successful diplomatic outing, an outsider diplomat noted “you have to play *their* game” by showing humility and compliance.⁷³ As an “outsider” to the network of official diplomacy, Mandela sought to abide by the decorum required in that space in order to achieve his goals.

Black Power Salute Resumed & Memorialized

Mandela resumed his display of the black power salute, giving the gesture new meaning as a raised fist denoting unity. After the brief absence of the black power salute during Mandela’s speech to Congress, he began to display the iconic gesture again in Atlanta, Georgia and beyond. At one of his many stops in Atlanta, Georgia, Mandela is pictured standing in an outdoor space under a fancy canopy, with Winnie Mandela to his right and Mayor Maynard Jackson and Mrs. Coretta Scott King to his left. All four of them raised their fist in the black power salute while an 80-piece band played the South African Zulu song, “Prayer for Africa.”⁷⁴

Several dignitaries were present at the rally in Dodd Stadium: Dr. Cameron Alexander, Pastor of Antioch Baptist Church; Michael Lomax, Chairman of the Fulton County commission; former mayor of Atlanta, Andrew Young, Marvin Arrington; President of the Atlanta City Council; Sifiso Makhathini, Chairperson of the local chapter of the African National Congress; the African dance connection; barefoot ballet; third world; the Antioch Baptist church north choir; Atlanta recording

⁷³ Fiona McConnell, “Performing Diplomatic Decorum: Repertoires of “Appropriate” Behavior in the Margins of International Diplomacy,” *International Political Sociology* 12, no. 4 (2018): 372.

⁷⁴ Joyce E. Davis, “Mandela Speaks To 50,000 At Ga. Tech,” *Atlanta Daily World* (Atlanta, GA), July 1, 1990. “Nelson Mandela’s Atlanta Visit June 1990: Photo Gallery,” *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, www.ajc.com.

artist Peabo Bryson; and gospel recording artist Shirley Caesar, who led the song “We Shall Overcome” with Bryson.⁷⁵ The symbolism of the song implied a peaceful overcoming of the racial strife as opposed to a violent overcoming further moving Mandela to the same page on nonviolence as Dr. King. Mandela quoted from Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech telling a sold-out crowd to “Let freedom ring in South Africa. Let freedom ring wherever the people’s human rights are trampled upon.” He further compared the apartheid struggle in South Africa to the U.S. civil rights movement.⁷⁶

The verbal and visual rhetoric together sent a message of solidarity as implied by the other people surrounding Mandela who also displayed the salute. One of those joining Mandela was Mrs. Coretta Scott King, the widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. whose message on nonviolence set him apart from other militant black activists of the civil rights era. It would be inconceivable to think that Mrs. King would engage in a militant demonstration by displaying the black power salute in public. Rather, the context of Mandela’s visit rendered the gesture of the black power salute in a new light as a symbol of unity and solidarity for the advancement of pan-African foreign policy objectives.

Many black Americans viewed Mandela as the embodiment of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. whose philosophy on nonviolence Mandela was believed to have extended. Juan Williams observed that, “For black Americans, Mandela, is the personification of the black struggle against white oppression – Martin Luther King

⁷⁵ Davis, “Mandela Speaks To 50,000 At Ga. Tech.”

⁷⁶ Joyce E. Davis, “Thousands Flood Auburn Avenue for Mandela: Wraps Up Visit at Sold-Out Rally at Ga. Tech Stadium Wife, Winnie, Warmly Received At \$100 Plate Women’s Luncheon,” *Atlanta Daily World* (Atlanta, GA), June 29, 1990. Davis, “Mandela Speaks To 50,000 At Ga. Tech.”

Jr. returned to life. Mandela is a comfortable throwback to the relatively simple struggle of black against white over the inequalities of racial segregation.”⁷⁷ Further highlighting the similarities between both leaders, Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director of the NAACP noted, “I expect African Americans will respond to Mr. Mandela with the same warmth and affection that Africans responded to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.”⁷⁸ Retired schoolteacher Lillian E. Pharr connected Mandela to Dr. King as well, “Here is somebody who maybe can take the place of Martin Luther King. I have the feeling it will give people much needed hope that is lacking.”⁷⁹ Given the strong connection between Mandela and Dr. King’s, Mandela’s use of the black power salute necessarily took on new meaning as a nonviolent symbol.

With Mandela’s use of the black power salute during his visit, the gesture expanded in meaning and usage thus symbolizing unity and solidarity for one’s cause. Indeed, the public display of the raised fist has become a ubiquitous symbol of enthusiasm and camaraderie. Everyone from President Trump to cadets graduating from West Point to climate change activists has displayed the “raised fist” to express excitement for their cause – causes often devoid of any link to black power.⁸⁰ Mandela’s visit and the rhetorical gesture of the raised fist that accompanied it

⁷⁷ Juan Williams, “Mandela In America: The Risks of Adulation,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), June 17, 1990.

⁷⁸ Juan Williams, “Mandela In America.”

⁷⁹ Lynda Richardson and Veronica Jennings, “Heartfelt Outpouring for Mandela; Anti-Apartheid Activists, Public Energized by Today’s Visit: [FINAL Edition],” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), June 24, 1990.

⁸⁰ For a breakdown of Trump’s raised fist, see: Paula Mooney, “Trump’s Fist Photos: Why Does President Trump Raise His Fist So Often?,” *Inquisitr* (Brooklyn, NY), May 19, 2017. For article on West Point cadets raising the fist, see: Peniel E. Joseph, “The Many Meanings of a Fist,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 18, 2016. For visual of earth day environmental protesters raising the fist, see: Earther (@EARTH3R), “incredibly powerful #climatestrike,” Twitter, March 15, 2019, 3:08 p.m. <https://twitter.com/EARTH3R/status/1106618203780931594>.

allowed Americans to overcome the stigma of the gesture by associating it with the noble cause of the anti-apartheid movement – a movement geared toward social change in a foreign land outside of the United States.

Mandela was memorialized with a statue of him displaying the black power salute as an acknowledgment of how essential the gesture was to his activist persona. On September 21, 2013, a statue of Mandela was erected on the very spot where thousands had picketed to secure his freedom. The statue memorialized Mandela's iconic stance with him brandishing the black power salute. The statue was unveiled on the grounds in front of the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C. where a crowd gathered around to observe the momentous occasion.⁸¹ The statue is yet another extension of the reproduction of Mandela's iconic stance. South African artist Jean Doyle designed the statue and "modeled the sculpture from photographs of Mandela leaving prison in 1990, his fist is raised triumphantly over his head."⁸² Doyle's statue is a replica of the sculpture outside the gates of renamed Drakenstein Correctional Centre in South Africa from which Mandela was released. The plaque on Mandela's statue displays a quote taken from Mandela's 1990 speech to Congress:

The stand you took established...that here we have friends...fighters against racism who feel hurt because we are hurt, who seek our success because they too seek the victory of democracy over tyranny. I speak...of the millions of people throughout this great land who stood up and engaged the apartheid system in struggle. Let us keep our arms locked together so that we form a solid phalanx against racism...Let us ensure that justice triumphs without delay.⁸³

⁸¹ Joe Davidson, "Statue of Mandela Unveiled at South African Embassy," *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), September 21, 2013.

⁸² "Mandela Statue Unveiled in Washington," *Voice of America* (Washington, DC), September 21, 2013.

⁸³ "Mandela Statue Unveiled in Washington," *Voice of America*.

At the unveiling, Randall Robinson, founder of the Free South Africa Movement reiterated the pan-African goals which motivated FSAM, “We entered this building nearly 29 years ago with the belief that the struggles for justice in the United States and South Africa were inextricably bound up together.”⁸⁴ The jointness of the struggle led movement leaders to influence each other by sharing symbols of the struggle, a common language of speaking about oppression, and the joy of triumph with the victory of Mandela’s release. Even though Mandela’s black power salute upon his release from prison felt like a recall of the militant past, by the end of his visit to the United States, his display of the black power salute took on a nonviolent meaning because of his association with the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Astoundingly, Mandela’s right fist will forever be raised in a black power salute in Washington, D.C., the city where he refrained from displaying the salute during his speech to Congress.

Conclusion

Mandela frequently displayed the black power salute to greet supporters during his visit to the United States. His use of the “raised fist” within the American context occurred about three decades after the tumultuous era of the nationalist black politics of the 1960s thus distancing the gesture of its radical origins. In this chapter, I locate Mandela’s use of the gesture at the nexus where the black power salute evolved in meaning from its radical origin as a symbol of the Black Panther Party (BPP) into a benign gesture of unity, solidarity, social bonding, and camaraderie. The black power salute becomes the “raised fist” and gets co-opted by movements throughout the

⁸⁴ Davidson, “Statue of Mandela Unveiled at South African Embassy.”

world as an expression of protest, discontent, and solidarity. In the contemporary socio-cultural environment, the raised fist is ubiquitous and can be spotted in any large gathering of people, political or otherwise. From Trump rallies to graduation ceremonies to environmental protests, people display the “raised fist” without regard for the radical origin of the gesture.

In this chapter, I sought to answer the question: “How did Mandela’s display of the black power salute connect him to anti-apartheid supporters in?” To answer this question, I examined the circulated image of Mandela’s black power salute, the politics of black power which the stance communicates, the absence of that stance in an arena of official diplomacy, and the presumed presence of the gesture during Mandela’s tour. In all, Mandela’s display of the black power salute identified him as a member of the pan-African movement for equality. Mandela emerged from his twenty-seven-year imprisonment as a changed man who ascribed to the principles of nonviolence, thereby serving as a conduit through which the black power salute is reinterpreted.

Chapter 3: Mandela in Washington, D.C.: Ideographs in Mandela's Speech to Congress

Mandela's speech to a joint session of the U.S. Congress marked a highlight of his visit to the United States. He was accorded the opportunity to address a joint session of Congress, a privilege that is customarily reserved for the President of the United States and sometimes extended to foreign heads of state. Mandela's political position as the Deputy President of the ANC gave him the credibility to make the address. Mandela's credibility as a representative of anti-apartheid activism was enhanced by his use of ideographs during his address to foreign policymakers in Congress. His credibility was further enhanced by his persona as a citizen of the apartheid regime in RSA, whose personal experience with the racist policy of apartheid qualified him to speak about the harmful effects of the policy.

Ideographs are significant ideological words and concepts that cut across time and space. Ideographs invoke the past while being applied to the present in a new way to solve extant problems in society. Given the rhetorical situation of the speech and the multiple audiences who listened to the speech, Mandela made use of ideographic references that were rooted in both American and South African history, and their respective founding documents. In this chapter, I ask: how did Mandela's speech to Congress express ideographs that advanced the goals of the anti-apartheid movement? To answer this question, I examine two specific ideographs in Mandela's speech, <democracy> and <economy>. Mandela used these ideographs to evoke the emotional commitment of his audience to the struggle of the anti-apartheid movement.

Ideographic Rhetoric

Michael Calvin McGee coined the term ideograph and described it as a word that is “preserved in rhetorical documents,” “with the capacity to dictate decision and control public belief and behavior.”¹ Slogans that manifest political ideology often form “a vocabulary of “ideographs” easily mistaken for the technical terminology of political philosophy.”² Ideographs are effective at shaping the contours of power through their use in civil discourse. Ideographs gain meaning when wielded over mass audiences as they have the capacity “to control “power” and to influence (if not determine) the shape and texture of each individual’s reality.”³ McGee proposed that ideographs occur along a diachronic axis of historical applications and within a synchronic constellation of associated pairings.⁴

The critic begins with analyzing the ideograph’s diachronic or historic grammar then turns to its synchronic or present-day use in current texts. McGee expresses the synchronic relevance of ideographs as follows: “Ideographs seem structured horizontally, for when people actually make use of them presently, such as ‘rule of law’ clash with other ideographs (‘principle of confidentiality’ or ‘national security’), and in the conflict come to mean with reference to synchronic confrontations.”⁵ The rhetorical function of an ideograph in a present discourse is dependent on whether that ideograph is similar or different from its past use.

¹ Michael Calvin McGee, “The ‘Ideograph’: A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (1980): 5.

² McGee, “The Ideograph,” 5. For McGee’s ideographic research about “the people,” see: Michael C. McGee, “In Search of ‘the people’: A Rhetorical Alternative,” *Quarterly journal of Speech* 61 no. 3 (1975): 235-249.

³ McGee, “The Ideograph,” 5.

⁴ McGee, “The Ideograph,” 5.

⁵ McGee, “The Ideograph,” 12.

Ideographs may either reinforce the diachronic precedent or attempt to redefine it. However, attempting “to redefine an ideograph synchronically can be a tricky task as it has to link the primary ideograph with new ideographs or practical contexts while maintaining allegiance to the constraints of rhetorical culture.”⁶ For instance, John Lucaites and Celeste Condit argue that the civil rights movement’s use of <equality> required both the reinterpretation of the ideograph by Malcolm X and allegiance to its diachronic constraints in the rhetoric of Dr. King.⁷

The meaning embedded in ideographs has breadth and depth rooted in history and the context of the utterance. Ideographs represent “the normative collective commitments of the members of a public, and they typically appear in public argumentation as the necessary motivations or justifications for action performed in the name of the public.”⁸ Andrew W. Robertson, acknowledging the influence of McGee, defined ideographs as “political slogans or labels that encapsulate ideology in political discourse.”⁹ McGee identified several ideographs in his original essay, including liberty, property, law or the rule of law, religion, right of privacy, freedom of speech, and popular sovereignty. In proposing the concept of ideographs, McGee distinguished between “technical” research about language (seeking the true or real meaning of a concept) as opposed to the way it is used in public discourse. Public discourse, for McGee, ranges from “formal” documents such as the American

⁶ Joshua Ewalt, “A colonialist celebration of national: Verbal, visual, and landscape ideographs at Homestead National Monument of America,” *Western Journal of Communication* 75 no. 4 (2011): 373.

⁷ Celeste Condit and John Lucaites, *Crafting Equality: America’s Anglo-African word* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), xii-xiii.

⁸ Condit and Lucaites, *Crafting Equality*, xii-xiii.

⁹ Andrew Whitmore Robertson, *The Language of Democracy: Political Rhetoric in the United States and Britain, 1790-1900* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 93.

Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution to the less formal products of public discourse from legislators, presidents, political activists, and other rhetorical advocates. According to McGee, ideographs have no fundamental meaning. Rather their meaning is embodied with the performative utterance of the word in context. McGee would later propose the concept of fragments that further explained the methods by which ideographic messages make meaning: “The fragmentation of our American culture has resulted in a role reversal, making *interpretation* the primary task of speakers and writers and *text construction* the primary task of audiences, readers, and critics.”¹⁰

Ideographs derive meaning from their function in the context of public discourse. Ronald Lee asserts that ideographs have “little cognitive meaning unless tied to specific situations.”¹¹ In particular, an ideograph acquires meaning from a constellation of words and “is always understood in relation to another.”¹² Dana Cloud’s research on the conservative ideograph of <family values> concludes that the meaning of that ideograph is dependent upon its relationship to <opportunity>.¹³ Similarly, the meaning of <rule of law> can potentially be undermined when trumped by evoking <national security> or the <principle of confidentiality>.¹⁴ In Cloud’s and McGee’s examples, the meaning of one ideograph is determined by a positive or negative relationship with another related ideograph.

¹⁰ Michael Calvin McGee, “Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture,” *Western Journal of Communication* 54 no. 3 (1990): 274.

¹¹ Ronald Lee, “Ideographic Criticism” in Jim A. Kuypers, ed. *Rhetorical Criticism: Perspectives in Action* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009), 295.

¹² McGee, “The Ideograph,” 14.

¹³ Dana L. Cloud, “The Rhetoric of Scapegoating, Utopia, and the Privatization of Social Responsibility,” *Western Journal of Communication* 62 no. 4 (1998): 387-419.

¹⁴ Michael Calvin McGee, “The ‘Ideograph’: A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (1980): 1-16.

There is no absolute test for determining what is and is not an ideograph. McGee largely defined ideographs through their function. Ideographs are agents of ideology, “social control” and “agents of political consciousness.”¹⁵ McGee considered ideographs as the “building blocks of ideology” in the attempt to make concrete material changes in society.¹⁶ Ideographs are a “mechanism of power.”¹⁷ Ideographs exert control indirectly because “human beings are ‘conditioned’ not directly to belief and behavior but [rather] to a vocabulary of concepts that function as guides, warrants, reasons, or excuses for behavior and belief.”¹⁸ Ideographs then are those guides, warrants, and reasons that make up a vocabulary of motives. Ideographs impart value, justify ideological positions, and direct action.¹⁹

McGee drew parallels between his concept of *ideographs* and Richard Weaver’s idea of *ultimate terms*. Weaver defined *ultimate terms* as “rhetorical absolutes” or “terms to which the very highest respect is paid.”²⁰ Ultimate terms are also referred to as god/devil terms as proposed by Weaver and expounded in Kenneth Burke’s *A Grammar of Motives and A Rhetoric of Motives*.²¹ Devil terms are often used to characterize the “other.” Michael Edwards suggests that Devil terms within the screen of Americans would be “rape, incest, terrorism, and murder. These are

¹⁵ McGee, “The Ideograph,” 6.

¹⁶ McGee, “The Ideograph,” 7.

¹⁷ Catherine Helen Palczewski, “What is “good criticism”? A Conversation in Progress,” *Communication Studies* 54 no. 3 (2003): 385-391.

¹⁸ McGee, “The Ideograph,” 6.

¹⁹ Michael Calvin McGee and Martha Anne Martin, “Public Knowledge and Ideological Argumentation,” *Communications Monographs* 50 no. 1 (1983): 47-65.

²⁰ Richard M. Weaver, “Ultimate terms in Contemporary Rhetoric,” *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), 211-212.

²¹ Bruce E. Gronbeck, “The Rhetoric of Political Corruption: Sociolinguistic, Dialectical, and Ceremonial Processes,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 64 no. 2 (1978): 155-172. Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives and A Rhetoric of Motives* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1962).

terms that disturb the peace and encroach upon fundamental human rights.”²² God terms and devil terms cannot simply be invented with the organic interaction between the diachronic and synchronic qualities of language. Additionally, a diachronic structure of ideographs requires flexibility in interpretation. For instance, the original articulation of the “freedom of expression” in the U.S. Constitution was to protect political speech. Yet, the ideograph of “freedom of expression” has evolved to justify hate speech. Most importantly, an ideograph always carries traces of the past but transcends the past to shape meaning in the present and the future.

Critical studies on ideographs cover the use of ideographs in presidential rhetoric, rhetorical criticism, legal studies, and visual rhetoric.²³ Scholars have investigated the ideographs of progay versus antigay and the ideographic war over sexuality.²⁴ Others have studied the ideograph of <family values> during the 1992 presidential election campaign.²⁵ Vivian Bradford observed that McGee’s ideograph

²² Michaela Edwards, “Gotham: A Rhetorical Analysis of President Donald J. Trump’s Republican National Committee Acceptance Speech,” Ph.D. diss., Middle Tennessee State University, 2017, 8.

²³ For sample critiques on the varying use of ideographs, see: Celeste Condit, “Rhetorical Criticism and Audiences: The Extremes of McGee and Leff,” *Western Journal of Communication* 54 no. 3 (1990): 330-345. Warren Sandmann, “Critical Legal Studies and Critical Rhetoric: Toward a Reconceptualization of the Acting Human Agent,” *Legal Stud. F.* 17 (1993): 367. John M. Murphy, “Domesticating Dissent: The Kennedys and the Freedom Rides,” *Communications Monographs* 59 no. 1 (1992): 61-78. Carole Blair and Neil Michel, “Reproducing Civil Rights Tactics: The Rhetorical Performances of the Civil Rights Memorial,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 30 no. 2 (2000): 31-55. Marouf Hasian Jr, “Communication Law as a Rhetorical Practice: A Case Study of the Masses Decision,” *Communication Law and Policy* 1 no. 4 (1996): 497-532. Janis L. Edwards and Carol K. Winkler, “Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima Image in Editorial Cartoons,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 83 no. 3 (1997): 289-310. Fernando Delgado, “The Rhetoric of Fidel Castro: Ideographs in the Service of Revolutionaries,” *Howard Journal of Communication* 10 no. 1 (1999): 1-14. Tracy Lee Clarke, “An Ideographic Analysis of Native American Sovereignty in the State of Utah: Enabling Denotative Dissonance and Constructing Irreconcilable Conflict,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 17 no. 2 (2002): 43-63.

²⁴ Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, *Progay/Antigay: The Rhetorical War Over Sexuality*. Vol. 4. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2000). Robert Gutierrez-Perez and Luis Andrade, “Queer of Color Worldmaking in the Rhetorical Archive and the Embodied Repertoire,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* (2018): 1-18.

²⁵ Dana L. Cloud, “The Rhetoric of Scapegoating, Utopia, and the Privatization of Social Responsibility,” *Western Journal of Communication* 62 no. 4 (1998): 387-419.

has been conflated with visual icons to argue that iconic representations of people, places or events function visually as the ideograph functions verbally.²⁶

In all, ideographs are historically rooted but always reapplied to fit a contemporary narrative. Not every word is an ideograph; rather, an ideograph encapsulates ideology and has both diachronic and synchronic qualities. Ideographs have the power to shape consciousness and political behavior because as humans we are conditioned to live by a vocabulary of motives.

An Ideograph of <democracy>

At the time of his address to Congress, Mandela was still regarded as a divisive figure by some members of Congress who refused to attend his speech. Most notably, Representative William E. Dannemeyer (R-Fullerton) boycotted the speech claiming it was “a matter of principle.” He compared Mandela to the 1960s revolutionary H. Rap Brown. Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) was also absent from Congress on that day.²⁷ In spite of these two detractors, the majority of the Members of Congress were supportive of the anti-apartheid cause and the Congressional Black Caucus celebrated Mandela’s life with breakfast in his honor on the morning of his congressional address. These events formed the backdrop against which Mandela delivered his epideictic address that contained ideographs of <democracy> and <economy>.

²⁶ Vivian Bradford, “In the Regard of the Image,” *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory* 27 no. 3/4 (2007): 471-504.

²⁷ Edwin Chen, “Mandela Speech Draws Cheers From Congress: South Africa: A Reference To American Heroes Brings Standing Ovation. He Cites ‘Thirst’ For Human Rights,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1990.

In Mandela's address to Congress, he extended the ideograph of <democracy> to make arguments against apartheid in South Africa. Mandela thanked Americans for joining hands to fight for "the victory of democracy...victory of democracy over tyranny."²⁸ Mandela's celebration of <democracy> was future-oriented just like Dr. King's appeal during his "I Have a Dream" speech. But where Dr. King longed for the "promise of democracy" to be made real for black Americans, Mandela celebrated the first "victory of democracy" in South Africa – the victory of his release from prison after twenty-seven years. He also commented on American heroes of the past whose fight for democracy he admired: "We could not have heard of and admired John Brown, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King Jr., and others -- we could not have heard of these and not be moved to act as they were moved to act."²⁹ There are many victories of democracy in America's past which Mandela could have been drawing from. However, given the connection between the civil rights movement and the anti-apartheid movement, Dr. King's rhetoric made for the nearest historical soil wherein Mandela's ideographic discourse could be planted.

The anti-apartheid and civil rights movements were essentially ideographic movements because of their reliance on established historical ideas and concepts that shaped attitudes and action toward black civil rights. Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech used ideographs which portrayed his political goals for black America. He used ideographs like <(in)justice>, <freedom>, <rights>, <liberty>, <democracy>,

²⁸ Nelson Mandela, "Address by Nelson Mandela, Deputy President of The African National Congress," 101st Session of The United States Congress Session, Congressional Record H 4136 Vol. 136 no. 83 (1990).

²⁹ Mandela, "Address to Congress," 1990.

<dignity> to engender his frustration with the plight of blacks in America and his hope for the future. These symbolic words that hold historical, ideological, and cultural meaning gave context to Dr. King's oration. The similarities between South African apartheid and American segregation was strongly felt and the methods used to overthrow them were jointly shared. Hence, the anti-apartheid movement took on the "spiritual and material tenor" of the civil rights movement.³⁰ Mandela's speech to Congress extended the ideographic umbilical cord that connected both movements.

Mandela's demand for democracy in South Africa mirrored the demands for democracy that various movements have made throughout America's history. From the woman suffrage movement to the civil rights movement, Americans have harkened back to their founding documents as the source of rights that ought to be extended to them in a democracy. Invoking the historical evidence for his appeal for democracy, Mandela referenced the material and symbolic documents of American democracy to call for the same for his own nation:

We could not have known of your Declaration of Independence and not elect to join in the struggle to guarantee the people "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." ...To destroy racism in the world, we, together, must expunge apartheid racism in South Africa. Justice and liberty must be our tool, prosperity and happiness, our weapon.³¹

Mandela's reference to the American Declaration of Independence is the ultimate diachronic rooting of the ideograph of <democracy> in history. Additionally, Mandela employed diplomatic skill as shown in this excerpt on <democracy>. He could have berated the Members of Congress who voted against the CAAA who

³⁰ Matthew Greeson, "Fighting for Equality: The Anti-Apartheid Movement and The Legacy of Civil Rights," *Colgate Academic Review*, vol 5 no. 10 (2012): 65.

³¹ Mandela, "Address to Congress," 1990.

indirectly sought to inhibit the spread of <democracy> to South Africa. Instead, he graciously lauded all Americans by hailing the genius of one of their founding documents – the Declaration of Independence. Mandela’s synchronic reference to <democracy> expanded and instantiated the meaning of the concept as the weapon with which to expunge racism and apartheid in his nation.

Mandela appealed to Congress to support the burgeoning democracy in South Africa by exposing the dangers inherent in a system without democracy. Mandela stated his nations’ demands for democracy by showing the problems with its absence:

Our people demand democracy. Our country, which continues to bleed and suffer pain, needs democracy... Unhappily, our people continue to die to this day, victims of armed agents of the state who are still determined to turn their guns against the very idea of a non-racial democracy.³²

Mandela’s demand for democracy took on material significance when he mentioned the bleeding of the people. Noting their bodily suffering, Mandela observed that they had become targets of armed violence rather than participants in a thriving democracy. Mandela’s allusion to violence against black South Africans and their exclusion from democracy was reminiscent of violence against African Americans during the civil rights era. Celeste Condit conducted an ideographic study on <democracy> within the context of the civil rights era. In it, she noted that arguments made for democracy in the years from 1939 to 1945 were marked by violence against blacks at home and war abroad.³³ To be fully accepted into the promise of democracy, black Americans had to fit into the narrative of the war hero in order to escape the violence of everyday life. In the effort to include black Americans in the

³² Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

³³ Celeste Michelle Condit, “Democracy and Civil Rights: The Universalizing Influence of Public Argumentation,” *Communications Monographs* 54 no. 1 (1987): 4.

American <democracy>, Condit argues that “a need for more workers and soldiers – more human power” in World War II led to democratizing effects.³⁴ Because of America’s involvement in World War II, the wartime wave of black Americans entering into the workforce increased the spread of <democracy>.

Black South Africans had no such gradual democratizing event. By 1948, apartheid laws were passed with steadily increasing punitive and segregationist effects. During the industrial era as black laborers sought work on white farms in South Africa, the Native Labor Relations Act of 1911 was passed which made it impossible for blacks to strike.³⁵ The inability to strike meant a lack of agency to challenge poor working conditions or very low minimum wages.³⁶ By 1923, the Urban Area Act was passed which required black adult males to carry passes to enter certain geographic locations. These pass laws governed where blacks could live, work, or travel. Additionally, poor Boers who lost their farms to commercial agriculture soon felt threatened by blacks who could be trained for low wage jobs in the commercial center. In 1924, the Industrial Conciliation Act was passed which set up collective bargaining that separately recognized white and “colored” trade unions, thus, closing certain jobs to blacks.³⁷ Seeking to consolidate their control of the land, various laws were enacted to convert whole tracts of land into “White” areas. Here lies the foundation of the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, whereby 13% of the land was

³⁴ Condit, “Democracy and Civil Rights,” 4.

³⁵ Frederick Hale, “South Africa: Defending the Laager,” *Current History* 84, no. 501 (1985): 155.

³⁶ By 1918, South Africa had become a major market for U.S. cars and stood in fifth place among all foreign buyers of U.S. automobiles. See: Richard W. Hull, *American Enterprise in South Africa: Historical Dimensions of Engagement and Disengagement* (New York: New York University Press, 1990).

³⁷ Hale, “South Africa: Defending the Laager,” 155.

allocated to whites with each average white farmer owning approximately 6,000 acres.³⁸ Black lands were seized, and many black farmers were forced into becoming hired labor to industrial white farmers. Blacks were systematically locked out of South Africa's economic life with no recourse to the democratic tools that ensure justice.

The seizure of black land and other black-owned resources led members of the ANC to draw up a Freedom Charter which served as an *Ubuntu* manifesto of sorts. The Freedom Charter which was drafted by members of the ANC in conjunction with the South African Communist Party (SACP) outlined the economic and political principle of the right to "a better life for all." Officially adopted on June 26, 1955, at a Congress of the People in Kliptown, the Freedom Charter simply begins with this statement – The People Shall Govern – harkening to the desire for participatory democracy, a concept expressed in Mandela's speech to Congress. The following is an excerpt of the demands for democracy outlined in the Freedom Charter:

We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know: that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people; that our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality; that our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities; that only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief; And therefore we, the People of South Africa, black and white together - equals, countrymen and brothers - adopt this Freedom Charter. And we pledge ourselves to strive together sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.³⁹

³⁸ Wilfrid Grenville-Grey, "The Rockefeller Report: Important Insights, Critical Omissions," *Africa Today* (1981): 17-26.

³⁹ *The Freedom Charter* adopted at The Congress of The People at Kliptown, Johannesburg, June 25 and 26, 1955 archived by *Federation of South African Women 1954-1963*, Johannesburg, South Africa.

The Freedom Charter reads like an *ubuntu* manifesto; a philosophical position of shared humanity. The Freedom Charter gave life to the demands for participation in the South African democracy.

<Democracy> orbits around similar meaning spheres in American public discourse as “freedom” and “equality.”⁴⁰ According to the founding fathers of America, the words “free” and “equal” were understood to mean similar things because “If people are free, then they are equal.”⁴¹ Congress showed commitment to <democracy> based on “the adoption of the historic Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act” which Mandela argued, “made such a decisive contribution to the process of moving our country forward towards negotiation.”⁴² Mandela offered his appreciation: “We thank you most sincerely for all you have done, and count on you to persist in your noble endeavors to free the rest of our political prisoners and to emancipate our people from the larger prison that is apartheid South Africa.”⁴³ For the partnership of equality, democracy, and freedom, Mandela showed his gratitude.

Mandela envisioned a future South Africa where the promise of democracy would be alive with unity among “black and white people” so that America “will be proud to call [us] a friend and an ally” because of our striving towards “liberty, human rights, prosperity, and peace among the peoples.”⁴⁴ In seeking freedom from “the larger prison” of apartheid, Mandela longed for a just and equal society. Not

⁴⁰ David Tucker, “The Economics and Philosophy of Liberty,” *General Meeting of the Mont Pelerin Society*, Saint Vincent, Italy, 1986.

⁴¹ Attributed to Harry Jaffa as cited in Joseph Sobran, “Pensees: Notes for the Reactionary of Tomorrow,” *National Review* (New York, NY), December 21, 1985, 28.

⁴² Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

⁴³ Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

⁴⁴ Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

equality that makes everyone identical in their material outcome but rather, equality of opportunity to be free to use one's gifts and talents to advance oneself. Alexis de Tocqueville warned of a false equality of outcome in *Democracy in America*. He stated:

There is...a manly and lawful passion for equality which incited men to wish all to be powerful and honored. This passion tends to elevate the humble to the rank of the great; but there exists also in the human heart a depraved taste for equality, which impels the weak to attempt to lower the powerful to their level and reduces men to prefer equality in slavery to inequality with freedom.⁴⁵

Despite Mandela's reference to the opulence of many white South Africans, he did not envision that they should become poorer so that black South Africans might become rich. Instead, Mandela sought to lift all South Africans up through the gifts of democracy.

Through the ideograph of <democracy>, Mandela sought to shape the consciousness of Americans in regards to the anti-apartheid sanctions and "gain assent from the audience" to continue them.⁴⁶ The ideographs Mandela used were "unifying and connected experiences across time and space" in a diachronic and synchronic fashion by rhetorically linking the anti-apartheid and civil rights movements.⁴⁷ He reached back to America's founding documents and pressed

⁴⁵ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America Vol I*, trans. Henry Reeve, ed. Francis Bowen (Boston: John Allyn, Publisher, 1863), 67-68.

⁴⁶ Mary E. Stuckey and Joshua R. Ritter. "George Bush, and American Democracy," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 37 no. 4 (2007): 646.

⁴⁷ Mark P. Moore, "The Rhetoric of Ideology: Confronting a Critical Dilemma," *Southern Communication Journal* 54 no. 1 (1988): 74-92.

forward to a future vision of democratic victory thus “expanding the application of several terms.”⁴⁸

An Ideograph of <economy>

Economic freedom is often commensurate with political freedom. Mandela’s ideographic address combined references to political freedom and economic freedom. The extent to which people are politically free, in part, determines the extent to which they can fully participate in their national economy. Michael Novak in *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* noted that a free society, dedicated to liberty, is the result of three support systems: the economic system, the political system, and the moral-cultural system.⁴⁹ It follows that a society dedicated to liberty would create an economy dedicated to liberty, and Mandela observed that “the process of the reconstruction of South African society must and will also entail the transformation of its economy.”⁵⁰ David Tucker argues that “while economic liberty goes a long way toward a society of liberty, economic liberty cannot truly thrive without a political system based on liberty and a moral-cultural system that values the virtues of honesty, integrity and discipline.”⁵¹ Economic terms can be used as a tool for persuasion and they bear relevance to policy-making.⁵² Thus, Mandela’s speech to Congress effectively channeled his appeal for economic justice into tangible policy goals.

⁴⁸ Eric Connelly, “State Secrets and Redaction: The Interaction Between Silence and Ideographs,” *Western Journal of Communication* 76 no. 3 (2012): 236.

⁴⁹ Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1991).

⁵⁰ Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

⁵¹ Tucker, “The Economics and Philosophy of Liberty,” 4.

⁵² Donald N. McCloskey, “The Rhetoric of Economics,” *Journal of Economic Literature* 21 no. 2 (1983): 481-517.

Mandela's use of the ideograph of the <economy> was combined with his reference to other clusters of terms that impact material wellbeing. Rojhat B. Avsar argued in "Ideographic Use of Economic Terms," that economic terms when used in public discourse are not of "neutral value," they add meaning to policy argument when used in clusters.⁵³ Some of these terms include benefactor, capital, dependent, donor, food, poor, recipient, shelter, technology and welfare. Arguing for the reconstruction of the South Africa society, Mandela noted, "We need a strong and growing economy. We require that it is able to address the needs of all the people of our country – that can provide food, houses, education, health services, social security, and everything that makes human life human."⁵⁴ The transformation of the South African economy was essential to achieve the goals of <democracy> and vice versa. With the segregation of apartheid, black South Africans would have been on the receiving end of the failure of the economy to meet their needs. A strong economy according to Mandela would care for the needs of *all*.

Mandela's reference to the <economy> was one of the few passages where he invoked race. He noted that the failures of the South African economy were due to "the opulence of our white compatriots and the deliberate distortion of the economy to feed that opulence."⁵⁵ Since whites were the majority of business owners as well as sole leaders of the South African economy, it follows that Mandela would heap the blame of a broken economy on white compatriots and their opulence. The opulence of

⁵³ Rojhat Berdan Avsar, "Ideographic use of economic terms," *On the Horizon* 23 no. 3 (2015): 169-173.

⁵⁴ Mandela, "Address to Congress," 1990.

⁵⁵ Mandela, "Address to Congress," 1990.

white South Africans was evident in the economic failures of the nation. Observing the failed promise of the apartheid government to care for its people, Mandela stated:

We must also make the point, very firmly, that the political settlement, and democracy itself, cannot survive unless the material needs of the people, the bread and butter issues, are addressed as part of the process of change, and as a matter of urgency. It should never be that the anger of the poor should be the finger of accusation pointed at all of us because we failed to respond to the crisis of the people for food – to the cries of the people, for shelter, for the dignity of the individual.⁵⁶

Mandela observed that the less-than-ideal material conditions of black South Africans were linked to failed economic policy and to the larger failure of democracy. Any mention of material conditions implies that a working economy could, in theory, meet the needs of all the people either through private enterprise or public assistance.

Mandela referred to human *dignity* as the cornerstone of economic prosperity; a concept that bridges the divide between his many audiences. The Western audience would have understood dignity to mean respect for the human person. While his South African audience would have understood dignity in terms of *Ubuntu* or communitarianism. *Ubuntu* values dictate that we all derive our humanity from each other. It is a communitarian perspective on human relationship that affects every aspect of African life. Dignity or *Ubuntu* was to be respected in the process of economic transformation so that the “anger of the poor” must become the concern of the rich. *Ubuntu* is African moral philosophy plus practice plus religion, all in one. Even Western capitalism requires a modicum of morality to function effectively. Michael Novak underscores the need for morality in order for democratic capitalism to work:

⁵⁶ Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

Democratic capitalism is not a “free enterprise” system alone. It cannot thrive apart from the moral culture that nourishes the virtue and values upon which its existence depends. It cannot thrive apart from a democratic policy committed, on the other hand, to limited government and, on the other hand, to many legitimate activities without a prosperous economy is possible.⁵⁷

Ubuntu is Africa’s moral philosophy which influences every aspect of socio-cultural and economic life in South Africa. Mandela’s *ubuntu* values led him to declare that “the restoration of the human rights of the people of South Africa” would be one of his main goals,⁵⁸ that dignity or *Ubuntu* was the moral and cultural framework that South Africa needed to govern its forthcoming free enterprise system.

Mandela’s reference to “bread and butter issues” demonstrated his willingness to connect the goals of democracy with the prospects of a thriving <economy>. This moral perspective on the role of government separated him from his white compatriots. The values present in Mandela’s reference to the economy betray a communitarian and socialist perspective whereby the state is responsible for the welfare of the people. For Mandela, it would not be out of order for a newly formed South African democracy to determine food policy from a top-down perspective ensuring that each member of the South African democracy received “bread and butter.” As a member of the ANC which had connections with the Communist Party of South Africa, Mandela’s reference to “bread and butter” issues as falling within the purview of democracy is not surprising.

The use of moral philosophy to temper the excesses of capitalism is evident throughout Africa. President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania argued that capitalism was

⁵⁷ Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, 56.

⁵⁸ Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

incompatible with African culture and instead the trend must reverse and return to the socialism of traditional African culture.⁵⁹ Capitalism is perceived to foster excessive individualism, competition rather than cooperation, exploit the weak, divide society, promote inequality, and regard some as rich/superior and others as poor/inferior.⁶⁰ Nyerere favored African style socialism called *ujamaa* which in Swahili means “familyhood.”⁶¹ *Ujamaa* was Nyerere’s call for a return to African brotherhood and cooperation and it closely mirrored the South African philosophical concept of *ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* means deriving value from the other, hence, justice is restorative, not retributive. In such a system, it is fruitless to compete with the other since “all I have is yours, vice versa.” Mandela and Nyerere both proffered socialism or African style capitalism as the only rational choice for Africa because of the cultural emphasis on brotherhood. Due to the competition and alienation inherent in capitalism, the economic arrangement continues to struggle to take full flight in Africa. Perhaps African style capitalism – a system of brotherly cooperation as opposed to competition and alienation – could be the fix Africa needs.

Mandela’s ideas about the <economy> evolved from a position of nationalization to one of free-market capitalism.⁶² Before his release from jail, in a

⁵⁹ John Iliffe, *Emergence of African Capitalism* (New York: Springer, 2015); Charles K Wilber & Kenneth P. Jameson (eds.) *Socialist Models of Development* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 2013); Mawere, Munyaradzi, and Tapuwa R. Mubaya, *African Philosophy and Thought Systems: A Search for a Culture and Philosophy of Belonging* (Bamenda: Langaa Rpcig, 2016). Richard H. Bell, *Understanding African Philosophy: A Cross-Cultural Approach to Classical and Contemporary Issues* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

⁶⁰ J. A. Akinpelu, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Education in Nigeria* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1981).

⁶¹ Julius Kambarage Nyerere, *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1979).

⁶² Andrew Ross Sorkin, “How Mandela Shifted Views on Freedom of Markets,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), December 9, 2013.

letter dated January 1990 and addressed to South Africans, Mandela reiterated his commitment to the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) – the protest arm of the apartheid movement – he noted:

Nationalization of the mines, banks and monopolies is the policy of the ANC and a change or modification of our views in this regard is inconceivable. Black economic empowerment is a goal we fully support and encourage, but in our situation state control of certain sectors of the economy is unavoidable.⁶³

Within hours of that letter circulating, Johannesburg Stock Exchange traders were “unceremoniously falling out of bed” to launch a selling spree.⁶⁴ A few months later, after his release from prison, Mandela moderated his position by saying only banks, mines and monopolies would be nationalized but other industries would not. Soon after, he stated that this would occur only if it boosted the economy. Mandela’s perspective on the economy in his speech to Congress straddled the capitalist and socialist theories of economics, presented as “African-style capitalism.” His middle-of-the-road approach suggests a different perspective on handling the transition from apartheid to democracy. Rather than seeking a handout, Mandela sought an equal partnership with America as a trading ally:

We would like to approach the issue of our economic cooperation not as a relationship between donor and recipient, between a dependent and a benefactor. We would like to believe that there is a way in which we could structure this relationship so that we do indeed benefit from your enormous resources in terms of your capital, technology, all-round expertise, your enterprising spirit, and your markets. This relationship should, however, be one from which your people should also derive benefit so that we, who are fighting to liberate the very spirit of an entire people from the bondage of the arrogance of the ideology and practice of white supremacy, do not build a relationship of subservient dependency and fawning gratitude.⁶⁵

⁶³ “We Will Nationalize,” *Mail & Guardian* (London, UK), January 26, 1990.

⁶⁴ Marais Hein, *South Africa Limits to Change: The Political Economy of Transformation* (London: Zed Books, 1998): 146.

⁶⁵ Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

The mutual trade understanding outlined in the passage ensures that both the American and South African nations would engage in capitalist free trade even as Mandela himself was slowly recovering from his preference for socialism. By the time of his 1990 speech to Congress, Mandela had given up on the goal of socialism and embraced a robust view of capitalism for his nation.

As Mandela transitioned from freedom fighter to statesman, he had to reconcile his view of socialism with the Western pressure for South Africa to practice free-market capitalism. In his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, he recalled that the ANC's demands in the Freedom Charter emphasized: "a more even distribution of the regards of certain industries, industries that were already monopolies, and that nationalization might occur in some of those areas."⁶⁶ Mandela noted that Afrikaans were "concerned about the idea of nationalization, insisting that the ANC and the Freedom Charter supported blanket nationalization for the South African economy."⁶⁷ After his release from jail, Mandela tried to walk back his support for blanket nationalization and socialism by observing that, "the Freedom Charter was not a blueprint for socialism but for African-style capitalism."⁶⁸ The exact meaning of African-style capitalism has yet to be fleshed out through the rigors of academic research. I believe that African-style capitalism is a "mixed economy"⁶⁹ as mentioned by Mandela during his speech to Congress; an economy where capitalism is balanced

⁶⁶ Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2008), 93.

⁶⁷ Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, 93.

⁶⁸ Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, 93.

⁶⁹ Mandela, "Address to Congress," 1990.

with respect for human rights and economic development that allows all people to grow in equity.

In February 1992, while attending the world economic forum in Davos, Switzerland, Mandela finally rejected nationalization and firmly advocated for free-market capitalism.⁷⁰ Other ANC leaders followed suit and began talking about policy alternatives such as antitrust legislation and government-appointed directors on the boards of major companies. Even Thabo Mbeki feigned that nationalization had never been a part of ANC policy.⁷¹ When asked in 1995 why the ANC had changed its position on nationalization, Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, said that the collapse of the Soviet Union broke the romantic illusions of many ANC members.⁷² Tito Mboweni, a former governor of the South African Reserve Bank, who accompanied Mr. Mandela to Davos said Mandela's change of heart was genuine.⁷³

Mandela was faced with a tough choice concerning investment in South Africa. He told his biographer, Anthony Sampson, that "[Davos] changed my views altogether. I came home to say: 'Chaps, we have to choose. We either keep nationalization and get no investment, or we modify our own attitude and get investment.'"⁷⁴ Moreover, at Davos, Mandela met delegations from communist parties of China and Vietnam who were seeking to "privatize state enterprises and invite

⁷⁰ Richard Peet, "Ideology, Discourse, and the Geography of Hegemony: From Socialist to Neoliberal Development in Postapartheid South Africa," *Antipode* 34, no. 1 (2002): 54-84.

⁷¹ Claire Ceruti, "How and Why the ANC's Nationalisation Policy Changed: Economic Nationalism and The Changing State-Capital Relation," Master's Thesis, University of Witwatersrand, 1995.

⁷² Adam Habib and Vishnu Padayachee, "Economic Policy and Power Relations in South Africa's Transition to Democracy," *World Development* 28, no. 2 (2000): 245-263.

⁷³ Andrew Ross Sorkin, "How Mandela Shifted Views on Freedom of Markets," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), December 9, 2013.

⁷⁴ Sorkin, "How Mandela Shifted Views on Freedom of Markets," 2013.

private enterprise into their economies.”⁷⁵ At these meetings, the ideal of nationalization first articulated in the 1955 Freedom Charter lost its appeal.

Even though Mandela had given up on socialism, he insisted on regulated, African-style capitalism. In crafting a new South African economy, the ANC was not eager to copy the Western model of development. Scholars have observed the insufficiency and inefficiency of western views on post-colonial development of nations of the Southern hemisphere.⁷⁶ With regard to the deregulation principle inherent in Western forms of capitalism, Mandela offered a slight amendment to allow for some regulation of his nation’s <economy>, “there is no self-regulating mechanism within the South African economy which will, on its own, ensure growth with equity.”⁷⁷ Mandela supported a system of state-regulated capitalism rather than supporting a neoliberal form of capitalism or hypercapitalism which upholds the free market as the optimum arrangement for global commerce, promotes individual autonomy, deregulation, and the free flow of global capital.⁷⁸

Conclusion

Mandela’s 1990 ideographic address to Congress was historic as it fused together elements of American history with the history of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Ideographs like <democracy> and <economy> were sprinkled throughout Mandela’s speech as he paid homage to the greatness of the

⁷⁵ Sorkin, “How Mandela Shifted Views on Freedom of Markets,” 2013.

⁷⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979). David Korten, *When Corporations Rule the World* (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 1995).

⁷⁷ Mandela, “Address to Congress,” 1990.

⁷⁸ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt, 2007); James Arnt Aune, *Selling the Free Market: The Rhetoric of Economic Correctness* (New York: Guilford Press, 2001).

American Republic. The concretization of America's values of equality for blacks during the civil rights movement was a model that Mandela sought to emulate. During the civil rights era, Dr. King's rhetoric coupled with the non-violent disobedience sensitized the collective consciousness of America to accept blacks as fully equal and deserving of full participation in the American democracy. Mandela's ideographic rhetoric aimed to achieve the same thing for black South Africans by gaining American support against apartheid.

Mandela acknowledged the root source of the ideograph of <democracy> in America's founding. America's founding documents such as the Declaration of Independence which asserted the preeminence of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness," and the rhetoric of America's founding mothers and fathers who throughout history had extended the promise of democracy to others inspired Mandela's speech to Congress. He referenced John Brown, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and Martin Luther King, Jr. These heroes formed the context for Mandela's ideographic rhetoric as their words inspired the tenor of his speech. Mandela sought for his nation to achieve the same "victory of democracy" experienced by these rhetors in America.

Finally, this analysis of Mandela's speech to Congress culminates with an interrogation of the ideograph, <economy>. Ideographs carry ideological meaning that betrays the commitment of the rhetor. Mandela's reference to the <economy> betrayed his desire for equality of access to capital, the need for a mixed economy, the possibility of African-style capitalism, among many other ideas. By referring to a cluster of terms that denote the health of the economy – benefactor, capital,

dependent, donor, food, poor, recipient, shelter, technology and welfare – Mandela signaled his desire for a functional South African economy which followed a unique African path to success and cared for the welfare of all. Economic terms are not of neutral value in policy debates. For instance, when Mandela spoke about the South African <economy> in terms of poor blacks with “bread and butter issues,” he informed Congress of the dire material needs of his people and his willingness to promote an economic system that provided welfare. In all, the ideograph of <economy> as expressed in Mandela’s speech to Congress denoted myriad possibilities and opportunities for the South African economy to achieve success.

Chapter 4: Mandela in California: Social Movement Strategies of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions

Mandela's visit to various American cities solidified old alliances on behalf of the anti-apartheid cause. His visit to cities in California, in particular, validated the partnership that was established between the anti-apartheid movement and California state officials as encapsulated in the passage of state legislation A.B. 134 – The South Africa Divestment Bill. Then-Assemblywoman Maxine Waters of California introduced the bill in 1986, the same year that H.R. 4868 – Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) – passed in Congress. Some legislative parallels exist between the comprehensive federal sanctions bill against South Africa and the divestment actions taken by California state government officials. Executive parallels also exist. For example, in 1985 after President Ronald Reagan issued Executive Order 12532 – Prohibiting trade and certain other transactions involving South Africa¹ – Governor George Deukmejian of California issued a similar executive order directed at California pension fund investments in South Africa. Governor Deukmejian's order expressed the hope that "corporations, through their employment and training policies, could become forces for constructive social change."²

¹ Ronald Reagan, "Executive Order 12532 – Prohibiting trade and certain transactions involving South Africa," *Federal Register*, September 9, 1985.

² George Deukmejian for Office of the Governor, "Letter to President Regan urging additional sanctions against South Africa," 18 June 1986, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, USA.

The anti-apartheid movement in America was stronger in certain states than in others. The presence of the South African consulate general in Los Angeles significantly influenced the intensity of the anti-apartheid movement in California. The geographic location of the consulate general in Los Angeles, one of the large metropolitan cities of the West Coast, ensured that protest at that consulate would be witnessed by official representatives of the apartheid government of South Africa. There is a strong impact of geography – space and place – on public protest as location matters in the display of protest rhetoric.³ The immediacy of making an impact by directly challenging official representatives of the South African government rendered both Washington, D.C. and California as hotbeds for the anti-apartheid movement in America. Mandela's presence in California specifically highlighted the boycott, divestment, and sanctions strategy of the anti-apartheid movement in that state and shed light on the multidimensional organization of the Free South Africa Movement (FSAM).

In this chapter, I seek to answer the question: What social movement strategies were employed by the Free South Africa Movement (FSAM) to garner Americans' support against apartheid and how did Mandela's visit to Los Angeles and Oakland validate commitment to these strategies? The chapter begins with an explication of the literature on social movement rhetoric as it relates to the anti-apartheid movement. The rest of the chapter outlines the boycott, divestment, and

³ Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook, "Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 257-282.

sanction strategies used by the Free South Africa Movement to bring about lasting change in a foreign nation and Mandela's engagement with the movement.

Social Movement Rhetoric

The study of social movements is a multidisciplinary endeavor with research findings as varied as the many academic disciplines that engage in the work. In rhetorical studies, the term 'social movement' was prominent during the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s and focused on rhetorics of the civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, and the women's rights movement. Interest in social movement research peaked in the 1980s leading to a special issue of the *Central States Speech Journal* devoted to the topic, an issue focused on rhetorical perspectives toward social movements. In rhetorical studies, social movement research has since declined over the last three decades for many reasons – the splintering of movements into microscale associations, the turn to social protest and activism, and the growth of healthy counterpublic studies. Encouragingly, theoretical concepts such as counterpublics, activism, protest, resistance, establishment, inside/outside, marginalized/privileged all come together in the study of social movements.⁴ To study social movement is to engage in research on one or more of these splintered movement subdivisions. Given that the FSAM activities peaked in the late 1980s, the rhetorical conversation about social movements is most relevant to understanding that movement.

⁴ Christina R. Foust, Amy Pason, and Kate Zittlow Rogness, eds. *What Democracy Looks Like: The Rhetoric of Social Movement and Counterpublics* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2017).

There are differences between a social scientific and rhetorical approach to social movement studies. Sociologists tend to study social movements by identifying key components such as leadership structure, impact on the status quo, and the overall life cycle of a movement.⁵ More so, political sociology of social movements tends to study how social groups marshal resources, recruit followers, and navigate the political environment to achieve certain goals.⁶ While simply identifying these features alone would most definitely qualify the anti-apartheid struggle as a social movement, the goal of this dissertation is to engage with the tools of rhetoric to shed light on the anti-apartheid movement. Rhetorical scholars traditionally tend to study social movements from a text-based approach, analyzing speeches and pamphlets that emanate from the movement. A rhetorical approach is more useful in this case study as it elucidates the messaging, structure, and symbols of social change employed by the FSAM.

In the literature on social movement rhetoric, scholars continue to grapple with the question – what constitutes social movement studies? The answers are as varied as the scholarly articles published in any given rhetoric journal about the subject. Each answer gives a clue into the mind of the scholar and the nature of social movements. Michael McGee suggests that social movements ought to be about “movement” as a meaning-making process rather than some discrete reality that exists outside the symbolic world.⁷ It is also about “moving the social” to new

⁵ Piotr Sztompka, *The Sociology of Social Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

⁶ Andrew G. Walder, “Political Sociology and Social Movements,” *Annual review of sociology* 35 (2009): 393-412.

⁷ Michael C. McGee, “‘Social Movement’: Phenomenon or Meaning?,” *Central States Speech Journal* 31, no. 4 (1980): 233-244.

dimensions of social consciousness where the focus is on “the fact of collectivity and not on the accident of an allegedly pre-existing phenomenon.”⁸ McGee’s approach to social movement challenged critics to pay attention to the materiality of the discourse, the real-life events that call forth a social movement, a reality which precedes the collective of people who organize for social change. Robert Asen resists the simplicity of the phenomenological approach and cautions that scholars should not reduce complex symbolic action to particular “persons, places, or topics.”⁹ Surveying the field, Kevin DeLuca argued that little progress has been made as the field continues in a “traditional sociological approach” with an emphasis on the rhetorical dimensions of leadership structure, organizational prowess, and campaign literature.¹⁰ DeLuca further questioned “the social,” and argued that social movements do *not* necessarily “focus on the distribution of material goods, the expansion of institutional political rights, and security, but rather thematize personal and collective identity, contest social norms, challenge the logic governing the system, and, in sum, deconstruct the established naming of the world.”¹¹ DeLuca encouraged social movement scholars to study the social as the locus wherein movement is detected.

Rhetorical critics of social movements must also examine the historical exigence that gives rise to a movement. Social movement study, David Zarefsky

⁸ McGee, “‘Social Movement’: Phenomenon or Meaning?,” 244.

⁹ Robert Asen, “Seeking the “Counter,” in Counterpublics,” *Communication Theory* 10, no. 4 (2000): 424-446.

¹⁰ Kevin M. DeLuca, “Articulation Theory: A Discursive Grounding for Rhetorical Practice,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 32, no. 4 (1999): 334-348. Kevin M. DeLuca, *Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism* (New York: Guilford Press, 1999). Kevin M. DeLuca, “Unruly Arguments: The Body of Rhetoric of Earth First!, ACT UP, and Queer Nation,” *Argumentation & Advocacy* 36 no. 1 (1999): 9-21. Kevin Michael DeLuca and Jennifer Peebles, “From Public Sphere to Public Screen: Democracy, Activism, and the “violence” of Seattle,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 2 (2002): 125-151.

¹¹ DeLuca, *Image Politics*, 25.

argues, should be oriented toward a better historical understanding of how rhetoric brings about social change. Zarefsky advocates for defining social movement as a historical entity that is readily identifiable, “[a] scholar of social movement rhetoric takes, as given, instances of collective behavior which the sociologist labels a ‘movement’ and then examines their rhetorical dimensions.”¹² McGee, on the other hand, wants social movements to be mined for their meaning-making potential. McGee argued that when we leave it up to sociologists to define what a movement is, their phenomenon approach eschews the power that the label itself holds. David Chandler posits that our understanding of a splintered public sphere should guide the critical engagement of social movements, “today critical intervention in the public sphere is . . . no longer possible. In fact, to engage publicly is to engage on the terrain of the enemy: The ideal of publicity functions ideologically . . . if there is no public sphere in which collective identities can be formed it would appear that ‘radicals’ have little option but to engage in ‘global’ individuated ethical protest.”¹³ Our many methodological arguments about social movement rhetoric continue to atrophy this field of research.¹⁴

The distinction between social movement and social change allows scholars to focus on different but related theoretical concerns in their research. *Social movement* might represent “an affirmation of human significance,”¹⁵ given the instrumental attempt to move the social. In contrast to the broader *social change* where movement

¹² David Zarefsky, “A Skeptical View of Movement Studies,” *Central States Speech Journal* 31, no. 4 (1980): 252.

¹³ David Chandler, “No Communicating Left,” *Radical Philosophy* no.160 (2010): 55.

¹⁴ Gordon R. Mitchell, “Public Argument Action Research and the Learning Curve of New Social Movements,” *Argumentation & Advocacy* 40 no. 4 (2004): 209-225.

¹⁵ McGee, “Social Movement: Phenomenon or Meaning?,” 242.

might refer to the material conditions that rhetoric is sometimes inept at capturing.¹⁶ The designation of an insider and outsider is also relevant to definitional issues within social movement research as studying out-group phenomenon contributes to the understanding of the in-group.¹⁷ Social movements often seek to create controversy. According to Kathryn Olson and Thomas Goodnight, a ‘social controversy’ is “an extended rhetorical engagement that critiques, resituates, and develops communication practices bridging the public and personal spheres.”¹⁸ Social controversy can be deployed as a tactic of social movements in order to achieve social change.

My goal in detailing the theoretical conversation on social movements among rhetorical scholars is to situate my work on the FSAM as a development of this rich conversation. As an off-shoot of the larger anti-apartheid social movement, FSAM was engaged in the process of moving the social sphere at the national and state level. By organizing boycotts in front of the South African embassy, FSAM enabled U.S. discourse to evolve from an emphasis on communism to one of racism. The symbolic role of the FSAM in leading the coalition of regional anti-apartheid organizations involved in advocacy makes it the focus of this chapter. Ultimately, rhetorical theories on social movement explain the success of the FSAM in securing the release of Mandela and other political prisoners through the tools of boycott, divestment, and sanctions.

¹⁶ Dana L. Cloud, “Which Voices? Whose Democracy?,” *Argumentation & Advocacy* 37 no. 4 (2001): 212.

¹⁷ Robert S. Cathcart, “Defining Social Movements by their Rhetorical Form,” *Communication Studies* 31, no. 4 (1980): 267-273.

¹⁸ Kathryn M. Olson and Thomas G. Goodnight, “Entanglements of Consumption, Cruelty, Privacy, and Fashion: The Social Controversy Over Fur,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80, no. 3 (1994): 249.

The Free South Africa Movement

The social movement that developed to secure Mandela's release and racial justice in South Africa was multi-dimensional. The movement unfolded in layers with state, local, municipal, and non-state actors taking an active role in the campaign against apartheid. While the FSAM is the focus of this chapter, there were other movements that preceded it in the work of anti-apartheid activism and they were spread out throughout the United States. There was the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) founded by George Houser in 1953 which was headquartered in New York.¹⁹ Houser himself was active in the U.S. civil rights movement and one of the pioneers of the interracial bus freedom rides called the Journey of Reconciliation.²⁰ The ACOA focused its work on "college students, divestment and material aid."²¹ The ACOA was on the front lines of divestment as it "fully endorsed African demands for a boycott against South Africa, and pioneered in exposing U.S. corporate ties."²²

The Washington Office on Africa (WOA), a local spin-off of the ACOA formed in 1972 with the collaboration of the Africa Office of the Board for Global

¹⁹ For information on ACOA, see: George M. Houser, *No One Can Stop the Rain: Glimpses of Africa's Liberation Struggle* (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1989); George M. Houser, "American Supporters of the Defiance Campaign," <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/campaigns/houser.html>; and George M. Houser, "The Struggle Never Ends," <http://africa.msu.edu/activists/remembrances/houser.php>.

²⁰ Bayard Rustin and George M. Houser, "We Challenged Jim Crow!" *Report prepared for CORE and the Fellowship of Reconciliation* (1947).

²¹ Sylvia Hill, "The Free South Africa Movement," *International Conference A Decade of Freedom: Celebrating the Role of the International Anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa's Freedom Struggle* (Durban, SA: University of Kwazulu-Natal, October 2004), 6, <http://scnc.ukzn.ac.za/doc/AAmwebsite/Papers.htm>.

²² William Minter, "African Liberation and Progressive Internationalism in American Life: An Untold History," *International Conference A Decade of Freedom: Celebrating the Role of the International Anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa's Freedom Struggle* (Durban, SA: University of Kwazulu-Natal, October 2004), 5, <http://scnc.ukzn.ac.za/doc/AAmwebsite/Papers.htm>.

Ministries of the United Methodist Church, the Southern Africa Task Force of the Presbyterian Church, and the Board of World Ministries of the United Church of Christ. The WOA's goal was "to keep members of Congress informed on issues which affect the course of political struggle for majority rule in South Africa, Namibia (Southwest Africa), Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau."²³ Many other organizations joined the effort to educate the public, raise consciousness at places of worship, and lead divestment. They include – the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, the United Mine Workers, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSCME).²⁴ In terms of social movement organizing, the immediate forerunner to the FSAM was the Southern African Support Project (SASP). In 1978, SASP evolved from a collective into a community-based international solidarity organization. Based on their emphasis on the news media, they set the precedent for the work of FSAM. It is thus important to note that the FSAM was not an idea that sparked overnight. Many organizations worked for decades to "Free South Africa" before FSAM entered the arena.

The FSAM grew out of a meeting-turned-protest held on Wednesday, November 21, 1984 (Thanksgiving Eve) at the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C. Anti-apartheid activists requested a meeting with the South African Ambassador to the United States Bernard G. Fourie where they demanded the release of apartheid prisoners. After the meeting concluded, they refused to leave the

²³ Edgar Lockwood and Christine Root, "Mailing Announcing the Opening of the Washington Office on Africa," October 3, 1972, African Activist Archive, University of Michigan, East Lansing, Michigan, USA.

²⁴ Sylvia Hill, "The Free South Africa Movement," 6.

ambassador's office and commenced a sit-in protest. The founding members of the FSAM included: Randall Robinson, Executive Director, TransAfrica; Dr. Mary Frances Berry, Commissioner of the U.S. Commission on Civil rights; D.C. Congressman Walter Fauntroy; and Georgetown University law professor Eleanor Holmes Norton. Thus, the FSAM was born out of an act of social protest.

Randall Robinson was one of the leaders of FSAM and a graduate of Harvard Law School. He got his start in politics on Capitol Hill as a foreign affairs aide to Rep. William L. Clay (D-St. Louis) then he worked for Rep. Charles C. Diggs Jr. (D-Detroit). During their time, Diggs and Robinson sensed a vacuum on Capitol Hill – there were lobbies for Israel, for Arab interests, for nearly every nation, industry and cause possible but “nobody ever heard much about Africa. One prominent member of Congress told me there weren't more than a few people on the Hill who could name more than three African countries.”²⁵ The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) met in the fall of 1977 and created a lobbying group for Africa and the Caribbean called TransAfrica.

TransAfrica was formed as a foreign affairs lobby group to represent the interests of the black diaspora. The whole project was run out of Rep. Diggs' office until they had enough funds to start a separate office. Randall Robinson took over as the Executive Director of TransAfrica and grew the organization in size and influence. Growing up in Richmond, Robinson experienced racism. The old wound was reopened when he got his first taste of apartheid during a Congressional trip to

²⁵ David Remnick, “Randall Robinson, From Boyhood Pain to a Crusade Against Apartheid,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), February 5, 1985.

South Africa. One of the white members of the delegation had to accompany him to the bathroom and Robinson was shocked when “They told us that giving black the right to vote was like putting a gun in the hands of a 5-year-old.”²⁶ Following these experiences, TransAfrica took on the initiative to create a protest movement to “Free South Africa.”

FSAM was the messaging and public protest arm of the multidimensional anti-apartheid movement. When the anti-apartheid activists organized by TransAfrica arrived at the South African embassy, their intention was to get arrested. While Robinson, Berry, Holmes-Norton, and Fauntroy met with Ambassador Fourie, Cecelie Counts was outside the embassy organizing the protesters and handling logistics. The leaders alerted the media about their scheduled meeting with the ambassador of South Africa to demand the release of political prisoners of the apartheid regime. They were eventually arrested and charged with unlawful entry. Their arrests made the headlines of newspapers and television news spurring anti-apartheid supporters from around the country to join their efforts. The *Washington Post* headline for the next day read, “Fauntroy Arrested in Embassy: Delegate, 2 Others Protest S. African Acts.”²⁷ *The New York Times*’ headline read “Apartheid Protest Takes Page from 60’s History.”²⁸ Noting increased celebrity participation, *The New York Times* observed,

The protest has become a velvet-rope success in Washington and other cities as Kennedy children have called up along with entertainers, scrambling

²⁶ Remnick, “Randall Robinson, From Boyhood Pain to a Crusade Against Apartheid.”

²⁷ Kenneth Bredemeier and Michael Marriott, “Fauntroy Arrested in Embassy,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), November 22, 1984.

²⁸ Barbara Gamarekian, “Apartheid Protest Takes Page from 60’s History,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), November 30, 1984.

politicians and an ever-enlarging spectrum of Establishment leaders to book “arrest opportunity” time outside the embassy on Massachusetts Avenue.²⁹

Spurred by media coverage of the protests, activists, citizens, and celebrities took on the challenge. Rosa Parks, a famous civil rights activist, arrived in front of the South African embassy on a cold December morning in 1984. She offered her celebrity persona to the FSAM campaign and noted, “I am grateful to be here today lending my support.”³⁰ Other celebrities who protested include Arthur Ashe, Harry Belafonte, Paul Newman, Tony Randall, and Amy Carter, the daughter of former President Jimmy Carter.³¹ Representatives Walter Fountroy, Charles Hays, John Conyers, and Ron Dellums (all members of the CBC) were arrested on the same day.³² The role-call of protesters grew in significance and historicity with each passing day. The family of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was also represented by Yolanda King, his daughter,³³ and Mrs. Coretta Scott King, his widow. Mrs. King remarked about the lack of large-scale effort, “My feeling is that there are many people who feel the need to do something about the conditions in South Africa, but there has been no organized efforts on a large scale. I think this [FSAM] is the beginning of that organization.”³⁴ Each offered their support to the movement and sparked national attention by doing so. With the organizational prowess of Cecile

²⁹ Francis X. Clines, “A Fledgling Protest Movement Gathers Steam,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), August 5, 1985.

³⁰ Karlyn Barker, “Rosa Parks, New Groups Join Protest,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), December 11, 1984.

³¹ *Have You Heard from Johannesburg: Apartheid and the Club of the West*, directed by Connie Fields (Berkeley: California Newsreel, 2006), DVD.

³² “Dellums Arrested in on-going South African Protest,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), November 29, 1984. See also: “Congressman and Rights Leader Arrested at South African Embassy,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), November 27, 1984.

³³ “More Arrests Outside South African Embassy,” *Atlanta Daily World* (Atlanta, GA), December 2, 1984.

³⁴ “A Movement Reborn,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), December 1984.

Counts, the daily protests proceeded like clockwork for more than one year.³⁵ By August 1985, over three thousand people had been peacefully arrested outside the South African embassy, the location of a coordinated picketing campaign by the FSAM.

FSAM employed a strategy of public arrest which allowed for the individual self-expression of protestors. Writing about the ego-function of protest rhetoric, Richard B. Gregg argues that “[It] has to do with *constituting* self-hood through expression; that is, with establishing, defining, and affirming one’s self-hood as one engages in a rhetorical act.”³⁶ Professor Sylvia Hill was a member of SASP as well as FSAM. In her 2004 conference paper presentation, she outlined the intricate multidimensional relationship between the many anti-apartheid groups and the symbolic power of expression that FSAM’s arrest strategy gave to protestors. Hill observed:

What I have come to believe is that arrest is symbolic. It is a way to let the protester express opposition to a policy, practice, or government. It gives public voice to what is internal disdain for US foreign policy. It really isn’t important that people are not jailed and placed on trial. What is significant, from the organizer’s point of view, is that the person expresses public opposition instead of private disdain for policies. The challenge for the organizer is to find that creative space that will permit ordinary citizens to express collective opposition. Instead of expressing isolated opposition at home or in the classroom, it is the task of the organizer to create venues for internal feelings of disdain to be expressed publicly. This, the Free South Africa Movement accomplished; and therefore; one of our profound lessons of this movement is that one should never underestimate the power of symbolic protest to create a political climate for political change.³⁷

³⁵ Karlyn Barker, “Background Troops of Antiapartheid; Hundreds Provide Supportive Presence at Embassy,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), December 16, 1984.

³⁶ Richard B. Gregg, “The Ego-function of the Rhetoric of Protest,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* (1971): 74.

³⁷ Sylvia Hill, “The Free South Africa Movement,” 7.

FSAM created an apparatus that allowed ordinary citizens to express collective opposition against apartheid. While protestors may have arrived with a concern for how they as an individual felt about the plight of black South Africans, they quickly joined a group of people who held similar beliefs. By showing up to protest, the primary audience of the communication act is one's self or one's ego with an effect on the system or others as a secondary concern. FSAM strategy of protest enabled this process of self-persuasion and public demonstration for thousands of people.

While validating their individual need to take action, protestors quickly found themselves enveloped in a fraternity with others. FSAM's protests would take on the feel of a fellowship and brotherhood whose joint goal was the freedom in South Africa and the release of Mandela. Many of the people who protested for Mandela's release lived to see him visit the United States as a free man. A college student in the 1980s, Laura Chapin, recalled her participation in the anti-apartheid protests at the height of her social consciousness about foreign policy,

For those of us coming of age in that era, Nelson Mandela was our awakening to social justice and a world larger than ourselves. Having missed the civil rights movement, opposing apartheid was our chance to do something to rectify a wrong and act for the greater good....This explains why I, as a college student at the University of Texas in the 80s, sat in front of the UT administration building with a raised fist chanting, "Divest Now!" and the singsong "Freee Nel-son Man-dela." So did my friends, at UT and Bryn Mawr and the University of Vermont – and so did a student at Occidental College named Barack Obama whose very first political action was a protest against apartheid. There were shantytowns and sit-ins at colleges across the country urging an end to apartheid, and for those institutions to end investments in South Africa as a form of economic sanction. And full confession, it was also a little trendy. There were cool posters and we got to sing along to Little Steven. I maintain to this day that Sun City is still a kickass protest song.³⁸

³⁸ Laura Chapin, "Protesting Apartheid Woke Up A Generation," *US News* (Washington, DC), December 6, 2013.

There is no doubt that the organizing efforts of FSAM gave this woman and people of her generation the space and place to express their protest of the apartheid regime in South Africa. Students around the country exhibited the youthfulness and progressiveness of the movement. Using slogans, songs, and symbolic shantytowns, they generated newsworthy protest moments that multiplied the effect of FSAM nationally.

The main rhetorical strategy of the FSAM was to create a spectacle and messaging synergy through public displays, arrests, and disruptions which were covered by the media. As FSAM protest activities increased, so did the media coverage of their messaging increase.³⁹ As scholars have noted, protests are less likely to appear prominently in newspaper coverage over time.⁴⁰ To secure coverage, protesters had to devise clever messages on their posters on the picket line outside the embassy; messages like these: “Freedom and equality for all,” “Free South Africa Now,” “Apartheid is inhuman and ungodly Stop It!”⁴¹ Further coordinating messaging, when the Reverend Jerry Falwell called Bishop Desmond Tutu a “phony,” FSAM collected more than one million signatures on a Freedom Letter opposing apartheid and supporting Tutu. That letter was presented to him at a demonstration outside the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C. on January 8, 1986. In part,

³⁹ “Anti-Pretoria Drive to Spread Across U.S.,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), December 3, 1984.

⁴⁰ Patrick Rafail, Edward T. Walker, and John D. McCarthy, “Protests on The Front Page: Media Salience, Institutional Dynamics, And Coverage of Collective Action In The New York Times, 1960-1995,” *Communication Research* 46, no. 1 (2019): 33-61.

⁴¹ These messages are discernible from the photographs of the protest. For pictures and other memorabilia from the movement, see: African Activist Archive, University of Michigan, East Lansing, Michigan, USA, <http://africanactivist.msu.edu/index.php>. Also cited in Phyllis E. Slade Martin, “A Moral Imperative: The Role of American Black Churches in International Anti-Apartheid Activism,” Ph.D. diss, George Mason University, 2015, 227.

the letter read, In signing this FREEDOM LETTER, we say NO to Mr. Falwell, NO to apartheid, and NO to the government of South Africa. I am proud to stand with you, Pope John Paul, Coretta Scott King and one million other American to speak with a single and solid voice against the oppression of the Black people in South Africa.⁴²

FSAM's message of boycott, divestment, and sanctions was consistent at all levels of the multidimensional organization. FSAM had a presence in Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Oakland, and several other cities across America. Each affiliate FSAM-branch organized regional protests and marches to garner local support for the cause; inspiring local action at churches, businesses, unions, and schools. An FSAM poster associated with the Chicago branch reveals the group's list of demands (see Figure 1). All the demands are noteworthy, but the most salient ones are #4 (Divest from South Africa Now), #5 (Free Nelson and Winnie Mandela, and all political prisoners), and #11 (Boycott all South African products); demands which eventually became U.S. law. The collective consistency of these demands caused FSAM to transcend from mere demands into the realm of policy to cause social change.⁴³ Within an authoritarian state, scholars argue that demands will inevitably be dominated by calls for civil and political citizenship rights.⁴⁴ With the FSAM leading a diaspora movement against the somewhat authoritarian apartheid regime, the

⁴² "The Freedom Letter," January 8, 1986, African Activist Archive, University of Michigan, East Lansing, Michigan, USA, <http://africanactivist.msu.edu/image.php?objectid=32-131-1DD>.

⁴³ Gerald F. Davis, Doug McAdam, W. Richard Scott, and Mayer N. Zald, eds. *Social Movements and Organization Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁴⁴ Joe Foweraker and Todd Landman, "Citizenship Rights and Social Movements: A Comparative and Statistical Analysis," In *Oxford Studies in Democratization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

demands were both directed at the apartheid state as well as Americans. Activists reasoned that if Americans put enough pressure on government leaders, sanctions would be put in place to dismantle apartheid.

The message in figure 1 shows that the boycott, divest, and sanctions rhetoric was consistent at every level of FSAM's organization. Because the demands were rooted in civil rights and citizenship rights, they were clear and unambiguous. Vague demands can become "empty signifiers: that is, they can be filled with a range of differential contents from across the ideological spectrum."⁴⁵ Empty signifiers weaken action, but specific demands embolden the movement. The specificity of FSAM's demands, enumerated in bullet points and disseminated throughout the country, reduced confusion and allowed them to be easily co-opted. From East to West, North to South, members of the FSAM coalition were rhetorically synched – speaking in one accord about the need to "Free South Africa" through boycott, divestment, and sanctions. After years of FSAM's protest, Mandela was freed in 1990 as South Africa began the work of democratic reform.

⁴⁵ David Bates, Matthew Ogilvie, and Emma Pole, "Occupy: In Theory and Practice," *Critical Discourse Studies* 13 no. 3 (2016): 351.

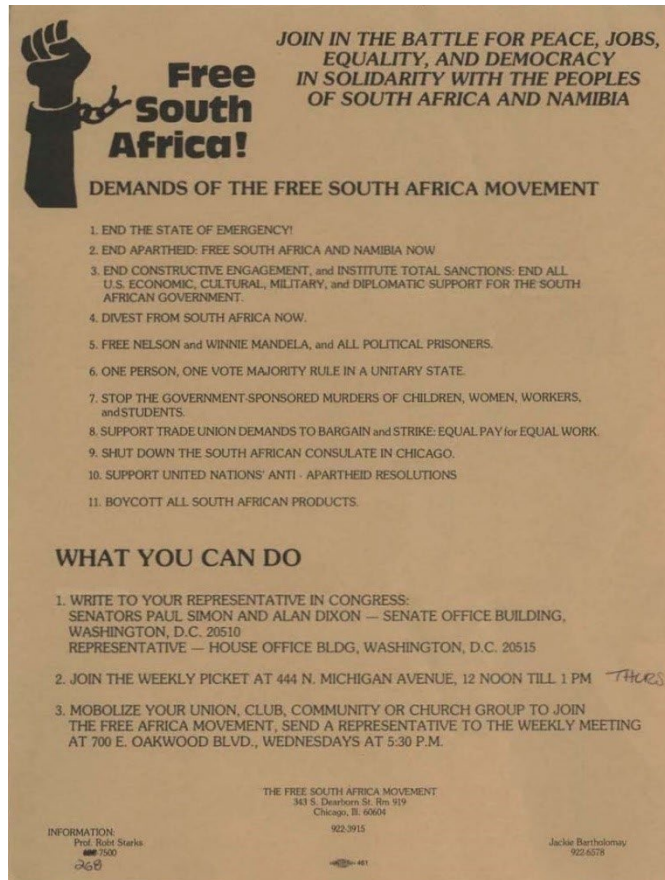


Figure 6 An FSAM Chicago Protest Poster from September or early October 1985. Collection: Sahotra Sarkar Chicago anti-apartheid collection, Michigan State University Libraries Special Collections.⁴⁶

FSAM inspired protest throughout the nation with the message of boycott, divestment, and sanctions. At universities and city halls across the United States, individuals took on the goal of economic divestment.⁴⁷ At the University of Michigan, the message of the anti-apartheid movement was to “keep the pressure on apartheid...divestment for humanity.”⁴⁸ The divestment movement was so active on

⁴⁶ “Free South Africa,” a pamphlet for the Chicago FSAM located in *Africa Activist Archive* (East Lansing, MI: University of Michigan),

http://africanactivist.msu.edu/document_metadata.php?objectid=32-13015F7.

⁴⁷ *The South Africa Catalyst Project, Anti-Apartheid Organizing on Campus...And Beyond* (Palo Alto, CA: The South Africa Catalyst Project, 1978). Marc Fisher, “The Second Coming of Student Activism: Showdown Over South Africa,” *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* 11, no. 1 (1979): 26-31.

⁴⁸ “Campus Protest Demanding University of Michigan And United States Divestment from Apartheid South Africa,” *The Michigan Daily Photo Archive* (University of Michigan: Bentley Historical Library), March 16, 1978 <http://Michiganintheworld.History.Lsa.Umich.Edu/Antiapartheid/>.

University of Michigan's campus that it now houses the *Africa Activist Archive* which contains hundreds of primary source documents from the FSAM. From the mid-1970s through the late 1980s, students and faculty at the University of Michigan participated in the nationwide campus-based protest against university investments in corporations that did business in apartheid South Africa. Moreover, in 1988, the State of Michigan divested state employee pension funds from companies such as General Motors and Ford Motor Company that did business in South Africa.⁴⁹ Whether at the college or state level, divestment was a consistent messaging strategy of anti-apartheid supporters.

Divestment as Economic Diplomacy

Economic sanctions have long been a mainstay of American diplomacy. Economic sanctions were used in the post-Cold War era to control the behavior of states in the international arena.⁵⁰ Divestment and disinvestment worked together to put economic pressure on the South African apartheid regime. The term "divestment" refers to the act of an institution directing its investors to sell its share in the stock of corporations doing business in or with a particular country. The term "disinvestment" refers to the act of corporations closing or selling off their operations in a particular country and withdrawing whatever physical assets they can.⁵¹ Both divestment and disinvestment are part and parcel of the BDS strategy for social change. Divestment and disinvestment have been used by different movements to express their discontent

⁴⁹ Rick Pluta, "Michigan to begin South African divestment," *United Press International* (Washington, DC), December 30, 1988.

⁵⁰ *Economic Sanctions and American Diplomacy* ed. by Richard N. Haass (Council on Foreign Relations, 1998).

⁵¹ David Beaty and Oren Harari, "Divestment and Disinvestment from South Africa: A Reappraisal," *California Management Review* 29, no. 4 (1987): 31.

with particular policies. More recently, the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel and the fossil fuel divestment movement have sought to convince supporters to withhold financial resources from certain states and organizations. In the case of apartheid South Africa, divestment was a tool to bring about speedy change to an oppressive system: “The anti-apartheid divestment movement is based upon the premise that the apartheid system is not reformable, i.e., that apartheid must be abolished, not cosmetically altered.”⁵² Divestment helped to raise public consciousness as it was “effective in raising the public moral standards or public awareness of South African repression.”⁵³ Thus, the public became more insistent of the need to abolish apartheid.

Divestment and disinvestment formed part of FSAM’s economic diplomacy. Economic diplomacy can be regarded in terms of donors giving “resources to bolster like-minded states.”⁵⁴ Economic diplomacy can also work in the reverse where donors withhold resources to punish states for errant behavior in the international arena. Peter van bergeijk and Selwyn Moons define economic diplomacy as “a set of activities (both regarding methods and processes for international decision making) related to cross border economic activities (export, import, investment, lending, aid, migration) pursued by state and non-state actors in the real world.”⁵⁵ To be specific,

⁵² Vincent Harris and Sterling D. Pulmpp, “Divestment Hits Apartheid in the Pocketbook,” *The Black Scholar* 16, no. 6 (1985): 13.

⁵³ Siew Hong Teoh, Ivo Welch, and C. Paul Wazzan, “The Effect of Socially Activist Investment Policies on The Financial Markets: Evidence from The South African Boycott,” *The Journal of Business* 72, no. 1 (1999): 35.

⁵⁴ Jonathan D. Brandon, *Challenges to Economic Growth in Post-Conflict Environments: New Trends in Human Capital Loss, Aid Effectiveness, and Trade Liberalization*, Master’s Thesis, University of Barcelona, 2018, 12.

⁵⁵ Peter A.G. van Bergeijk and Selwyn Moons, “Economic Diplomacy and Economic Security,” *New Frontiers for Economic Diplomacy* (2009): 38. For a comprehensive treatment of economic diplomacy,

BDS diplomacy is a form of economic diplomacy where boycott, divestment, and sanctions are the economic means used to influence the internal politics of a nation to achieve political ends. The FSAM and other anti-apartheid groups resorted to economic diplomacy using the tools of boycott, divestment, and sanctions to bring about democratic change in South Africa.

The divestment movement was an economic expression of the anti-apartheid movement's demands for freedom. Freedom for black South Africans was demanded in two senses – political and economic. In terms of political freedom, anti-apartheid activists sought the release of political prisoners. And in terms of economic freedom, anti-apartheid activists sought the equal participation of black South Africans in the economy and an end to labor exploitation. The BDS strategy targeted foreign investment in South African businesses making it difficult for them to get loans, expand operations, and trade on the world market. FSAM connected the BDS strategy with a sustained public protest that linked economic diplomacy to the demands for political freedom.

Mandela in California

Mandela validated FSAM's economic diplomacy of boycott, divestment, and sanctions during his visit to California. California was the very last stop on Mandela's 12-day, 8-city tour. Having expressed solidarity with anti-apartheid supporters on the East Coast, in the South, and the Midwest, Mandela arrived in California exhausted from travel. Beginning with a reception at Los Angeles city hall, Mandela greeted his

see: Nicholas Bayne and Stephen Woolcock, *The New Economic Diplomacy: Decision Making and Negotiation in International Economic Relations* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2003).

supporters noting, “We could not have left the United States without visiting the city which daily nourished the dreams of millions of people the world over.”⁵⁶ He referenced the movie industry, tipping his hat to the role of the Arts in spreading the message of South Africa’s quest for freedom. By the 1980s, South African politics featured in a wide range of global cultural forms from “documentaries, novels, plays, popular songs, rock concerts, music videos, T-shirts with political slogans or portraits, satirical television programmes and feature films.”⁵⁷ Celebrities and artists used their platform to shed light on apartheid as several of them showed up to protest at the South African embassy in Washington, DC and regional consulates. Hence, Mandela’s visit was a validation of those efforts. At a star-studded fundraiser, Mandela was greeted by artists like Quincy Jones, Danny Glover, Diana Ross, Ron Kovic, Billy Davis, and Marilyn McCoo. Other celebrities who contributed include actress Cicely Tyson, actor Loy Gossett Jr., former boxer Muhammad Ali and hurdler Edwin Moses.⁵⁸ Surrounded by stars, Mandela observed, “Many would know Los Angeles as the unchallenged capital of motion pictures, many would regard your city as the city of glamour and splendor...” The glamour and splendor translated into a

⁵⁶ Tracy Wilkinson and Andrea Ford, “Mandela Gets Star’s Welcome,” *The Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), June 30, 1990.

⁵⁷ Hilary Sapiro, “Liberation Movements, Exile, and International Solidarity: An Introduction,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009): 273. For research on apartheid related art, see: V. Bickford-Smith, ‘Playing Apartheid: With a Particular Focus on “Hollywood” Histories of the 1970s’, in V. Bickford-Smith and R. Mendelsohn (eds), *Black + White in Colour: African History of Screen* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007), 262. Peter Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood Exploring the Jungles of Cinema’s South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1996) and Rob Nixon, “Cry White Season: Anti-Apartheid Heroism and the American Screen,” *Homelands, Harlem and Hollywood: South African Culture and the World Beyond* (1994): 77-95.

⁵⁸ Michael Fleeman, “Mandela Greets California Crowds, Raises California Millions,” *The Associated Press* (Los Angeles, CA), June 30, 1990.

large amount of money raised in support of Mandela and the ANC to the tune of \$1.2 million.⁵⁹

The blend of artists' cultural awareness and political activism took on flesh during Mandela's California visit. During his speech at the Oakland Coliseum, Mandela praised the San Francisco and Oakland longshoremen who in 1984 refused to unload a South African cargo ship; an action that brought attention to the ANC's struggles and resulted in churches, universities and other groups taking anti-apartheid stances. Mandela hailed those workers in this way:

We salute members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union Local 10 who refused to unload a South African cargo ship in 1984. In response to this demonstration, other workers, church people, community activists, and educators gathered each day at the docks to express their solidarity with the dockworkers. They established themselves as the frontline of the anti-apartheid movement in the Bay area.⁶⁰

Mandela's salute of the dockworkers was a salute to International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) who staged a boycott of South African apartheid cargo. In 1984, members of the ILWU Bay Area's branches, Locals 10 and 34, refused to touch South African cargo for eleven days – the most dramatic passage in the history of the Bay Area's anti-apartheid movement. ILWU workers were spurred into action after watching the 1973 anti-apartheid documentary the *Last Grave at Dimbaza* that was screened at union meetings. Historian Peter Cole captured the impact of the movie by noting, "This education of workers and the larger public laid the groundwork for

⁵⁹ Tracy Wilkinson and Andrea Ford, "Mandela Gets Star's Welcome," *The Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), June 30, 1990.

⁶⁰ Peter Cole, "Bay Area Longshore Workers Fought Against Apartheid," *Shaping San Francisco's Digital Archive @ Found*, June 5, 2015, www.foundsf.org.

Local 10's boldest action, the 1984 *Nedlloyd Kimberly* boycott.”⁶¹ Cinema, arts, and politics blended to deliver a decisive blow to trade routes between South Africa and the United States.

The ILWU workers had a strong influence on many aspects of the West Coast FSAM. According to activist David Bacon, the 1984 ILWU protest was, “The real birth of the anti-apartheid movement in northern California,” which became known as the Bay Area Free South Africa Movement (BAFSAM).⁶² ILWU anti-apartheid activists expanded the movement by linking up with allies in other Pacific coast port cities including Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver. When the divestment movement grew popular, ILWU was at the forefront. In 1978, the ILWU first discussed pulling its ILWU-PMA Pension Fund investments from any company conducting business in South Africa. ILWU leaders inspired students at the University of California, Berkeley to protest under the slogan “An injury to one is an injury to all.”⁶³ Students at UC Berkeley protested for months in 1986. They set up a shantytown, meant to resemble a South African township, resulting in repeated clashes with administrators that increased public awareness eventually leading to divestment. The Association of Students of the University of California at Los Angeles withdrew funds from the Bank of America and Security Pacific Bank in 1980.⁶⁴ Representative Ronald Dellums was also greatly influenced by ILWU

⁶¹ Peter Cole, ““An Injury to One is an Injury to All” ILWU Local 10 and the Fight against Apartheid,” *Journal of Civil and Human Rights* 1, no. 2 (2015): 168.

⁶² David Bacon, “Work a Day for Freedom! A Short History of the Bay Area Free South Africa Labor Committee,” <http://www.noeasyvictories.org/research>.

⁶³ Peter Cole, “Bay Area Longshore Workers Fought Against Apartheid,” *Shaping San Francisco's Digital Archive @ Found*, June 5, 2015, www.foundsf.org.

⁶⁴ Janice Love, *The U.S. Anti-Apartheid Movement: Local Activism in Global Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1985): 33.

activities as his father belonged to Local 10 and worked as a longshoreman. Elected to Congress in 1970 to represent Oakland and Berkeley, Dellums would introduce an apartheid sanction bill every session he served in Congress beginning in 1971. Thus, Mandela's acknowledgment of the longshore workers was an acknowledgment of the ripple effect they had on the West Coast FSAM.

FSAM Support for AB-134

The West Coast branch of FSAM was very active and worked toward the passage of AB 134 – The South Africa Divestment Bill. The West Coast branch of FSAM consisted of several local branches from the Bay Area, Oakland, and Los Angeles. They all coalesced to fight apartheid symbolically and legislatively. On December 12, 1987, they gathered in Los Angeles, California under the banner “International Human Rights Day: Protest Against Apartheid,” to demonstrate for a “Free South Africa.” Members of the West Coast branch of FSAM also actively supported the California divestment bill.

California's divestment bill was first introduced by Assemblywoman Maxine Waters in 1985 but failed to leave committee until it was reintroduced in 1986 when the bill received wide support from California constituents. The text of the bill read in part,

This bill [AB 134] would prohibit the use of state trust money, as defined, on or after January 1, 1987, to make additional or new investments or to renew investments, in business firms that have business operations in South Africa, or business arrangements with the government of South Africa. This bill would also prohibit the use of state trust moneys on or after January 1, 1987, to make additional or new investments in financial institutions that make loans to any South African corporation or to the government of South Africa.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Assembly Bill no. 134, “South Africa Divestment Bill,” August 1986 Legislative Session, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, USA.



Figure 7. International Human Rights Day Against Apartheid by Shaka Kusaidi, African Activists Archive. A rally and march sponsored by the Los Angeles Free South Africa Movement. Speakers included California State Representative Maxine Waters and Reverend Allan Boe.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ "West Coast Rally Against Apartheid," December 12, 1987, collection of Shaka Kusaidi, African Activist Archive, University of Michigan, East Lansing, Michigan, USA, <http://africanactivist.msu.edu/image.php?objectid=32-131-3D3>.

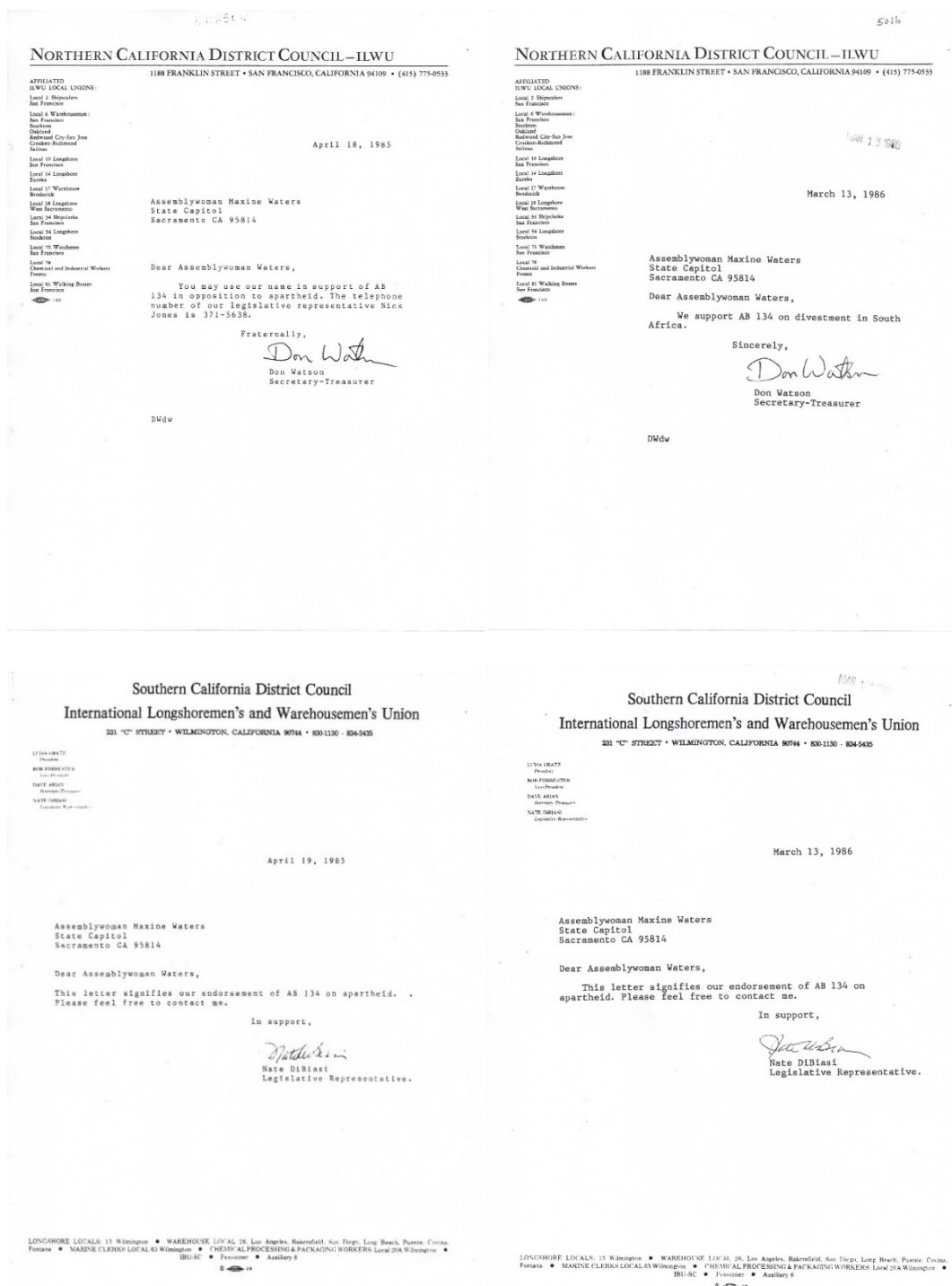


Figure 8. Northern and Southern International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Support Letters for AB134.

Waters had tried to get the bill passed for many years despite opposition. Both times

when she introduced the bill in the California House in 1985 (AB 1134) and 1986

(AB134), she received letters of support from the Northern and Southern International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Unions, the members of which formed the nucleus of the west coast FSAM. The ILWU letters simply stated their endorsement of AB 134; adding to the record of supporters for the bill.⁶⁷ A summary of the real number impact of AB 134 signaled a significant impact on South Africa's economy:

California approved a plan which would ultimately strip state pension funds of more than \$11 billion of South African-linked investments. Apart from the California action, about \$5.5 billion of public employee pension funds has been or will be divested under policies adopted to date. Also to date, about \$410 million of college and university endowments has been earmarked for divestment.⁶⁸

The compound effect of the several states that passed sanctions measures was astounding. In some ways, Californians were late to the party as their anti-apartheid activism peaked later than other states. In January 1982, Massachusetts became the first state to vote to fully divest its public employee pension funds. The Massachusetts investment legislation reads as follows:

After January 1, 1983, no public funds shall remain invested in any bank or financial institution which directly or through its subsidiaries has outstanding loans to the Republic of South Africa or its instrumentalities, and no assets shall remain invested in the stocks, securities or other obligations of any company doing business in or with the Republic of South Africa. Any proceeds of sales required under this (bill) shall be invested as much as reasonably possible in institutions or companies which invest or conduct business operations in Massachusetts so long as such use is consistent with sound investment policy.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Correspondence from Northern & Southern International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union to Assemblywoman Maxine Waters, 19 April 1985 and 13 March 1986, California State Archives, Sacramento, California, USA.

⁶⁸ Christopher Coons, "Divestment Steamroller Seeks to Bury Apartheid," *Business and Society Review*, 57 (1986): 90-95.

⁶⁹ "Summary of Political Forecasts," April 1, 1985, *F&S Political Risk Letter*, California State Archives, Sacramento, California, USA.

Similar bills were passed in Connecticut on June 9, 1982, and in Nebraska on April 9, 1984, just to name a few. From states to cities to unions to churches to college campuses, FSAM encompassed a diverse group of supporters with a consistent message to oppose apartheid through boycott, divestment, and sanctions. As states passed anti-apartheid bills, the South African economy felt their effect. In response, the apartheid state mounted its own rhetorical opposition to sanctions.

Opposition to Apartheid Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions

As social movement groups clamored for sanctions, the apartheid regime of South Africa marshaled its own rhetorical arguments against sanctions. Anti-divestment supporters offered arguments to delay divestment or stop them altogether. Among the few detractors of divestment and economic sanctions was Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi. Gatsha Buthelezi, as he was referred to by contemporaries, was a descendant of Zulu nobility. He was the traditional leader who operated under the government of South Africa's separate development policy as Chief Minister of the KwaZulu Homeland. Although Buthelezi was portrayed by opponents of divestment as an independent black South African who represented millions of blacks, Buthelezi was in fact, "little more than a government employee."⁷⁰ In her letter to colleagues about Buthelezi's activities, Maxine Waters asked them not to be duped by Buthelezi's statements opposing divestment, "as an employee of the South African government he could hardly say other....it continues to be a crime (treason) to advocate for divestment in South Africa and treason is punishable by death."⁷¹

⁷⁰ Maxine Waters, "Who Is Gatsha Buthelezi?," June 6, 1985, *Letter to Members of the Legislature*, California State Archives, Sacramento, California, USA.

⁷¹ Waters, "Who Is Gatsha Buthelezi?" 1985.

On June 10, 1985, Chief Buthelezi addressed the California State Legislature to share his state-sponsored message against sanctions. He chastised the West for the role it played in allowing apartheid to fester for so long. He also chided the West for interfering in Africa's affairs, that "Black South Africa recognizes that the struggle in South Africa has to be conducted by South Africans. No outside force can win liberation for us. We ourselves must liberate the country."⁷² With specific reference to the impact of sanctions on black South Africans, Buthelezi stated his opposition to boycott, divestment, and sanctions strategies of the ANC Mission in Exile,

When I oppose disinvestment as an option supported by Black South Africans, I receive mass applause for doing so. Every job that is created keeps somebody from starving. Every wage packet earned helps buy the essentials of life for somebody. A township like Soweto could not survive one week without pay packets from industry. Those who call for disinvestment do so in direct opposition to Black sentiment in South Africa.⁷³

Buthelezi also referred to the ANC Mission in Exile as acting desperately to bring about change, echoing intelligence claims that many ANC members were more interested in toppling the apartheid regime to bring about communism. In January 1985, Donald S. McAlvany issued an intelligence briefing where he labeled members of the Free South Africa Movement as spearheaded by TransAfrica as "a radical left pro-communist group." He argued that FSAM held ulterior motives, "TransAfrica, the hundreds of anti-apartheid groups, and the far left are not concerned about human rights in South Africa – they want revolution and a pro-Soviet black government installed."⁷⁴

⁷² Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi, "Statement by Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi to the California Legislature," June 10, 1985, California State Archives, Sacramento, California, USA.

⁷³ Buthelezi, "Statement by Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi to the California Legislature," 1985.

⁷⁴ Donald S. McAlvany, "South Africa: Will She Survive?," *The McAlvany Intelligence Advisor* (California State Archives, 1985): 7.

Reverend Leon H. Sullivan, the author of the Sullivan Principles, was among those opposed to divestment. His Sullivan Principles had become the industry standard with several companies signing as a display of corporate responsibility. One of such companies was Caterpillar Tractor Co. that also testified in opposition to California's bill. Caterpillar argued that divestment would not be in the best interest of black South Africans. Having implemented the Sullivan Principles that called for complete desegregation of plants and offices, Caterpillar argued "we can do more to improve the quality of life for our workers, their families, and their communities, and break down apartheid's barriers by remaining in South Africa than by withdrawing. We believe our continuing presence in that country will result in greater positive benefits for black South Africans than the well-intended legislation before you today."⁷⁵ Unlike Caterpillar Tractor's official position, Sullivan was not completely opposed to divestment. Sullivan simply argued that the Sullivan Principles had not yet been given time to take effect,

I believe the Sullivan principles, along with other forces, should have 24 more months to work in South Africa, but if statutory apartheid has not ended by that time, there should be a total United States economic embargo against South Africa and the withdrawal of all U.S. companies – to be followed, I hope, by the withdrawal of companies from other countries.⁷⁶

The voices against divestment were few but strong. Especially convincing was Sullivan's voiced discontent with the haste toward divestment given that he was the author of the widely-accepted ethical standards for business conduct in South Africa; an ethical standard that became the gold standard for businesses in South Africa.

⁷⁵ John D. Hassell (Government Affairs Representative), "Statement of Caterpillar Tractor Co. before the Committee on Public Investments, Finance and Bonded Indebtedness," April 18, 1985, California State Archives, Sacramento, California, USA.

⁷⁶ Leon H. Sullivan, "A Deadline for South Africa," *Oakland Tribune* (Oakland, CA), June 3, 1985.

Nevertheless, opposition to AB 134 was registered in the form of letters and testimony to the California State Legislature. Nevertheless, anti-apartheid supporters were not swayed, they continued to advocate for boycott, divestment, and sanctions.

In addition to rhetorical opposition to the California divestment bill, opponents of the boycott, divestment, and sanctions strategy had the option to marshal legal opposition to AB 134. The first time Assemblywoman Waters introduced AB 134 in 1985, Bion M. Gregory, Legislative Counsel of California, offered his expert legal advice noting that a future California state divestment law could be nullified by existing federal and state law. Among the reasons given by Gregory is this: “The United States Constitution, which has been interpreted to grant to the federal government exclusive power over foreign affairs (see *Zschernig v. Miller*, 19 L. Ed. 2d 683),” prohibits state action on foreign policy.⁷⁷ The Supreme Court held in the 1968 case *Zschernig v. Miller* that the Constitution in itself generally bars “an intrusion by the State into the field of foreign affairs which the Constitution entrusts to the President and the Congress.”⁷⁸ Legal scholars highlighted the constitutional dilemma noting that state and local measures on foreign affairs were often enacted before the federal government had a chance to act and that the lag in action resulted in “frequent inconsistency in both means and objectives...creating two or more versions of ‘United States’ foreign policy.”⁷⁹ Howard Fenton referred to the inconsistency as evidence for the fallacy of federalism since “policy objectives of

⁷⁷ Bion M. Gregory (Legislative Counsel of California) Letter to Honorable Maxine Waters, “South Africa: Investment Divestitures (A.B. 134) - #7704,” April 10, 1985 and January 10, 1986, California State Archives, Sacramento, California, USA.

⁷⁸ *Zschernig v. Miller* 389 U.S. 429 (1968).

⁷⁹ Howard N. Fenton III, “The Fallacy of Federalism in Foreign Affairs: State and Local Foreign Policy Trade Restrictions,” *Northwestern Journal of International Law & Business* 13 (1992): 564.

these states and local laws were generally far broader than those of the federal act,” with many of them outlasting the 1991 lifting of federal sanctions.⁸⁰ Were detractors of AB 134 so inclined, they could have mounted a credible legal challenge to the South Africa divestment bill by citing the unconstitutionality of the state bill.

Legal scholars argued that while the ends of state divestment legislation were noble, the means were not constitutional. They argued that federal power regulating foreign relations should be left entirely free from local interference.⁸¹ As James Madison wrote in *The Federalist* in 1788, “If we are to be one nation in any respect, it clearly ought to be in respect to other nations.”⁸² Based on this principle, cities and states should do nothing to interfere with the nation speaking with one voice on foreign affairs. Yet Congress failed to prohibit such duplication in the 1986 Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. In fact, the 1986 CAAA appended a resolution expressly disclaiming any preemptive intent.⁸³ Offering direct opposition to state

⁸⁰ Howard N. Fenton III, “The Fallacy of Federalism in Foreign Affairs: State and Local Foreign Policy Trade Restrictions,” *Northwestern Journal of International Law & Business* 13 (1992): 564. For research on the exit and reentry of businesses into South Africa pre/post sanctions, see: Lynn Berat, “Undoing and Redoing Business in South Africa: The Lifting of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 and the Continuing Validity of State and Local Anti-Apartheid Legislation,” *Connecticut Journal of International Law* 6 (1990): 7.

⁸¹ Glenn S. McRoberts, “Federalism and Foreign Affairs: Toward a Dormant Foreign Affairs Doctrine,” *Loyola of Los Angeles International and Comparative Law Review* 11 (1989): 639. See also, Grace A. Jubinsky, “State and Municipal Governments React Against South African Apartheid: An Assessment of the Constitutionality of the Divestment Campaign,” *University of Cincinnati Law Review* 54 (1985): 543. Howard N. Fenton III, “State and Local Anti-Apartheid Laws: Misplaced Response to a Flawed National Policy on South Africa,” *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics* 19 (1986): 883. The Supreme Court struck down a Massachusetts law prohibiting business in Burma citing its unconstitutionality, for research on this case, see: James J. Pascoe, “Time for a New Approach-Federalism and Foreign Affairs after Crosby v. National Foreign Trade Council,” *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* 35 (2002): 291.

⁸² James Madison, *The Federalist* no. 42, ed by Jacob Cooke (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1961): 279.

⁸³ For information about the preemption, see: Cinthia R. Fischer, “Federal Preemption and the South African Sanctions: A Survival Guide for States and Cities,” *Loyola of Los Angeles International and Comparative Law Review* 10 (1988): 693-739; Kevin P. Lewis, “Dealing with South Africa: The Constitutionality of State and Local Divestment Legislation,” *Tulane Law Review* 61 (1986): 469. Peter J. Spiro, “State and Local Anti-South Africa Action as an Intrusion upon the Federal Power in

action on foreign affairs, one scholar called for a dormant foreign affairs doctrine describing it as such:

A dormant foreign affairs doctrine is needed to ensure that our government can speak clearly and authoritatively in the international setting. Allowing states to engage in foreign policy, directly or indirectly, creates the potential for confusion and impairs the performance of federal officials whose duty it is to conduct such policies. The Constitution provides citizens of the various states with a mechanism for influencing foreign policy through the election of members of Congress and the Executive branch. It is these elected officials, and not those at the state and local levels, who have been empowered by the people to speak for this nation.⁸⁴

Based on various tests of the constitutionality of the California law, Glenn S.

McRoberts argued that AB 134 failed to meet constitutional standards as “it [AB134] is a direct intrusion upon the federal government’s foreign affairs powers...[and] the burden it places on the nation’s ability to conduct foreign policy arguably outweighs the putative local benefits.”⁸⁵

The passage of AB 134 was based on the joint effort of FSAM members and California legislators. Support of the measure within government circles was not immediate as it took several years for many officials to adopt a pro-divestment stance. Most notably, Governor George Deukmejian changed his mind about divestment in the months between February 1985 when AB 134 was first introduced and August 1986 when he signed it into law. The changing tide of public opinion could have been a determining factor in Deukmejian’s decision. His change in position along with the persistence of members of the California State Assembly led to the successful passage

Foreign Affairs” *Virginia Law Review* 72 (1986): 813. Christine Walsh, “The Constitutionality of State and Local Governments’ Response to Apartheid: Divestment Legislation,” *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 13 (1984): 763-800.

⁸⁴ Glenn S. McRoberts, “Federalism and Foreign Affairs: Toward a Dormant Foreign Affairs Doctrine,” *Loyola of Los Angeles International and Comparative Law Review* 11 (1989): 656.

⁸⁵ McRoberts, “Federalism and Foreign Affairs,” 656.

of AB 134. After the passage of California's divestment bill, Waters expressed her gratitude for the fortitude displayed by all:

I never lost faith that the decision makes of this state would eventually support this legislation. And I never lost faith that this bill would be signed by this Governor [Deukmejian] or the next Governor. At this point, all I can say is that I am extremely proud of all those who have supported this legislation and helped to bring about freedom and justice for the oppressed people of South Africa. Although it has been seven long years, it is clear that in the end persistence does reap sweet rewards.⁸⁶

Waters' persistence was the fruit of organized social movement activity by the FSAM. With consistent messaging delivered at boycotts, parades, and other publicly displayed protests, the West Coast branch of the FSAM helped to secure the passage of AB 134.

During his 1990 visit, Mandela insisted on the continuation of economic sanctions. Beginning with his speech to Congress in Washington, D.C. and at every stop thereafter, Mandela urged the American people to maintain sanctions until every vestige of the apartheid regime is erased. His message was no different during his speeches and public appearances in California. As he spoke at the Oakland Coliseum, his last public speech of the visit, his message was one of continued sanctions. The podium at his Oakland speech bore the words "SANCTIONS NOW" in bright red letters on a yellow background to reinforce the verbal message with a written message.⁸⁷ In a diplomatic move against his own nation, Mandela embraced the

⁸⁶ "Legislature Passes AB 134, The South Africa Divestment Bill," August 27, 1986, *News from Maxine Waters Democratic Caucus Chairwoman*, California State Archives, Sacramento, California, USA.

⁸⁷ *Nelson Mandela – Full Concert – 06/30/90 – Oakland Coliseum Stadium (OFFICIAL)*, YouTube video, 35:37, posted by "Docs & Interviews on MV," November 18, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUcvjm9D2M4>.

boycott, divestment, and sanctions strategy of the American anti-apartheid movement as a means to bring about democratic change in South Africa.

Conclusion

The boycott, divestment, and sanctions strategy of the Free South Africa Movement was multidimensional, symbolic, and rooted in economic reform as a means to achieve political freedom. As one organization within the larger American anti-apartheid social movement, FSAM harnessed its strength as the messaging and media strategy arm to raise awareness about apartheid in South Africa. The media strategy began with a sit-in at a locus of power, the South African embassy in Washington, D.C. By refusing to leave the meeting with Ambassador Fourie, Randall Robinson and his colleagues launched a movement that lasted from 1984 until Mandela's release in 1990. Under the banner of the Free South Africa Movement, the members launched a resurgence of the civil rights activism of the 1960s. FSAM cut across demographic barriers as it gave both celebrities, poor blacks, middle-class blacks, and even college students an outlet for political action. United under few, straightforward goals, FSAM spread throughout the United States forming chapters in cities and states around the country.

The West Coast branch of the FSAM encapsulated the multidimensional nature of the movement. The Bay Area FSAM and Los Angeles FSAM both evolved out of the boycott of South African goods by longshoremen and warehousemen. ILWU workers refused to unload cargo from South Africa and thus sparked interest in the civil unrest in South Africa. The location of the South African consulate in Los Angeles also served as a location for meeting and protest which influenced the

strength of the anti-apartheid sanctions bill that emanated from the California State legislature. Given the West Coast interest in anti-apartheid activism, the California state legislature considered divestment bills against South Africa in 1985 and 1986. Both times, the bills were introduced by Assemblywoman Maxine Waters whose political activism was heavily influenced by membership in FSAM.

Californians' support for AB 134, the South Africa Divestment Bill, was not always strong. When Waters introduced the bill in 1985, it failed to leave committee. By 1986, the tide had turned both locally and nationally, when the United States Congress was considering similar legislation. Opposition to AB 134 was argued on economic and constitutional grounds. In South Africa, the apartheid regime hired Chief Gatsha to travel around the world to sell the message that sanctions hurt black South Africans the most and therefore, should be avoided. In the U.S., legal experts expressed concern that AB 134 directly interfered with the United States Constitution which granted the federal government the power over international affairs. While there was no legal challenge of AB 134 in the courts, there were considerable arguments against its constitutionality.

Mandela validated the boycott, divestment, and sanctions strategy of the FSAM during his visit to California. Given that FSAM's strategies were not welcomed by all, it is noteworthy that Mandela validated them and called for their continuation. At every stop in the U.S., including his stop in California, Mandela's message of validation was consistent. Just as FSAM had consistently distributed fliers, held marches, sit-ins, and protests to demand sanctions, Mandela's message to Americans was equally consistent – continued sanctions. Mandela adopted an

adversarial relationship against his nation's leadership because of his support for BDS diplomacy which used sanctions as a means to achieve political freedom for black South Africans. Mandela's visit to California was not only a validation of friendship with anti-apartheid supporters, but also a validation of the economic diplomacy of boycott, divestment, and sanctions deployed by FSAM.

Chapter 5: Conclusion, Lessons, and Implications

Nelson Mandela's 1990 visit to the United States stands out as an unusual, even remarkable, international event happening at a particularly precarious moment in the relationship between the United States and South Africa. Decades of official diplomatic interactions between the United States and South Africa produced slow but steady societal change. American legislative victories were won at the state and federal level which impacted social realities in South Africa. With Congressional leadership strongly in support of anti-apartheid measures, President Reagan's veto of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 was easily overturned. Additionally, consistent and overlapping divestment action from multiple states, cities, schools, and churches contributed to the end of South Africa's apartheid regime. Reluctantly, the regime gave in to demands for the release of political prisoners. Mandela's release from prison and visit to America ushered in a new era in the relationship between the United States and South Africa.

In this dissertation, I position Mandela at the nexus of changing modes of foreign policy practices. Official diplomats often operate in secrecy by eschewing public display of approval or dissent in order to maintain peace in the international arena. However, Mandela's visit recognized a different mode of conflict resolution, outside of the norms of official diplomacy with demands and counter-demands being openly weighed in the public sphere. Such public argument about foreign policy renders rhetoric as a significant factor in international conflict resolution. Mandela ventured into diplomacy as a private citizen as he represented the interest of black South Africans on the world stage. Drawing from an extensive arsenal of rhetorical

expressions, Mandela expressed his solidarity with supporters of the anti-apartheid movement through visual and verbal rhetoric as he validated the economic diplomacy strategy of boycott, divestment, and sanctions against South Africa.

By the end of Mandela's U.S. tour in California, many asked – what next? Around the world, his release from prison was viewed as a major first step in many steps toward full democracy despite the uncertain future. In the United States, his visit was regarded as the official end of the FSAM,¹ and observers looked forward to the future of a democratic South Africa with great anticipation. For me, the more relevant question is the one I ask in this dissertation: how did Mandela's 1990 visit as an unofficial "diplomat" underscore the historic, visual, and ideographic rhetoric of the anti-apartheid social movement in America? As I examine the impact of Mandela's visit, several lessons and implications emerge: the role of exiles in forming a global constituency, coalition building with elected officials and the public, symbolic interaction with members of the movement, consistent messaging to avoid mission creep, and the role of a hero in the furtherance of a social movement.

Exiles and Coalition Building

South Africans in exile in the United States and around the world contributed to the dismantling of apartheid. Many of them left home reluctantly as the apartheid regime tightened its grip on black South Africans. They were forced into exile and settled in foreign nations around the world, going underground to avoid

¹ The African Activist Archive notes July 1990, the month of Mandela's visit to the last U.S. city on the tour, as the official end date of the free South Africa movement. "Free South Africa Movement," African Activist Archive, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA, 1984 to July 1990, <http://africanactivist.msu.edu/organization.php?name=Free%20South%20Africa%20Movement>.

imprisonment.² With several anti-apartheid black South Africans living in exile, Mandela's world tour was a victory lap for these leaders who maintained pressure on the apartheid regime from the many foreign nations where they had been scattered. These exiles "took to lobbying governments all over the world with a view to shaping legal structures that would allow them the protection they required."³ Once the ANC was unbanned and became a legitimate political party, their members had the ability to resurface from the shadows and usher Mandela into the halls of power in the various countries where they had settled. Mandela embarked on a forty-five-day victory tour of twenty-one different African, European and North American cities.⁴ At each of these stops, Mandela met with fellow comrades many of whom he had not seen for decades, as well as local supporters who had embraced the anti-apartheid cause. Mandela also shared with them the prospect of a new South Africa which would welcome these exiles back home. The return of exiles home was filled with promise as the thought of a democratic South Africa filled them with hope.⁵

FSAM built a coalition with government officials around the country. At the national level, FSAM built a coalition with members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). The CBC was created in response to the desire to pass civil rights

² The Sharpeville massacre of 1960 caused the first wave of exiles out of South Africa. For research on anti-apartheid diaspora, see: Scott Thomas, "The Diplomacy of Liberation: The International Relations of The African National Congress of South Africa, 1960-1985," Ph.D. diss., London School of Economics and Political Science, 1990. For discourse on the near extinction of the ANC, see: Stephen Ellis, "The ANC In Exile," *African Affairs* 90, no. 360 (1991): 439-47.

³ Stephen Ellis, *External Mission: The ANC In Exile, 1960-1990* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 46. For details about the relationship between the South African communist party and the ANC during the exile years, see: Stephen Ellis and Tsepo Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid: The ANC & The South African Communist Party in Exile* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

⁴ "Nelson Mandela Timeline 1990-1999," *South African History Online*, April 4, 2011.

⁵ Ross Dunn, "South African Political Exiles Return to Warm Welcome but Uncertain Prospects," *The Christian Science Monitor* (Johannesburg, SA), December 19, 1991.

legislation at home and to influence foreign policy toward newly independent African states abroad. Their history began with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were legislative victories ushered in African Americans into government. One scholar observed this transition from civil rights protest to electoral victories as a shift from the “politics of protest” to the “politics of the ballot box.”⁶ Through the election of hundreds of African American officials at the city, state and national levels, the struggle against apartheid gained key allies with access to decision-makers at all levels of government.⁷ Representative Charles C. Diggs, a Democrat from Michigan, was first elected to Congress in 1953 and made apartheid one of his top policy concerns. Diggs was the founding chairman of the CBC and became the first black chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa in 1969. Diggs and the CBC led many congressional inquiries into the United States’ South African policy which gave anti-apartheid activists the opportunity to address Congress on the issue.⁸

Members of the CBC were responsible for the protest that began the FSAM in 1984. The CBC was widely known for its domestic policy impact but by the 1980s, its foreign policy activism became noteworthy.⁹ Ever since its founding in March 1971, the CBC had taken seriously the charge to end racism and advance the cause of

⁶ Marguerite Ross Barnett, “The Congressional Black Caucus: Symbol, Myth, And Reality,” *The Black Scholar* 8, no. 4 (1977): 17-26.

⁷ Ronald V. Dellums and H. Lee Halterman, *Lying Down with The Lions: A Public Life from The Streets of Oakland to the Halls of Power* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000): 142-144.

⁸ Charles C. Diggs served on the foreign relations committee for over 20 years where he became the expert on Africa and established relations with the leaders of newly independent African states. Nicknamed “Mr. Africa,” Diggs became apartheid’s most powerful opponent in the U.S. Congress. Francis Njubi Nesbitt, “Race for Sanctions: The Movement Against Apartheid, 1946—1994,” Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2002, 166.

⁹ Krissah Thompson, “In Its 40 Years, Congressional Black Caucus has seen Mission Challenges Evolve,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), March 31, 2011.

freedom for black Americans and blacks in the diaspora.¹⁰ Soon after its founding, on December 17, 1971, Representative Charles Diggs resigned his position as a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations to protest U.S. policy toward South Africa.¹¹ As a gesture of protest, CBC members boycotted President Nixon's State of the Union Address in 1971, asserting that Nixon was refusing to listen to the concerns of black Americans.¹² Moreover, Nixon's "Tar Baby" policy of cooperation instead of confrontation with the white minority regime did not endear him to black leaders.¹³ In regards to South Africa, the CBC showed another dramatic display of protest on November 21, 1984, when Delegate Fauntroy among other activists was arrested when they refused to leave the office of the South African Ambassador after a meeting where they demanded the release of political prisoners in South Africa.¹⁴ These protests by black Members of Congress highlight an important transition in black nationalism from domestic policy to foreign policy.

Spurred by the leadership of members of the CBC, Congress picked up the issue of apartheid in South Africa again in 1986. This time, members of the House of Representatives' who were members of the CBC were adamant about the fact that Reagan's sanctions were not working and were determined to remedy the situation.

¹⁰ Edward O. Erhagbe, "The Congressional Black Caucus and United States Policy Toward Africa: 1971-1990," *Transafrican Journal of History* 24 (1995): 84-96.

¹¹ Raymond W. Copson, *The Congressional Black Caucus and Foreign Policy* (Hauppauge: Nova Publishers, 2003).

¹² William L. Clay, *Just Permanent Interests: Black Americans in Congress, 1870-1991* (New York: Amistad Press, 1992), 139. See also, Arthur B. Levy and Susan Stoudinger, "The Black Caucus in the 92nd Congress: Gauging Its Success," *Phylon* 39 (1978): 322-332.

¹³ Anthony Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option: American Policy Toward Southern Rhodesia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); Roger Morris, *Uncertain Greatness: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).

¹⁴ Ronald W. Walters, *Pan Africanism in the African Diaspora: An Analysis of Modern Afrocentric Political Movements* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997).

On May 21, 1986, William H. Gray, a Democrat from Pennsylvania and a member of the CBC, introduced H.R. 4868 – Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 – in the House. It was a more stringent bill than the previously stalled H.R. 997 which was introduced by Oakland Representative Ronald Dellums.

Causes exist within Congress to promote particular interests and coalition building with Members of Congress usually fall along ethnic lines. “The central function of caucuses is to bring together legislators with shared interests, backgrounds, and policy goals.”¹⁵ FSAM reached out to black Members of Congress to seek their help with legislation. Ethnic diversity in Congress tends to have a positive effect on U.S. foreign policy legislation towards certain regions of the world.¹⁶ U.S. foreign policy is inevitably influenced by ethnic considerations. Foreign policy responds to other things as well, but probably first of all to the primal fact of ethnicity.¹⁷ The increase in the number of immigrants from African nations in the U.S. contributes to Congress’ foreign policy concerns regarding “strategic counterterrorism operations in Africa.”¹⁸ Black representatives who were members of the CBC had a significant impact on legislation affecting minorities in the United States and around the world.

Diversity in Congress leads to surrogate representatives who promote causes that are personally important to them but not necessarily relevant to their electoral

¹⁵ Robert Singh, *The Congressional Black Caucus: Racial Politics in the U.S. Congress*, (Thousand Oaks: California: Sage, 1998), 58.

¹⁶ Michael D. Minta and Valeria Sinclair-Chapman, “Diversity in Political Institutions and Congressional Responsiveness to Minority Interests,” *Political Research Quarterly* 66, no. 1 (2013): 127-40.

¹⁷ Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, *Ethnicity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).

¹⁸ Menna Demessie, “Congress from the Inside: U.S.-Africa Foreign Policy and Black Ethnic Politics,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44, no. 3 (2011): 685-687.

constituents back in their home district. Surrogate representation refers to “the representation of a group or an interest by a representative who is not bound by the traditional electoral representative-constituency relationship.”¹⁹ In other words, surrogate representation denotes “representation by a representative with whom one has no electoral connection – that is, a representative in another district.”²⁰ As an example, scholars point to the frequent participation of black representatives in demonstrations that are intended to draw attention to humanitarian issues in Africa. Just as CBC members were instrumental in the inaugural 1984 FSAM protest, between 2006 and 2012 Representatives John Lewis of Georgia, Keith Ellison of Minnesota, Donna Edwards of Maryland were arrested for demonstrations at the Sudanese embassy.²¹ So active was the CBC in the Sudan case that the *Associated Press* quoted CBC spokesperson Myra Dandridge, who informed the public that, “All 43 members [of the CBC] will have an opportunity to protest here and get arrested.”²² The surrogate representation of the CBC helped FSAM leaders and exiles to advance the anti-apartheid movement in America by advocating boycott and through the passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. Without coalitions with members of Congress and other officials of the government, social movement goals are difficult to achieve.

¹⁹ Walter Clark Wilson and William Curtis Ellis, “Surrogates Beyond Borders: Black Members of the United States Congress and the Representation of African Interests on The Congressional Foreign-Policy Agenda,” *Polity* 46, no. 2 (2014): 257.

²⁰ Cindy Simon Rosenthal ed. *Women Transforming Congress. Vol. 4* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002). See also: Jane Mansbridge, “Rethinking Representation,” *American Political Science Review* 97 (2003): 522.

²¹ Mike Mulcahy, “Ellison Arrested at D.C. Protest,” *Minnesota Public Radio* (Minneapolis, MN), April 27, 2009.

²² “Lee Among Those Arrested at Darfur Protest,” *FOX 2 KTVU*, May 16, 2006.

Coalition Building Outside Government

FSAM leaders formed coalitions with community activists outside of government in order to further the anti-apartheid cause. The most significant connections came in the form of groups of people who volunteered to picket, protest, and boycott at prominent locations throughout the country. Some of these locations included the South African embassy and consulates, city council offices, university campuses, union halls, and churches. At each of these places of protest, the messaging and strategy was consistent. Protestors called for the divestment of investment from companies doing business in South Africa. Even when the ethical standards of the Sullivan Principles were already in effect, protesters called for divestment. They also called for the release of political prisoners who had been held unjustly. They also called for a boycott of certain South African brands and products including “South African fruit, sherry and Craven A cigarettes.”²³ With the consistent message to avoid South African brands and businesses, FSAM’s coalition with the public was strengthened.

Another unifying symbol of FSAM’s coalition with activists outside government was the display of the black power salute. In chapter two, I detailed Mandela’s display of the black power salute with his accompanying cry, “Amandla!” as a unifying call to action for anti-apartheid supporters in the diaspora. Similarly, the FSAM adopted the symbolic gesture of the black power salute to unify and inspire the anti-apartheid public in America. Posters and pamphlets which announced FSAM

²³ “Boycott South African Goods,” *Forward to Freedom: The History of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement 1959-1994*, <https://www.aamarchives.org/campaigns/boycott.html>.

regional meetings were plastered with images of the clenched fist raised in the black power salute. While the black power salute was a vestige of the Black Panther Party (BPP) it quickly got co-opted by the FSAM for its efficacy as a sign against oppression.

Additionally, with the creation of the FSAM in 1984, the black power salute became less controversial as the rhetorical exigency for its new display was related to foreign policy activism. Peniel Joseph observed that the reduced fear of radicalism has allowed the meaning of the black power salute to be redefined: “As fears of a black revolt in America diminished, a raised black fist became less threatening.”²⁴ The black consciousness movement in South Africa co-opted the black power salute. By displaying the black power salute, Steve Biko and his companions expressed their blackness and willingness to organize for black civil rights. As South African exiles spread throughout the world, they took their appropriation of the black power salute along with them. Thus, a radical symbol in American politics was reinvented by its reintroduction by FSAM activists as a sign of solidarity with black South Africans.

Mandela’s 1990 visit further declawed the black power salute of its sting and helped further the process of coalition-building with the public. From his arrival in New York to his visit to Washington, D.C., Mandela brandished the black power salute to greet his supporters. Many waved the black power salute back to acknowledge the greeting. These supporters also bore various verbal signs that accentuated the nonverbal message. Verbal rhetoric such as “Free South Africa

²⁴ Peniel E. Joseph, “The Many Meanings of a Fist,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 18, 2016.

Now,” “Sanctions Now,” and so on. The black power salute lost its reference to America’s radical black politics as FSAM activists displayed it to signal support for a foreign policy issue. Mandela’s display of the black power salute denotes the diffusion of the symbol into non-violent social movements of the twentieth and twenty-first century. The implication of Mandela’s visual rhetoric of the black power salute is that it followed on the heels of a radical movement but did not appropriate the violence of that movement.

When Mandela and members of the FSAM appropriated the black power salute, they were doing so peacefully. Hence, future social movements followed in the non-violent tradition of the black power salute laid out by Mandela and FSAM supporters. After a group of West Point female cadets of the 2016 graduating class went viral for posing with the black power salute (i.e. raised fist), Peniel Joseph explained the unstable meaning of the black power salute:

The raised fist has experienced a renaissance of late, as black millennials politicized by the deaths of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, outraged by racist policing in Ferguson and Baltimore, and united in their deft use of social media have shown an increasing willingness to adopt both the shield of Martin Luther King Jr.’s disciplined nonviolence and the rhetorical sword of Malcolm X in a quest for social justice. Through its popularization of the raised fist as a symbol of generational insurgency, the Black Lives Matter movement has ensnared the West Point cadets. The situation reminds us of how the raised fist is at once a symbol with powerful historical resonance and one that can shift in its meaning and intent.²⁵

Given the shifting meaning of the black power salute, the so-called “raised fist” is now detached from its radical origins. I position Mandela and the FSAM of the 1980s at a point where the visual gesture of the black power salute transitioned to become

²⁵ Joseph, “The Many Meanings of a Fist.”

simply the raised fist, distinct from its history as a gesture of exclusively radical implications.

Hero Function in Social Movements

Social movements often coalesce around the persona of a person or group of persons whose biography, character and credibility make a convincing argument for the cause. Mandela quickly became the face of the anti-apartheid struggle for freedom because of his biography, personality, and credibility. He was an international icon whose memory is difficult to refute or revise.²⁶ Even after having been affiliated with the underground army, *Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation)* or MK as it is colloquially known, Mandela's revolutionary past is barely mentioned as part of his biography.²⁷ Mandela was preceded in the role of public hero by Steve Biko whose life in exile was filled with political writing and public campaigns to raise black consciousness against apartheid. Following Biko's death in September 1977, the void was left to be filled about another credible hero. Mandela easily filled that void. From terrorist to local hero to global icon, Mandela's public persona was crafted to project the best image of black South Africans unjustly imprisoned by the apartheid regime.²⁸

Mandela's biography was respectable. As the son of Xhosa royalty, he had the natural respect of his tribal community. His education at premiere institutions and self-study as a lawyer also positioned him to succeed in political activism and receive the acclaim of his comrades. With the reputation of a rebel, a royal, and a resister of

²⁶ Paul Maylam, "Archetypal Hero or Living Saint? The Veneration of Nelson Mandela," *Historia* 54, no. 2 (2009): 21-36.

²⁷ Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Mandela* (London: Little Brown and Company, 1994).

²⁸ Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "From a 'Terrorist' to Global Icon: A Critical Decolonial Ethical Tribute to Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela of South Africa," *Third World Quarterly* 35, no. 6 (2014): 905-921.

apartheid, Mandela had a credible biography to command the respect of his comrades. The unofficial story is that Mandela's persona was completely contrived and his radical association with communism downplayed to make him seem reasonable to the rest of the world. Rian Malan analyzed revealed manuscripts of Mandela's prison writings and noted that Mandela expressed strong communist sentiments. Mandela's struggles were highlighted by the ANC's thus transforming him from local freedom fighter to global hero:

It is common cause that the ANC decided in the 1960s to use Mandela as the anti-apartheid movement's official poster boy. He was the obvious choice, a tall, clean-limbed tribal prince, luminously charismatic, married to the telegenic Winnie, and reduced by cruel circumstance to living martyrdom on a prison island. All you had to do was cleanse him of the communist taint and Bob's your uncle: four decades down the road, you have the president of the USA getting weepy as he describes Mandela's lifelong struggle for 'your freedom, your democracy.'²⁹

Whatever the reason for the ANC's selection of Mandela to be the standard-bearer of the anti-apartheid cause, he clearly had a respectable biography to match.

Notwithstanding his communist affiliation, ties which he later erased, Mandela had the personal charisma and family biography to become a hero against apartheid.

Mandela's hero status was heightened by media depictions of his suffering. His life story was incorporated into songs, films, and other easily disenable media formats. A pop music hit by Special AKA's "Free Nelson Mandela" became a cult classic in America and around the world. A two-hour video *Viva Mandela* released in 1990 on MTV, for example, used music to explain the intensity of the apartheid

²⁹ Rian Malan, "What a Lost Prison Manuscript Reveals about the Real Nelson Mandela," *The Spectator* (London, UK), January 18, 2014.

struggle – an homage that was both celebratory and historiographic in its function.³⁰ Complex ideas are difficult to share via pop music, but simple ideas make for catchy songs with a simple phrase. Pop music was a conduit for the simplest ideas of the anti-apartheid struggle – boycott, freedom, and other shared ideas – they formed the “lowest-common-denominator themes” within a larger foreign policy issue.³¹ Ideas as complex as decades-long apartheid were “reduced to the individual personalities within the social realm in which they are principal actors...the Mandela/De Klerk couplet translates readily into a black vs. white conflict.”³² Music translates these fragile dichotomies and fragile personas into digestible messages for the audience in order to take action.³³

Movies give us yet another perspective on Mandela’s legacy. The list of actors who have played him includes Morgan Freeman, David Harewood, Terrence Howard, Atandwa Kani, Danny Glover, Sidney Poitier, Clarke Peters, Dennis Haysbert, Idris Elba, and Lindane Nkosi. Each actor brought to the role a unique aspect of Mandela’s lifelong struggle from his violent resistance in the 1950s, to his imprisonment and release, to his years as president and an elder statesman. Some of the movie titles about Mandela’s life include *Mandela* (1987), *Mandela* (1996), *Mandela and de Klerk* (1997), *Goodbye Bafana* (2007), *Invictus* (2009), and *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* (2013). In each of these movies, Mandela’s legacy was carefully crafted to

³⁰ Keyan G. Tomaselli and Bob Boster, “Mandela, MTV, Television and Apartheid,” *Popular Music and Society* 17, no. 2 (1993): 1-19.

³¹ Keyan G. Tomaselli and Arnold Shepperson, “The Absent Signifier: The Morphing of Nelson Mandela” in Keyan G. Tomaselli and David Scott (eds.) *Cultural Icons* (California: Left Coast Press, 2009), 34.

³² Tomaselli and Shepperson, “The Absent Signifier: The Morphing of Nelson Mandela,” 34.

³³ H. Stith Bennett and Jeff Ferrell, “Music Videos and Epistemic Socialization,” *Youth & Society* 18, no. 4 (1987): 344-362.

give him reverential status as a symbol of freedom for black South Africans. When British filmmaker Peter Kosminsky proposed a film called *Young Mandela*, portraying Mandela as a fiery ANC soldier who devalued non-violence, he was roundly chastised.³⁴ Perhaps the chastisement of Kosminsky was less about ideology and more about the need to preserve the hero mythic that carried the anti-apartheid movement through the difficult years of organizing in the 1980s. Mandela's hero status served a very important role in the anti-apartheid movement. Based on the iconography of Mandela in Western-produced movies, Francis Lukhele argues that Hollywood played an inordinate role in the "making" of post-prison Mandela into a global hero and secular saint.³⁵

Mandela's hero persona was fragile and open to contestation but was never truly contested. Mandela experienced similar woes as other black South Africans. Like others, he endured the indignity of the apartheid system. He took up armed resistance to fight that oppression and only dropped references to violence after twenty-seven years of imprisonment. Yet, the international media iconized him as a living saint,³⁶ and as "a moral colossus" towering over the world.³⁷ In the words of Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, "To this day, Madiba remains probably the single most admired, most respected international figure in the entire world."³⁸ Statues of Mandela have been erected in public spaces of significance

³⁴ Peter Bradshaw, "Nelson Mandela in the movies," *The Guardian* (London, UK), December 6, 2013.

³⁵ Francis Lukhele, "Post-prison Nelson Mandela: A 'made-in-America hero,'" *Canadian Journal of African Studies/La Revue Canadienne des études Africaines* 46, no. 2 (2012): 289-301.

³⁶ Charlene Smith, *Mandela* (Cape Town: Struik Publishers, 1999), 140.

³⁷ Martin Kalungu-Banda, *Leading like Madiba: Leadership Lessons from Nelson Mandela* (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2006)

³⁸ Mac Maharaj, Ahmad Kathrada and Kate Parkin (eds), *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait* (Bloomsbury: London, 2006), 5.

around the world. With the erection of the Mandela statue in London's Trafalgar square, former Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone noted, "so Nelson on his column and Nelson Mandela on his pedestal would in a sense encapsulate the beginning and the end of the British Empire."³⁹ In Washington, D.C. the unveiling of Mandela's statue in 2013 invoked similarly strong emotions as Mandela was memorialized in his iconic black power salute.

The idolization of Mandela rendered him unapproachable by critics. He was seldom criticized during his life as his persona was so tightly constructed as a hero. Yet, the fragile nature of his constructed persona made him more susceptible to accusations of inauthenticity by people of his "tribe." The claims of inauthenticity manifested in disagreements on the future of South Africa's economy. Whereas Mandela and his ANC comrades had insisted on a policy of nationalization, Mandela's sudden international stardom required that he adopt a free-market capitalism posture in order to invite foreign investment. As Andrew Nash put it, extraordinary confusion on Mandela's views on capitalism and socialism persist.⁴⁰ Having espoused the doctrine of the "Freedom Charter," which promised national health care and the re-apportionment of federal land to black South Africans, Mandela's turn to capitalism was viewed as a "sell out" move.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the challenge by his detractors barely rose to the level of causing public scandal. Mandela enjoyed fame and iconic hero status at home and abroad.

³⁹ Maharaj, Kathrada, and Parkin, *Mandela: The Authorised Portrait*, 324.

⁴⁰ Andrew Nash, "Mandela's Democracy," *Monthly Review* 50, no. 11 (1999): 18-19.

⁴¹ Ashwin Desai and Richard Pithouse, "What Stank in the Past is the Present's Perfume": Dispossession, Resistance, and Repression in Mandela Park," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103, no. 4 (2004): 841-875.

The implication here is not that Mandela remained unchallenged in his hero status; the implication is that social movements tend to oscillate around a strong person hero persona. A hero figure is essential to the dissemination of social movement protest rhetoric. Given Mandela's suffering at the hands of the apartheid regime, his personal story was easily conflated to become the story of every single black South African; such that an attack on him was viewed as an attack on black South Africans. If an educated black man from royal stock can be denied his human rights, how much more the average black South African, the reasoning goes. The dichotomy of black versus white contained in the Mandela/De Klerk antagonism made for easy pop songs and other media to create viral messaging. The FSAM and other affiliates anti-apartheid social movement groups seized on Mandela's persona as a rallying point for activism to spread and grow the base of Americans who supported Mandela for his bravery. The media's valorization of Mandela's biography, education, and charisma amplified the injustice done to him, thus increasing his local and international appeal among anti-apartheid supporters.

Conclusion

The struggle against apartheid awoke the conscience of the world as various nations issued sanctions to curb the growth of the apartheid regime. In America, the sanctions took the form of legislative bills at the national and state level. In other countries, there were coordinated boycotts of South African products. The Sullivan Principles that called for ethical and non-racist business practices for American companies in South Africa laid the groundwork for change. As legislators discussed sanctions, they would often refer to Sullivan's Principles as the starting point from

which further exploration of sanctions could commence. The goal of sanctions was to force the South African government to accelerate democratic changes. The anti-apartheid movement used economic diplomacy to seek societal and moral change. The indirect nature of the divestment advocacy caused legal scholars to question whether individual states had the power to effectually pass legislation that affects foreign policy through economic sanctions. While Americans debated the legality of various states' sanction bills, the South African economy experienced great strain from the legislation. In response, President de Klerk released political prisoners as a sign of good faith. Sanctions enabled democratic changes in South Africa and contributed to the dismantling of the apartheid system.

Prior to Mandela's release from prison, the anti-apartheid movement in America grew in strength through coordinated efforts between exiles from South Africa, allies in government, and supporters in the general public. Exiles played a significant role in carrying the stories from "home" into the international arena. In the early days of the apartheid struggle, when establishment media failed to carry news of the daily goings-on in South Africa, it was exiles who shared stories with the world. As exiles settled into life in their new homeland, they formed coalitions with members of civil society groups and leaders in government. South African exiles to America were especially successful in their organizing as they latched on to the latent memories of the civil rights movement.

The FSAM grew in numbers as black Americans found opportunities to express their solidarity with the black diaspora in South Africa. The civil rights movement experienced a lag in momentum after the busy 1960s and 1970s, but the

FSAM brought new energy back into black politics. With the resurgence of civil disobedience activities in front of the South African embassy in 1984 came the resurgence of black protest and its associative gesture of the black power salute. The black power salute reemerged out of the 1980s protest culture as a symbol of unity, identification, and nonviolent protest of a foreign policy issue. The distance between the problem of apartheid and the average American audience allowed the black power salute to undergo a reinterpretation. It went from being a militant salute to simply being a “raised fist” or “clenched fist.” Mandela’s embodiment of the black power salute revived imagery of black consciousness while also ascribing new meaning of nonviolent “Power!” The reimagined “raised fist” symbolizes the power to reshape one’s destiny and enlist supporters in one’s cause.

Mandela’s role as a quasi-diplomat was indispensable to the success of the anti-apartheid movement and it is doubtful that the movement would have gained traction abroad without his heroic persona. Through his years of imprisonment, Mandela symbolized the high ideals of man’s quest for freedom, human dignity, and racial equality. Even though his biography rendered him to be a worthy representative of the cause, Western media played a big role in the refashioning of Mandela from fiery insurgent to dignified statesman. Across the world, the image of Mandela walking out of prison with a raised fist has been memorialized in statues further searing his legacy in our public consciousness. Memorials, films, and statues are the stuff of legend. There is little wonder then that Mandela was frequently referred to as a living saint.

On December 5, 2013, Mandela passed away surrounded by his family. World leaders were present at his funeral and eulogized him as a man who boldly proclaimed the dignity of the human person. Pope Francis, leader of the Roman Catholic Church, hailed him as one who promoted “the human dignity of all the nation’s citizens and for forging a new South Africa built on the firm foundations of non-violence, reconciliation and truth.” He prayed that Mandela’s example “will inspire generations of South Africans.”⁴² President Barack Obama remembered Mandela as “the last great liberator of the 20th century.”⁴³ Mandela’s legacy of advocating for human dignity was fondly remembered by all in attendance. To honor his legacy, anti-apartheid supporters celebrate July 17 as Mandela Day.⁴⁴ Mandela’s lifework against apartheid inspires people around the world to emulate his example to advance their cause for freedom, equality, and justice.

⁴² David Gibson, “As the World Mourns Nelson Mandela, Abortion Foes Protest,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), December 10, 2013.

⁴³ Mark Landler, “In Obama’s Praise of Mandela, a Nudge to Africa,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), December 10, 2013.

⁴⁴ Krissah Thompson, “On Mandela Day, D.C. founders of Free South Africa Movement look back,” *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), July 17, 2013.

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