Abstract

This thesis examines the idea that Australian federal political leaders are becoming more powerful. This idea, often referred to as presidentialization, generates heated debates in academic circles. Using one of the more systematic frameworks, namely the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model, and combining a behavioural component, this thesis seeks to explore whether Australian federal politics has become presidentialized. Poguntke and Webb viewed presidentialization as consisting of three separate but inter-related faces. These were: the executive face, the party face and the electoral face.

This thesis undertakes this task by examining four leadership periods from the Australian Labor Party (ALP). This includes: The Chifley leadership period (1945-51), the Whitlam leadership period (1967-1977), the Hawke Leadership period (1983-91) and the Kevin Rudd leadership period (2006-2010).

In the Chifley leadership period it is argued that very little evidence of the presidentialization phenomenon as described by Poguntke and Webb (2005) is identifiable. This finding adds to their hypothesis that many of the causal factors that contributed to presidentialization did not emerge until after 1960. This section of the thesis also highlights how different Australian society and the ALP were during this period than to the later periods examined in this thesis.

The second period, the Whitlam leadership period, is vastly different. Clear increases in the capacity of leaders to exert power began to emerge. Hugely important structural changes to the ALP occur during this period which fundamentally alters intra-party power. Some evidence of leaders being able to exert greater power within the executive of government can also be identified during this period. The elections that Whitlam contested display a mixed level of personalisation.
It is argued in the Hawke period that intra-party power for the leader increases even further. In the executive, policy is increasingly centralised due to a combination of structural and conditional factors empowering the leadership even further. Due to Hawke’s personal popularity, the ALP runs campaigns vastly more personalised than the Whitlam period.

The Rudd leadership period is the final period examined. This section argues that in a continuation of what occurred during the Hawke period, the capacity of the parliamentary leadership to exert power in the Executive and within the party continues to increase. However, evidence of presidentialization during elections is mixed.

This thesis concludes by attempting to identify any trends or counter-trends across the periods examined. It also compares the findings to the international data-set Poguntke and Webb (2005) have compiled. Finally, it explores the future of political leadership studies and suggests some future research opportunities.
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Glenn Kefford
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<tr>
<td>ACTU</td>
<td>Australian Council of Trade Unions</td>
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<tr>
<td>AJPH</td>
<td>Australian Journal of Politics and History</td>
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<td>ALP</td>
<td>Australian Labor Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>APSA</td>
<td>Australian Political Science Association</td>
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<td>ASIO</td>
<td>Australian Security Intelligence Office</td>
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<td>CPA</td>
<td>Communist Party of Australia</td>
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<td>DLP</td>
<td>Democratic Labor Party</td>
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<td>ERC</td>
<td>Expenditure Review Committee</td>
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<td>ETS</td>
<td>Emissions Trading Scheme</td>
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<td>FPLP</td>
<td>Federal Parliamentary Labor Party</td>
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<td>GFC</td>
<td>Global Financial Crisis</td>
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<td>GSE</td>
<td>Government Sponsored Enterprises</td>
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<td>HECS</td>
<td>Higher Education Contribution Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>IR</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>MHR</td>
<td>Member of the House of Representatives</td>
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<td>MP</td>
<td>Minister of Parliament</td>
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<td>NDP</td>
<td>Nuclear Disarmament Party</td>
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<td>NPM</td>
<td>New Public Management</td>
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<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
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<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM&amp;C</td>
<td>Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet</td>
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<td>PMO</td>
<td>Prime Minister’s Office</td>
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<td>PR</td>
<td>Proportional Representation</td>
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<td>QLD</td>
<td>Queensland</td>
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<td>RSPT</td>
<td>Resources Super Profits Tax</td>
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<td>SA</td>
<td>South Australia</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Sydney Morning Herald</td>
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<td>SPBC</td>
<td>Strategic Priorities and Budget Committee</td>
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<td>TARP</td>
<td>Troubled Asset Relief Program</td>
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<td>UK</td>
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Chapter One - Introduction

Are contemporary political leaders more powerful than their predecessors? Are prime ministers becoming more like presidents? These questions have been intensely debated in the literature over the last two decades and the ‘presidentialization thesis’ has been central to this.¹ According to Poguntke and Webb (2005: 1) “[P]residentialization denominates a process by which regimes are becoming more presidential in their actual practice without, in most cases, changing their regime type”. In other words, presidentialization is the idea that leaders have more resources and autonomy, within the institutional parameters of their regime, than their predecessors. Presidentialization has become one of the key analytical concepts used to explain the changing modes of political leadership in liberal democracies, even though it is a concept that attracts more critics than supporters. According to Michael Foley (2007), debates about presidentialization often “generate more heat than light” and this was certainly the case for much of the last two decades.²

The modern debate about political leaders dominating their governments in the Westminster system can be traced to the 1960s in Britain and to the Mackintosh and Crossman thesis which declared cabinet government was dead and prime ministerial government the orthodoxy (Mackintosh, 1968; Crossman 1963: 51). Concerns about the increasing power of leaders gave rise to a number of works across Europe examining ‘presidential’ like leaders within parliamentary systems including Foley’s (2000) The British Presidency. Foley (2000: 25) argued that leaders were ultimately more detached from their governments and parties than previously was the case and that leaders had become autonomous agents within the system. While Foley’s (2000) work was a systematic account of Britain, it was not until Poguntke and Webb (2005) adopted a comparative politics framework that the presidentialization thesis advanced beyond debates about indigenous idiosyncrasies to a discussion about the causal effects driving changes across democratic systems.

¹ For the purpose of this thesis, the key term ‘presidentialization’ will be spelt in the American and British style. While this is typographically inconsistent with Australian spelling, it will prevent inconsistencies between quotes and general discussion of the concept.
² To reduce the level of capitalisation throughout the thesis, terms such as prime minister, cabinet and caucus will only be capitalised when referring to specific examples. Generic use will remain in lowercase except where it is part of a quote that uses capitals.
The framework of presidentialization that Poguntke and Webb devised was based on what they perceived as the three distinct faces of presidentialization: the executive face, the party face and the electoral face (See Chart 1.1). They noted each of these “revolves around the tension between political parties and individual leaders” (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 7). The executive face of presidentialization, while inter-related with the party face, is specifically focussed on how leaders interact with their governments. Any growth in the formal powers of leaders as well as evidence of autonomous decision making is central. In Poguntke and Webb’s (2005: 9) terms: “While partified government means governing through parties presidentialized government implies governing past parties”. When examining the party face of presidentialization, Poguntke and Webb (2005: 9) were looking for a “shift in intra-party power to the benefit of the leader”. This shift may be related to the third face of presidentialization, namely the electoral face, whereby the leader appeals over the party to the electorate for their support base. Usually this would be a result of structural changes to the party giving leaders more formal powers allowing them to bypass various power bases within the party and/or as a result of a concentration of power and resources in the office of the leader (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 9). The electoral face has three central components, campaign style, media focus and voting behaviour. Campaign style is about examining whether there has been a growing emphasis on leadership appeals in election campaigns. Media focus is about examining whether the media is focussing more on leaders than previously and voting behaviour is about examining if leaders are becoming more important in the choices of voters (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 10).

By using a comparative approach and increasing the generalisability of the thesis, Poguntke and Webb (2005) achieved two things. They succeeded in broadening the debate and they also increased its clarity in definition and conceptualisation as the parameters were more explicitly defined than previously. Also, by providing a clear framework, Poguntke and Webb (2005) highlighted the difference between conditional dominance which is reversible, and has more to do with the individual in office, and structural changes which emerge as a result of a variety of causal factors that alter the

\[\text{As indicated, the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model is a work of comparative politics and as such the generalisability of the thesis has to be adequate while maintaining validity. However Karvonen (2010) has criticised the thesis for lack of comparability between data sets. Webb et al, have provided a rebuttal to these criticisms in their paper 'The Presidentialization of Party Leadership? Evaluating Party Leadership and Party Government in the Democratic World' (2011).}\]
dynamic of parliamentary and semi-presidential systems into a “de-facto presidentialization’ arrangement” (Webb et al, 2011: 3-5). This distinction is critical to a systematic examination of presidentialization and separates it from the casual observations of media commentators who have asserted that Australian politics is becoming more ‘presidential’.

Chart 1.1 – The Three Faces of Presidentialization as Conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005)\(^4\)

The evolution of the debate has allowed systematic comparative analysis to be conducted and it is this framework that will be used to examine presidentialization in the Australian context in this thesis. However, this thesis will also include a behavioural aspect as well. While the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model will be very helpful in examining formal rule changes and dramatic endogenous changes, the addition of a behavioural focus will aid in the exploration of norms and exogenous, incremental changes. As Australian federal politics has inherited the Westminster parliamentary system along with the fluid nature of conventions, this is a necessary addition so that the way power is exerted in Australian federal politics can be fully conceptualised and theorised. Thus far, the literature on presidentialization in Australia is minimal at best. Bennister (2007) used a combination of the presidentialization thesis and the core-executive model to analyse the prime ministership of John Howard compared to Tony

\(^4\) While Poguntke and Webb (2005: 7) argue that “the three faces revolve around the tension between political parties and individual leaders” they also note at various other points that each face can impact on the others. While they never explicitly depicted the faces in this manner, this graph better demonstrates the overlapping nature implicit in their framework. For instance, electorally popular leaders can use this popularity as capital to have their will implemented in government and in the party.
Blair. No other long-run in-depth studies exist of presidentialization in Australia. This thesis will contribute to the literature in a number of ways. First, it will test the thesis by examining the Australian case. Second, it will make a theoretical contribution to the literature by highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of one of the more systematic conceptualisations of the thesis, namely, the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model. Third, it will highlight areas of Australian exceptionalism as well as commonality with the findings internationally. Furthermore, while there is a general consensus within the literature that changes started to emerge around 1960 as a result of a variety of causal factors, this thesis will examine a leadership period before the year 1960, to determine if changes are as substantial as they are often believed to be.

**Research Questions**

Therefore, the primary research question of this thesis is: *Has Australian federal politics become presidentialized?* Secondary to this, the following sub-questions will be examined:

i. Has the capacity for leaders to exert power in the executive *increased*?
ii. Has the capacity for leaders to exert power in their parties *increased*?
iii. Have Australian federal election campaigns become *more* leader-centric?
iv. Poguntke and Webb (2005) argued that 1960 should be viewed as an approximate starting point for changes. Does the Australian case support their hypothesis?

**Central Argument of the Thesis**

With these research questions in mind, this thesis will argue that Australia has an institutional architecture that provides an opportunity for political leaders to be extremely powerful. They have also held these advantages for some time. It is for this reason, that Australia shows very few signs of *increasing* presidentialization in some facets of Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) framework. In other areas though, the evidence suggests that Australia has shifted towards a more presidentialized form of government.
Research Methodology and Methods

Central to this thesis is an ontologically anti-foundational approach in so much that we live in the social world and are affected by social constructions of reality (Marsh and Furlong, 2002: 19). This thesis is primarily concerned with the capacity of agents to exercise power. Therefore, an exploration of the different constructions of power is inevitable. This thesis will investigate both the institutional and behavioural power of agents. Institutions such as political parties are central to this thesis making changes in rules and structures vitally important. This institutional power can be understood using the traditional institutional approach as outlined by Rhodes (1995: 44). This approach is very successful at examining clear changes in the formal rules of institutions. However, according to Mahoney and Thelen (2010: 2), institutionalist work can often fail to account for incremental changes. Therefore this thesis will complement the institutional approach with a behavioural focus as well. As this thesis also deals with leaders (agents) and the power they possess, this approach will add an additional layer of analysis. The consequence of this is that the epistemological position of this thesis is not homogenous to constructivism but does not fit neatly into the critical realist position either. This thesis takes the view that causal inference is established based on empirical evidence. Central is the idea that not all social and political phenomena can be directly examined (Marsh and Furlong, 2002: 30). In particular, some of the most important social and political phenomena, such as power are “deep structures” in society which cannot be directly observed, yet “by positing their existence we can obtain a better explanation of social” and political action than through pure observation (Marsh and Furlong, 2002: 30-31). Therefore a variety of qualitative methods such as interviews and archival analysis will be employed in this thesis to understand contextual meanings and socially constructed realities (Moses and Knutsen, 2007: 191-5). But this thesis also makes use of quantitative techniques such as descriptive statistics to examine changes to the way that leaders are interpreted in this reality as well. The research methodology of this dissertation has been largely inductive and based in grounded theory, in so much that once the data is collected and analysed, empirical generalisation will be developed and preliminary relationships identified. Therefore, when it comes to the methods that will be employed and taking into account the heterogeneous epistemological position adopted, this thesis follows the view outlined by Sayer (2000: 19) that methods should not follow some “cookbook prescription”. Moreover, as Moses and Knutsen (2007: 14) noted “good science should be driven by questions or problems, not by methods”.
Examining the presidentialization phenomenon using predominately quantitative analysis would be extremely difficult if not impossible (Poguntke and Webb, 2005; Foley, 2000). As Poguntke and Webb observed, “How might one quantify presidentialization in a meaningful way?” (2005: 347). Fortunately, the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model of presidentialization is conceptually clear enough so that one can look for indicators of presidentialization using primarily qualitative methods. As their model is a work of comparative politics, a large international data-set already exists to compare any changes against. This will mean that any areas of exceptionalism or commonality will be easily identified. Positivists may view this approach as less methodologically rigorous than they would like, however as this thesis ontologically and epistemologically positions itself as different to the vast majority of positivist social science, this is perhaps unsurprising. In other words, this difference is reflected in not only the view this thesis takes about what we know, but also the ways in which we seek to understand the social world. The mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches used in this thesis will improve triangulation, reducing what many see as the weaknesses of using solely qualitative analytical tools.

This study has sought to replicate the conceptual framework developed by Poguntke and Webb (2005) with some important exceptions. In The Presidentialization of Politics: A Comparative Study of Modern Democracies, Poguntke and Webb (2005: 5) examined 13 country case studies by looking at what they described as “three faces of presidentialization”. These were the executive, party and electoral faces. They acknowledged the obvious issues with such an approach when they noted that they were subject to the classic problem of “the mismatch between a relatively limited number of cases and a large number of variables with potential explanatory power” (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 347). However, this thesis aims to overcome some of these problems and the criticisms directed at the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model.

One difference between this thesis and the Poguntke and Webb (2005) approach is that they examined the concept comparatively across different nations and regime types. This thesis will overcome comparability and methodology problems by providing a
more in-depth historical analysis of the concept of presidentialization within one political system, Australia’s. One of the central criticisms of how the Poguntke and Webb (2005) presidentialization thesis has been employed and contrasted has been that the empirical efforts have not been comparable (Karvonen, 2010: 10). This will not be an issue in this instance and by engaging in thick description, this thesis will be able to explore the behavioural power of agents which has been lacking in much of the literature thus far. Also, by examining the concept over a longer period of time, more precise identification of changes or trends can be identified. The Poguntke and Webb (2005) study had country experts identify changes from 1960 onwards and the evidence underpinning presidentialization was assessed through “the three-dimensional framework which looked at leaders’ positions within their party organisations, within national executives (in respect of governing parties), and within electoral arenas” (Webb et al, 2011: 3-4). This thesis will examine one country, namely Australia, and examine this case study by focussing on leadership periods of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (FPLP) over an extended period of time.

The focus on one party also differs with the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model but clear reasoning exists for this difference. First, in the conceptualisation of presidentialization Poguntke and Webb (2005) developed, political parties were critical to understanding this phenomenon. They noted that it was growing power from and within parties that accentuated leaders’ authority in the executive of government, within parties themselves as well as in the way that election campaigns are run (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 336). They also argued that the party face was central to the other faces (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 9). Therefore, by focussing on one party, this thesis will be able to plunge deeper into the phenomenon in a country with strong parties such as Australia. Adding further weight to this is that it is reasonable to assume that it is within the FPLP rather than its primary opponent in the Australian political system, the Liberal Party, in which the least amount of evidence of presidentialization would be able to be identified. The Liberal Party, created in 1944 under the guidance of Robert Menzies, has placed strong federal parliamentary leaders as one of its key principles (Brett, 2006: 212). The FPLP has traditionally viewed leaders with suspicion and through its complicated web of internal institutions, attempted to provide checks and balances on these leaders. In addition, as the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model used 1960 as the year from which to test the idea of presidentialization, this thesis will compare one leadership period before this time.
and three thereafter. This will be an important contribution to the literature as it will add evidence, from the Australian context, which will help to confirm or reject the hypothesis that the causal factors Poguntke and Webb (2005) argue contributed to presidentialization emerged after 1960.

To undertake this, the comparative case study method will be employed. According to George and Bennett, the “case study approach…has come in and out of favour over the past five decades” (2005: 5). In Rhodes’ (1995: 56) view, the strength of the comparative case method is that it “allows valid generalisations provided that there is a theoretical statement against which to compare the case studies”. The theoretical statement provided by Poguntke and Webb (2005) model is that politics in liberal democracies has become increasingly presidentialized. This dissertation will test this theoretical statement in the Australian context and any trends or counter-trends will be identified from one period to the next.

One of the critical pitfalls often attributed to case study analysis is that of selection bias where only cases that support the theory are selected. In this thesis, this will also not be a problem. In examining presidentialization in the Australian context, and within the confines of the modern Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, four separate leadership periods were chosen. As one of the three key areas to examine is the executive face, it was critical to select periods in which leaders of the FPLP became prime minister as well. As a starting point, it was decided that the focus of the study was going to be on post-World War Two leaders of the FPLP as the difficulties in comparing the modern FPLP with that of the structure closer to federation would be a difficult task in terms of the ability to access suitable sources. As a result, and with the need to select leaders who were also prime minister in mind, the leadership periods selected were Ben Chifley (1945-1951), Gough Whitlam (1967-1977), Bob Hawke (1983-1991) and Kevin Rudd (2006-2010). This left out only Paul Keating and Julia Gillard as leaders of the FPLP who were prime ministers in the post-World War Two period. As the Gillard period is incomplete it is difficult to properly analyse her period in office. Also, related to the Gillard period but as well as the Keating period was the desire to select cases across the decades. Hence, four separate periods spanning the latter part of the 1940s and the early 1950s for Chifley, the 1960s and 1970s for Whitlam, the 1980s and beginning of the
1990s for Hawke, and the first decade after the turn of the century for Rudd were selected. The leadership periods were not selected based on leadership styles or individual characteristics, but as examples from each of the periods in which the ALP governed. The closest, in terms of one period finishing and the other beginning are the Whitlam and Hawke periods. Each of these leaders will have experienced a variety of intra-government and external pressures and this plurality of experience will ensure that evaluations over whether leader domination was conditional, or if their capacities had been structurally enhanced, is based in the broadest possible sample within these periods. This is fundamentally important as it has been noted that during the Tony Blair prime ministership, as an example, that he was far more dominant in his early years than his later years (Heffernan, 2012: 4). Furthermore, as presidentialization should in theory be less evident in the FPLP than in the Liberal Party, charges relating to picking cases based on the dependent variable should not be applicable. There is of course the view in political science, most persuasively put forth by Robert Michels (1962) that social-democratic or ‘centre-left’ parties have a tendency to become oligarchic. This thesis will not be discounted and will be returned to when the findings of the thesis are discussed. However, the principal conceptual parameters for this thesis will remain the Poguntke and Webb (2005) presidentialization model with the addition of the behavioural aspect previously discussed.

**Measuring Presidentialization**

At the core of the presidentialization thesis is the notion of power and questions such as: Who holds it? How do they exercise it? Have these power resources increased? Power is a much studied, yet amorphous concept in political science. The definition most commonly used is that of Max Weber (1978: 53) who argued that “[P]ower is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests”. In Poguntke and Webb’s (2005: 7) view, autonomy is central to studying power as “leaders who enjoy greater autonomy have a larger sphere of action in which they are protected from outside interference”. They also argued that their overall power is the “combination of this protected area and their ability to use all their power resources to overcome potential resistance by others outside this protected area” (2005: 7). Therefore, they view increased power as being a result of “two processes…. [A] growth
of the zones of autonomous control” and “growing resources to overcome potential resistance” (2005: 7). Following Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) approach, this thesis will view signs of leaders having the capacity to exert more power or authority over processes and/or institutions as constituting evidence of presidentialization.

Central to Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) volume is an investigation into the ways that the capacity of leaders has been structurally enhanced. This proposition has, arguably, defined their understanding and explanation of power and the way it is exercised. However this conceptualisation is problematic when applied to a system heavily reliant on conventions such as Australia. Primarily, this has to do with Poguntke and Webb’s (2005: 5-6) binary approach to what is a conditional and what is a structural factor. The central drawback with this approach, as will be demonstrated throughout this thesis, is that how power is exercised can often have very little to do with a structural enhancement whereby something formal within these institutions has been altered. Frequently, the sources of leader power are informal and behavioural. While Poguntke and Webb (2005) do discuss the importance of conditional factors which are at times behavioural, this aspect of the framework is not explored as systematically as their exploration of structural change which normally comes in the form of a formal rule change. What this thesis will show is that a more dynamic understanding of the “processes of institutional change” that impact on political leadership could be provided by stretching the parameters of the current framework to include some aspects of constructivist methodology (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010: 3). Most notably, this would come by integrating norms into the debate.

While leaders may be able to exercise political power due to structural enhancements as Poguntke and Webb (2005) have clearly shown, they may also exercise it due to the evolution of a norm. The commonly accepted definition of a norm in International Relations (IR) is a “collective understanding about the proper behaviour of actors within a given identity” (Katzenstein, 1996: 5). While the use of norms in IR has become common to help scholars understand the behaviour of actors, it has been used relatively sparsely within political science.\textsuperscript{5} However, the integration of a behavioural dimension

\textsuperscript{5} Of course the debate over whether these are separate fields or whether International Relations is a sub-field of political science is ongoing.
would greatly improve understanding of the sources of leader power and the ways they exercise this power. Across the four leadership periods examined in this thesis, it is at times clear that the way leaders interact with institutions is due to the presence of a norm. These examples will be highlighted throughout.

There is little agreement in the literature on political leadership on how to describe the power of leaders and any increase in this power. Dominance, pre-dominance and pre-eminence are just some of the terms that have been used to describe the amount, as well as the nature of the power that leaders possess (Heffernan, 2003; Bennister, 2012). This thesis will attempt to overcome these obstacles and sources of confusion by clearly defining which terms will be used and what these terms mean. Dominance in this thesis will be defined as leaders enjoying a high degree of authority and/or prestige at a given time. However it will not be used as a sign of presidentialization. Dominance and conditionality should also not be taken to imply agency. If the actions of leaders as an individual agent are discussed, this thesis will use the term Poguntke and Webb (2005: 7) used, autonomy. Furthermore, throughout this thesis it will be noted that the Poguntke and Webb (2005) framework is the model being used to examine presidentialization. But as has been noted previously, this thesis will also be examining the behavioural focus as well. For the sake of brevity, this will not be highlighted each time the model is discussed.

**Structure and Agency**

Central to understanding the idea of presidentialization is deciphering whether changes to the system are structural or conditional. Hay (1995: 191) noted that “conceptions of structure and agency are implicit in every explanation and attribution of causality to social and/or political actors”. Conditionality often plays a part when commentators write of how ‘presidential’ elections have become within parliamentary systems or the way leaders are running their governments. Many of these claims are made without any long-run analysis as evidence. Thus, it is important to determine whether changes or signs of presidentialization are just a sign of the individual characteristics of individual leaders or something deeper.
But this is not the full story. Determining how (if at all) changes occurred, and if agents actually were able to change how things were done is also important. In general, this thesis argues that while institutions clearly have an impact on actors, these same actors can play a central role in changing institutions as well. In fact, at various points in this thesis, it is clear that agents have at least in some minor way, changed the nature of institutions. The ability of actors to be the drivers of change is especially true in political parties and particularly so in Australia’s modern political parties, who have converged around the dominant paradigm of neo-liberalism (Marsh, 2006: 125). Of the many positions taken within the structure and agency debate, the approach of this thesis takes some cues from Anthony Giddens’ structuration theory. Hay noted that: “Giddens’ aim has been to develop a hybrid theory capable of reconciling, on the one hand, a focus on the structures which are the very condition of social and political interaction, with, on the other hand, sensitivity to the intentionality, reflexivity, autonomy and agency of actors. This he has attempted to achieve through the development of a dialectical understanding of the relationship between structure and agency” (1995: 197). In particular, Giddens’ view of what agency should be understood as is incorporated throughout this thesis. Giddens (1984: 9) argued that “[A]gency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing things in the first place”. However, this thesis also recognises the criticisms of Giddens approach. For instance, this approach is not truly dialectical as it “does not allow us to study the interaction between the two” (Marsh, 2010: 216). Any analysis overlooking the interactions between the forces of structure and agency will be incomplete and this thesis will show how at various stages that changes to Australian federal politics are a product of the interaction between structures and agents who inhabit that system. It is with this in mind that key issues within this thesis, namely structural and conditional presidentialization and the capacity of agents to change structures are viewed. Hence, while these are the broad principles that will be employed, this thesis also adheres to the view that theories about structure and agency should be a guiding orientation rather than a methodology for others to follow (Stones, 2005: 5).

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6 Giddens (1984: 9) explained this further by noting that this is “why agency implies power; cf. the Oxford English Dictionary definition of an agent, as one who exerts power or produces an effect”. 
Boundaries of the Thesis

This thesis only considers presidentialization in four leadership periods of the FPLP. The reason for this is two-fold: To examine presidentialization using the framework of Poguntke and Webb (2005), an analysis of periods in government must be included. This eliminated all but six choices. As mentioned previously, the four leadership periods selected were chosen as they represented distinct periods of office. Debates over continuity and discontinuity in policy and approach of the FPLP are also not dealt with except where it is symptomatic of presidentialization. The focus of this thesis is not on the types of leaders or even the personalities, except to outline the difference between conditional and structural presidentialization. For example, while Rudd may have been a domineering leader in caucus and cabinet, this is not a sign of presidentialization, merely a sign of his personal style and as such conditional.

The thesis also only focuses on leaders from the one party, the FPLP. A similar study on the Liberal Party may have produced different conclusions. However, the Liberal Party’s top-down approach and the fact “Liberal MPs are not constrained in any way by the organisation” (Jaensch, 2009: 27) mean results in the party face may not have been radically different. Another clear limitation of the research was in identifying the actual impact that leaders have on voting intentions as part of the electoral face. This is extremely difficult to measure and very little evidence exists to support or reject this part of the Poguntke and Webb (2005) thesis. Bean and McAllister (2009: 215) have gone some way to remedying this gap in the literature; however this still requires more attention. The problem though, as Poguntke and Webb (2011, 27) noted, was that a leader’s impact on voting behaviour can lay “further back in the funnel of causality” making it almost impossible to measure.

Sources

This thesis has largely relied on primary sources ranging from archival and historical research, semi-structured interviews, memoirs, biographies as well as documents from the ALP and newspapers. Secondary sources, including journal articles and books have been used to supplement the argument. The sources used for each period are different based on availability, although the biggest difference in terms of sources used was
between the Chifley and Rudd periods. As the Rudd period is the most recent, accessibility to interview subjects was easier and the Rudd chapter has utilised this source of information extensively. The interviewees, who included FPLP parliamentarians, former state parliamentarians as well as members of the organisational wing of the party, also made general comments about broader changes to the ALP and to politics generally and these have been used throughout the thesis as well. None of these interviewees wished to have their identities remain anonymous and considering the seniority within the party of many of these participants, this aptly highlights the range of perspectives that are present within an organisation such as the FPLP. However, not everyone who was interviewed has been cited in the thesis as responses to the questions varied in terms of the cogency of the response and the link to the questions this thesis has pursued. However, this is not a reflection on the capacities of these participants. It is more due to many of the interviews being conducted quite early on. Over time, the way the central thesis question (and sub-questions) were framed has evolved making some responses less or more relevant.

Inevitably, interviews dealing with not only the micro level, but macro level history will have to face the dilemma of relying on memory and reflection as evidence. As many of the arguments made throughout this thesis have been made based not only on the statements of those involved at the time, but also their personal reflections in memoirs, biographies and interviews these have been taken as primary sources and as evidence, but not as constituting ‘truth’. Statements and reflections that have been used as seminal evidence have been substantiated wherever possible to improve triangulation. Furthermore, the relationship between agents involved has also been noted when it was feasible. For example, if members of the FPLP have been critical of the leader, or if any personal tension or context which may not be immediately obvious is important, it has been noted. As Moses and Knutsen (2007: 221) noted “constructivists recognize that meanings are open-ended – they are contingent products of contexts, actions and interpretations, and their complex interactions”. This thesis is no different and views history as an interpretive science and to use the words of EH Carr (1961: 26):

The facts are really not at all like the fishmongers slab. They are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean; and what the historian catches will depend partly on

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7 As this thesis shifts frequently between reflections, biographies and primary sources recorded at the time of certain events, for consistency present tense will be used when discussing theoretical contributions and the literature review, while past tense will be used for empirical contributions.
chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use—these two factors being, of course, determined by the kind of fish he wants to catch.

This thesis encountered two specific problems in terms of sources. First was the lack of available sources on the Chifley period, thus making this case study the most difficult to compare to the more contemporary examples. Second, a lack of electoral and media studies before the late 1970s meant that when an examination on media focus or campaign style was required, another method needed to be employed. To resolve this, an examination of three broadsheet newspapers was conducted focussing on the final two weeks of each election campaign. These were the Sydney Morning Herald (SMH), The Age and The Australian. For the Chifley leadership period, as The Australian did not yet exist, the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age were used to maintain consistency. Schwartz, when examining media coverage of the 2007 federal election, argued that:

“A strong case can be made that newspapers – and there are now only twelve capital city and national newspapers in the country- still help set agendas for other media forms. This is especially true for radio – whose talkback hosts rely heavily on newspaper reports, as do the producers of current affairs television programs. If all media outlets have a form of symbiotic relationship between each other, then newspapers still have a dominant role because they employ more journalists and reporters to create content” (2008: 115-6).

This thesis takes a similar position and argues that as newspapers have become the parameter setters for daily debates, that this represents an adequate replacement for the lack of academic analysis on media focus during these periods. To contribute to the examination then, all articles from the three broadsheet newspapers that mentioned the FPLP during the final two weeks of each election campaign (13 in total) were coded. These articles were initially divided between those articles that mentioned the leader and those that did not. Then the total sample was divided between those articles which focussed primarily on policy or those which focussed on personality, individual characteristics of the leader or on polls. In total, 8427 articles were coded. This will provide one of the more comprehensive investigations into whether Australian federal election campaigns are becoming increasingly personalised.

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8 At various stages throughout this thesis footnotes will be used to cite sources. While not strictly sticking to the Harvard style implemented throughout the remainder of this thesis, the amount of sources cited at times is very large. This approach was viewed as the best way to organise the large amount of content cited in-text.
Structure and Overview of the Thesis

Chapter Two provides a review of the literature on political leadership, presidentialization, and the FPLP. This chapter argues that there is a general consensus in much of the literature over whether leaders are becoming more powerful in Australia but that there is very little empirical data to support such a claim. Debates over whether presidentialization, leader pre-dominance or increasingly leader focussed politics exist continue to be fought fiercely by international scholars and Australian political scientists should not overlook this.

Chapter Three is the first of the case studies and examines the Ben Chifley (1945-1951) leadership period of the FPLP using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model of presidentialization. This chapter adds weight to Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) claim about the possible timing of the emergence of the causal factors that have driven leader-focussed politics because the period shows almost no evidence of the phenomenon.

Chapter Four examines the Gough Whitlam (1967-1977) leadership period of the FPLP using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model. It is within this period that the first evidence of presidentialization as conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005) can be identified. This is most obvious in the changing nature of the relationship between the leader and the party. However, there is also evidence of changes to the resources leaders have at their disposal in the executive as well as in the way the party campaigns and the focus of the media during these campaigns.

Chapter Five is an investigation of presidentialization during the Bob Hawke (1983-1991) leadership period of the FPLP. This chapter identifies many significant changes including a continuation of fundamental changes to the way the leader and the party interact as well as a further accumulation of resources the leader possesses in the executive. The election campaigns during this period maintain roughly the same level of personalisation that was evident during the Whitlam period.
Chapter Six analyses the Kevin Rudd (2006-2010) leadership period. This chapter notes that in the executive face, very little has changed from earlier periods. However, the power of the leadership vis-à-vis the party has been further accentuated. Elections have become even further personalised and leader-centric based on the evidence available.

Chapter Seven is a summation of the findings with a particular focus given to looking for trends or counter-trends from one period to the next. This chapter argues that there is clear evidence of presidentialization of Australian federal politics. However the most compelling evidence of this is in the way that leaders interact with their parties rather than in how they govern. Furthermore, there is evidence of election campaigns becoming increasingly personalised. But this phenomenon is not a new one and its roots could be identified as far back as the Whitlam leadership period.
Chapter Two - Literature Review

The literature on leadership and leaders dominating political parties is incredibly diverse. It traverses a variety of areas in political science with little consensus on why leaders have, if at all, become dominant. In fact the only consistent narrative within this varied literature is that leadership is a neglected area of political science. Walter (2008: 1) noted as much and argued that: “this is partly to do with the conventions of social science itself: its rejection of the nineteenth century emphasis on ‘the great man’ thesis of history”. Subsequently, for much of the twentieth century, leaders were rarely seen as autonomous agents in the system. They were viewed as constrained and restrained by a variety of checks and balances established as part of systems of governance. However more recently, this ‘truism’ of political science has begun to be challenged by different schools of thought. Many of these different schools can trace their historical roots to Britain in the 1960s and to the Mackintosh and Crossman thesis that cabinet government was dead and prime ministerial government the orthodoxy (Mackintosh, 1968; Crossman 1963: 51). Alternatively, there is a different school of thought, whose roots can be found in the work of classical elite theorists such as Michels (1962) and Pareto (1968) who viewed leaders as part of the problems which are inevitable in democratic systems. These schools will be examined in the way they have been set out above; with the democratic school examined first and the elite school to follow.

This chapter will also examine a second body of literature about Australian political parties. Much of the rationale for this thesis and literature review is based around the view that political parties are the dominant institution in the Australian body politic. An examination of the literature about the changes to Australian parties is therefore important. This will also be specifically relevant when examining the party face element of the Poguntke and Webb (2005) framework. The view that political parties play a central role in Australian politics is one shared by Jaensch (2006:24) and he argued that:

When King (1969, p141) wrote that ‘the political party’s role in Western industrial society today is more limited than would appear from its position of formal pre-eminence, he did not give sufficient attention to Australia, where the parties and the party system are, more than ever, the key to understanding the polity. In Australia, the domain of political parties is almost the same as the domain of politics – almost every aspect of the political system is linked in some way to political parties.
The Poguntke and Webb (2005) presidentialization thesis has seldom been applied to systems where parties are as strong as they are in the Australian case. This thesis will therefore test the Poguntke and Webb (2005) thesis in new ways, whilst still contributing to the broader literature on changing leadership modes. The dynamic between leaders and political parties is central to the presidentialization thesis, and this thesis will demonstrate how that dynamic has played out over time in the previously neglected Australian case.

Political Leadership

Studying the concentration of power around leaders is not a new discourse (See Farrell: 1971 as an example). Though, leadership is an often neglected area of political science. Bennister (2008: 336-337), for instance, argued that: “Sophisticated studies on prime ministerial leadership styles, in particular those trying explicitly to develop an internationally comparative perspective, have remained rather thin on the ground”. The literature which does discuss the idea that leaders are in the ascendancy in parliamentary democracies, has historically been anecdotal and seemingly not viewed as part of established schools of thought in political science (Bennister, 2008; ‘t Hart and Uhr, 2008: 1). Bennister’s work (2008: 336-337) - which was a comparative analysis on the pre-dominant prime ministerial periods of Tony Blair in the UK and John Howard in Australia respectively – argued that:

In contrast to the burgeoning study of leadership in other disciplines, political science has been slow to make systemic analyses of political leadership. The keenness of scholars to concentrate on institutions and structures has led to a downplaying of the role of leadership. Prime Ministers, in particular are viewed as constrained actors, dependent and contingent. Comparative angles have often been lacking in a sub field generally dominated by American work.

The lack of social scientists working on leadership has been noted in Australia in particular. James Walter (2008), when delivering the Presidential address to the Australian Political Science Association (APSA) Conference in 2008, noted; “Here is a striking instance: there are 180 papers listed for this conference—apart from this address only two are designated as dealing with leadership”. While Walter (2012: 323) acknowledged that gaps in the literature have been filled by Kane (2001) among others,
he still argued that theoretical contributions to the literature from Australia have been very minimal. Unsurprisingly then, for much of the twentieth century, Australian academic work took its cues from the UK, including an inheritance of the view that leaders are constrained actors. The debate inherited from the UK of cabinet versus prime ministerial government is an example of this (Bennister, 2008: 337). A further example relates to the dual leadership roles that political leaders play, as leaders of government as well as leaders of their political parties. The traditional view was that leaders are prisoners of their followers (‘t Hart and Uhr, 2008: 11). It was for this reason that the traditional discussion of leaders was prefaced with the assumption that leaders were neither separate nor autonomous from the system as a whole, which subsequently led to initial studies comparing systems ‘like for like’. In other words, parliamentary systems were compared with parliamentary systems and presidential systems with presidential systems. This ensured that the debate was inherently confined by these parameters and the question for parliamentary systems was more so an examination of the notion of ‘Primus Inter Pares’. It was this notion of the constrained actor that dominated the literature. Even the cabinet v prime ministerial government debate which developed during the 1960s, while refreshing in its view of leaders of having greater autonomy, still viewed these leaders as restricted, as the thesis maintained an ‘institutional approach’ in its evaluation of leadership.

Despite this, the cabinet versus prime ministerial debate still remains seminal, as it was the first analysis that viewed leaders as having the capacity to become autonomous agents. The start of this debate has been attributed to two main protagonists during the 1960s, Richard Crossman and John Mackintosh (Honeyman, 2007: 4). With Crossman’s (1963) foreword to The English Constitution now viewed as the start of this debate. In his 1968 book The British Cabinet, Mackintosh used examples of various prime ministers to show how different individuals could dominate a cabinet. Hence, while not displaying disregard for the checks and balances approach, Mackintosh was pioneering in his analysis of the validity of ‘Primus Inter Pares’. In a review of Mackintosh’s book for The Guardian, Crossman concluded by arguing that “the cabinet style of government (which Bagehot had noted was typical in his 1867 book The English Constitution) no longer existed” (Honeyman, 2007: 5). This was a real tipping

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9 Although, Bennister has noted that evidence of this debate was seen as far back as 1955 (2012: 13).
point in the literature and stimulated great debate on the merits of the Mackintosh-Crossman thesis and it was from this point that cross regime studies began.

In Hart’s (1991: 211) article *President and Prime Minister: Convergence or Divergence?* He asserts:

*that British Prime Ministers have come to dominate the cabinet because of their power to hire and fire ministers, their control over the cabinet structure, agenda and meetings, and their dispensation of patronage....and the growth of modern, disciplined, mass political parties—substantially increased the prime minister’s power. Crossman later added that prime-ministerial domination of the government publicity machine was a vital weapon in the supremacy of prime minister over cabinet and that ‘the post War epoch, has seen the final transformation of cabinet government into prime ministerial government.*

While innovative, this critique is still traditional and needs to be placed in perspective. This analysis did not view party leaders as autonomous agents. At no time did Mackintosh or Crossman claim this was presidential government or signs of ‘presidentialization’. They hedged their argument by recognising that leadership was dependent on party and colleague support and parties were still seen to be a part of the checks and balances in preventing dominance by leaders (Hart, 1991: 210). Hart accepted much of the Crossman and Mackintosh thesis but refuted the merits of the theory when it was developed into a cross-regime comparative analysis. This usually came in the form of a comparison between the British prime minister and the US president which Hart (1991: 213) argued, was a direct offshoot of the prime ministerial versus cabinet government debate. He maintained that such comparisons were erroneous and ill-conceived and claimed that, “[W]hat Mackintosh argued was that the locus of power within the cabinet system had shifted to the prime minister, not that a new system of prime ministerial government had replaced the old system of cabinet government” (1991: 210).

While this is certainly a valid critique of these early cross-regime based studies which viewed the US presidential system as the type of government parliamentary systems were edging towards, this thesis seeks to avoid these potential pitfalls. It does this by using the Poguntke and Webb (2005: 6) model and by explicitly looking for causal factors that shifted systems along the axis of partified government towards their ‘ideal’ form of presidentialized government. As Poguntke and Webb (2012: 3) have been at pains to explain, the US model is *not* the ideal model they are referring to.
we tried to derive an ideal-type of what we felt 'presidentialization' could be taken to mean from the essential logic of a system that incorporates both the popular election of the head of the executive and the separation of powers. These, we think, are the most important features defining presidential systems.

This allows the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model to move beyond discussions about individual cases to a comparative politics approach which allows us to understand whether similar changes, if there are any, are occurring across liberal democracies. In summary, the prime ministerial government versus cabinet government debate, while still viewed with suspicion by some, became the gateway to cross-border, cross-regime based studies, including studies on the power of prime ministers versus presidents.

However, this opportunity has not been taken in Australia and Bennister (2008: 337) noted that:

*The absence of a developed body of scholarly work on the prime minister and a systemic framework for studying the position may be a hangover from the British political preoccupation with the perceived demise of cabinet government...The gap has been filled somewhat in Britain in the Blair years, but in Australia detailed study of the forms, institutions and conventions through and by which political power is exercised at the centre of government is lacking.*

Investigations exploring the possibility of prime ministerial autonomy did emerge elsewhere in the wake of the Mackintosh-Crossman beginning. One of these early forays was the work of Farrell (1971) in Ireland. This has most notably, been continued on in the work of Foley (1993; 2000). Foley’s *The British Presidency* (2000), has received mixed responses within the political science community, with Heffernan (2005a: 53-54) disputing much of the thesis arguing that Foley’s book:

*is a wonderfully illuminating study of political leadership in Britain...Yet, while Prime Ministers clearly matter more than most ministers, the notion of Presidentialisation ultimately misleads. It makes little of the power dependencies found within any system of collegial government...He or she is only one actor alongside others...The Presidentialisation thesis particularly fails to acknowledge that institutional factors make it impossible for a Prime Minister to become a President.*

However, in that same year, Heffernan co-wrote a chapter on the British prime minister in Poguntke and Webb’s (Heffernan and Webb, 2005: 56) volume on presidentialization with the chapter concluding that:
We must not, of course, ever lose sight of the fact that these developments have occurred in the context of a traditionally highly partified form of parliamentarism...We do not contend that prime ministers have become completely indistinguishable from presidents, but suggest that changes have occurred across a number of political dimensions that are mutually consistent.

This further highlights the strength of the Poguntke and Webb framework and demonstrates how systematic the Poguntke and Webb (2005) thesis was compared to the still valuable contribution of Foley (2000).

Despite the extremely valuable contribution of Foley (2000), Heffernan (with Webb, 2005) was demonstrably more convinced by the Poguntke and Webb (2005) thesis and the framework they employed which was far more systematic than that employed by Foley (2000). However, Heffernan has not been alone in his criticism of theses that have emphasised leadership autonomy. Rhodes and Dunleavy (1994), Bevir and Rhodes (2006) and Smith (1999) have all contended that those advocating leader autonomy, have produced weak analyses that have been anecdotal at best. In their view, these contributors should instead have focussed on a more modernised conceptualisation of the central policy co-ordinating machinery, namely, the core executive. Dunleavy and Rhodes (1994: 12) in particular argued that when analysing executive politics, merely looking at leaders or cabinet was not enough and that other actors should not be left out including departmental ministers and bureaucrats. The Poguntke and Webb (2005) thesis goes further than Foley in actually allowing for an investigation into other actors within the core executive, including ministers, political advisers and bureaucrats and this is shown in many of the case studies in the Poguntke and Webb (2005) thirteen country comparative volume. Furthermore, as Bennister (2007: 238) has argued, there is actually an overlap between much of the literature on the core-executive and the autonomous leader literature including the presidentialization thesis. Undoubtedly, Poguntke and Webb could have more strongly defended their conceptualisation of the presidentialization thesis, especially against those that advocate the core-executive model. This is especially true considering they have provided articulate and convincing defences to the other main criticisms of the thesis which have come from Karvonen (2010) and Dowding (2012). All three critiques will be discussed below and a defence provided.
The critique from core-executive advocates has perhaps best been articulated by Rhodes, Wanna and Weller (2011). Their argument centres on the idea that there are essentially “four contested and contestable claims” about the presidentialization thesis (2011: 86). These are: due to a lack of formal rules around chief ministers that power has become more centralised; that policy making and co-ordination centralisation has increased leadership capacity; that “pluralization of advice has empowered the chief minister”; and, that the “personalization of party leadership” has increased attention on the leader. Rhodes, Wanna and Weller (2009: 110-1) further asserted that:

*Arguments that the Westminster system has been undermined by presidentialism are not persuasive. All the chatter about presidencies is often a counter to the messiness of court politics and wider party politics. The debate is also instrumental. For example, for Blair’s supporters, it was a way of promoting his standing in the party and in the country...But it matters not that the presidential analogy is misleading because the game is not about empirical accuracy.*

These criticisms do not diminish the usefulness of the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model though. To begin with, while on the one hand arguing that leaders are constrained actors, they argue that court politics is an alternative explanation. This seems incongruent as it seems to emphasise the agency of other actors over those of the leaders. Furthermore, the Poguntke and Webb (2005) thesis does not argue that the prime minister is independent of other actors. Instead, it takes its cues from Heffernan (2005b: 609) who argued: “Well resourced executive actors, such as the prime minister, are ‘less dependent’ on other actors... Tony Blair, rightly cited as an example of a powerful prime minister, does not have a monopoly of power. He does, however, have an extensive authority”. Thus, the core-executive model under-estimates the power and autonomy of leaders (Hefferenan, 2005b: 609). Furthermore, while Rhodes, Wanna and Weller (2011: 21) bemoan the lack of comparative data they seem to emphasise indigenous idiosyncrasies (with specific focus on Westminster systems), which overlooks the point that Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) model is a work of comparative politics. Finally, if a further defence was required of the use of the Poguntke and Webb (2005) thesis over core-executive models, when one examines the literature refuting the presidentialization theses, none are systematic, in-depth long term studies which examine changes to the political system. This thesis in contrast, is not only systematic, it is in-depth and attempts to identify trends and counter trends in the phenomenon.
A different criticism of the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model has come from Karvonen (2010). This critique is primarily centred on what Karvonen views as the lack of comparability between the data sets in the Poguntke and Webb (2005) volume. In particular, Karvonen (2010: 10) argues that “the conclusions are not based on comparable empirical efforts”. As Webb et al (2011: 24) have clearly shown, part of creating a feasible comparative model is identifying “a list of empirical indicators that work equally well and will be fully available across a large number of countries”. Moreover, if generalisability is not increased the phenomenon cannot be measured comparatively. Increasing the generalisability is certainly not revolutionary and as systematic and legitimate as many other comparative studies despite the misgivings of area specialists (Webb et al, 2011: 24-25). In addition, this criticism will not be relevant for this thesis as comparability is increased even further by focussing on leaders from the one party and by basing the analysis of each leadership period on comparable empirical efforts, the central criticism Karvonen (2010) held.

Keith Dowding has provided perhaps the most vitriolic critique of the presidentialization thesis to date arguing that the thesis should “be expunged from political science vocabulary” (2012: 1). Dowding (2012: 2) asserted that “the forces identified as presidentialization are better seen as personalisation of politics”. He contends that any centralisation of decision making within the executive takes us further away from ‘presidentialism’ and that any power prime ministers have accrued makes them less like the United States (US) president, not more, because prime ministers have always been more powerful. This thesis agrees with much that Dowding (2012: 2) has to say on changes within liberal democracies. He acknowledges that there is evidence of centralisation, a growth in institutional resources and that a personalisation of politics is occurring. However, this thesis contends that the presidentialization thesis is not merely the personalisation thesis re-packaged. Webb et al (2011: 21) have demonstrated that the personalisation thesis does not sufficiently account for structural changes within the executive and within parties which have enhanced the capacity for leaders to dominate. Moreover, as argued previously, the presidentialization thesis as conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005) is not about specific regime types, but an ideal type of presidential system.
Dowding (2012; 2013a; 2013b) certainly has a point about the differences between presidential and parliamentary systems and perhaps referring to the phenomenon as presidentialization, rather than pre-dominance and/or pre-eminence, as others prefer, has been problematic, but this obscures what the thesis is truly about, namely whether leaders are more powerful and central to politics than previously (See Heffernan, 2003 and Bennister, 2012: 20 for more on this). Put simply, Dowding’s (2012: 16) argument that we should not view these changes (if there any) as inter-connected is not shared in the conceptual boundaries established for this thesis. In fact, one of the central points of the Poguntke and Webb (2005 and 2012) work has been to show that these factors need to be viewed collectively as any changes can have far reaching effects on political leadership within modern liberal democracies. This point will be returned to in an analysis of the findings as it is a critical debate within the literature at present. This thesis contributes to this debate by providing an in-depth long-run analysis considering whether the different phenomenon’s effecting leaders should be viewed under the one umbrella.

The personalisation thesis Dowding (2012) was referring to, has been examined by a number of contributors (See Graetz and McAllister, 1987; Bean and Mughan, 1989; Bean, 1993 as examples). In essence, the personalisation of politics refers to the idea that democratic systems are experiencing fundamental changes “without any concomitant change in their formal institutional structures” (McAllister, 2005: 2). This is obviously not vastly different from the presidentialization thesis and Walter and Strangio (2007: 12) in No Prime Minister: Reclaiming Politics from Our Leaders concluded that “as greater expectations are invested in leaders, more extensive responsibilities are delegated to them by the parties and the public and they consequently act as superheroes”. Furthermore, Bennister (2008) for example, noted that “the leadership of the country is embodied by the prime minister, and the currency placed on these leaders in a mediatised world has increased as institutions such as parties have declined”. Poguntke (2000: 7) is also in agreement with using the term ‘personalisation’ to describe “[T]he growing influence of candidate effects on voting choice”.

However, as was noted previously, the personalisation thesis deals primarily with the changing capacity of agents. While still important, any study of these trends needs to
examine structural changes to the system as well. Therefore this thesis agrees with Poguntke (2000: 7) who maintained that the process of “[P]residentialization is something entirely distinct and worth examination”. While the ‘personalisation’ thesis certainly has its merits, this thesis will follow the separation of the concepts, as developed by Poguntke (2000) as well as Poguntke and Webb (2005). The work by Poguntke (2000) and Poguntke and Webb (2005) is at the forefront of the field in this area and the empirical evidence uncovered in ‘The Presidentialization of Politics’, highlighted its value with all of the thirteen country case studies, showing signs of the presidentialization trend. In particular, it was Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) unique three-face conceptualisation, which noted that changes in the electoral face impacted on the party and executive faces and vice-versa which moved debates about personalisation forward.

A thorough investigation of the presidential trend in Australia is not only timely considering the opportunity for comparative analysis as a result of Poguntke and Webb (2005), but will add much to the literature as it relates to perceptions of post-Cold War politics being devoid of ideologies and visions. This shift has meant that leadership personalities and styles have become more important. In short, what is happening in terms of the growing concentration of power and authority in leaders can tell us much about the story of contemporary politics in liberal representative democracies.

**Literature on the ALP**

An examination of the literature on the FPLP is important for two separate but important reasons. First, as this thesis is an examination of presidentialization in Australia using the FPLP as a case study, a review of the literature on the FPLP is required. Second, a central aspect of the presidentialization thesis conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005) is the party face element. It is this face which is central to the whole thesis as it acts as the conduit between the other faces, namely the executive face and the electoral face. Or in Poguntke and Webb’s (2005: 7) words, presidentialization revolves “around the tension between political parties and individual leaders”. This tension between party and leader is particularly prevalent in the FPLP, which has historically been suspicious of leaders.
The literature on the FPLP can generally be grouped into camps. The first is the work of academics which examines changes (or continuity) in the party, and these are usually related to a broader school centred on the declining relevance of political parties (For example, Johnson, 1989 and 2011; Jaensch, 1989; Beilharz, 1994). The second are the biographies and party testimonials, such as True Believers (Macintyre and Faulkner, 2001; also see McMullin, 1991), which while still celebrating defining elements of the party such as the conference or the factions, acknowledge that power has often been wielded by a select few, who have altered the destiny of the party. Both of these will be examined in the section that follows which looks at the central themes in much of the literature on the party.

The tension that exists in democratic leadership, especially within a political party, has been a key theme in much of the literature on the FPLP. This argument has most recently been canvassed in the work of Walter and Strangio in their volume No, Prime Minister: Reclaiming Politics From Leaders (2007).\textsuperscript{10} In it, Walter and Strangio (2007: 57; see also Jaensch, 2006: 26) noted that as far back as 1967, the FPLP leadership was making changes to centralise the power in the hands of the parliamentary leadership. These changes are important and can be seen as similar to changes to the British Labour Party under Neil Kinnock which have been accentuated under Tony Blair. In fact, Warhurst and Parkin (2000: 34)\textsuperscript{11} have argued that leader domination is one of the great ironies of the FPLP, considering their emphasis on collective decision making:

\textit{Labor’s parliamentary leader, at any particular time, seems to embody the public image of the party. It seems so obvious that it is Kim Beazley or Bob Hawke or Gough Whitlam who has represented the party in the public eye that it is worth restating how much this is in conflict with much of the basic, ‘mass party’ ethos. Labor tradition has tried to constrain its leaders: even after winning the parliamentary Caucus vote which gives them their leadership office, the leaders must also accept the Caucus decision about who will be in their Ministry or Shadow Ministry. On the other hand, Labor's parliamentary leader has always loomed large from the beginning of the party’s history.}

The leader domination and the attempts to accrue more powers for the leadership vis-à-vis the organisational wing of the party is certainly important for the party face aspect of the presidentialization thesis. In particular, the role of agency seems to be under-played in many of the accounts of presidentialization. Therefore, this thesis will look for signs of agency that have been overlooked in the literature and this will mean that the role

\textsuperscript{10} However, it should be noted that Walter and Strangio (2007) is not FPLP specific and looks at leaders from both major parties.

\textsuperscript{11} Walter also noted that “Bob Carr has recently reminded us that the ALP has always been divided between an ethos of working for the common good, and a cult of leadership” (2008: 3).
Whitlam and others have had on shaping the party face is worthy of further examination. Other factors that have been touched on in the literature as central to, or as a sign of changes to the FPLP include: the declining membership and the death of the FPLP as a mass party; the centralisation of power; structural changes to the party; and discontent over a reduction in democracy. All of these factors will now be examined.

The Declining Membership and Death of the FPLP as a Mass Party

A related but different theme in the literature is the debate over where the party is headed and if this is in the right direction. Frequently, this focuses on the effects of a declining membership and the ‘death’ of the FPLP as a mass party. Warhurst & Parkin (2000: 7-8) are key contributors to this debate. They note that “Labor like other parties, exists in an anti-party age. The very justification for their existence is now frequently questioned”. The declining membership of the FPLP is similar to other major political parties in Western democracies and has been touched on by a number of contributors (Warhurst & Parkin, 2000; Jaensch, 2006; Ward, 2006; Swan, 2002; and Button, 2002). An accurate figure of FPLP membership is hard to ascertain, with figures provided quite varied, however there is consensus that the membership is in a great decline with former Senator Chris Schacht for example arguing “that the ALP membership is about the same as the membership of the Adelaide Football Club. It is a woeful figure” (Jaensch, 2006: 28).

Jaensch (2006), in contrast, sees the declining membership as a sign of the party becoming less representative internally and more leader dominated. In particular, Jaensch (2006: 30) argues that over time, the FPLP has shifted from its traditional mass party model towards a catch all and even perhaps cartel model. This has reduced the need for a traditional mass party model, with thousands of branch members actively campaigning. Contributing to this change has been the “development of oligopolies of factions and unions, and for all parties by public funding” (2006: 30). Arguments that these changes have made Australian politics more democratic are not consistent with what has been found in practice (Jaensch, 2006: 31).
Similar arguments can be found in Walter (2006: 6); McAllister (2004: 2); and Button (2002). Walter (2006: 6), as well as Walter and Strangio (2007), have perhaps come the closest to agreeing with the presidentialization thesis (without explicitly spelling this out). For instance, Walter (2006: 6) argued: “There is less focus on policy, and more on the personality of the leader. Leadership effects on voting outcomes are now widely recognised. All of this gives the leader a licence and impact unmatched in former party structures”. The one thing that is generally agreed on in the literature is the moment when things started to change in Australian politics, namely 1967; the year Gough Whitlam became FPLP leader (Jaensch, 2006: 24; Walter and Strangio, 2006: 56).

Placed in its historical context, one can see why much of the literature views this as an important moment: the 1966 Federal election was a low point for the ALP electorally. They lost further ground to a post Menzies Coalition, with the result in the House of Representatives meaning the Coalition had double the amount of members of the FPLP. However, one question that this thesis will explore is: What role has agency played? For instance, while much of the literature does discuss structural changes to the polity, it fails to explicitly link these changes to the changing nature of the FPLP in any substantive way.

One example of these structural changes altering the FPLP has been described by Mills (1987: 1-2; see also Warhurst and Parkin, 2000:7). As the dominant mediums for mass communication changed the FPLP looked to the US for inspiration. The model first applied to South Australian Premier Don Dunstan’s re-election campaign was replicated federally which used:

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\textit{sophisticated opinion research and extensive television advertising, both borrowed originally from the world of American Corporate marketing...In 1972, Labor repeated the formula at the Federal level, sweeping to power for the first time in 23 years...The success of the campaign institutionalised market research and mass advertising in Australian political practices, it rewrote the book, setting new high water marks for centralised and costly electioneering.}
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The changes to the FPLP are not inconsistent with Michels’ (1962) argument about political parties, in particular ‘left’ or ‘centre-left’ political parties becoming dominated by elites. However, when placed within the context of the presidentialization debate, the timing of these changes to the FPLP parallels the timing of changes to politics internationally as described by Poguntke and Webb (2005: 18). In particular, they
argued that many of the causal factors, including the decline of cleavage politics and the mass use of television, leading to presidentialization did not emerge till around 1960. Hence, the model conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005) can account for these changes to Australian political parties and offers a view different from much of the other literature, which up to this point, has provided an under-developed explanation of the sources of leader power.

Centralised Power

A different school of literature, but no less important for this thesis, is that which examined if power is becoming increasingly centralised in the hands of the parliamentary leadership. Walter (2010) and McAllister (2004) are central protagonists in this debate. In particular, they argue that many functions of the party have been replaced by the role of the prime minister and opposition leaders and that “weaker voter attachment enhances the role of the leader” (2010: 325). This emphasis on greater personalised leadership, according to Walter (2010: 331), has increased the strength of leader convictions which in turn has driven policy decisions. However, the real question is still; why has power been centralised? This has not really been determined and is a weakness of the literature.

One of the most controversial decisions on FPLP party structure, as acknowledged by many including Ward (2006: 72), Warhurst and Parkin (2000: 29), Manning (1996: 37-38) and Button (2002: 41-42) is the shift of power away from the state branches and the national conference. While the national conference still theoretically holds the position of the chief decision making body of the party, the parliamentary leadership have all but absolved the conference of responsibility for policy decisions. “To some extent, the parliamentary leadership has shifted from being delegates of the working class to being the ‘trustees’ of party policy” (Sawer and Zappala, 2001: 47). This shift of the locus of power, has prompted Ward to argue that the pledge taken by Labor parliamentarians is merely symbolic and that while “the formal constitution of the Labor Party fixes its National Conference at the apex of a pyramid which rises on a base of thousands of local branches of the ALP throughout Australia, in practice not only has the National
Conference surrendered power to decide party policy, but Labor’s base of thousands of local branches is also now substantially hollow” (2006: 72-73).

The reasons listed for such a change are varied, but Jaensch argues that even though the FPLP’s structure positions the caucus as “delegates of the platform and the membership”, the FPLP have had increasing room to move. As the parliamentary party are a permanent entity, the national conference is only held every two years, meaning the parliamentary wing need to make policy, which can at times differ from the platform (2006: 33). Ward notes that the ALP has “followed in the footsteps of the LPA by allowing its parliamentary leadership to effectively decide policy” (1991: 171-1). As Ward (2006: 72) explains, there is a stark contrast to the party of contemporary times and the one of four decades ago;

To grasp how Labor has altered we need only recall the occasion in March 1963 when its federal leader and deputy parliamentary leaders were photographed outside Canberra’s Kingston Hotel awaiting the decision of Labor’s National Executive which was meeting within to decide whether the Labor Opposition would oppose plans by the US to build a communications facility in Australia's northwest.

Perhaps even more glaring is the fact that in 1966, the national executive almost expelled Gough Whitlam after he referred to them as the ’12 witless men’. This would be entirely unthinkable in the contemporary party where leaders exert their influence in all of these intra-party institutions as they are a part of all of them (Lloyd, 2000b: 52).

An alternative view in the literature comes from Rodney Cavalier, former member of the NSW parliament. Cavalier concurred with the theory that the dominance is not new, however he has suggested that to understand the dominance of the leadership one has to go even further back into the past: “Labor has become a cartel party dependent on the unacknowledged largesse of the taxpayer….A party does not have to be democratic to survive or prosper. The ALP for much of the time since 1916 is living proof of that. Self-perpetuating oligarchies are the norm for preferment within most parties around the world” (2006: 62). Cavalier (2010) is of the belief that 1916 and the battle over conscription destroyed the fabric of the party as this was the year that the affiliated unions took control of the party and they have strangled internal democracy ever since. Cavalier’s thesis, which situates the dominance of the parliamentary elite further into
the past than anyone else in the literature, is evidence of the deeper problems the party is still facing. Namely, that societal pressure is making it increasingly difficult for political parties with prescriptive institutions who are founded on the idea of collectivism, such as the FPLP, to govern in a manner that is viewed acceptable by many. This does not mean that it is not possible. Merely that it is providing leaders with the capacity to wriggle free of their democratic constraints.

Former FPLP leader, Mark Latham (2005a), who also diagnosed a centralisation of power, has gone so far as to give a lecture on ‘Ten Reasons Why Young Idealistic People Should Forget about Organised Politics’. Latham advised that being politically active in a political party these days means you wouldn’t be joining what people understand political parties to be about “but a political machine—an oligarchy dominated by opportunism, careerism and acts of bastardry. This is the unhappy story of Labor’s culture over the past twenty years” (2005b: 5). The Latham critique of the FPLP and its leadership may be interpreted as ‘sour grapes’, but it cannot easily be dismissed as Latham does at least attempt to relate his experience back to political theory, namely that of Michels (1962).

Fifty years ago, in his book Political Parties, Robert Michels argued that prominent Left-wing movements inevitably fall under the influence of paid officials and apparatchiks, men more committed to the bureaucratic control and administration of the party than the radical transformation of society. My experience inside the ALP replicates the Michels model. As the diaries show, I thought about these issues for nearly a decade but was never able to find a feasible solution. Others might have more success in the future, but my conclusions then, as now, are overwhelmingly pessimistic. I cannot see a way of overcoming the machine men and their influence (Latham, 2005b: 6).

The ‘machine men’ Latham refers to are those who dominate the factions. In a party such as the FPLP, the manner in which leaders could be held to account or how decisions were traditionally made was through a process of negotiation and compromise with state branches, and more recently with the factions. As Xandra Faulkner (2005: 82) highlights, when discussing how local members of the ALP are chosen as delegates to attend the national conference, “[U]usually, two of the factions will make a deal to give each other their preferences, ensuring that people at the top of their faction ticket are elected”. However, the factions, especially more recently, have become central to leader domination of the party. At various points over the last twenty years, some thought the stranglehold of the factions had been broken. For instance, Paul Keating commenting
after the election of Latham to the leadership viewed the moment as “a victory for a new beginning and a defeat for the bankrupt factional operatives” (cited in Donovan, 2004: 8). Rodney Cavalier (2006: 58) on the other hand, is less optimistic and argues that real changes will only occur once a fundamental change in the relationship between the party and the unions transpires: “[U]nions are the creature of faction; factions are the instrument of unions. They are indivisible. Break union control, and the faction system breaks with it. Workers, note are not part of this equation”. This antipathy is not directed at the unions though. In Cavalier’s (2006: 59) sights are the careerists who have come to dominate the unions; those who have spent “a career and working life spent wholly inside the ALP political class”.

Changes to the Party and Discontent over a Reduction in Democracy

Interconnected with the literature on the factions is the body of work which laments changes away from the mass ethos which has produced discontent within the party. Warhurst and Parkin (2000), Ward (2006) and Button (2002) are notable contributors, each of which is generally in agreement. In their views, any reform process has either been delayed or ignored by powerbrokers. After each federal election (especially loses), the ritual call for greater internal democracy is heard. Often these make their way into the internal party reviews conducted since the 1960s and 1970s. For instance, the 1978 National Committee of Inquiry had as one of its key terms of reference “the most effective functioning of the party in terms of the involvement and satisfaction of party members”. In almost every review done since this time recommendations proposing greater internal democracy have also been made (Warhurst & Parkin, 2000: 29).

Once again, the election of Gough Whitlam as leader of the FPLP in 1967 is seen as a crucial point and Warhurst and Parkin (2000: 31) argued that:

*Increasing the power of the politicians was, after all, one of the explicit goals of the important reforms instituted during and since Gough Whitlam became National Parliamentary leader in 1967. At that time, the National Conference consisted of six members nominated by each State Conference, and did not necessarily include parliamentary leaders. Campaigns by Whitlam and later reforms, most recently in 1994, led to today’s larger Conference and revamped executive, which includes the four national parliamentary leaders and each of the State parliamentary leaders and, in practice, a very large representation of elected politicians beyond the leaders.*
Ward (2006) and Button (2002) in particular characterise the reform process since this time as largely superficial and that despite the size of the national conference has increased, the situation has, if anything, deteriorated for members, as decisions for policy are either subsequently ratified or the platform ignored. Examples of this behaviour include the sale of uranium to France in the 1980s, refugee policy in 2001, as well as the sale of Qantas and telecommunication policies. Button argues that “the parliamentary party should not act in defiance of the national conference without some sort of ratification” and that conference delegates are tired of the “sterile, managed conferences where the outcomes of the debates are pre-determined by factional deals. There are few genuine debates and unity as a media offering is preferred to any public disagreement or robust debate” (2002: 41-42).

For Warhurst and Parkin, the Hawke and Keating leadership periods were the point that the “[P]rime Minister began to exercise considerable influence over the process” of selection of a ministry” (2000: 35). This assertion is worthy of further investigation in this thesis as is the assertion that Rudd had more power in making these types of decisions than any other leader previously (see for example Karvelas, 2007: 4, Stuart, 2007: 23, Franklin, 2007: 3, The Mercury, 2007: 2). However, the initial evidence from the literature suggests that Rudd does not deviate far from the pattern of his prime ministerial predecessors.

According to Manning (1996: 37-38) and Blewett (2000: 388-9) central to this dominance of the leader has been the nature of the campaigns that the party has run. In particular, they argue that since the Hawke period, campaigns have become increasingly presidential and that greater centralisation has moved power even further away from the machine towards the senior factional leaders. The result of which has been to take much of the responsibility for campaigning out of the hands of the organisational wing of the party. The consequences of this shift are that the base, unsurprisingly, feel the party is undemocratic. Button is of the belief that the situation is so dire that the ALP is no longer even representing contemporary Australia. “It’s national body has become an offshore island adrift from the rest of the party, inaccessible to its rank and file, a barren and rocky outcrop untouched by new ideas” (2002: 4).
This is a damning critique of an organisation meant to be based on the idea of collectivism and Walter and Strangio (2007: 57) have argued that election results lead to deference to the leader by other members. “[W]hat is undeniable about the dominant parties is that they are capital-intensive, professional, centralised and dependent on the projection of effective leadership. ...this means the leaders can transform party philosophy and approach as Hawke and Keating did to Labor and Howard to the Conservatives, hence the reason for the constant shifting leadership is the parties are searching for the next messiah”. This is a stunning observation considering this was written before the demise of Rudd as leader of the FPLP and contrasts with much of what was said around the same time. For example, one commentator claimed that “Rudd is forging a unique style of leadership that is changing the way politics is conducted in this country. Almost by stealth, he is reshaping the manner in which we are governed and redefining – perhaps forever – the role of Prime Minister” (Stewart, 2009: 14). Past FPLP heavyweight, Graham Richardson, was closer to the mark when he asserted that;

*If you’ve watched the Labor Party since the last election this is not about New Labor, this is all about Rudd Labor. He picks the ministry so the power of the caucus is being rightly diminished. It’s a one-man-band. A lot of people don’t like that situation. All they can say is it’s working, as long as it’s working, no-one is going to try and undo it (‘Q and A’, 2009).*

**Conclusion**

In summary, much of the literature supports the idea that centralisation has been happening and this decline in internal democracy fits much of what Michels (1962) predicted. But it also is indicative of the presidentialization phenomenon described by Poguntke and Webb (2005). The advantages the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model has over the Michels thesis, is twofold. First, while political parties are obviously central, the Poguntke and Webb (2005) framework is based on what they see as more complex changes within political systems, including changes to the media and the executive. Furthermore, the Poguntke and Webb (2005) framework is more clearly conceptualised, with indicators specifically chosen so that a clear barometer for measuring changes is established. For these reasons, it is the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model which will be used to examine if Australian politics has become presidentialized.
Any investigation that explores the areas of leadership and political parties is going to encounter a varied and complex literature. In spite of this, some general conclusions can be made based on the literature explored. First and foremost, while many commentators agree that power is becoming centralised, argument emerges when one tries to identify when this centralisation began, what were the driving forces behind it and what these changes actually mean. This thesis aims to answer these questions as well as the central question: has Australian federal politics become presidentialized? Second, this review has shown that while there is general agreement among scholars over many of the changes, a lack of systematic studies means that this thesis is a timely and necessary addition to the literature. While the thesis certainly has links to different strands of political theory as has been shown in this literature review and anecdotal evidence of changes has been produced, large-scale empirical studies are required to more clearly distinguish between the role played by institutions and individual agency in the emergence of leader-centric trends.

Chapter Three - The Chifley Leadership Period 1945-1951 - The Golden Era and the Return to the Opposition

This chapter will examine the period in which Ben Chifley was the leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party from 13 July 1945, till his death on 13 June 1951. The evidence underpinning presidentialization will be assessed using Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) framework. This includes examining the position of leaders within the executive arm of government, within their own parties and also during elections (Webb et al, 2011: 3-4; Poguntke and Webb, 2005). This chapter will sketch out the historical background of the period to provide a context for the analysis to follow. It will then argue that very little evidence of presidentialization in the Chifley leadership period is identifiable. However, this is consistent with Poguntke and Webb’s (2005: 18) contention that many of the causal factors which have contributed to presidentialization did not emerge till 1960, including the decline of cleavage politics and the mass use of television. This chapter will be important in two other ways. First, by examining a leadership period before the 1960 baseline, this thesis will provide an important test case to determine the validity of the post-1960 hypothesis of Poguntke and Webb (2005). Second, this chapter will provide an important base to measure evidence of presidentialization against in the later periods examined in this thesis. As this was a time before television in Australia, with the dominant medium still being radio and with cleavage politics and class remaining an important factor in voting, this period provides an important basis against which to measure the emergence of presidentialization trends in subsequent decades.

Historical Background

This section will do two things. It will touch on Chifley’s rise within the ranks of the FPLP. Secondly it will provide a historical context to some of the key events that will be analysed using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model. For this chapter, this will include issues such as post-war re-construction, the Bretton Woods Agreement,

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12 McAllister (1992: 72) for example argued that “[T]here seems little doubt that the decline in the electoral importance of class has been substantial” (but occurred mainly between 1967 and 1979).
attempts to nationalise the banking system, industrial unrest and the influence of Communism on Australian federal politics.

Australia in 1945 was a country ravaged economically and psychologically from war efforts and with a population weary of war time austerity (McMullin, 2006: 257-265). In this environment, Australians looked to their federal government to start the post-war reconstruction. Ben Chifley became Australian prime minister in July 1945, with one month left to run in World War Two. He had been a prominent figure in the Labor government during the war and was noted as a calming influence on Prime Minister John Curtin and others. As he was Treasurer during John Curtin’s prime ministership, Chifley, with the support of his colleagues, decided to continue on in the role during his prime ministership. Fred Daly, Labor Member of Parliament (MP) at the time, noted that while “the war was Curtin’s task, the post-war years were Chifley’s” (Daly, 1977: 35).

Chifley’s ascent to the leadership was not something that came quickly or without sacrifices along the way. In fact his climb to the top of the FPLP was more incremental than rapid and came on the back of an apprenticeship that included losing his seat of Macquarie in 1931, when he was serving as the Defence Minister in the Scullin government before it was unceremoniously dumped by an electorate struggling with the Depression. Chifley regained the seat nine years later before becoming Treasurer from 1941 under Curtin. In many respects it was the experience of losing his own seat that made Chifley aware of the importance of understanding the concerns of the electorate. Don Rodgers (1971: 26), Chifley’s Press Secretary, argued Chifley cared for his own electorate more than most parliamentarians and he remained heavily involved throughout his prime ministership and would often finish off the week in Canberra and then drive around the centres of his electorate.

The enthusiasm Chifley demonstrated for his local community meant that most locals were aware of Chifley’s expertise in financial matters and he was often asked to lend a hand in a variety of areas. For example, Chifley’s reputation for steady economic
management led the Abercrombie Shire on the outskirts of Bathurst, to ask if he could come and manage their books, even though he was not even a ratepayer in the area. The Council arranged a piece of land to be registered to Chifley so he could become a councillor and over time he became President of the council (Rodgers, 1971: 26). Moreover, while he was prime minister, he actually ran in the council elections and was defeated. The contrast with contemporary politics could not be starker and Rodgers (1971: 26) mused that; “it’s probably the only occasion in world history, I should imagine, when a Prime Minister was defeated in a shire council election”.

Despite the obvious differences between Australia in the 1940s and the contemporary manifestation, one similarity remains; then and now are both periods in which the dominant macroeconomic policy orthodoxy has come under scrutiny. Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno (2011: 100-1) argue that when Chifley took the leadership, he did so at a time when global consensus had shifted to favouring greater intervention in the economy. The creation of ‘welfare states’, allowed the FPLP to integrate their “old belief in modifying market outcomes in pursuit of social justice with the British economist John Maynard Keynes’ call for increased government activity to smooth out the economic cycle”. Key to Chifley and the FPLP’s vision for the Australian economy was the goal of full employment and in May 1945 a White Paper was tabled setting out the ways that the government was going to attempt to achieve this (Crisp, 1967: 43).

Central to this goal were Australia’s post-war development projects. This included Australia starting to develop a domestic motor vehicle industry in the form of Holden cars, which Chifley made possible by negotiating for the Commonwealth Bank and Bank of Adelaide to put up money for the initial production. In July 1945, Chifley also set up the Hydro-Electric Authority, which as a body created the conditions for the Snowy Mountain Hydro Scheme to be a success (Carroll, 2004: 176-7). However to achieve many of the nation-building objectives the party had embraced, they also had to embrace mass immigration. While the White Australia policy was still in effect, the government created a hugely successful scheme of assisted European migration to achieve its goals (McMullin, 2000: 259).

13 Chifley’s home town and part of his Macquarie electorate.
Labor returned to the polls in 1946 facing the newly formed Liberal Party of Australia and won the election albeit with a reduced majority (30 seats down to 17) and despite a four per cent swing against the government (McMullin, 2000: 259). In late 1946, the ALP was required to make a decision on whether they should ratify the Bretton Woods Agreement which created the International Monetary Fund. For many within the Labor movement, it was impossible to view the debate without reference to the experience of the Labor Scullin Government who many in the movement believed had suffered at the hands of the banking industry (McMullin, 1991: 243; Love, 1984: 158-164). According to Love, supporters and opponents of ratification alike, viewed their decision as the best way to prevent the high financiers of global capitalism impacting on the livelihood of the working class (Love, 1984: 162-163). Chifley who supported the agreement eventually won over a majority in the caucus however this only came after an extended period of debate within the caucus and the party generally. The Bretton Woods Agreement will form an important part of the analysis of the executive face of presidentialization during the Chifley leadership period.

Labor’s antipathy to the ‘money power’ which has been described as “one of the party’s oldest and most firmly held articles of faith” was also evident in the reaction of the parliamentarians to banking legislation (Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno, 2011: 103). In particular, when the High Court in 1947 ruled part of the government’s 1945 Banking Act unconstitutional, many within the party were unsure how the party would proceed. When Chifley suggested the party should nationalise banking before every aspect of their banking legislation was challenged, many within the party “were amazed, then jubilant” (McMullin, 2000: 263). As expected, the banks and their supporters launched a large political and legal counter-offensive, the size of which was unmatched at the time (McMullin, 2000: 264). The issue dominated the next two years and after the High Court declared the 1947 Banking Act unconstitutional and the government unsuccessfully appealed to the Privy Council, the two sides eventually came to an agreement that the original 1945 Banking Act was actually acceptable to both sides. The war with the banks however, had cost the government considerable support within the community (Love, 1984: 177; McMullin, 2000: 264). The bank nationalisation saga is a seminal case study in Australian politics as it showcased the importance of class during
this period. For Love (1984: 165), this was “a kind of ideological revenge for 1930-31”. With so many factors at play, examining the decision making of Chifley during this period will provide an interesting comparison to later leadership periods. This will be examined in the executive face section in addition to the Bretton Woods Agreement.

This was however not the end of the problems for Chifley and his colleagues in the lead up to the 1949 election. Industrial unrest was on the rise and many unions were attempting to retain temporary benefits provided during the war or to extend these benefits (Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno, 2011: 105). The strike that was most troubling for the government was the 1949 coal miner’s strike. The government suspected Communist influences in the dispute and Chifley’s decision to introduce special legislation which led to jail sentences for union leaders, the freezing of funds and using the military to work on behalf of the miners divided the party and the community (Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno, 2011: 105 and McMullin, 2000: 265). This dispute provides another important case study of the way decisions were made during the Chifley period in office and will also be examined in the executive face section.

The 1949 election, held on 10 December, resulted in a huge defeat for the FPLP. Their opponents won a 27 seat majority in the House of Representatives and would hang on to power for another 23 years. However, in spite of the loss, the caucus made no case for a change from Chifley’s leadership. In fact, according to Crisp they “begged him not to retire and accorded him repeated unanimous re-election” (1960: 253).

As the 1950s began, the FPLP could not have possibly imagined how bad the decade was going to be for them. An early sign came when the Menzies Government introduced the Communist Party Dissolution Bill which immediately proved divisive within the party. Eventually, the federal executive, who were still in charge of party policy, decided to vote in support of the bill, a decision Chifley opposed but accepted nonetheless. Some of Chifley’s colleagues, however, were less willing to accept the decision. H.V Evatt, Labor’s deputy leader, took the legislation before the High Court and had it overturned (Day, 2001: 518-9; Scalmer, 2001: 93; McKinlay, 1981: 106).
In the subsequent election, on 28 April 1951, the FPLP was forced to confront the propaganda about Communism on two fronts, with internal pressure from a group of Catholics led by B.A Santamaria who were known as ‘The Movement’\(^{14}\) as well as from the government who continued to label the FPLP as Communist sympathisers (See for example Liberal Party Election Advertising in \emph{SMH}, 1951a: 7 and \emph{SMH}, 1951c: 5). Despite a small five seat swing back to the FPLP in the House of Representatives, bringing the majority back to 17 seats, the FPLP lost control of the senate to the government. Soon after, on 13 June 1951, Chifley died. The Communist Party Dissolution Bill is important to this chapter as it showcases the decision making processes of the party out of government. It also provides the opportunity to examine Chifley’s capacity to unilaterally make policy and bypass the party, a question pertinent to the party face section.

\textbf{Analysis of the Chifley Leadership Period}

The following section will examine the Chifley leadership period using the three-dimensional framework as outlined by Poguntke and Webb (2005). In the executive face, some of the more critical policy decisions will be evaluated for traces of presidentialization. Also, in the executive face, any growth in the resources at the disposal of the prime minister will be examined. For the party face, the focus will be on changes to the structure of the party and the decision making around the Communist Party Dissolution Bill. Finally, for the electoral face section in this chapter, two of the three central components of Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) conceptualisation will be examined. Campaign style will consider what type of campaigns the party ran during the elections of this period. While the media focus section will look at the way in which the media reported on these campaigns. Unfortunately, because of the absence of polling data, it is not possible to explicitly assess leader effects on voting but this will be included in the remaining case studies.

\^{14} This group were essentially an anti-communist pressure group within the ALP who had the support of the Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr Mannix (McKinlay, 1981: 100). Chifley was not supportive of ‘The Movement’ despite his Irish Catholic background and did not agree with what had become known as Catholic Social Theory. The Movement, whose strength lay in the Victorian branch, did not have similar support in other states (McKinlay, 1981: 106). The 1951 election was dogged internally by the friction the Movement most notably in Victoria, which set out to punish Chifley and Evatt, who in particular had become the primary target of the extremist right wing elements within the party for his support of the right for the Communist party to exist (McKinlay, 1981: 108-9; Day, 2001: 475-9).
The Executive Face

When examining the executive face of presidentialization, the focus is on a shift in the power within the executive to the head of government, or in other words, the “leader’s autonomy from the party in respect of the business of the executive of the state” (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 337, emphasis in original). In the Chifley leadership period, evidence of presidentialization in the executive will be explored by examining how Chifley managed the decision making process. Critical events during this period to evaluate include the decision to nationalise banking, the decision to sign the Bretton Woods Agreement and also the decisions made during the six-week coal miner’s strike in 1949. Furthermore, any growth in the resources at the disposal of the chief executive will be examined. This section will ultimately find that very little sign of presidentialization exists in the executive face in the Chifley period.

Management of the Decision Making Process

When investigating how Chifley managed the decision making process and in looking for evidence of presidentialization, substantial differences emerge between this period and the later periods examined. These fundamental differences were a result of the parliamentarians still being considered “delegates of the working class” and evidence of this is in the way that policy was examined and decided upon organisationally, and in the manner that non-parliamentary institutions of the ALP could influence the decisions of the parliamentarians (Ward, 2006: 72-73). As Weller (1992: 11) noted, “Prior to 1949 governments created systems of cabinet committees, but none had a sustained impact or lengthy existence. Chifley, for instance, used a combination of ministers and officials in a way that has not been copied since”. The committee system which would become central to the functioning of governments in later periods, was close to non-existent during the Chifley leadership period and Fred Daly (1976), ALP member of parliament from 1943 to 1975, argued that the committee system that had become so pronounced by the time the Whitlam Government was in office, played almost no role in decision making during the Chifley Government. In fact, according to Crisp, at times during the Chifley Government, instead of cabinet committees, “mass seminars” which included public servants and the parliamentarians occurred, but these are “now a dim memory” in terms of the way business is conducted in the executive (1967: 49). This highlights a key difference and adds weight to the idea that limited evidence exists of
presidentialization when it came to the management of the decision making process. As will be shown, the committee system provided the leadership with greater opportunities to manipulate and centralise decision making.

Another related, but sometimes conflicting element to managing the decision making process for a Labor government is the relationship the parliamentary leadership has with the party machine. How this inherent tension is dealt with is critical in the way Labor governments function and has been a key weakness of some leaders, most notably the Rudd Government of 2007-2010. According to McKinlay (1981: 93), Chifley’s colleagues viewed him as “authentically Labor” and that when he stated that he was the mouthpiece of the caucus, he was speaking the truth. Les Haylen, member for Parkes between 1943 and 1963, argued that Chifley was an excellent manager of cabinet and caucus affairs and he was confident enough to allow vast discussion within these confines as he was confident in his own abilities. Haylen argued “[H]e is above all a democrat; he will calmly accept the majority’s decision. But in truth, the caucus majority never made a decision that Chifley did not shape and mould to his will” (cited in Freudenberg, 2001: 83). The influence and support Chifley enjoyed went beyond his immediate colleagues as well though and Crisp noted that “[O]utside the immediate governmental orbit, he commanded the confidence of the overwhelming majority of key men in a Labour [Sic] Party organisation more happily united than for a generation past” (1960: 226).

McMullin (1991: 243), in particular, showed that Chifley was the type of leader that attempted to negotiate and debate possible policies in the traditional FPLP way, through the institutions of the executive, namely caucus and cabinet far more so than Whitlam for example. Chifley’s dealings with caucus members endeared loyalty to him. He allowed beaten antagonists to maintain their dignity and was always ready to deal with problems within the party straight away to prevent issues festering (Rodgers, 1971; Crisp, 1960: 233). Chifley would often write to his colleagues and the approach he took with them was personalised to their particular circumstances. It was this personal touch that endeared Chifley to his colleagues. Crisp gave us the clearest picture of how caucus meetings were conducted under Chifley, noting that they were usually lively occasions and Chifley would often get his own way by wrapping up the debate in a way which
best supported his point of view (1960: 235). Also, at times when Chifley’s ministers deviated from the governmental line, Chifley would state that: “[M]inisters speak not on behalf of the government but to express their personal views. The views of the government are expressed by its leader” (Chifley cited in Crisp, 1960: 238-39).

Of course the capacity to influence, and perhaps even at times instruct, their colleagues is part of the political capital that leaders of parliamentary parties have at their disposal. This approach did not just suit Chifley and prime ministers since then have continued to behave in such a way (Weller, 1992: 17). Crisp (1967: 29) when reflecting on this noted: “Though their personal political and administrative styles may vary very widely, strong Prime Ministers like Chifley and Menzies will be very much on top of their Cabinets and their Cabinet business”. Chifley’s capacity to have his colleagues adopt his preferred positions are widely known and the decision to nationalise banking, to ratify the Bretton Woods Agreement and the response to the Coal Miner’s strike of 1949 were all examples of this happening despite opposition to these positions within the cabinet and the broader movement. These three issues will now be examined for evidence of presidentialization.

Bank Nationalisation

Many of Chifley’s colleagues had been deeply affected by the Great Depression and the downfall of the Scullin Government at the height of the crisis. Many within the ranks viewed the intransigence of the banks as central to much of the suffering (Carroll, 2004: 178-9; Daly, 1977: 57-58; Makin, 1961: 138). Reflecting on this, McMullin argued that “there was a determination in Labor ranks to ensure that no subsequent ALP government would be so powerless to control the banks and the national economy” (McMullin, 1991: 247). Thus, to view the nationalisation policy without examining the history of Labor’s antipathy towards the ‘money power’15 would be remiss. By taking a longer view of the history of Labor’s approach to banking and finance, Love (1984) was

15 In Labour and the Money Power: Australian Labour Populism 1890-1950, Love (1984) convincingly argues that from the 1890’s the labour movement had established a theory about banking and finance called the ‘money power’.

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able to examine trends in FPLP policy and he argued that Labor’s enthusiasm for bank nationalisation had remained relatively steadfast.¹⁶

This enthusiasm did not sustain though as towards the end of the 1930s the FPLP position on banking policy became more moderate. According to Love this was directly related to the leadership of Curtin during this period. The strategy that had been determined meant that “ALP supporters would have to wait until three years of Labor Government had elapsed before the question of nationalization [sic] could be reconsidered” (Love, 1984: 149). Before this could occur though, two major events altered the path the party was seeking to take. Each of these impacted on Labor’s desire to implement nationalisation. First, British economist John Maynard Keynes’ *General Theory on Employment, Interest and Money*¹⁷ started to achieve greater coverage. In Love’s (1984: 149) view, this strengthened the hand of the party’s social democrats. Second, World War Two began. Both slowed down any desire the FPLP had on banking reform. It was not until after 1942, when the government began looking at post-war reconstruction, that Labor was able to return to the issue as well as to the need for an international financing deal, which would subsequently become the Bretton Woods Agreement.

At the end of hostilities and after much discussion within the FPLP, the government introduced The Commonwealth Bank Act 1945. Love (1984: 165) argued the policy was linked to the government’s goal of full employment and the objective was to “extend government control over the operations of the Australian banking and monetary system”. However, this was a much watered down policy than many in the caucus had hoped for as many still thought that nationalisation was the only reliable control (Stephens, 1974: 84). At this stage, Chifley was not one of those who supported nationalisation (Stephens, 1974: 85). However after the High Court ruled that Section 48 of the 1945 Banking Act was unconstitutional, which many in the caucus viewed as a political decision (Stephens, 1974: 84), Chifley on 16 August 1947 announced the

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¹⁶ As early as 1936 bank nationalisation had been on the agenda for the FPLP and at the 1936 Special Federal Conference, Lang Labor was re-admitted to the fold and at the insistence of Lang supporters among others, a committee was formed to review the party’s monetary policy and the report was finalised just before the 1936 Federal Conference. Love argued that (1984: 146) “in deference to the radicals, particularly the Langites, the principles envisaged a nationalized [sic] banking system controlled by the Commonwealth Bank, operating under conditions controlled by the Federal Parliament”. Lang Labor was the name given to the breakaway group led by Jack Lang, who was also Premier of New South Wales on two occasions.

¹⁷ The theory was actually published in early 1936 but most Labor politicians were unaware of the development for some time (Love: 1984, 149).
intention to nationalise banking with a 43 word statement that Daly (1977: 58) contended, “[R]ocked the political world for the next three years”.

Once again, Labor cited past economic downturns as reason enough to implement the policy and Labor parliamentarians “stressed the desired effects of the legislation with copious references to the depression of 1929” (Stephens, 1976: 262). Arthur Calwell, Minister for Information, went so far as to describe the bills as the anti-depression bills and the anti-unemployment bill (Stephens, 1976: 262). From the outset, the nationalisation policy was tremendously unpopular but this did not concern Chifley. According to McKinlay, the propaganda campaign bemused Chifley. He viewed the shock at the decision to nationalise banking as incongruous, maintaining that the 1946 elections provided the ALP with the mandate to implement the policy. The decision to nationalise was merely a continuation of the discourse Chifley and Curtin had engaged in since taking office in 1941 when they announced they would follow the recommendations of the 1937 Royal Commission into Banking, as well as the path Labor had clearly advertised it would take from the 1930’s onwards (1981: 97-98; Carroll, 2004: 178-9). When the Opposition Leader, Robert Menzies, lambasted the proposal in parliament, Chifley responded by arguing that,

*The fact is that the Labour [sic] Party throughout its existence has never left any doubt in the public mind that it believes that the complete control of the financial and monetary system should be in the hands of the people through their representatives in Parliament...I know something about the policy of the Labour Party, and over the years this has been the theme song of our party (1952: 102).*

Interestingly, the statement announcing the policy was issued without a caucus vote. When Chifley’s colleagues heard of the decision, they could barely believe it with Arthur Calwell and Eddie Ward (Minister for Transport and External Territories), who were in London at the time, quoted as saying, “somebody must be joking” (Daly, 1976). As nationalisation had been in the platform for so long, nobody believed it would actually happen (Daly, 1976). The issue of banking was of central importance to the labour movement and after the decision to nationalise the banks was made, Daly (1976) recalled the mood of the times;

*The Labour [sic] movement have always believed that the banks were manipulated against them. The memories of the depression and Theodore’s fiduciary issue and [sic] the want and them caused by the banks and Sir Robert Gibson and the Commonwealth Bank Board made every*
Labor man of that generation desire to see the banks outside the control of the private people not answerable to parliament.

When it comes to viewing bank nationalisation through the presidentialization framework, it is clear that Chifley discussed the policy with his closest advisers and with cabinet colleagues at the meeting on Saturday 16 August 1947, where unanimous approval was given to the nationalisation policy (Crisp, 1977: 327; Stephens, 1974: 86). However, the decision was made and announced without caucus approval, which only came a month later, with another unanimous endorsement on 16 September 1947 (Weller, 1975: 427). What can we read into this in terms of presidentialization? Obviously Chifley did not make the decision to nationalise banking autonomously from the party as the issue was discussed and voted on within cabinet and perhaps even more importantly had been a part of the party platform since the 1921 National Conference. This would seem to preclude any notion of leadership autonomy and would furthermore paint a picture of Chifley as a leader determined to implement the ideals of the party, without concerning himself with the possible electoral consequences of his actions. However, it is also clear as Dedman noted, that very few members of the caucus understood banking and finance;

>a great many members of the caucus didn’t understand what it was all about, and to that extent they tossed it onto their leaders, the Prime Minister in the first case and any others in cabinet who were supporting it (cited in Stephens 1974: 86).

Tom Burke, an ALP backbencher during this period, agreed with this assessment. He argued “it [banking nationalisation] was avoided like the plague, mostly because hardly anyone knew how to approach the question or discuss it”, and that “[T]he cabinet team was not strong and he would have had a great deal of authority over them...he had to take both positions as no one else in the cabinet had the foggiest notion of finance” (cited in Stephens 1974: 86). As a result, the evidence indicates that Chifley, not dissimilar from many other leaders, was deeply respected by much of his cabinet and many were unwilling to take him on. In particular, his knowledge and expertise in financial affairs, and his dual role as Treasurer as well as prime minister meant that this concentration of knowledge allowed Chifley to enjoy a very high level of input into cabinet decision making, especially on financial matters. However, this does not indicate presidentialization; as there was very little evidence of increasing autonomy from the collective decision making institutions. Therefore, the evidence shows that the

18 This was because Chifley held both the positions of treasurer and prime minister.
banking nationalisation decision, while shaped by strong leadership influence, was still backed by a decision of the collective decision making body, namely cabinet, even though this was provided a month after the decision was made. This means very little evidence of presidentialization is identifiable in this instance.

The Bretton Woods Agreement

The conference to discuss international financing arrangements was convened by the US in July 1944 and was inspired by Keynes and his General Theory. By 1946 the Labor Party was deeply divided into two distinct groups on the issue of Bretton Woods. The pro-IMF group based around Chifley, who Love (1984: 159) referred to as, “the party’s Keynesians” and those concerned that the IMF was being created to serve the interests of international financiers, who Love (1984: 159) claimed had “the weight of the past bearing upon them”. It was according to Love, “essentially a choice between an act of faith and the burden of history”. The opponents of ratification of the agreement led by the inimitable Eddie Ward had a long and detailed set of reasons for why Labor should not support the agreement (Love, 1984: 161-2).

In contrast to the approach that Chifley used during the bank nationalisation predicament, he approached the Bretton Woods Agreement with less support from his parliamentary colleagues and from the wider labour movement generally, so much so that McMullin noted that “Labor’s traditional antipathy to the practitioners of high finance ensured that Chifley would have difficulty persuading his party that Australia should ratify the agreement” (McMullin, 1991: 243). However, Chifley did achieve his aims on Bretton Woods despite continual opposition to the plan. This including winning over the caucus in March 1947 despite up to six ministers being unhappy with the decision (McMullin, 1991: 243). Unlike bank nationalisation where Chifley was able to convince his caucus colleagues of the merits of the scheme, on this occasion Chifley did not have the initial support of his colleagues and was required to build support for the agreement through the organisational wing before returning the issue to caucus (Love, 1984: 162).

19 For more on the ALP’s internal machinations about Bretton Woods see Crisp (1977:199-214).
Chifley was aware of the opposition to the agreement within various elements of the party so he decided to begin a push for support within the ALP federal executive. According to Freudenberg, Chifley made this move as he knew that unless the federal conference over-turned the decision, this would bind opponents to the decision (2001: 84). When the federal executive met to discuss the agreement, Chifley convinced enough delegates to support the agreement for a resolution to be passed by seven votes to five allowing Chifley to proceed and rejected an amendment giving caucus the authority to decide on international policy independent of the federal executive (Weller and Lloyd, 1978: 330-1). However, when caucus later considered the agreement Chifley was short by 29 votes to 26, and the question was referred to a federal conference. As Chifley was a master of the party rules and procedures, he understood that a special federal conference would be required and at least four of the six states would have to request this (McMullin, 1991: 243). Chifley used all his persuasive and cajoling ability to prevent this from happening and convinced the New South Wales, Western Australia and Tasmanian executives not to request a special conference (Love, 1984: 162-3). Chifley then returned the agreement back to caucus in March 1947 when caucus members were still “glowing with the news of tax reductions and pension increases he had just announced to them. This time despite the reported opposition of six ministers, Chifley obtained the vote 33 to 24” (McMullin, 1991: 243).

Chifley’s ability to manage the Bretton Woods issue in the face of sustained opposition from within the caucus, showed his power within the party as other leaders might have succumbed to the pressures being placed on them or worse yet, allowed a split to develop in a party already notorious for its divisiveness (Freudenberg, 2001: 84; Day, 2001: 444-5). Chifley understood the rules of his party better than anyone else, and also had the advantage of being a sitting prime minister, but this alone was not enough to ensure his will was asserted during the Bretton Woods debate. Chifley had his preferred position implemented by using the rules of the party which prescribed authority to the federal executive (Freudenberg, 2001: 84). This was not a new phenomenon in the ALP and Weller drew comparisons between Chifley’s actions over Bretton Woods and Curtin’s action over conscription.

Often federal leaders used the conference or the executive as a means of obtaining support for or the legitimation of actions already proposed or taken... In both cases, Curtin on conscription and Chifley on Bretton Woods, the leaders justifiably doubted whether they had the support in caucus necessary to have their proposals adopted; they therefore used the extra-parliamentary
Hence, the case of the Bretton Woods Agreement is not symptomatic of presidentialization; rather it shows a leader who appreciated the nature of party politics and in particular Labor politics. Negotiation and cajoling are part of this process. Chifley did have some fundamental advantages and the organisational structure of the party at this time was central to this. First, the federal executive was relatively small meaning he had fewer people to deal with than would be the case in later periods. Second, he was able to influence the voting intentions of the State branches as he was the supreme character in the labour movement at that time. Third, all levels of the movement were indebted to Chifley in some way and this meant that Chifley could influence enough people to ensure his desired outcome succeeded. While the decision initially did not have caucus support, eventually Chifley received this as well. This shows someone who was able to advance his position through the traditional forums and institutions, relying on the political capital that had been accrued along the way and displays no evidence of presidentialization through this period.

Coal Miner’s Strike

Leading up to the 1949 election, Chifley was forced to confront many within his party and the labour movement generally when for seven weeks, 23,000 coal miners led by the Miner’s Federation went on strike. The division within the party was so apparent according to Freudenberg (2001: 88) that “Caucus faith in Chifley’s judgement was tested to the limit and that Caucus overrode many protests from a number of MP’s to introduce legislation to freeze union funds” (Freudenberg, 2001: 88). For Daly, the coal miner’s strike was the culmination of the incremental influence of Communism in the trade union movement, including Communist activists holding key positions in key unions (1977: 66). According to McKinlay (1981: 96) the fuse was lit for a showdown when the government continued to advocate austerity which placed them in direct confrontation with various sections of the trade union movement who were seeking improved working conditions. Chifley however argued that his austerity measures should be continued and the labour movement like all other areas of society were
required to remain patient until an improvement in the global economic situation eventuated (Daly, 1977: 39).

As the situation began to escalate, the government decided to freeze all miners’ union funds and made donations to the strike fund illegal. According to Day (2001: 489) Eddie Ward, still a key member of the government viewed this as an act of treachery. Despite the opposition, Chifley and his supporters were resolute because the strike had broader implications as transport was cancelled and power supplies were cut (Day, 2001: 489). The legislation introduced, the National Emergency (Coal Strike) Bill, was approved by caucus on 29 June 1949, the day after it was introduced by the Attorney General H.V Evatt into parliament (Weller, 1975: 488). While the timing of these events may appear significant, the decision making still needs to be placed in context. Moreover, as noted earlier, the parliamentarians were not in control of party policy during this period. According to McMullin (1991: 253), as the dispute continued, Chifley stayed in close contact with the sub-committee created to focus on the strike, and when Chifley took the controversial step to send in the army to re-start coal production, he did so only after officials from both the NSW and federal executive approved the decision which was announced at a unique joint meeting of the NSW and Federal governments on 27 July (McMullin, 1991: 253). This communication between the leadership and the committee dealing with the strike, as well as with the organisational wing of the party, highlight how little autonomy Chifley demonstrated during this period. Whether Chifley could have shown greater autonomy during this period, would be purely speculative, but according to Carroll (2004: 181) and Daly (1977: 71), political factors drove much of the decision making during this period, namely, the willingness to appear tough on Communism as well as a desire to prevent Communism from dividing the party.

When one examines Chifley’s role in the coal miner’s strike looking for evidence of presidentialization, very little evidence exists of unilateral policy making or leadership autonomy. While internal opposition to the policies implemented was obvious, this opposition was still managed within the traditional institutions of the executive, namely,
the cabinet and for the FPLP, the caucus. This differentiates the Chifley case study significantly from the later leaders examined.

Growth of Resources at the Disposal of the Prime Minister

Walter (1992: 29) argued that the transition of the prime minister’s department21 “from a post-box into an important feature of central government machinery” should be understood in terms of post-World War II politics. However, many of the key changes that were integral to this change in the Prime Minister’s Department occurred after Chifley and the ALP lost office. The central reason for this according to Walter was Chifley himself, who had become the central cog in policy-making. He relied on the support of the Treasury as well as what became known as his ‘official family’ in the Department of Post-War Reconstruction (Walter, 1992: 29). This ‘family’ according to Crisp (1977: 257), included a mixture of ministers, senior bureaucrats and other less senior, yet nevertheless highly competent bureaucrats. Of course Chifley’s dual role as prime minister and treasurer was critical in the amount of resources he had his disposal as well. Although, Chifley was not unique in this regard as other prime ministers, for example Joseph Lyons,22 had also taken on portfolios during their prime ministership during the first half of the century. Changes to the public service in 1949, after the ALP lost office, altered this and prime ministers no longer take portfolios. Nevertheless, it is clear that during this period, Chifley had institutional advantages due to two factors. First, the Department of Post-War Reconstruction being established as a result of the war provided Chifley with resources surpassing those of peace time leaders during this period. Second, this was a period before technological constraints increased the complexity of governing, allowing prime ministers to be more involved in portfolios than they currently can become (Walter, 1992: 31). As a result, the resources Chifley had at his disposal were substantial for the period in that he also had the resources of the Treasury and the Department of Post-War Reconstruction to call upon. These resources were a direct result of the war and Chifley’s dual roles, and conditional based on the political context of this period.

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21 See also Weller (2011) et al which looks at the history and changes in the department from its beginning.

22 During Lyons’ prime ministership from 1932-1939, he at various stages took on the Treasury, Defence, Repatriation, Commerce and Health portfolios.
Executive Face Summary

When Chifley became prime minister he did so just before the end of the Second World War and the government’s key role was post-war reconstruction. Chifley undoubtedly was a dominant prime minister in terms of his level of knowledge and expertise in financial matters compared to his colleagues, as well as in the resources he had at his disposal as a result of a burgeoning bureaucracy with a vast reconstruction and welfare state agenda. Chifley also through his dual roles as prime minister and treasurer had a larger than normal amount of resources at his disposal. However, it is clear that this was conditional and based on the political context which he was working within. Crisp noted that

Chifley had always effective – and normally, complete – command of his cabinet. The control was entirely personal. He never had a colleague who stood to him in which he had stood to Curtin (1977: 236).

This may have been the case and shows how dominant a leader Chifley was, however dominance does not necessarily equate to presidentialization as Chifley still worked within the traditional institutions of the Westminster system and the party when making these decisions in government. As a result, in the executive face, limited evidence exists of presidentialization in the Chifley leadership period.

The Party Face

This section will scrutinise the party face of presidentialization during the Chifley leadership period. While inter-connected with the party face, the executive face solely consists of an examination of the time in office. Therefore the period in which Chifley was leader while the party was in opposition must also be examined. In addition, any changes in the relationship between the leader and the party, which includes any changes to how the intra-party institutions were administered, must be explored. This means examining the period between the election loss in 1949 and Chifley’s death on 13 June 1951. Unlike the Whitlam period, Chifley did not spend years as leader of the opposition before taking office. Any structural changes within the party that occurred during this period did so either while Chifley was the sitting prime minister or after the return to opposition. In particular, any indication of rule changes that give leaders more power or a growth in the resources a leader has available to them will be examined. As
will any indication of unilateral decision making or any attempt to develop a personalised mandate independent of the party (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 343). Ultimately, this section will show that the dominance of Chifley during this period was mostly conditional and based on a variety of factors particular to that time as well as to Chifley’s personal leadership qualities. This is an important finding as it adds weight to much of the Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) argument about the emergence of causal factors, around 1960, that structurally enhanced the capacity for leadership domination.

Organisational Structure of the Party

There are certain factors, idiosyncratic to the ALP, which provided Chifley with power within the party. These organisational factors are important for a number of reasons. They help scholars to better understand the nature of the ALP at that period of time and they also help to explain the way Chifley dealt with the organisational wing of the party. These include the different institutions within the party, namely, the federal executive and the conference, as well as the State branches. In a party founded on the idea of collectivism, with clearly defined roles and procedures such as the ALP, the relationship between the leader and the organisational wing can define the success of a leadership period. This was particularly so at the time that Chifley was leading the ALP as the party was very different from the contemporary, professional organisation. Very few of the party’s employees in the organisational wing, including the federal secretary, were full time workers (Crisp, 1977: 240). The organisational institutions were also at a similar level of development. The federal executive only met twice a year and consisted of only 12 members and the federal conference only met triennially and was much smaller than the current composition as only 36 delegates from the six states were invited to attend. The federated nature of the party meant that the state branches held considerable power (Warhurst and Parkin, 2000: 45; Crisp, 1977: 240). The ability of Chifley to have a deep impact on policy as a result of these conditions was seen in how decisions were reached during the debate over ratifying the Bretton Woods Agreement. These conditions in themselves provided enough ingredients for leaders to dominate the party at this time and Crisp (1977: 240) argued that; “[T]his rudimentary, even vestigial, federal organisation has not merely given Federal labour [sic] leaders a sometimes invidious freedom of action in policy matters, it has necessarily pushed them deeply

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23 Some of this power still remains, as the state branches are in many ways the lifeblood of the party.
into organisational work”. For Chifley, this meant managing the finances of the party, which provided him with the capacity to dispense even greater patronage.

Control of the Party Finances

In most institutions, the control of finances provides the bearer/s of that responsibility with above average power. Political parties are no different. In contemporary politics, the organisational wings of most political parties control this domain and the dispensation of funds usually requires the approval of multiple office holders. This in turn reduces the dominance of any one of these officials. As expected then, when one person controls the finances, they also become the focal point for the power associated with the command of the party coffers. If this person is also the leader of the parliamentary party, the political clout of this person is magnified innumerably. This was the situation during Chifley’s leadership. Crisp noted the importance of this and observed that;

\[
\text{Chifley administered a fund of many thousands contributed by trade unions and a diversity of other sources. From it he paid considerable sums to the Federal and State Executives, or directly, to meet campaign expenses. He occasionally even subsidised State Parliamentary campaigns where State Executives were in financial low water.....control of the funds of the Federal Party undoubtedly further reinforced the Leader’s influence (1977: 244-5).}
\]

Crisp also recorded that Chifley would make a point of sending new candidates cheques and when distributing funds throughout the party, Chifley would also attach a personal note for the recipient. In turn, state branches and new members of the parliament felt a sense of loyalty to Chifley (Crisp, 1977: 245). While none of the evidence suggests that Chifley was attempting to disperse patronage in a coercive or underhanded way, it is clear that Chifley still benefited from this elevated position within the party. As at one stage he was the distributor of party finances, the prime minister, as well as the treasurer, an extraordinarily dominant position to be in, and the almost pious loyalty bestowed on Chifley after two election losses demonstrates this.

Thus it is clear that a variety of contributing factors made Chifley a dominant leader within the party and Crisp’s description of Chifley is one grounded in personal experience of dealing with Chifley and with being present at the time. However the
dominance of Chifley within the party as described by Crisp, needs revision as it is clear that while Chifley may have been dominant, other episodes instructively reveal the reserve power that the federal executive still maintained during this period and no episode highlights this better than how the FPLP resolved how they would deal with the Communist Party Dissolution Bill.

Communist Party Dissolution Bill

After the 1949 election defeat, Chifley had a number of key issues to resolve within the FPLP. None were more pressing than the debate surrounding the banning of the Communist Party. Rising sentiment against Communism was visible in the United States as a result of Senator Joe McCarthy and others’ rabid pursuit of Communist shadows (Griffith, 1970: x). In Europe the ‘Iron Curtain’ was dividing the continent as part of the Cold War and in Australia the tide of public opinion had turned against Communism due to rising fears of its influence spreading across Asia in a ‘domino effect’ and due to the continual scare tactics employed by the government (Crisp, 1977: 379; Stevens and Weller, 1976: 119; Day, 2001: 505).

Inside the FPLP, opposition to Communism was also rising. According to Day (2001: 504), “[A]bout 60 per cent of Chifley’s colleagues were Catholic, with a solid core of them being determined anti-Communists who had been fighting with the trade unions against Communist influence and were now intent on pursuing their crusade in parliament”. This was particularly so in the Victorian branch where the Catholic Social Movement was on the rise. Their goal, under the stewardship of B.A Santamaria, was to defeat the Communist sympathisers and those considered not sufficiently anti-Communist enough within the Labor Party (Crisp, 1977: 384). When Menzies introduced the bill into parliament on 27 April 1950, he did so arguing that the Communist Party had disproportionate power for its size and in his best imitation of Joe McCarthy proceeded to name 53 alleged Communists (Day, 2001: 505; Crisp, 1977: 384). When Menzies introduced the bill into parliament on 27 April 1950, he did so arguing that the Communist Party had disproportionate power for its size and in his best imitation of Joe McCarthy proceeded to name 53 alleged Communists (Day, 2001: 505; Crisp, 1977: 384).

The Bill had three central provisions. First, the Communist Party were declared an unlawful association. This meant that any property it owned was forfeited to the crown. Second, the Governor-General, acting on advice from the government, could declare bodies (for example, trade unions) Communist sympathisers, meaning they were unlawful bodies as well. Finally, “the Governor-General was authorised to declare a person as a communist and engaged, or likely to engage, in activities prejudicial to Australia’s security and defence. Effectively, such a person could not be employed by the Commonwealth. Furthermore, such a person could not hold office in a labour union or industry vital to Australia’s security and defence” (Museum of Australian Democracy, n.d.).

However, the following day Menzies had to admit that the evidence gathered on at least five of the alleged was not correct (Crisp, 1977: 386).
The FPLP and the wider movement were divided over the bill from the outset, with caucus and the party’s federal executive almost evenly split on whether to support or oppose the bill (Day, 2001: 506-7). Central to Chifley’s opposition to the bill were two critical factors. First, Chifley argued that he knew Menzies did not in fact believe in the bill as he had rejected previous attempts to propose similar bills as a restriction of freedom of speech and, it was clear that some in the government intended to use the bill to conduct investigations of their own into the affairs of members of the FPLP. According to Day, Menzies and Arthur Fadden, the Treasurer, had alleged that the Labor Party and the Communist Party were one and the same and that a vote for Labor was a vote for the Communists (2001: 507; Also see the Liberal Party election advertising in SMH 1951a: 7; 1951c: 5). The bill which gave the government the power (among many others) to declare individuals as Communists, barring them from positions in government organisations and trade unions was conveniently introduced 24 hours before the Victorian Liberal Government released the findings of a Royal Commission which had been investigating the influence of Communism in the state and unsurprisingly supported the view that Menzies was advocating: that the influence of Communism was far reaching in Australian society (Crisp, 1977: 385).

From the outset, Chifley argued that the true intention of the bill was to split the labour movement and he set himself the task of holding the party together while still ensuring that individual freedoms were not damaged (Crisp, 1977: 386). When the Labor caucus met to discuss what to do on May 3 and 4, Chifley advised his colleagues that the federal executive and the trade union movement as represented on the Federal Labour Advisory Committee both opposed the bill (Crisp, 1977: 387). While Chifley believed that the party should not support legislation to ban any political party, the decision reached was to pass the legislation while proposing a variety of amendments (McMullin, 1991: 258 and Day, 2001: 507). As the FPLP had the numbers in the Senate, when the amendments were proposed, “Menzies grudgingly agreed to some changes” (Day, 2001: 507). However, following the start of the Korean War in June, Menzies re-introduced the bill into the House of Representatives on 28 September claiming that Australia was in danger and if not passed he would use the rejection of the bill as a trigger for a double dissolution election (Day, 2001: 508). After much debate, the federal executive decided to support the banning of the Communist Party in Australia, much to the chagrin of Chifley, who viewed the decision as putting short-
term political factors ahead of what he viewed as responsible. Chifley in humiliating fashion was then required to go back into parliament and to accept the government’s decision, which he acknowledged was one of the most humbling and difficult things he ever had to do, but he believed in the sovereignty of the institutions of the party and accepted the decision (Day, 2001: 510). In the election that followed on 28 April 1951, and with communism central to the campaign, the party lost its control of the senate despite picking up five seats in the lower house (McKinlay, 1981: 108–9).

When the decision making process and events leading up to the FPLP’s subsequent defeat at the 1951 election are examined, in the foreground is the clear interjection in decision making from the organisational wing of the party. This was a time before key reforms to the party changed the organisational structure in two critical ways. First, the parliamentary leadership were not represented on the federal executive, as this did not happen until the Whitlam leadership period. Second, the state branches were much stronger at this time and this was before reforms shifted the party from a federal party to a national party, fundamentally altering the dynamic between the leader and the organisational wing of the party.

Undoubtedly, the decision making on this policy was tied up with bigger debates in the world than just how a leader interacts with his party and this is a caveat any analysis needs to acknowledge. Chifley was clearly unwell by this point and this may have had some impact, but it was also apparent that the influence of interest groups in state branches, in particular Victoria, was critical in many of the decisions that were made. It highlighted how de-centralised the party really was at this time and that even Chifley, the hero of the labour movement who was re-elected unopposed, could not co-ordinate or usurp the traditional institutions or loci of power within the party. In essence, the Communist Party Dissolution Bill highlights above other examples, how difficult it would have been for Chifley to centralise power around himself as this was a time when ideological separation between the parties was still obvious. No matter how dominant a

26 In spite of this, the issue remained central to federal politics for the next decade (See Scalmer, 2001: 93 and McKinlay, 1981: 106 for more on this).
leader was, Communism was always going to spark infighting in a church as broad as the ALP.\(^\text{27}\) Thus, to conclude, this example showed no evidence of presidentialization.

**Party Face Summary**

In Crisp’s (1977: 242-3) view, Chifley was the most dominant Labor prime minister he had known. Explaining Chifley’s dominance within the FPLP, Crisp noted that:

> In the past, Labour Prime Ministers have been at the beck and call of governing bodies outside parliament. Today these governing bodies go cap in hand to the Prime Minister.....never before in its history has the [Federal] Labour Party identified itself so completely with one man, or acknowledged a virtual dictatorship so cheerfully and willingly. To old Labour stalwarts with whom effective control of the Parliamentary party by the movement was a cardinal article of faith, this must have seemed a truly extraordinary performance (1977: 242-3).

Chifley was certainly dominant, but Crisp’s analysis is misleading. Chifley clearly had certain advantages that made him a dominant leader within the FPLP. First, he controlled the party finances. Second, the organisational structure of the party was under-developed and federal, rather than the more contemporary national structure present today, and third, while in government, Chifley was also Treasurer as well as prime minister. These factors provided Chifley with the capacity to act unilaterally or to attempt to bypass the traditional institutions of the party. However, Chifley didn’t do this and still worked within the traditional channels. It is clear that in the party face of the Chifley leadership period that very little evidence of presidentialization exists. During the period, the traditional role for the extra-parliamentary institutions was still firmly in place, namely that the organisational wing under the direction of the federal executive still had the power to determine parliamentary policy and the parliamentarians only overcame this dominance from the organisational wing by working through the intra-party institutional channels, as happened over the Bretton Woods Agreement. While Chifley certainly was a dominant prime minister and leader of the FPLP, even he took direction from the executive and the conference at times and this was never more evident than during the debate over how to respond to the Menzies Government’s Communist Party Dissolution Bill. Chifley did not, as other later leaders did, attempt to change the internal power dynamic of the party, but rather focussed on working within the pre-existing institutions through negotiation and persuasion to have his agenda

\(^{27}\) The split within the party on this issue - among others - it could be argued contributed in driving some of the reforms that Whitlam later implemented.
implemented. In essence, the Chifley leadership period demonstrates that leaders of the FPLP have always had the capacity to act autonomously, however the factors that have allowed leaders to do this have changed dramatically since the 1940s. For example, no modern leader would manage the party’s finances and it would be extremely unlikely that a leader would simultaneously occupy the position of prime minister and Treasurer. Thus, it is clear that the Chifley leadership period is part of what can be described as the ‘pre-modern’ age for leadership in the FPLP. While leaders certainly had the capacity to dominate their parties, the pathological factors which empowered these leaders were fundamentally different to what aided the opportunities later leaders had for domination.

**The Electoral Face**

It is perhaps in the electoral face where the concept of presidentialization is most often discussed. Frequently, scholars comment on how leaders have dominated campaigns and become more presidential (See Weller and Young, 2000: 163), or how during elections prime ministers act presidential (See Lloyd 1992: 132). When examining the electoral face of presidentialization, three factors need to be examined: campaign style, media focus and voting behaviour. Unfortunately, unlike later periods in which greater analysis has been conducted on election campaigns, the literature available on this period is very limited. As a result, two prominent broadsheet newspapers, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* have been examined in the lead up to the three elections Chifley contested as leader, namely 1946, 1949 and 1951 to examine the campaign style and the focus of the media during this period. No data exists on voting behaviour during this period so this case study will not include a section on voting behaviour. This section will argue that no evidence of presidentialization in the electoral face during the Chifley leadership period is identifiable as there were very few signs of “increasingly leadership-centred electoral processes” (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 5). This finding is nevertheless important. It adds weight to Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) 1960 hypothesis, and narrows the possible window in which changes, if there are any, have occurred.

**Campaign Style**

Lloyd (1992: 110) has argued that considering the first television programs in Australia were broadcast in 1956, one can reasonably predict when television became critical in
deciding who would ultimately become the prime minister. However, Chifley lived in an era of print media dominance as the elections that he contested as leader were before this point (Lloyd, 1992: 111). This section will examine the advertising of the party in the broadsheet newspapers, The Age and The Sydney Morning Herald, to gain a clearer picture of the campaign strategies used during this period as well as reviewing the secondary literature on the campaigns.

Campaigning during this period meant criss-crossing the nation as well as radio broadcasts for the leader. However Chifley was not enthusiastic about electioneering and Crisp (1977: 242-3) argued that this “was not a field where he had any talent or flair, and whether in consequence of that personal deficiency or not, the subject never seemed to spark his imagination”. At various stages during his time as leader, his colleagues tried to raise the issue with Chifley and advised him that he needed to be more enthusiastic about campaigning and the party needed to produce more material about what they were going to achieve, but Chifley was “lukewarm” on the idea and Crisp argued that due to Chifley’s influence the campaigns were rather mediocre affairs (Crisp, 1977: 243).

Chifley was confident of victory in the 1946 election and despite some unease from his colleagues about the Liberal Party’s new policies Chifley viewed the election as a nuisance, disrupting the task at hand (Day, 2001: 432). Chifley’s weakness in the media was highlighted by the Sunday Sun who questioned how he could be a success when “he has a voice that scrapes like a nail on a can” (cited in Day, 2001: 417). Day noted the difficulty this was going to cause Chifley as the radio had become an essential communication tool for electioneering purposes and despite Chifley receiving broadcasting advice from a former Conservative MP, Walter Marks, he was dismissive of the advice (Day, 2001: 418-9). In spite of this, the election was a success for Chifley, with the ALP retaining 43 of its 49 seats, as well as winning 16 seats in the Senate, giving the party total dominance in the Senate with 33 of the 36 Senate seats. The party’s campaign, was as The Sydney Morning Herald reported (1946a: 1; Also see The Age, 1946a: 2), nothing more than “Labour Relying on its Past Record”. Crisp (1977: 228) substantiated this, noting that Chifley remained relatively disinterested in campaigning.
Chifley’s policy speech was little better than a pedestrian report and routine prospectus of a well established enterprise. Symptomatic of the low value he placed on election campaigns, it was not broadcast live from a party rally, but from a recording made in the near solitude of a studio. Significantly, at the end of a warm fighting speech he made subsequently to a crowded meeting in the Brisbane City hall, a supporter interjected: ‘Why didn’t you give us a speech like that over the wireless last night?’. When one views the advertising that the FPLP used in the broadsheet newspapers during the campaign, the lack of emphasis on Chifley personally is further enforced. Some boldly listed Labor’s achievements (See SMH, 1946b: 7), while others relied on an endorsement in an article from the Financial Times Newspaper in Britain, which the FPLP advertising described as “the most Conservative and influential financial newspaper in the world” (See SMH, 1946c: 8 and The Age, 1946b: 7). The remainder compared the FPLP’s taxation policies to the opposition’s (See SMH, 1946d: 3; 1946e: 7; The Age, 1946c: 5; 1946d: 5), while others argued that only Labor could stop industrial unrest (See The Age,1946g: 5) or maintain full employment (See The Age, 1946f: 2).

During the 1949 election, which Lee (1994: 501) considers “one of Australia’s most important” due to the way nationalism and Communism were dealt with, the FPLP faced a less accommodating public. In explaining the key themes in the 1949 election campaign, Day (2001: 496-7) points to bank nationalisation, petrol rationing, government regulation, as well as Communism as central themes. But he also argues that the election was about Chifley and the image that had been created about him as the man of austerity and stability who could lead Australia out of troubled times. However, the population now growing weary of austerity wanted the restrictions placed on them during war time to be removed. Day (2001: 496-7) argued that the whole campaign bordered on arrogance as it was a pre-recorded broadcast with very few promises made and almost nothing to be optimistic about, which was sharply contrasted by Menzies’ live performance on the radio and the Liberal Party’s use of the John Henry Austral radio series (Mills, 1984: 170; Rodgers 1971: 35).²⁸

²⁸ The series was a “part-satire, part serial, part soap-box, which for more than 18 months presented dramatised accusations to the nation about the Chifley Government’s socialist sins” (Mills, 1984: 90).
The campaign was typical of the FPLP at that time, with Chifley, as the leader traversing the country, making speech after speech and heavily influencing how the campaign would be run (Crisp, 1977: 368). At a meeting of the federal executive on May 11 1949, Chifley said: “We will go to the people on our record...Our opponents will talk a lot about Communism....The Government has announced that it will develop the country...and I believe that the people will want a government that has such a programme” (Crisp, 1977: 369). According to Crisp, the FPLP campaign focussed heavily on the past, including on the Great Depression and mass unemployment, and with Chifley unable to compete with Menzies’ ability as an orator on the radio, unsurprisingly the campaign had minimal impact (1977: 371).

The advertising used by the FPLP in the major broadsheet newspapers was primarily concerned with economic achievements and how the FPLP was protecting jobs and bank deposits (See SMH, 1949a: 5, 1949b: 8; The Age, 1949a: 5, 1949b: 3; 1949c: 3; 1949d: 5). In contrast, the opposition’s advertising was almost solely a scare campaign based on Communism and attempts to draw tenuous links between Chifley (and others) and Communism (See The Age, 1949e: 5; 1949f: 2 as examples).

At the forefront of events leading up to the 1951 election was the introduction of the Communist Party Dissolution Bill into parliament in April 1950 and the subsequent High Court case that began in November 1950 in which the court declared the Act unconstitutional (Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno, 2011: 110; Scalmer, 2001: 92). The advertising Labor used in the attempt to return to government centred on a few themes. Most prominent was the obvious attempt by the FPLP to portray themselves in less than subtle terms as tough on Communism, with one piece of election advertising titled “Only Labor Will Smash Communism” (See The Age, 1951a: 8; 1951b: 7; SMH, 1951b: 2). Other advertising attempted to paint Chifley as more trustworthy than Menzies and attempted to highlight areas that Menzies had failed sections of the community, for example women, or had failed to deliver on his promises, for example putting value back into the pound (See The Age, 1951c: 8; SMH, 1951d: 8; 1951e: 5). Only minor focus was placed on Chifley the individual, again, far more of the focus was on policies.
In summation, when it came to campaign focus during the Chifley years, several things stand out. First, Chifley considered elections a distraction and gave them scant attention despite having a central role in deciding on the type of campaign that was run. Second, the advertising was heavily reliant on pointing out what the FPLP had done for the population while in government or pointing out where Menzies had failed in his role as leader. Third, while Chifley opposed the emerging trends in electioneering he and the FPLP tried to exploit his personal popularity and image with the general public. Day (2001: 531-2) argued that:

*The public image was one that he had created and which had a solid core of truth in it...As the Labor propaganda proclaimed, Chifley was a man of the people and many could relate to his lifestyle and admire him for it during the war and afterwards. However, it was not so attractive an image by the late 1940s when Australia’s middle class in particular was anxious to cast off the privations of wartime and enjoy the relative prosperity that was gradually becoming available to them as a result of Chifley’s policies.*

As a result, while the advertising the FPLP used focussed on the policies of the party, the campaigns the FPLP ran were divided between focussing on policies and projecting an image of Chifley as the austere reliable gentlemen. This is clear when the advertising that the party used during this period is examined, as issues rather than individuals were the focus. The depth of fear about Communism can perhaps be no better viewed than through the advertising the Liberal and Labor parties used during the 1951 election when the Communist Party of Australia’s (CPA) future was most at risk. As a result, it is clear that the election campaigns had an element of personalisation to them but this was far from overwhelming. Two factors seem to have contributed to this. First, the level of personalisation may have been increased if not for Chifley’s own interventions. Second, the importance of the print media was still very high during this period and compared to other mediums has generally provided closer scrutiny of policies rather than personalities (See McAllister, 2005: 8).

**Media Focus**

When examining media focus, the key is to examine whether greater focus of the media is given to leaders and if leadership appeals became central during these election campaigns (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 345). During the three election campaigns that Chifley fought, similar issues were prominent in the print media’s focus for every
campaign, with some minor variations. Central to this was Communism and post-war rebuilding internationally. The events that dominated the news cycle in the *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* in the lead up to each of these elections will now be reviewed.

The focus of the media during the 1946 campaign was varied but, being so close to the end of World War II, post war rebuilding and the international negotiations between the victors were prominent news stories (See Table 1.2; *The Age*, 1946g: 1; 1946h: 1; 1946i: 1; 1946j: 1; 1946k: 1 as examples). Domestically, the dominant news story of the campaign was about the lack of coal available that was impacting on industry as well as individuals (*The Age*, 1946l: 3; 1946m: 5; 1946n: 1; *SMH*, 1946f: 1; 1946g: 5). While the post-war rebuilding environment dominated the agenda and international news overshadowed domestic news, at least one of Chifley’s colleagues achieved some media coverage: HV Evatt, the Minister for External Affairs (See Evatt in *SMH*, 1946a: 8 and 1946b: 3).

The focus of the media during the 1949 election campaign was on a few key issues. Bank nationalisation policy and the FPLP’s socialisation objective were most prominent (See *SMH*, 1949c: 5; 1949d: 8; *The Age*, 1949h: 9; 1949i: 2; 1949k: 7), and the threat of Communism more generally was also a focus (See *The Age*, 1949j: 1; 1949k: 1; 1949l: 4 as examples). The increase in the size of the parliament, with the House being increased from 75 to 123 and the Senate from 36 to 60 received coverage also (See *SMH* 1949e: 5; 1949f: 2 as examples). Accusations by Jack Lang and his supporters about Chifley’s money lending during the 1930s and 1940s “designed to destroy Chifley’s image as a champion of the battlers” received coverage in addition to this (Day, 2001: 499, See also *SMH*, 1949g: 1; *The Age*, 1949n: 1). Once again, Evatt received extensive publicity due to the importance of his portfolio (See *SMH*, 1949h: 6; 1949i: 5; *The Age* 1949m: 6).

During the 1951 election, the key themes of the previous two elections were once again a focus of the media with Communism domestically and internationally and the Cold War significant issues (See Table 3.1; *SMH*, 1951f: 6, 1951g: 1; *The Age*, 1951e: 5 as
examples). However, the presence of US armed forces in the Pacific and the implications for Australian foreign policy were also prominent (See SMH, 1951h: 1, 1951i: 3, 1951j: 1; The Age, 1951f: 1, 1951g: 1). Domestically, inflation (See The Age, 1951h: 2 and 1951i: 1) and the Cotton tax introduced by the government were also central issues (See SMH, 1951k: 8; The Age, 1951j: 3, 1951k: 1, 1951l: 8). Coverage of Chifley’s colleagues was once again sparse, however Evatt (See The Age, 1951m: 6 and SMH, 1951l: 8) received coverage as did Senator Nick McKenna, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (See SMH, 1951m: 3 and 1951n: 3).

When it came to media focus during the election campaigns that Chifley contested as leader, Chifley undoubtedly received extensive coverage, but this coverage was not about Chifley as an individual as Table 3.1 highlights. The coverage Chifley received was about the policies of the party and nothing like what later leaders of the FPLP received. It was also clear that Chifley’s colleagues received scant coverage with the exception of Evatt. The dominant news stories and the focus of the media during much of this period were on international events and the perceived Communist threat to Australia domestically and internationally. Chifley was mentioned in 52.2 per cent of articles surveyed in the 1946 election campaign, 47.9 per cent in the 1949 election campaign and 41.8 per cent in the 1951 election campaign. The 1949 campaign contained the most personalised coverage based on the final two weeks of the campaign, however, this still equated to less than one in 20 articles focussing on personal characteristics or polling (See Table 3.1).

| Table 3.1 - Media Focus During the Election Campaigns of the Chifley Leadership Period in The Age and SMH |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Number of Articles Surveyed                  | 1946 | 1949 | 1951 |
| Number of Articles that Mentioned Chifley    | 111  | 165  | 110  |
| (52.2%)                                       |      |      |      |
| Number of Articles Focussed on Policy         | 110  | 157  | 108  |
| (99.9%)                                       |      |      |      |
| Number of Articles Focussed on Personality   | 1    | 8    | 2    |
| or Polls                                      | (0.1%)| (4.8%)| (1.8%)|

As previously mentioned, all of the articles from the final two weeks of each election campaign in The Age and SMH were coded to determine these figures.
Electoral Face Summary

The period in which Chifley was leader of the FPLP was dominated by international events and the election campaigns and media focus during this period were heavily occupied with these events and in particular with the perceived threat of Communism. However, it is clear that this was a time before modern electioneering techniques and polling and one in which someone who still rejected the centrality of the media could become the leader of a major political party. This shone through in the campaigns of this period, especially compared to his opponent in the three election campaigns, Robert Menzies (Crisp, 1977: 227; Day, 2001: 496-7). While Chifley received far more coverage compared to his colleagues he was almost never photographed during these election campaigns. This is a significant factor which reduces the efficacy of the presidentialization argument in the Chifley leadership period. Essentially, while Chifley was the key component, the campaigns the FPLP ran during this time were based on the policies of the party and the achievements of the Curtin and Chifley Governments. Occasionally, campaign advertising focussed on a head to head battle between Chifley and Menzies, but there were very few of these and almost exclusively they were a part of the 1951 election campaign. If Chifley had embraced campaigning more than he did, it is possible that the campaigns would have been more personalised than they were, and perhaps even more successful.

Conclusions on the Chifley Leadership period

In Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) comparative study of presidentialization, they made it clear that they thought that some of the variables that had a causal effect on presidentialization emerged around 1960. As a result, examining a leadership period before this baseline provides an important control in many respects. First, it tests the validity of the 1960 hypothesis proposed by Poguntke and Webb (2005). Second, choosing a case study before this period, should mean that any trend from the Chifley period to the later periods, will be easier to identify as very few of the causal factors that Poguntke and Webb discussed as contributing to presidentialization, had emerged
before or during this period. These causal factors included the mass use of television and the breakdown of cleavage politics (See McAllister, 1992: 72).³⁰

For the most part, the Chifley leadership period showed no signs of presidentialization. However, the story is more complex. The FPLP during this period was vastly different to the incarnations examined in the later case studies and the party during this period could be considered ‘pre-modern’. The party was still a federal organisation with very few national resources and almost no full time staff members. Naturally enough, a leader with the knowledge, expertise and personal traits of Chifley could become a dominant leader within this environment. Chifley could dispense patronage within the party in a variety of ways but perhaps the most powerful was through his capacity to financially assist new parliamentarians or any other members of the labour movement Chifley deemed in need of this assistance. This role undoubtedly provided Chifley with immense power within the party but these behavioural factors were not part of a norm that had been established nor would they become accepted behaviour for leaders moving forward.

Chifley also had other advantages that helped him win over ambivalent colleagues on the key issues of the time. The ‘official family’ accentuated the pluralisation of advice he received and the esteem his colleagues held him in. He was the undisputed expert on all things economic and many of his colleagues could contest Chifley’s views on these issues. The product of these ingredients was a leader of the FPLP who was extremely dominant. However, the difference between dominance and presidentialization is stark.

Presidentialization in the executive face is primarily concerned with unilateral policy making from the head of the government and no evidence exists of this occurring in the Chifley Government. Presidentialization in the party face is concerned with the leader bypassing other party leaders, factions or institutions and with an increasing concentration of power and resources in the leaders’ office. Very little evidence exists of this happening either. Finally, in the electoral face, evidence of presidentialization as

³⁰ McAllister (1992: 72) argued that “There seems little doubt that the decline in the electoral importance of class has been substantial (but occurred mainly between 1967 and 1979)."
conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005) could come in a few forms. It could be through the growing emphasis on leadership appeals in election campaigns. Through the concentration of media focus on leaders during these campaigns, or through the effects those leaders can individually have on voting. Once again, the evidence of this occurring is minimal at best. Therefore, the evidence from the Chifley leadership period seems to support the 1960 hypothesis proposed by Poguntke and Webb (2005). In addition, the power that Chifley possessed, which was extensive, was due to a mixture of institutional and behavioural power. However, the behavioural factors that empowered Chifley had more to do with the under-developed structure of the party compared to the more modern manifestation.
Chapter Four - The Whitlam Leadership Period 1967-1977 – Emerging Presidentialization and Political Opportunism

This chapter will examine the period in which Gough Whitlam was the leader of the FPLP between 1967 and 1977. It will also examine important changes to the nature of the leadership as well as take note of changes structurally and organisationally during the period in which Whitlam was deputy leader to Arthur Calwell between 1960 and 1967. This chapter will map out key historical events during this period and then, using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) framework, will argue that evidence of presidentialization is identifiable in all three of the faces as conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005). However, this evidence is sporadic in some instances. This chapter will also argue that this burgeoning leader-centric politics is comparable and consistent with Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) findings internationally.

Historical Background

While the FPLP went within seven seats of returning to government in 1954 under H.V Evatt and within 2 seats in 1961 – including winning the two-party preferred– the subsequent 1963 and 1966 polls swung well and truly away from them. The 1966 poll had left the FPLP with half the numbers of their conservative opponents and with little chance of governing on the horizon. When Gough Whitlam became leader of the FPLP on 9 February 1967, he took control of a party that had already been in opposition for 18 years and a party where the ashes of sectarian strife were still smouldering. More broadly, the international headlines were still dominated by the ongoing war in Vietnam, while on the domestic front clear changes to Australian society were beginning to emerge. These changes included a new ‘youth culture’ which was different to anything Australia had previously seen - in essence a ‘new left’ was on the rise (Horne, 1980: 42-44).

Whitlam’s rise to the leadership overlapped with growing levels of social unrest and in examining just one of these years, Kurlansky (2005, 3) in his book, 1968: The Year that Rocked the World, argued that a few factors merged to create 1968 including:
This revolutionary fervour did not dissipate at the end of 1968 however, as the remaining years of the 1960s and most of the 1970s remained politically and economically volatile, with the Watergate scandal and the ‘Oil shocks’ of 1973 and 1974 examples of this. The vast societal changes during the 1960s and early 1970s provided the FPLP with new opportunities to break the conservative rule in Australia that stretched back to 1949 (Manne, 1999: 183). Opportunities were also available to Whitlam to show how he was different to the ‘old guard’ within the party as well as to build support for the reforms of the party he wanted. Whitlam viewed two main issues as obstacles to the ALP governing again. First was the tightly run and radical nature of the Victorian branch which was extremely hesitant to trust parliamentarians. The other was opposition to structural reforms to the party and Whitlam hoped that the 1967 Federal Conference would finally resolve some of these problems (Oakes, 1973: 154-55). At the conference, it was finally agreed that the parliamentary leaders would be granted full voting rights on the executive and the conference, and Freudenberg (2009: 94) argued that the FPLP, for the first time in its history, had a national leader and a national secretary both deeply committed to party reform.31

Just over a year after taking the leadership of the FPLP, Whitlam decided to force his colleagues to unite behind him or change the leadership again. On 19 April, 1968, he advised his parliamentary colleagues that unless he was given their loyalty and support he could not continue on as the leader of the FPLP. Whitlam advised his colleagues that he would resign and re-contest his position at the 30 April caucus meeting. In particular, Whitlam viewed the actions of the Victorian branch and members of the ‘left’ within the FPLP as obstructing the changes required for moving the party forward (Kelly, 2001: 107-109). While Whitlam subsequently won the ballot by 38 votes to 32, defeating Dr Jim Cairns, Hocking (2008: 312-314) noted that “Cairns encapsulated the core of his discord in the single memorable question ‘Whose party is this – ours or his?’ It was dramatic, precise and extraordinarily effective”.

31 An amendment was adopted that the Senate Leaders would also be included (Walter, 1980: 29; Oakes, 1972: 14-18).
Many of the changes that Whitlam had been pushing for were finally embraced at the 1969 Federal Conference. Not only was the parliamentary leadership provided with representation but it was the first televised conference. Whitlam eventually won the day on state aid to non-government schools, an issue that had plagued the FPLP, after it was agreed that the establishment of a commission to decide which schools needed funding the most would allay the concerns many had (Beazley Snr, 1985: 12-11; Barnard 1983-7). The result of the federal election of 1969, a 17 seat swing to the FPLP, meant that any division remaining in the party was relatively minor compared to past periods as the real prospect of governing seemed to salve past wounds. However before the 1972 poll, another major intra-party event occurred. In 1971, enough of the required stakeholders finally agreed to allow intervention into the Victorian branch. Electorally, Victoria had been the weak link for the FPLP for some time. From 1955 to 1969, across six separate elections, the FPLP only gained an additional three federal seats in Victoria (Faulkner, 2001: 216), and the Victorian branch had also sought to maintain their autonomy on certain policy issues and in particular the state aid issue which many in the Victorian hierarchy had refused to accept (Hocking, 2008: 359).32

The federal election on 2 December 1972 saw the FPLP finally returned to government after 23 years in opposition. The result, a 2.5 per cent swing and 8 seats were enough for the FPLP to possess a comfortable but small 9 seat majority in the House of Representatives. According to McKinlay (1989: 185-7) it became apparent that from the outset, Whitlam wanted to remake Australian society and his willingness to do so was evident in some of the legislative outcomes achieved in the early part of his government. The national anthem was changed, tertiary education fees were abolished and all remaining servicemen were ordered home from Vietnam. Whitlam also sent a letter of invitation, three days after the election, to the Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, in an attempt to open up diplomatic relations.

Whitlam’s first term was not without controversy however. In early 1974 Whitlam attempted to appoint Vince Gair, leader of the Democratic Labor Party to the post of

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32 It should be noted however that Intervention into the Victorian branch, which was dominated by the Trade Union Defence Committee (TUDC), more than likely would not have occurred without the change in leadership of the NSW Branch which was also about to be investigated. The NSW and Victorian branch had what Freudenberg called a “knock for knock” agreement - essentially a non-aggression pact. For more on this see Freudenberg (2009: 169-78); Oakes (1972:26-28); Hocking (2008: 355-64) and Allan (2002: 50).
Ambassador to Ireland. This it was hoped would allow the government greater leverage in the Senate, where Gair maintained a seat. When the opposition found out about this decision, a few hours before Whitlam was about to announce it, they notified the QLD government led by Johannes Bjelke-Petersen have the State Governor issue the writs for the election of the QLD Senate seats.  

33 With little room to move and after the opposition refused to pass six supply bills, Whitlam asked for, and was given, a double dissolution election by the Governor General, Sir Paul Hasluck.

The Federal election on 18 May 1974 was a historic event. It was notable for being only the third double dissolution election in Australia federal history; it secured Labor a second term; and eliminated the DLP from the federal parliament for over three decades, when they lost all five of their Senate seats. Labor’s failure to secure control of the Senate also meant the status quo resumed in terms of the tactics which would be employed by the opposition. However, before the inevitable rejection of bills in the Senate could occur and before Whitlam asked for, and was granted Australia’s only joint sitting of the houses of parliament, Whitlam would make one decision that would haunt the FPLP forever. On 11 July 1974, Sir John Kerr was sworn in as Governor General (Lloyd, 2000a: 343, See also McKinlay, 1989: 200-1). Yet before the true extent of this error of judgement was fully revealed, the FPLP had to attempt to manage an economy affected by the oil shocks, rising inflation and unemployment, which were all impacting on the governments expansionist agenda.

As the end of 1974 was approaching, the government in need of finance to fund its program sought international loan deals and came into contact with an international loans financier, Tirath Khemlan. The estimated $4 billion dollars being sought was never secured.  

34 However, when what had been attempted was revealed, the general public was outraged, especially as Treasury had opposed the idea as extremely unorthodox. In particular the Executive Council - whose authority Rex Connor  

35 had acted under – had their propriety questioned (McMullin, 1993: 352-354; Bramble and

33 Bjelke-Petersen’s animosity towards the Whitlam government was well known and he tried to highlight any real or perceived mistakes of the federal government. As McMullin (1993: 352) noted, “he rushed through the electoral formalities for a normal half Senate election for five vacancies in QLD before Gair had actually resigned” (See McKinlay, 1989: 189-198 and Freudenberg, 2009: 301-06 also).

34 In fact the Executive Council provided and revoked the loan authority twice, with the second occasion being a decline in the authority from $4 Billion to $2 Billion (McMullin, 1993: 352-354).

35 Rex Connor was the Minerals and Energy Minister from 1972-1975.
Kuhn, 2011:96-97; Lloyd, 2000a: 344). As more revelations came to light over the Loans Affair, Jim Cairns was sacked from the Ministry and Rex Connor later resigned (McKinlay, 1989: 204; Bramble and Kuhn, 2011:96-97; Lloyd, 2000a: 345). As 1975 progressed, it was becoming apparent that the obstacles facing the government were mounting, in particular the obstruction of the Senate. Following the retirement and death of two Labor Senators, two non-Labor state premiers broke with convention and appointed opponents of Whitlam to the Senate vacancies. As a result, the ALP found itself in a position where the opposition had a majority in the Senate, 31 to 29 (McMullin, 1993:364-5; Bramble and Kuhn, 2011:96-97; Kelly, 2001: 113-119).

From October 1975, the actions that would lead to the greatest constitutional crisis in Australia’s history unfolded over the space of less than two months. On 16 October, the Senate deferred the budget, meaning supply would effectively run out on 30 November. The subsequent three weeks were dominated by negotiation and compromise with the Governor General, Sir John Kerr the central figure in these negotiations. However, the tipping point came on 6 November, when after discussions with High Court Chief Justice, Sir Garfield Barwick, Kerr decided he would dismiss the prime minister. Amazingly, that same day, Bill Hayden had visited the Governor General to discuss the government’s alternative financial arrangements; however Kerr had been dismissive of the ideas put forward. When Hayden reported as much to Whitlam and indicated that he thought Kerr may be considering something drastic, Whitlam replied with characteristic stoicism; “comrade, he wouldn’t have the guts” (Whitlam cited in McMullin, 1993: 368). On 11 November, after further discussions between the party leaders came to nothing, Kerr provided Whitlam with a letter dismissing the government, leading to the immediate calling of an election. Despite the enthusiasm and rallying of the base, the election result was an unmitigated disaster for the FPLP, 30 seats lost, a 7.4% swing against the party and the opposition taking control of the Senate with a six seat majority (McMullin, 1993: 372-73; Bramble and Kuhn, 2011: 99).

The return to the opposition benches was never going to be easy for the FPLP and the bickering within caucus began almost instantaneously (McMullin, 1993: 376-86; See

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56 Bill Hayden held several ministries in the Whitlam Government, was Foreign Minister in the Hawke Government (1983-88), became leader of the FPLP in 1977 and later became Governor-General of Australia.
also Bramble and Kuhn, 2011: 100-10 for the changes in policy compared to the period in government). Despite Whitlam considering quitting the leadership, he was re-elected leader, this time with the ‘left’ faction’s Tom Uren as his Deputy Leader. According to Walsh (1979: 147), 1976 and 1977 were lost years for the FPLP: “Labor fell into what best could be called a catatonic state; Gough Whitlam remained leader but it was a listless defeated party”. As 1977 progressed a second consecutive landslide appeared to be on the cards. However the election on 10 December 1977 resulted in the FPLP being able to claw back 2 seats from the government. Shortly following this, Whitlam decided his time was up and resigned from the leadership position and the following year, resigned from parliament (Lloyd, 2000a: 352).

Analysis of the Whitlam Leadership Period

The Whitlam leadership period is one of the more fertile periods in political history for examination. To examine presidentialization during this period, this section will once again turn to the three faces of presidentialization as conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005). For the executive face, particular focus will be given to the way that the executive was structured and the management of the decision making process. This includes: Whitlam’s propensity towards unilateral decision making, his establishment of small policy committees and his tactical dissemination of information to the cabinet and the caucus. For the party face, focus will be given to changes to the federal executive and the conference that Whitlam vigorously pursued. Finally, for the electoral face, the focus will be on the federal elections Whitlam contested as leader, namely 1969, 1972, 1974, 1975 and 1977.

The Executive Face

As mentioned previously, when examining the executive face of presidentialization, the focus is on a shift in the power within the executive to the head of government (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 337). In the Whitlam leadership period, evidence of presidentialization is most apparent in the growing level of resources the leader in the executive possessed. However, Whitlam’s penchant for autonomy will also be examined and this will be shown to not be an indicator of structural presidentialization
but rather contingent dominance, relating to Whitlam’s personality and the circumstances that his government found itself in.

Management of the Decision Making Process

As time has passed since the Whitlam leadership era, the mainstream media, the conservative economic establishment, as well as Whitlam’s Labor successors have been quick to distance themselves from ‘Whitlamism’. Walsh (1979: 88) noted as much when he argued; “Labor’s transition from office to the wilderness occurred with such speed, ruthlessness and public acclaim that both the tactics and the policies of the Whitlam era were largely discredited within the Labor Party”. For the conservatives, the Whitlam Government proves that Labor cannot successfully govern. For the FPLP, Whitlam’s record is uneasily marginalised in the annals of Labor history. Keating (cited in McMullin, 1991: 431) for instance, has argued that Whitlam should be saluted for making the party more electorally popular but admonishes him for belatedly recognising “that the economic sands had shifted beneath it”.

Of specific interest for this thesis though is the way that decisions were reached and the role Whitlam as leader of the parliamentary party had in the decision making process. Unquestionably, Whitlam attempted to place himself at the centre of decision making on economic affairs, much to the chagrin of some of his colleagues and reflecting on this period, senior members of the Whitlam leadership team were vehemently opposed to his approach and his policies (See Bowen cited in Cohen, 1996; Beazley Snr, 1985; Crean, 1983 and Uren, 1991). The extent of this discontent led Beazley Snr to argue that “we (the FPLP) were reaching Government by tantrums”37 (Beazley Snr, 1985: 15-13-15). An example of what Beazley Snr was describing was provided by Lionel Bowen - Minister in the Whitlam Government and Deputy Prime Minister in the Hawke Government - who recalled that:

After the double dissolution election in 1974, which we won, cabinet assembled and Gough came in and said, listen I’m told by the Treasury the economy is grossly overheated, so we’re going to increase taxation 10 per cent all round. And we said, look we’re just back from an election and things aren’t too crash hot out there. They’re not very happy with us, and we’re not going to increase taxes, Well he said, you’re a pack of illegitimates. But he couldn’t persuade us. OK he said, if you bastards don’t agree with me I’m leaving. We unanimously said, fine keep going, we’re back in government and we think we can run it a little better than taking advice to

37 It should be noted that Beazley Snr added that this wasn’t so in the first year but was increasingly the case after intense opposition from the Senate (1985: 15-13-15).
increase taxes 10 per cent. He didn’t of course, and he said we’d talk about it later. Well, we never did talk about it again, but if you look up the figures on money supply between June and September 1974, you’ll find the Treasury, with Gough’s blessing but not cabinet’s, reduced the money supply by between 25 and 30 per cent. Well, unemployment went from 80000 to 280000, interest rates went through the roof, and we’re gone. We never recovered [sic] (cited in Cohen, 1996: 95-96).

This unilateral approach was a defining feature based on the accounts of those who were present. Beazley in particular paints a picture of Whitlam in Government as impulsive, reactionary and domineering over the caucus and the cabinet. He recalled that at one stage he said to Whitlam, “Gough, I have no fear of anything except your master-strokes. They never work.” While Lloyd (2000: 342) disagreed with Beazley Snr on this and in fact argued that “Whitlam very much left his ministers alone to administer their portfolios and public policy areas”, the evidence from those within the caucus and cabinet as well as from major events like the loans affair, paints a very different picture.

Beazley Snr was however not alone in his criticism of Whitlam as Frank Crean, the Treasurer between 1972 and 1974, also disparaged the Whitlam approach. While they may have felt personal animosity towards Whitlam as they were some of his major rivals within the party, they were widely respected members of the FPLP and senior figures in the government and as such their analysis cannot be overlooked. Crean (1983) argued that all along Whitlam wanted a submissive ministry and he wanted to control the policy process but he thought this was not what a FPLP ministry should be like.

I have often said to him individually that I always thought he was the worst chairman, and he was, he just wasn’t the chairman type...Often what you would have thought should have been raised in the Cabinet never got raised at all. Often they were not raised because he made sure they weren’t.

According to Beazley Snr (1983), it was this failure to bring many major decisions before the caucus and the cabinet which really brought Whitlam undone and that all of Whitlam’s disasters never came before cabinet. This included the loans affairs (which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter) and the lone stance Whitlam took

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38 It should be noted that Beazley’s relationship with Whitlam became less friendly as time wore on, something Beazley acknowledged (1985) and he even withdrew from the Whitlam shadow cabinet following the dismissal in light of the revelations that Whitlam had met members of the Iraqi Ba’ath Party.

39 Lloyd also worked as Lance Barnard’s Press Secretary so may have viewed Whitlam differently to those who were not in or around Whitlam’s inner circle.

40 This is a point Lloyd (2000: 343) for instance has noted about those who have criticised Whitlam’s management of the caucus and the cabinet.
in relation to the Indonesian-East Timor issue. The East Timor issue was one that divided Whitlam from many of his colleagues and his unwillingness to support an independent East Timor was totally out of step with the rest of the party and the conventions of the party and disagreements over what happened have continued ever since (Beazley Snr, 1985: 17-15). What is clear though is that Whitlam did take part in high level foreign policy decisions in which agreements were made which were opposed by the party, the Foreign Minister, Don Willesee, as well as the public service (Dunn, 1983: 143-146; Salla, 1995: 213). Mackie (2001: 143) noted that one of the key problems with the development of the policy on East Timor was the “dominating influence of one or two persons on the policy-making process...does seem to have had the effect of flattening out divergent views in the form of alternative ideas from either DFA, Defence, the PM’s office, parliament or the ALP itself in 1974–5”.

Another example of a major foreign policy decision that Whitlam acted autonomously on, was his dealings with Hanoi in 1975. Beazley Snr (1983) argued that:

Gough never took you into his confidence. If he thought you disagreed with something it was concealed from you...During the recent Anzac Day features on the ABC there was one on the way Whitlam from April the 2nd to April the 25th 1975 took exclusive control of anything that was done to evacuate anybody from Saigon...What was staggering to me was the revelation that Whitlam negotiated with Hanoi about what they would approve or not approve. This is as bad as whatever his negotiations were with Indonesia which were entirely concealed from the Cabinet. When his attitude over Indonesia was made public after we were in opposition he would still issue public statements contrary to the unanimous public decisions of the Labor Party in favour of the Indonesian takeover of East Timor. It was really quite scandalous.

Even Whitlam’s most loyal supporter, Lance Barnard (1983), acknowledged Whitlam’s failure to consult colleagues on major decisions when he acknowledged that there was very little discussion within cabinet or caucus over the raising of international loans. It is this lack of dialogue with Whitlam’s colleagues that set Whitlam apart from Chifley who attempted to convince his colleagues of his preferred position and then did everything in his power to have his position adopted. For Chifley, this meant using his personal touch to influence colleagues as well as using the institutions of the party such

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41 See Salla (1995) for a detailed account of the reasons why Whitlam did not support East Timorese independence. It also should be noted that Whitlam’s behaviour on the East Timor issue led his own caucus to vote for a Senate inquiry into his handling of the Timor issue once they returned to opposition (Freudenberg, 2009: 455).

42 The unilateral approach to foreign policy does not seem to be unique to Whitlam though as Kevin (cited in Mackie, 2001: 143), a former DFAT official has observed. He argued that “the trend towards prime ministerial centralisation of power has profoundly affected how foreign policy is conducted ... DFAT’s vigour and self-confidence were already being undermined”.

43 However, it must be noted that some of Barnard’s responses were conflicting on this issue as he also argued that he could not recall any major government decision on which he was not consulted, except for the decision to increase tariffs and even then he noted this was due to time constraints. Barnard argued that almost all decisions reached by the Whitlam Government were policies before they took government, so there should have been very few surprises. This counters some of the criticism of Whitlam.
as the conference and the executive as prescriptive institutions. This facet of Whitlam’s personality was a point Smith and Weller contemplated also: “[H]e [Whitlam] preferred to declare his position in caucus and to demand support rather than to secure it in advance by personal contact with strategically-placed members” (Smith and Weller, 1977: 51).

While leader autonomy is an important aspect of presidentialization, in this instance the examples do not infer presidentialization. While Whitlam acted unilaterally, through his management of the decision making process, he did so because of the type of person he was not because of the type of system he was working within. In other words, this does not constitute a trend towards presidentialization as this implies a movement towards less collective governing methods has occurred. While Whitlam acted autonomously in reaching decisions and this approach was different to Chifley, this approach is still conditional based on the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model. This is because no structural changes transpired and the behaviour of Whitlam as an agent within the system was not part of any established norm.

Cabinet Committees

Tied in with Whitlam’s attempt to dominate cabinet was the role small decision making groups were playing. Walsh (1979: 79) noted; “as in John Gorton’s kitchen cabinet, the membership was shifting and dependent on idiosyncratic quirks of Gough Whitlam”. Sexton44 (cited in Walsh, 1979: 81-82) agreed with this assessment, arguing: “it was common to discuss decisions in terms of whether they had been made by the first or second kitchen cabinet, because of the cabalization of decision making in the economic area. Political tactics became the prerogative of kitchen cabinets to which ministers might be admitted, or from which they might be excluded for the most idiosyncratic reasons”.

Walter (1980: 51-52) and Weller (1977: 50-52) also identified this as a problem and argued that empowering the committees took much of the emphasis away from the caucus and the cabinet.

44 Michael Sexton was on the staff of the Attorney General, Kip Enderby.
Not only did some committees give cabinet no option but to adopt their conclusions, but that in other cases cabinet did not even see what their decisions were. This was part of a wider tendency for Whitlam to take decisions without reference to cabinet. Some of those he took on his own; some were with the advice of other people. These were not purely routine decisions. Perhaps the most damaging decision made without reference to cabinet was to allow R. F. X. Connor to seek a large government loan from Arab sources. This was done at a gathering at The Lodge, the prime minister’s official residence, late in 1974 and made the subject of a minute of the executive council signed by the Governor-General (Smith and Weller, 1977: 50).

Further to this, Whitlam actually chose the committee members himself, which was an unusual development, as in theory the caucus was the supreme authority in the parliamentary arena and was meant to decide on such positions (Reid, 1976: 58-9).

Yet, the establishment of the cabinet committees to centralise decision making cannot be attributed as a trend of presidentialization from Chifley to Whitlam. As Weller (1992: 11) noted “Prior to 1949 governments created systems of cabinet committees, but none had a sustained impact or lengthy existence. Chifley for instance, used a combination of ministers and officials in a way that has not been copied since”. Furthermore, the committee structure used by Whitlam was “by the May 1974 election...largely redundant...as a consequence far more weight was given to ad hoc committees particularly the Expenditure Review Committee (ERC)” (Weller, 1992: 11). This will be important for the case studies that follow as the ERC became a semi-permanent fixture in spite of the fact that no formal constitutional powers are enshrined for it. However, the use of various committees during this period was merely conditional.

Strategic Release of Information

In addition to the autonomous decision making by Whitlam or a small group in a policy committee was Whitlam’s strategic release of information to the general public before his colleagues had made a decision. In particular, Whitlam would present decisions as a fait accompli to his colleagues through his use of the media. One of Whitlam’s tactics, which began at the start of his prime ministership, was his scheduling of press conferences. He agreed to have weekly press conferences on a Tuesday, however, cabinet met on Mondays (at the earliest) and caucus didn’t meet until Wednesday. So

45 The accusation has been made that this style of governing, ‘the kitchen cabinet’ as some call it, has been prevalent in other administrations, most notably Kevin Rudd’s, where the mainstream media in particular have attacked what they called the ‘gang of four’, which was Rudd, Swan, Gillard and Tanner.
“[T]he situation frequently arose where Whitlam on Tuesday afternoon hinted at and sometimes announced new cabinet initiatives to the press, which caucus, not yet having seen them, might next day amend, and at the extreme, reject” (Walter, 1980: 48). However, not even the embarrassment the government faced when contradictions emerged between cabinet and the caucus could make Whitlam change this method of operating (Walter, 1980: 48).

That Whitlam continued on with this order of proceedings despite continued opposition from his colleagues highlights that Whitlam was well aware of the strategic advantages he could exploit by ordering things in such a manner. This type of tactical dissemination of information and circumvention of the ethos and customs of disclosure within these institutions clearly highlight Whitlam’s preference for total ownership of governmental decision making. This seeming disinterest in collective governing has been further verified by other contributors including Crean (1983: 11:4), Smith and Weller (1977: 51) and Williams (cited in Walter, 1980: 30). Crean reasoned that the inefficiency and manipulation of the agenda to suit Whitlam’s own policy was at the heart of the problem and that; “I won’t say he didn’t want to be bothered, but he thought that if the ideas couldn’t come from him they weren’t going to come from anywhere” (1983: 11:4). Williams argued that “a lot of people knew that Whitlam regards Caucus as a bit of a bloody nuisance and a millstone around his neck” (Williams cited in Walter, 1980: 30). A key marker of dominance emerges from this, but not presidentialization: that through the exercise of leadership power, Whitlam was able to prevent his colleagues from altering decisions or changing the order of meetings. The inability of the party to prescribe a change to the leader is certainly symptomatic of governing past parties rather than through them. However, it has more to do with the personality of the leader rather than any structural change or accepted behaviour (norm) that had been established. Many leaders test the elasticity of their leadership, but the difference between what happened during this period and the Rudd period as an example, is that Whitlam’s leadership wasn’t based solely on electoral appeal. This will be discussed further in the Rudd chapter.
The Loans Affair

No episode during or since the Whitlam years has been used more by conservative media commentators or politicians to add gravitas to their claims that the FPLP are incapable of managing the Australian economy than the loans affair. The loans affair was set to a background of unparalleled political pressure in Australia and difficult economic conditions. Much of the detail for why the loans were being sought has been forgotten as time has progressed, which included the High Court ruling the Petroleum and Minerals Authority invalid and the opposition’s refusal to pass the Australian Industry Development Corporation Bill (Foster, 1978: 81-86). However it was the decision making process, lack of consultation with colleagues and the contempt that Whitlam and Rex Connor held towards some of their advisers within the public sector that underscored this failure. What followed has been well documented and is not the focus of this thesis however the unilateral decision making of Whitlam must be examined.

The decisions to provide Connor with authority to borrow the money followed by reducing the amount and then revoking the authority has been described in great detail elsewhere (See AJPH, 1975: 88; Lloyd and Clark, 1976: 138-161 for example). The decisions were viewed as a major mistake by many within the party and blame must be attributed to those present at the Executive Council Meetings, namely Whitlam, Cairns, Connor and Murphy. Beazley Snr (1983), Crean (1983) and Barnard (1983) in particular were very critical of the decision making around the loans affair and when asked whether the Labor Party would normally allow a prime minister as much latitude as Whitlam had taken, Beazley Snr responded by arguing “no, that’s why it never came before us”. Whitlam and those ministers not only acted unilaterally but failed to follow the conventions of government by having the Governor-General, who was at the ballet in Sydney, only sign off on the minutes of the meeting the following day (AJPH, 1975: 88).

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46 See Lloyd and Clark (1976: 114-117) for more on what Labor’s internal polling was saying about the way they were perceived as economic managers.
47 Also see AJPH (1975: 88) and Reynolds (2008) for a detailed account. This includes the broader context for attempting to secure the loans, namely for uranium enrichment and infrastructure for the resources industry.
48 It is worth noting that it was not only Whitlam and Connor who were suspicious of Treasury and Reserve Bank reservations towards the scheme. Sir Lennox Hewitt, Connor’s departmental head, shared the same view that this was merely the entrenched conservatism of these institutions (Foster, 1978: 82).
49 In fact, two days before the Executive Council met - when Whitlam decided that Cairns and Crean should switch portfolios - making the former Treasurer and the latter Minister for Overseas Trade - Crean warned Whitlam, “Well Gough, you will be sorry...that you ever made Jimmy Treasurer...and for goodness sake don’t have anything to do with this loan business” (McMullin, 1993: 356).
Undoubtedly, the loans affair is linked to the broader confrontation that was occurring in Australian politics at the time which continues to this day – conservative political forces in the parliament as well as in the media attempting to paint the FPLP as incompetent economic managers. However, while Whitlam and Connor were not required to bring loan raising to cabinet as Whitlam explained to parliament (cited in Lloyd and Clark, 1976: 149), Cameron’s argument that “the way the decision was made was an example of the elitism which produced disastrous mistakes for the Whitlam Government” was an accurate description (cited in Lloyd and Clark, 1976: 149). Hence, Whitlam must carry a large portion of the blame for this episode and in particular, his centralisation of the decision making process on economic decisions was critical. More important for this thesis, it clearly exposes the dominance Whitlam had over his party during his time in office. However, is this a sign of increasing presidentialization from the Chifley period to the Whitlam period in the executive? The answer is a definite no. Both leaders were dominant within the FPLP however no structural changes or norm had been established enhancing the capacity of Whitlam to act autonomously. Whitlam’s dominance was purely conditional as his opportunities had not been enhanced compared to previous leaders.

Growth of Prime Ministerial Resources

A further indicator that Poguntke and Webb (2005: 19) touch on when discussing the executive face is that of “the growth of resources at the disposal of the chief executive”. The Whitlam leadership period is viewed as the watershed for increasing numbers of staff around the prime minister (Holland, 2002; Jones, 2006: 642-643; Tiernan, 2007: 39-51). However, considering that it was 23 years since the FPLP had been in power and the reform agenda was larger than any prior government could lay claim to, the argument put forward by Holland (2002) that, “Governments have wanted staff who understand their party and its agenda” does seem to be accurate in this case. However, Walter’s (1986: 98) argument, that increased staffing was “serving as another mechanism to assure prime ministerial pre-eminence”, also has an element of truth to it.

50 McMullin (1993: 359) noted this also when he argued that the attacks from the media that the Whitlam Government experienced fit into the same category as those which the Scullin and the Chifley Governments had received at various stages over their tenure and this can be verified by a number of the major daily newspapers running stories about what ‘happened’ decades on. For example, see The Australian (13 December 2004; 27 October 2005; 25 October 2005) as examples and Lloyd and Clark (1976: 152) came to a similar conclusion.

51 Walter (1992: 35) and Holland (2002) noted that the argument had been made that the Whitlam Government came to power suspicious of the conservative nature of the public service.
and any growth in the level of these resources will be noted in the remaining case studies. Unlike the United Kingdom for example, where it has been argued that Blair in particular tried to create a department within Downing Street, Bennister (2007: 332) noted “[I]n Australia, the existence of a Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), established in 1971 and now expanded considerably has of course negated the need to create even a virtual one!”. Thus, while Australian leaders have more recently had clear institutional advantages over the British prime minister for example, the growth of the resources at the disposal of the executive has structurally enhanced the capacity of these leaders and this is a clear example of presidentialization, as conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005) occurring during this period.

The Executive Face Summary

Whitlam explained the situation in government perhaps better than anyone else could when he argued that he was the “Prime Donna Assoluta” while his colleagues were merely “Prima Donnas” (Beazley, 1985: 17-13). While various attempts were made to constrain Whitlam - as to be expected from a party with a history of suspicion of leaders – including an attempt to circumscribe the leader’s ability to allocate portfolios, by surrounding the leader with a large cabinet and by providing Whitlam with a deputy leader who could attempt to control Whitlam’s impulses these all failed. But this more adequately fits what Poguntke and Webb (2005: 337) argued can be attributed to “short-term contingent factors, such as the size of the cohesion of the parliamentary support on which they can draw, their current standing with the electorate, their personalities, and the sheer and inevitably unpredictable impact of what Harold McMillan once inscrutably and memorably referred to as events”. In the Whitlam leadership period, these ‘events’ included governing for the first time in 23 years as well as the emergence of an economic crisis of a magnitude unseen since the Great Depression. As a result, while greater evidence of presidentialization exists in the executive face in the Whitlam period than in the Chifley period, the trend that can be identified is most visible in terms

52 Of course the Department of prime minister was established in 1911 however it was not till 1971 that this department merged with the Department of the Cabinet Office creating PM&C.
53 An attempt was made in 1972 after taking government to include a veto for the caucus on the allocation of portfolios however the move failed (Freudenberg, 1977: 251). The problems concerning the size of the cabinet during the Whitlam government were problems the Hawke Government was keen to avoid. Also, this occurred when Barnard was replaced by Cairns and perhaps optimistically, many in the party thought that this would provide the party with the capacity to control Whitlam’s impulses. Barnard (1983-7) described this as “whistling in the dark...the plain fact is he had no influence over Gough Whitlam at all and indeed the situation became quite humorous in the end, as it was quite clear that there was no consultation between Gough Whitlam and his Deputy and never likely to be...Whitlam decided that if he couldn’t have the Deputy of his choosing, he would go it alone on major policy decisions”. 
of the growth of resources at the disposal of the chief executive and an emerging trend of centralised decision making.

**The Party Face**

When examining the party face, it is important to remember that while inter-connected with the examination of the executive face, the latter solely consists of an examination of the time in office. Thus, in the period in which Whitlam was leader, signs of presidentialization before taking office, or after a return to opposition must be examined. For Whitlam, this means examining the periods 1967-1972 as well as 1975-1977. Poguntke and Webb (2005: 343) noted that they were looking for “evidence of party rule changes which give leaders more formal power, and the growth of the leaders’ offices in terms of staff or resources”. This certainly was the case in the period 1967-1972 and Whitlam was a significant force behind many of these changes. As a result, this section will argue that increasing evidence of presidentialization in the party face is clearly identifiable during the Whitlam leadership period.

**Changes to the Structure of the Party**

While Whitlam’s legacy as a prime minister may be rejected by his contemporaries, his attempts and successes at changing the organisational wing of the party and its primary institutions, namely the federal conference and the federal executive are certainly not (See Gillard, 2011; Keating cited in McMullin, 1991: 431). In fact it could be argued that Whitlam’s leadership was the first of many in which the leadership was increasingly presidentialized in the party face and was the tipping point between two different parties. The pre-Whitlam party more closely resembled the mass party and it was this structure with idiosyncratic variations - as a result of major events in the life of the party, such as the 1955 split - which best symbolised the organisation before Whitlam become deputy leader. Subsequently, the structure of the party radically changed, and more closely came to fit the professional electoral model. Therefore, while Whitlam’s motivation was twofold; namely to ensure party policy wasn’t controlled by a small cabal in the executive and to reduce the perception of the party being controlled
by faceless men, the changes merely shifted decision making on policy from one cabal to another. This new cabal of course were the parliamentarians and more specifically, those selected by Whitlam to be a part of his inner circle (See Walsh, 1979: 79-82).

When Whitlam took the leadership he viewed ‘modernisation’ as essential. While it may have just been the perception that the organisational wing had more power than the parliamentary leadership, Whitlam knew this would always be something the FPLP’s opponents would attempt to capitalise on. As a result, the ‘36 faceless men’ campaign and the release of the photo of the parliamentary leaders - Arthur Calwell and Gough Whitlam waiting outside Canberra’s Kingston Hotel, while a special federal conference decided policy – can be seen as a key moment that compelled Whitlam to vigorously pursue structural and far reaching changes to the party. The *Australian Journal of Politics and History* (1963: 243), in its recording of events, noted:

> At the time of the federal conference, Messrs Calwell and Whitlam were sufficiently in doubt as to the outcome to wait anxiously outside the conference room, to the scorn of parliamentarians from other parties who are not burdened by such powerful extra-parliamentary colleagues... The relative importance of the ALP’s parliamentary and extra-parliamentary leaders is something which constantly changes with circumstances, but for the parliamentary leaders to have the leading role is the rule rather than the exception.

While circumstances may have existed where the parliamentary leaders had more power than the organisational wing before the split of 1955, the party Gough Whitlam took over the leadership of in 1967 was still scarred by this division and the power of the federal executive was testament to this. Thus, the push by Whitlam (and others) in having greater representation for the parliamentary leaders on the executive and the conference soon after taking the leadership – was an indication of what would follow. These changes were the first of many which took power away from the organisational wing and shifted it to the parliamentarians. The enormity of the change was not lost on

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54 Ironically this has continued on to this day. Mainstream media coverage of the removal of Prime Ministers Hawke and Rudd, almost solely focussed on the role ‘faceless men’ had played. These faceless men are usually factional operatives and sometimes even non-elected factional leaders, including leaders of various trade unions.

55 An example of this is a report Whitlam delivered in 1964 to the federal executive on the 1963 election loss. In it, Whitlam argued, “[T]he conference is closed to the press. It is the smallest Labor Conference in the World. Its parliamentary component has dropped from 70 per cent to 25 per cent over the last fifty years...The public must become better acquainted and more impressed with the proceedings of Labor’s supreme policy-making and organising bodies” and that, “[T]he party’s deliberations and image will be impaired unless and until the Federal Parliamentarians play and are seen to play a full part in formulating and interpreting Federal policy” (Whitlam, 1964: 2-3).

56 However, Whitlam also argued that “the parliamentary leaders in fact had a great deal of influence – usually the determining influence – but he added: ‘it doesn’t appear so, and it ought to be obvious to the public that we share officially in the making of policy which we have the job of putting in parliament, on the hustings and on TV” (Oakes, 1973: 123-124).
Whitlam (1972; Also see Freudenberg, 2009: 100) and he argued that what had occurred was the biggest change in the party’s structure since 1915:

> Before 1967 it could have legitimately been said that the Federal Executive of the Labour Party could treat Labour members of parliament as puppets. It can't be said now. And in fact half the people on the Federal Executive are members of the Federal Parliament. So what influence we have there is really dependent on our particular personalities—how persuasive we are. But the position has been completely changed from the position in the mid-sixties when it could be said so damagingly that we were ruled by faceless men [sic].

As a result, although Poguntke and Webb (2005: 9-10) argued that “while the presidentialization of internal party politics may be accompanied by growing control of the party machinery, this is not an essential characteristic of it”, in the case of the Whitlam leadership period and the FPLP, this most certainly was the case.

However, these changes to the party would only be effective if the platform could also be changed. Whitlam, similar to many before him, knew the importance of the platform whose ecumenical status has been described by Kim Beazley Snr as; “the Old Testament. While the policy speech is the New Testament” (Beazley cited in Freudenberg, 2009: 261). Thus, one of the key policy changes Whitlam was pursuing was over the issue of state aid and this would bring him into direct confrontation with the Victorian branch and eventually lead to the ‘Intervention’. However, in contrast to what will come in the later case studies, Whitlam still was attempting to act within the institutional limits of the party.

Return to Opposition

Following the dismissal on November 11 1975 and the subsequent rout in the election, Whitlam and the FPLP returned to the opposition benches. Whitlam’s colleagues were according to Reid (1976: 199) “bitter, out of office, and blaming Whitlam”. Freudenberg (2009: 455) argued the party were “disillusioned with the elitist nature of his decision making” and went so far as to “reject his proposal for an inner Cabinet and outer ministry and stripped him of the right to sack errant ministers”. As a result, one might have expected changes from what occurred in government. However, discussions Whitlam engaged in following the 1975 dismissal with the Ba’ath Party of Iraq over possible donations to the to the FPLP show this did not occur (Freudenberg, 2009: 304). The deal which further embarrassed the party and associated them with new
undependable sources was met with dismay internally. Mick Young\(^{57}\) (cited in Cameron, 1990: 26), as an example, angrily declared: “I can’t believe they could be so bloody stupid!” However after an investigation, the federal executive criticised the “grave error of judgement” and Whitlam maintained his position of leader for almost another two years (McMullin, 1993: 378-9).

Whitlam’s propensity to bypass the intra-party leaders did not end there. Following the dismissal, Tom Uren, prominent member of the ‘left’ became Deputy Leader of the FPLP, and Uren noted that before the policy speech for the 1977 election, he was advised of a major policy announcement, the plan to abolish payroll tax, an hour before the speech and that he wasn’t even going to be invited to speak at the function (Uren, 1991).\(^{58}\) Uren also noted that other policies, directly affecting his portfolio were also announced in the policy speech, without him being consulted (Uren, 1991). To not even advise the deputy leader - who in this case was also the shadow minister for the portfolio directly affected – clearly highlights Whitlam’s penchant for unilateral decision making. However, when attempting to examine a trend emerging from Chifley to Whitlam, no clear thread can be established. In essence, these examples demonstrate the conditional nature of much of this decision making. This provides a stark comparison to the rule changes which gave leaders more power and greater capacity to influence outcomes in the conference and on the executive of the party.

### The Party Face Summary

To summarise, in the party face during the Whitlam leadership period, clear and extensive evidence exists of shifting intra-party power towards the parliamentary leadership at the expense of the organisational wing. In fact, it could be argued that it was during this period that presidentialization in the party face really emerged. The vision Whitlam had for a ‘modern’ Labor Party with the parliamentary wing as the controllers of party policy remains a source of great division in the party to this day. The battle between the grassroots and the elites in the parliamentary wing over who decides policy, if the membership can block or amend parliamentary decisions through the conference are part of this tension and have still not been satisfactorily resolved,

\(^{57}\) Mick Young was National Secretary of the ALP and later became a minister in the Hawke Government.

\(^{58}\) Uren did note that this could have been due to the interference of the NSW Executive though.
remaining a controversial touchstone to deeper problems within the party (See the 2010 National Review for example). Clearly, changes to the structure of the party was something Whitlam could not achieve on his own and could not be forced through via the strength of his personality or due to the position that he held. Whitlam undoubtedly was one of the central - and perhaps loudest - advocates for change within the party, but in reality he was an agent for change that many others also wanted to see happen. At times the literature which covers this period is hagiographical in nature and gives Whitlam far too much credit for the changes and not enough emphasis is given to the changing nature of Australian politics and liberal democratic politics internationally as Poguntke and Webb hypothesised (2005). This however does not alter the fact that during this period clear evidence of presidentialization is identifiable, especially in comparison to the Chifley period.

The Electoral Face

When examining the electoral face three elements need to be analysed. These are campaign style, media focus and voting behaviour. This section will argue that presidentialization in the electoral face was apparent yet mixed during the Whitlam leadership period as there were signs of “increasingly leadership-centred electoral processes” but these were not uniform across the various elections (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 5). Factors that may have contributed to these changes include the emergence of television and the rise in professional advisers such as pollsters and media advisers surrounding the leader. Unlike later periods, in which greater analysis has been conducted on election campaigns, the literature available on this period is somewhat limited with the exception of the 1972 election, highlighting its historical importance in Australian politics. To examine the media focus aspect of electoral presidentialization, three prominent broadsheet newspapers, namely The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Australian, will be examined. For voting behaviour, fortunately for the elections of 1975 and 1977 some empirical data exists and this will be used in conjunction with polls published in the newspapers to identify any impact Whitlam may have had on voting in the five elections he contested as leader.
Campaign Style

During Whitlam’s period as leader the type of campaign the FPLP ran shifted dramatically, especially after 1972. This shift was not only in terms of the leader’s role in the campaigns, but the techniques used. Most important to changing the campaign style was the emergence of television as the dominant political medium of the period. Lloyd (1992: 109) has argued that “more than any other factor, the conduct of the contemporary Australian prime ministership has been shaped by the impact of television”. But he could have placed a caveat at the end of this: this was from Gough Whitlam onwards. The section that follows will examine the campaigns the party ran during the five elections that Whitlam contested as leader.

The 1969 election Mclean and Brennan (1973: 207) argued - was about “building up Whitlam” and the newspaper advertising that the FPLP used during the campaign verified this. For instance, one full page ad was entitled ‘Why They Changed Their Minds’ in which pictures of Whitlam appeared next to quotes from voters who had preferred the FPLP policy over the government’s (The Age, 1969c: 9). A further piece of advertising which ran the day before the election listed the FPLPs policies against the government’s with a large picture of Whitlam next to it (The Age, 1969b: 12) and similar ads also appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald and The Australian (See SMH, 1969c: 9, 1969d: 7 and The Australian, 1969a: 6 and 1969b: 13 as examples).

The 1972 campaign according to Mills (1986) and Crawford (2004: 140) was a watershed event and Walter and Strangio (2007: 60) argued:

> Gough Whitlam’s adviser’s deployed focus groups and market research when they were devising the 1972 “it’s time” campaign, a breakthrough in political promotion and a new benchmark for the alliance of public relations and politics. Innovative in its use of television advertising, the campaign was also unprecedented in its presidential style. Press secretaries and media-savvy advisers were a feature of the expanded ministerial offices introduced by the Whitlam government, an initiative every subsequent government was to follow.

In addition, Ward (2001: 9) argued that “[T]he 1972 Australian federal campaign was the last fought before the introduction of colour, and the first to be dominated by television”. Thus, the 1972 election can be seen as the threshold between two separate eras of elections. On the one hand, it was before colour television, yet on the other, new
techniques more common in the United States were being integrated into the repertoire of the FPLP. Interestingly though, this did not lead to the campaign focus centring solely on the leader. According to Jones (2003: 104) the creator of the ‘It’s Time’ adverting, the research that was conducted before the advertising was made revealed that voters found Whitlam distant and cold.

'It's Time' was therefore not only about celebrity and glamour, but was also a promotional vehicle for Whitlam. It included shots of him in early photographs as a schoolboy, a rower, a barrister and with Margaret on his wedding day. It was no coincidence that the advertisement ended with a shot of Whitlam with his wife. Including Mrs Whitlam was, as the market research recommended, meant to show that Whitlam was not a political automat, but has a wife and family.

The ambiguous nature of what was actually being referred to in the ‘It’s Time’ advertisements was especially telling. Mills (1986: 97) noted “not a single policy is hinted at, not a single mention of Vietnam, not a single solid clue is given about the future of Australia...It's Time for what? No specific answer is given”. According to Jones, this was however, “the point” (Mills, 1986: 97).

One of the key moments of the 1972 campaign was the campaign launch at the Blacktown Town Hall. According to Ward (2001: 10; Also see Oakes and Solomon, 1973: 172-173), this was the one event where national television coverage was central to the planning and that;

[W]ith national television coverage in mind shadow ministers were kept off the stage in order to keep the focus upon Whitlam. Moreover seating at the front of the hall was reserved for sporting identities, pop stars and television celebrities so that they (and not politicians) would be filmed by roving cameras. In all key respects the Blacktown campaign speech was carefully designed as a television happening.

However, the campaign launch was the exception rather than the rule during the campaign. “[T]he 1972 campaign had not seen the TV election much tipped... the televised appearances of Australian party leaders had been rather stagey occurrences. Instead of a TV election, 1972 had been an advertising agencies election marked by sheer ad agency professionalism” (Ward, 2001: 11; See also Mills, 1986: 97).

Labor was returned in government in the 1974 double dissolution election, however, their re-election did very little to change the political status quo. According to the Australian Journal of Politics and History (1974: 380), the key theme of FPLP campaign was allowing the government to implement the reform agenda they were

59 As Jones (2003: 103) noted, “[T]he famous ALP television advertisements featured well-known celebrities such as Little Pattie, Bobby Limb, Bert Newton and Jack Thompson, singing the 'It's Time' theme song. The advertisements varied from thirty seconds to two minutes, and there was a colour version made for theatres and drive-ins”.

60 For more on the campaign strategy see Crawford (2004: 148-151).
given a mandate for in 1972. While the party returned to Blacktown Town Hall, “the fanfare from 1972 had subsided” (AJPH, 1974: 382). The advertising that the FPLP used during the 1974 campaign was equally uninspiring. Some were tied in with the referendum questions that were being put to the electorate (See The Age, 1974: 7) while others focussed on either the economy - and in particular inflation under the heading ‘Whitlam, He’s So Much Better’ (See The Australian, 1974a: 8), or the number of policy changes which had occurred since the FPLP took office, titled ‘Only Whitlam Could Do So Much in 16 Months’, with Whitlam superimposed over the policies (See The Australian, 1974d: 12).

The 1975 Federal election, which followed the most dramatic moment in Australian political history – resulting in the biggest landslide in the House of Representatives since federation - was set in unusual circumstances, which makes it difficult to compare with other elections. However, the campaign and the advertising the FPLP used continued on in a similar vein from 1974, citing what the FPLP had achieved while in government (See The Australian, 1975b: 5). Interestingly however, for 1975, the election advertising and campaigning were vastly different across the mediums. As Lloyd (1977: 205) noted “[T]he party’s press advertising took a different tack from its television and radio ads, attempting to set out in some detail inconsistencies in Fraser’s public record”. In particular, the press advertising was no longer focussed on Whitlam. It either included Whitlam with broader labour movement colleagues such as Hawke (See The Age, 1975a: 6), or made no mention of Whitlam at all (See The Age, 1975d: 2). Although, when it came to television coverage of Labor’s campaign, much more focus was placed on Whitlam. In particular, Lloyd (1977: 207) noted

Labor directed a substantial part of its time to telecasting the speech with which Whitlam opened his campaign and the candlelight vigil outside Parliament House that closed it. Both set pieces were effectively produced, particularly the Whitlam telecast, which used careful camera work to emphasise the Labor leader’s imposing figure and the frantic enthusiasm of his audience. The telecast may have been too effective; there was some feeling among Labor officials that this demonstration of the ‘Fuhrerprinzip’ cost Labor electoral support.

The 1977 election campaign, perhaps more than anything else, showcased the shifting fortunes of the party and its leader Gough Whitlam, especially compared to 1972. During the campaign, Whitlam’s presence was seen as such a negative that the campaign strategists attempted to emphasise the ‘team’ rather than the leader. According to Mills (1986: 27) “Whitlam’s leadership was almost obscured behind a bevy of frontbenchers”. This approach of ‘burying the leader’ as Mills (1986: 147) put it
was achieved in 1977 by exploiting “the dominant popularity of ACTU leader Hawke, compared to Whitlam”. This was further emphasised by advertising that made no mention of Whitlam (See The Age, 1977: 14; The Australian, 1977c: 6 and 1977d: 3). The televised policy launch followed a similar format as well as “[T]he campaign organisers consciously attempted to project a Whitlam-Hayden leadership team” (Lloyd, 1979: 252-253). In Lloyd’s view, “Labor’s advertising was influenced by the need to mask its leadership credibility problem” and this desire was evidenced by the fact that the party’s main television commercial had Hayden as its centrepiece, rather than Whitlam (1979: 255).

As a result, when it came to the campaign style during the Whitlam leadership period, what can be clearly seen is that mixed evidence of presidentialization exists. The 1969 election had elements of presidentialization; however this was nuanced by the fact that this was more through the traditional mediums of print and radio. The highpoint for leader focus during this period came during the 1972 election with its increased focus on television, with the launch of the campaign at the Blacktown Town Hall being a key example. Other high points came during the 1975 election with the campaign launch and the candlelight vigil outside parliament house, both deeply leader-centric affairs. However, even in these campaigns, the focus was not solely on Whitlam. As the party were aware that the electorate found Whitlam cold and distant at times they attempted to highlight other key members of the party (or broader movement) (Jones, 2003: 104). In summation, in terms of campaign style, evidence of presidentialization is clearly mixed.

Media Focus
When examining the media focus, the key is to examine whether “media coverage of politics focuses more on leaders” (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 345). For the Whitlam leadership period, very little secondary literature exists on the media’s coverage of the campaigns. It is clear though that any analysis needs to recognise that some media outlets were opposing Whitlam and the ALP for a majority of the elections that Whitlam contested (See Lloyd, 1986: 121; Hocking, 2008: 281, 385-6). As a result, the media focus of the campaigns Whitlam fought is hard to determine, however, once

61 Whitlam did attempt to use the medium for his advantage and Lloyd (1992: 120) argued that “an important factor in McMahon’s defeat had been the high level press gallery support stimulated by Gough Whitlam during six years as opposition leader. In 1969, the ALP under Whitlam as opposition leader permitted direct TV coverage of the 1969 ALP federal conference and the leader’s policy speech launching Labor’s 1969 election campaign. The intrusion of the TV cameras into Australian politics largely dates from these two pioneering ventures”. 
again the major newspapers *The Age, The Australian* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* have been examined in the lead up to each election Whitlam contested.

The 1969 election was the first Whitlam contested as leader and while it may have been assumed that Whitlam may have been a curiosity for the media, the focus was on policies and the party over individual personalities. In particular the Vietnam War, and the ALP’s policy as adopted at the 1968 Federal Conference, to withdraw all overseas troops, as well as the newfound unity within the ALP were the focus.\(^62\) There were also ‘puff pieces’. For example, Hamilton, looked at Whitlam ‘the man’ however these were in the minority (1969: 6). In terms of coverage across the mediums, *The Sydney Morning Herald* (1969b: 3) noted on election day that TV had not played a major part in the campaign. However, Whitlam did receive large scale coverage in the newspapers and full page and double page spreads (For example see Barnes, 1969: 8; Armfield, 1969: 6; Solomon, 1969: 13). Overall though, Whitlam did not dominate the coverage at the expense of all of his colleagues and a number of stories were devoted to shadow ministers and their portfolios, such as Crean for example (*The Age*, 1969c: 9).

The 1972 federal election result, was as expected, a change of government and the media focus followed this pattern. The focus of the media in the campaign could be divided into a few categories. Coverage was either: broad based on the possible change of government (See Table 4.1);\(^63\) about the reasons to vote for Labor in the poll (See *SMH*, 1972a: 5); or those which discussed changes to policies that would occur under a Labor government (See *SMH*, 1972b: 5). This subtle acknowledgement that a change of government was almost inevitable was highlighted by editorial support for such a change (See *The Age*, 1972b: 9 and 1972a: 13). The articles that focussed more on Whitlam the individual rather than as part of a political party came mainly in the aftermath of the victory (See Barnes, 1972: 9 for example).

The 1974 Election which was held only 16 months after the 1972 poll was, due to its close proximity to the previous poll, fought on many of the same issues and based on

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\(^{62}\) See *SMH* (1969a: 8); *The Age* (1969a: 10; 1969b: 11); Grant (1969: 12); Armfield (1969: 1) as examples.

\(^{63}\) See Ramsey (1972: 1); Johns (1972: 1); Heinrichs (1972: 4); *The Age* (1972c: 1).
the ALP seeking another mandate to implement ‘the programme’. In a well-constructed piece of analysis a week before the 1974 poll, Allan Barnes, in The Age (1974: 9), noted that Mick Young confronted Whitlam, advising him that the campaign was not focussing on the party’s achievements or on “vote-winning ministers”. Almost immediately following this, the media focus shifted away from Whitlam, and Hawke - who once again loomed large over the campaign (See Table 4.1) – and Hayden were featured in articles on the key policy issues of health and industrial relations. There was also coverage of economists supporting the government and the economic decisions they had taken (See Armfield, 1974: 5; and The Australian, 1974c: 3). There were also the leader profile articles (See The Age, 1974d: 10 for example) as well. However, it was clear that even The Australian, whose anti-Whitlam agenda permeated through the pages, was focussed on perceived policy failures rather than personal deficiencies (See Kelly and Steketee, 1974: 1; Dare and Kelly, 1974: 17 as example).

Analysis of the 1975 election is more systematic than any prior election with Penniman’s (1977), Australia at the Polls: The National Elections of 1975, a ground-breaking look at the nature of Australian federal elections. The focus of the media during the 1975 election campaign - which was only 22 days in length - was varied and certainly not focussed solely on Whitlam. Perhaps this was due to the circumstances in which the election was forced, but Lloyd (1977: 202) noted that the biggest news stories of the campaign were reporting of the new polling data and commentary on this data. Hawke and Hayden played an increasingly more important role in stories about policy and in particular this was the case on economic matters in which Hayden became seemingly the preferred spokesperson (See Table 4.1; The Australian, 1975a: 6; Beeby, 1975: 1; Barnes, 1975: 8 discussing “the Hayden budget”). This focus on policy was also noted by Lloyd (1977: 204) who, when discussing the ABC’s current affairs radio programs ‘AM’ and ‘PM’, argued that:

*The programs maintained their standards during the campaign and were reinforced by a number of other programs which made an effort to dig into policy issues, a rarity in the media coverage of 1975. The most notable was a special series, ‘The Policy Makers’ which exposed spokesmen from both parties to questions by a staff interviewer and to phone-in questions from listeners.*

Thus Whitlam was certainly not the sole focus and the failure to arrange a debate between the leaders further accentuated this. The stories that did focus on Whitlam

64 For Hawke see The Age (1974b: 5) and The Australian (1974b: 1). For Hayden see The Age (1974c: 18) as example.
however were predominantly negative. In particular, focus was given to fresh allegations relating to the loans affair (See SMH, 4 Dec 1975a: 1 and The Age, 1975b: 9 for example); Whitlam’s clawing back of power from the states (See O’Hara, 1975: 7); and Whitlam’s failure to communicate his ideas adequately enough (See Barnes, 1975a: 1). However, the negative focus was not solely on Whitlam. The Age (1975c: 8) in an editorial argued “[T]he fact was that Mr Whitlam did not have the best team in the world to implement his policies for social change. Some of the ministers that caucus wished on him were hopeless”.

Fortunately Penniman continued his series on Australian elections for 1977. The 1977 election held on 10 December was in Lloyd’s (1979: 231) words “a distinct letdown for the media”. Predominately the focus of the campaign was the economy but refugees and uranium were prominent also (Lloyd, 1977: 234-250). A poll conducted for The Age (Radic, 1977c: 3 and 9 Dec 1977d: 3) noted as much, with unemployment, inflation and ability to manage the economy combined making up 59 per cent of the poll on most important issue for voters. The coverage followed this script with most stories focussed on how Whitlam, usually in consultation with Hayden, was going to “fight inflation” or change one of the policies of the government (See Table 4.1; Steketee, 1977a: 1, 1977b: 6; Beeby, 1977: 3). However Hayden individually (See Mayman, 1977: 5) as well as the Deputy Leader, Tom Uren, also received some coverage (See SMH, 1977: 10, The Australian, 1977b: 4). Coverage focussing on Whitlam argued that some of the magic of previous campaigns had disappeared (For example see Grattan, 1977: 21 and Butler, 1977: 7). In an analysis of the election strategy, O’Reilly (1977: 13) argued “Mr Whitlam’s caustic wit and flamboyant style also appeared to frighten many people. The Labor Party in this election campaign has tried to undo these images by projecting Mr Hayden and other opposition personalities. They have also tried to exploit Mr Hayden’s reputation for economic expertise and tried to live down the big-spending image by limiting the opposition’s policy commitments”.

In summation, while Whitlam contested five elections compared to Chifley’s three and while the media landscape had dramatically changed, with the exception of 1972, the coverage of Whitlam in terms of mentions was only slightly greater than that for Chifley (See Table 7.2). Aitkin and Kahan (1969: 13) noted in the lead up to the
the election of 1969, “[I]t is clear that the leaders occupy a pivotal place in the images of
the parties held by the electorate. This is natural enough given our form of government”
However the coverage in this period did not focus on the leader at the expense of all
others and in particular, Hawke, Hayden, Uren, Cairns and Barnard, as key members of
the labour movement, shared some of the coverage. Some time before the 1969 election,
campaign reporting of Australian federal politics in the print media changed. Articles
focussing on personality or polls increased from roughly one in twenty (in 1949) to
more than one in ten during the Whitlam period (See Table 7.2; Graph 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3).
While identifying the causal factors behind such a change is beyond the scope of this
thesis, two developments may help to explain the increase. The mass usage of
television, which arrived “in time for the 1958 federal election” and the burgeoning
field of political polling, especially in the late 1960s and early 1970s might have been
contributing factors (Mills, 1986: 94; 116). Thus, what has become commonplace in
contemporary politics, namely, the reporting of how leaders performed on various
television shows as well as reactions of leaders to polling may have started to become
newsworthy during this period.

Table 4.1 – Print Media Focus During the Election Campaigns of the Whitlam
Leadership Period in The Age, SMH and The Australian

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articles Surveyed</strong></td>
<td>356</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articles that Mentioned</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Whitlam</strong></td>
<td>212</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(59.5%)</td>
<td>(65.3%)</td>
<td>(54.8%)</td>
<td>(53.2%)</td>
<td>(51.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articles Focussed on Policy</strong></td>
<td>310</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(87.1%)</td>
<td>(88.1%)</td>
<td>(87.4%)</td>
<td>(89.8%)</td>
<td>(89.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articles Focussed on Personality or Polls</strong></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12.9%)</td>
<td>(11.9%)</td>
<td>(12.6%)</td>
<td>(10.2%)</td>
<td>(10.7%)</td>
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Voting Behaviour
As Senior and van Onselen (2008: 226) have noted, “[A]lthough the influence of
political leaders in determining electoral outcomes has been the subject of research in
the United States and Canada for a number of decades, it is only since the 1980s that it
has received scholarly attention in Australia”. Unsurprisingly then, the more comprehensive studies of this period were American and only completed on the elections of 1975 and 1977 (Mills, 1986: 12). No information exists which would assist in determining leadership effects on voting behaviour before the 1972 election and that which exists following this is sketchy and at times anecdotal. Despite this, the following section will piece together the information available to provide some general comments on leadership effects during this period.

In terms of a ‘Whitlam effect’ on the vote in 1972, Butler (1973: 3) noted that it seemed as if most people had decided who they would vote for well before the election campaign and this was backed up by research conducted by Newell et al (1973: 202) as well as Kemp (1973: 282). According to Braund (1973: 18) and Blewett (1973: 6-14), in 1971 when Labor conducted internal party polling, the results were not good for Whitlam personally. The report argued that “the electorate had not seen the real Gough Whitlam” (Braund, 1973: 18). Braund (1973: 18), contended that the FPLP were attempting to minimise the damage done by Whitlam’s image, rather than focus on him due to his personal unpopularity. McLean and Brennan (1973: 207) agreed, arguing “in contrast to its 1969 electoral strategy, when the ALP concentrated heavily on building up Whitlam, the party chose to make the 1972 campaign almost wholly issue-oriented”. However, Cameron (1973: 277) possessed a different view arguing that based on polling completed around the time of the election, that the primary reason for voters swinging towards Labor was the ‘It’s Time’ campaign. Kemp (1973: 288-289), differed again, acknowledging that a preference for one leader over another did play a part in some swinging voters decisions, however, some demographics also swung away from the FPLP. As a result, he drew the conclusion that “the 1972 election suggests an unusual level of dissatisfaction with the political scene”.

No evidence exists of any leadership effects in the 1974 election as this election was fought on many of the same issues as 1972 and the result stayed almost the same. In contrast, 1975 and 1977, had evidence suggesting leadership effects play a part. However these were negative in their nature for Whitlam (See Beed, 1977: 211-255 for the most comprehensive analysis of the opinion polling during the 1975 election). For example, in the lead up to the 1975 election, polling conducted for The Sydney Morning Herald (1975c: 13) noted that more supported the dismissal of the Whitlam government than opposed it (49 per cent to 48 with 3 per cent not sure). In 1977, polling done for
The Australian (1977a: 8, see also Radic, 1977a: 4 and 1977b: 4) included approval ratings for the leaders and not once in the 6 months leading up to the federal election of that year was the percentage of those who approved of Whitlam higher than those who disapproved.66

As a result, when it comes to voting behaviour and the impacts of leadership effects, the information available for this period is limited. However, based on what is available, it appears that during this period, positive leadership effects did not play a major part in any of these elections for Whitlam and for the FPLP. In fact, if any effects were present, these were negative in nature and the FPLP were doing their best to mitigate these by campaigning with the ‘team’ as well as by using celebrities and new advertising techniques. Poguntke and Webb contended: “even if leadership effects are minimal, the parties may respond to their perceived relevance by consciously personalizing their campaigns” (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 11). During this period, the party responded to both positive and negative effects, whether these were perceived or not.

The Electoral Face Summary

McAllister (2007: 13) has argued that it is commonplace to associate governments with the leader, that this has been the case for some time and that “the personalization of politics will remain a—and perhaps the—central feature of democratic politics in the twenty-first century”. As the professionalisation of modern political parties gained momentum during the Whitlam leadership period, the expectation may have been for signs of presidentialization to exceed the information that has been found. However, the evidence suggests that electoral face presidentialization was patchy during this period. While there were some examples of the party campaigning in a presidentialized manner, there were also examples of their campaigns equating to the antithesis of this approach. The level of media focus that Whitlam received varied across the five elections he contested, however this represented a slight increase in general than the coverage Chifley received. As has been mentioned elsewhere, it would be expected that in the leadership periods that follow, that the level of presidentialization in the electoral face will increase for a number of reasons. This includes that the professionalization of parties has continued and that television has further increased its dominance over other

66 For a comprehensive account of the polls during this period see Goot and Beed (1979: 141-185). The negative satisfaction rating ranged from one to twenty per cent over the period. Fraser had almost as dire results in the polling except he had one period where he had more approve than disapprove just before the 1977 election (The Australian, 1977a: 8).
mediums for political campaigning, resulting in images of the leaders becoming more important. In terms of the leader effect on voting, very little evidence exists to substantiate any positive effect that Whitlam had on voting intentions. In fact, any effect was primarily negative.

Conclusions on the Whitlam leadership period

One of the key difficulties when examining the leadership period of Whitlam is that this was a period (1967-1977) of massive social change. The controversial and irregular nature of events such as the dismissal make parts of this period hard to compare with other less dramatic periods in Australian federal politics. This momentous event and the emotion it arouses goes some way to explaining why some fail to navigate their way through the mythological fog that has developed in the years that have ensued. In separating the nostalgia from the information available, in particular the accounts of those who were present - including key supporters of Whitlam - a clear picture is painted of Whitlam; this is of someone who wanted control and was unable to delegate or to successfully manage a team. Whitlam articulated this better than most when he described this as his “crash or crash through” approach (Oakes, 1973: 122). However, this does not equate to presidentialization and for all of Whitlam’s unilateralism and autonomous decision making during this period the signs of presidentialization are mixed. In the executive face, Whitlam took opportunities available to him to act autonomously in a variety of areas, but does this show “increasing leadership power resources and autonomy within the political executive”? (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 5). Not necessarily, because as has been mentioned previously, presidentialization and conditional dominance are not the same thing. To put it simply, conditional dominance may rise and fall dependent on personality and circumstances, however structural changes will maintain. In the executive face, we can see the emergence of some signs of structural presidentialization, especially in terms of increased resources at the disposal of the chief executive. Also, we can see some minor evidence of centralised decision making processes through the use of cabinet committees and in particular the ERC is apparent (Weller, 1992: 12). Yet, much of the autonomy we can see in the Whitlam government is conditional rather than structural or part of an established norm.
In the party face, a mixture of agency and structure coalesced to produce the type, as well as the level of changes that transpired. Undoubtedly, Whitlam and others played a role in further entrenching and strengthening the role of the leadership in the FPLP. However, the changes to the executive, the conference, the ‘intervention’ into the Victorian branch and the changes to policies such as state aid were driven by structural changes first and foremost. As politics was becoming further professionalised and a growing emphasis was being placed on attracting the swelling middle classes, reducing real or perceived electoral liabilities was a key focus for many within the FPLP. The negative connotations associated with the ‘faceless men’ as well as the radical nature of the Victorian branch, were the key milestones to electoral success as they viewed it. Thus, signs of the party face becoming presidentialized exist in this period and this can be attributed to a combination of individual actors playing their part, but more importantly to structural changes. Whether these individual actors were capable of initiating systematic change without the type of meta-level structural pressures that emerged is doubtful, but they did play some role in a process that was set to occur and has occurred, in almost all Western polities. In comparison to the Chifley period, it is clear that a greater role, explicitly defined in the institutions of the party, was established for the leader of the FPLP from this period onwards. As a result, it was in the ‘party face’ where the clearest signs of presidentialization during this leadership period materialised.

In the electoral face, very little of the changes that were made, which were substantial, could be attributed to the role of agency. The key change, namely, the further use of television as the primary medium for political campaigning, further entrenched the role of leaders; however its emergence was entirely structural in nature. In fact, it was the lack of, rather than the focus on Whitlam which permeated much of this period. This highlights the contingent nature of dominance, compared to the structural presidentialization Poguntke and Webb (2005) were looking for or the behavioural presidentialization added to the framework. While sporadic evidence exists of

67 In an article Whitlam wrote in the Sydney Morning Herald twelve days after his elevation, he set out his desire to broaden the Labor base: “[M]ore and more men and women with professional training are employed on salaries rather than the self-employed. All teachers, scientists and journalists, most economists and engineers, and many lawyers and doctors, are in employment. They are in a better position than most to realise the lop-sided and anti-social features which our economy and society have developed under the Menzies Government. They are being dominated by the Liberal affliction of superiority towards persons who are in employment, however useful or important the employment. They can be expected in increasing degree to vote for Labor in the 1960s” (Whitlam cited in Oakes, 1973: 86).

68 However, Simon Crean in his relatively short leadership period achieved a substantial change to the rules of the party in 2002 when he had the so called 50: 50 rule introduced so that rank and file members had as equal a representation as trade union delegates, without what would seem meta-level pressures. See Allan (2002: 50-58) for more on this.
presidentialization emerging in the electoral face, these increases were not as large as perhaps expected, with some minor exceptions.
Chapter Five - The Hawke Leadership Period 1983-1991 –
The Growing Autonomy of the Parliamentary Leadership

This part of the dissertation will examine the period in which Bob Hawke was the leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party between 1983 and 1991. As in the previous chapters, the evidence underpinning presidentialization will be assessed through “the three-dimensional framework which looked at leaders’ positions within their party organisations, within national executives (in respect of governing parties), and within electoral arenas” (Webb et al, 2011: 3-4). Preceding this, the historical background of the period will be sketched out and the chapter will end by offering some conclusions on the Hawke leadership period.

Historical Background

When Robert James Lee Hawke became leader of the FPLP in 1983, he did so in the most unusual circumstances. While he had followed the path of many others by losing an initial caucus vote for the leadership, his victory sealed on 8 February 1983, was in McMullin’s (1991: 408) words, “the most extraordinary day in Australian politics since Remembrance Day 1975. In Canberra, Fraser advised the Governor-General to authorise a double dissolution on 5 March, and almost simultaneously Hayden resigned the FPLP leadership in Brisbane”. As a trade union advocate for the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) from 1959, and eventually its leader in 1969, and as Federal President of the Labor Party from 1973 to 1978, Hawke was often seen as a future leader of the parliamentary party. His entry into federal parliament, according to Kelly (1999: 277), “transformed politics since he came with a messianic belief, verified by the opinion polls, that he was certain election winner”.

The first election that Hawke contested in 1983 was set to a backdrop of deepening economic problems. According to Butler (1983: 155), “[B]y 1982 the OECD put Australia at the bottom of its league table for inflation and for stagnation and it looked as if it would soon be at the bottom for unemployment”. Within Western economic and political circles, a belief was spreading that government intervention into markets
needed to be limited. These ideas, most prominently articulated by Milton Friedman and the Chicago School of Economics, shunned the Keynesian style policies of much of the past four decades. This growing emphasis on globalisation, small government, privatisation, deregulation and free trade, while given various titles in different nations, came to be known collectively as neo-liberalism.69

The 1983 election victory, which was Labor’s biggest since 1929, included a swing of almost five per cent and was part of shifting tide towards Labor nationally, with four new Labor governments in less than a year across the country (McMullin, 1991: 411; AJPH, 1983: 508). At the first meeting of the new caucus, Hawke was allowed to have an inner and outer ministry, something Whitlam had wanted but was denied (AJPH, 1983: 508). In Blewett’s (2003: 73) view, this was a radical departure from the past for Labor and challenged the sovereignty of caucus. But he argued it was part of a broader theme of the government as it was:

> the determination of the new government to put efficiency before sentiment, authority above participation, hierarchy over equality. They signalled from the beginning a willingness to shatter old party shibboleths in the interest of a modern Labor government, a government above all determined to be something more than a brief interruption in the long hegemony of the conservatives.

One of the first major events of the Hawke Government was the National Economic Summit (NES). The Prices and Income Accord was unveiled as the centrepiece of the summit despite many predicted it would fail as had happened elsewhere in the world. However, the agreement that was made between business, the union movement and the government implemented a centralised system of wage fixing which was meant to simultaneously fight inflation and unemployment (AJPH, 1983: 513). The first year of the Hawke Government was dominated by a number of major events. These included: the mini-budget to address the unexpected budget deficit; the Combe-Ivanov Affair, where ASIO advised the government that former ALP National Secretary David Combe had become friends with V. Ivanov who they believed was a KGB spy; further debates over uranium mining; and, ended with the decision to float the Australia dollar, which was a sharp move away from Australia’s as well as Labor’s previous positions on the issue (McMullan, 1991: 420; AJPH, 1983: 509).

69 For example in Britain, the policies now commonly associated with neo-liberalism were considered a central part of ‘Thatcherism’ while they were known as ‘Reaganomics’ in the US.
In December 1984 Australians made their way to the polling booths for the second time in less than two years. As a double dissolution election had occurred in 1983, half-senate elections were required before July 1985 as well. To further complicate matters, the government also put two referendum questions to the electorate, neither of which was carried (See Rydon, 1985 and Maley, 1985 for more). The result for the ALP was a small swing towards the opposition, and while a surprise to many, it continued a trend which began in 1967 of swings away from the sitting government (Maley, 1985: 71).

In early 1985, Hawke and Kim Beazley Jnr agreed to allow US aircraft to refuel in Australia as part of their monitoring of the MX missile tests. However, they did so without the authority of caucus and cabinet and suffered a major embarrassment when they were required to ask the US to rescind their request as caucus asserted its traditional authority (Steketee, 2001: 144 and AJP, December 1985: 494). But the economic reforms continued and in September 1985 the government continued on with its changes to taxation and the economy by introducing a capital gains and fringe benefits tax (McMullin, 1991: 421).

In 1986, it started to become clear that the Australian economy was weakening and Australia’s foreign debt problem was being exacerbated by a large fall in exports. The government was forced to make large cuts to expenditure as well as keep interest rates high, which inevitably led to a decline in popularity for the government and for the prime minister, who “once seemed untouchable” (AJP, 1987b: 101). As 1986 progressed, an issue the FPLP seemed unable to resolve, was the sale of uranium to France. The decision to approve the sale, which contravened the platform of the party, was only ratified, after what was described as a “bitter debate, at a Special Caucus meeting” (Panter and Kay, 1994: 8). In particular, those that opposed the decision recalled the Chernobyl nuclear accident, which had only occurred four months earlier as well as Hawke pledging in 1983 to not sell uranium to France while they continued their tests in the Pacific, a position the 1984 and 1986 Conferences had upheld (Panter and Kay, 1994: 8 and McMullin, 1991: 425-6).
In the first half of 1987, the focus of both major parties was squarely on the election of that year (AJPH, 1987a: 279). The election was called for 11 July and as the Australia Card policy had been rejected twice by the Senate, Australia went to its sixth double dissolution election since federation. The result of the election was a small swing (0.94 per cent) nationally away from the government, but the FPLP picked up four additional seats. This gave the FPLP its highest number of seats in the House of Representatives in their history, and the victory was the first time a federal Labor administration had won a third term (Steketee, 2001: 152).

Following the election, one of the first things the government set out to do was to reshape the organisation and structure of the public service. The change meant that the number of departments was reduced from 27 to 17 and that there would be 15 ministers in the inner cabinet and 15 in the outer (AJPH, 1988: 215). However, this was not the only issue to dominate meetings of the party. How to deal with the stock market crash, privatisation of state owned enterprises, and the introduction of a ‘user pays’ scheme for higher education, which would eventually become known as the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), were intensely debated. Many of the decisions reached were radical departures for the party and Kelly is of the view that central to these reforms was the “conviction that distinct limits existed to the welfare state and to the register of claims made by individuals upon the state” (1999: 246-248; AJPH, 1988: 215). This highlights the seminal shift in the ideological direction of the parliamentary party during this period.

In 1988, the emergence of leadership tension became public knowledge when Hawke refused to set a timetable of when he would resign, which would allow the Treasurer, Paul Keating, to become prime minister. However the infamous ‘Kiribilli agreement’, made in November, established a succession plan in which Hawke would make way for Keating in the term following another Labor victory (Steketee, 2001: 151). Also in November, Hawke angered his party and the ‘Left’ in particular by failing to consult with caucus over an agreement for new US bases to be established (AJPH, 1989a: 245). As the government’s third term progressed, economic conditions were weakening significantly and interest rates, inflation and the balance of payments deficit were all worrying the government (AJPH, 1989b: 439). However, 1989 was a year in which the
focus of the nation shifted outward, as this was a year that will be remembered as one of the most momentous of the century. The Tiananmen Square massacre, the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the thawing out of relations between the US and the Soviet Union grabbed the headlines across the 12 months.

The March 1990 Federal Election was one that many expected the FPLP to lose, with high interest rates and controversies in the Western Australian and Victorian ALP administrations perceived as obstacles to retaining office (AJPH, 1990: 420). However, the FPLP held on to power, with a swing of less than one per cent away from them in the House of Representatives, and maintained an eight seat majority (AJPH, 1990: 421). According to Uren (1995: 432-3): “The main people responsible for the victory were firstly Hawke as the leader and secondly Graham Richardson”. Widely known as one of the key factional operators from the NSW Labor Right, Richardson, dramatically altered his view on the environment after taking the portfolio in 1987 and it was his capacity to attract second preferences from minor parties that were vital in this victory. This success was short-lived though as shortly after the election: “[T]he electoral stocks of the Hawke government slumped...By mid-November Labor’s Morgan Gallup Poll rating had fallen to an all-time low of just thirty-two per cent – a full eighteen points behind the coalition parties. There was little prospect of recovery” (AJPH, 1991a: 302). Two events dominated the headlines in the latter half of the year for the FPLP. First, was the seemingly inevitable involvement of Australia in a war with Iraq, which was becoming more and more likely as the government supported the sanctions that were advocated by the United Nations to pressure Iraq into withdrawing from Kuwait. Second, was a return to proposals over privatisation. At a Special National Conference in September, the government’s proposal to privatise Qantas and Australian Airlines was endorsed in spite of the rejection of the policies by a number of state branches and affiliated unions. According to the ALP Federal Secretary, R.D Hogg, this was “the most critical shift in party thinking in the last thirty years” (Hogg cited in AJPH, 1991a: 245).

As 1991 began, Australia would be drawn further into the dispute with Iraq, and while this may have improved Hawke’s standing with the electorate, internally support for

70 In Western Australia this was the WA Inc scandal and in Victoria, this was the collapse of the State Bank of Victoria.
Keating was increasing (AJPH, 1991b: 473-4). After weeks of speculation and denials, a special caucus meeting was called for 31 May to resolve the leadership issue. In the ballot held the following week, Hawke defeated Keating by 66 votes to 44 and Keating moved to the backbench (AJPH, 1991b: 474). However, the battle was maintained behind closed doors and on 19 December 1991, Keating finally defeated Hawke in caucus 56 votes to 51 ending Hawke’s leadership of the party (AJPH, 1991a: 245).

**Analysis of the Hawke Leadership Period**

The Hawke leadership was a period where the parliamentary party fundamentally changed the type of policies they would use to manage the economy shattering the party’s shibboleths. According to Jones (2003: 424), the product of this was: “Stronger Australia: weaker ALP”. The period provides much to examine in terms of presidentialization and this chapter will argue that signs of presidentialization are identifiable to various degrees in the executive, party and electoral faces. For the executive face, particular focus will be given to the way that the executive was structured and the management of the decision making process. This includes the use of cabinet committees and the growth of prime ministerial resources. For the party face, focus will be given to changes to the structure of the party including the factions, the conference and the platform. Finally, for the electoral face, the focus will be on the federal elections Hawke led the party into, namely 1983, 1984, 1987 and 1990 and the campaign style, media focus and any leader effects on voting behaviour will be examined.

**The Executive Face**

This section will argue that the role of prime minister has continued to change due to a variety of factors, some structural and some behavioural (norms). However, during the Hawke leadership period, clear evidence exists of the leadership group and key financial ministers, detaching themselves from and usurping the traditional democratic organisation of the FPLP while in government. The power that these economic

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71 Tacit support for Keating also was growing in the Australian mainstream media as well. See Sheridan (1990: 11) and Grattan (1990: 11).
ministers possessed was directly related to the domination of the parliamentary wing by supporters of the neo-liberal agenda since the Hayden leadership period. The way the dominant group within the party were able to control outcomes will be examined in the sections that follow.

Management of the Decision Making Process

The FPLP during the Hawke prime ministership set out to avoid the perceived mistakes of the Whitlam period and according to Day (2003: 403), “there was intense pressure on Labor to govern responsibly”. While Hawke may not have been influenced by such pressures, he did set out to govern and manage the decision making process in a very different way from Whitlam. The central plank of this approach is what was called the ‘consensus model’. The term often cited in the literature when the period is discussed, has been lambasted by some as a “myth” (Maddox, 1989: 9-10), while others viewed it as the development of some new paradigm (Moore, 2003: 112 and d’Alpuget, 2010: 7-10). At the very least, the approach was an effective rhetorical tool as Hawke, and the government, were able to use it to deal with criticism, by merely claiming that those that opposed the approach were not working for consensus (Jaensch, 1989: 160-1).

In caucus and cabinet, Hawke’s approach has been characterised as that of a “chairman” (Hayden, 1996: 476-477; Garnaut cited in d’Alpuget, 2010: 82). An important part of this ‘chairmanship’ was noted by Weller (1992: 18): “Hawke was prepared to allow debate to continue till satisfied that a consensus existed on many issues, leading to extensive meetings”. In Weller’s (1990: 24-25) opinion, this different approach to managing the team could be understood by looking at Hawke the individual who was:

at not often concerned with the details of policies. He has a general desire for a more cohesive and co-operative society, but there are few specific policy objectives to which he is committed...Another reason for this limited policy development is that Hawke is concerned as much, and at times more, with the process of decision making as he is with particular outcomes...Indeed, this desire for agreement also extends to trying to ensure that there is a consensus about the way things are decided.

72 Central to this consensus model was the use of summits. The first of which was when the Accord agreement was ratified in April 1983 at the National Economic Summit (NES). Summitry is not an approach only synonymous with Hawke and has been repeated since, for example in Rudd’s 2020 summit. However, the approach has been often derided with Uren (1995: 358) describing the NES as a “good public relations exercise”. According to Belharz (1994: 130-1), “Summitry was a feature of Hawke’s political style...Hawke’s National Economic Summit Conference was a piece de resistance. Like the swearing–in of the American president-elect, it combined novelty and tradition. Held in the old Parliament House, it thus conferred a sense of legitimacy of Westminster which the proceedings did not deserve – for this was a schoolyard tryout of Hawke’s Boyer Lecture”. It should be noted that d’Alpuget (2010) was Hawke’s second wife so her analysis needs to be considered in this context.
While this may have generally been the method that was employed, there are clear exceptions that are worth noting. The 1987 restructuring of the cabinet and creation of mega-departments, the holding of the Combe-Ivanov inquiry, the length of the 1984 election campaign, and the MX commitment to the US for instance are all examples where decisions were made without cabinet approval (Weller, 1990: 24-25).

The scene was set for confrontation early on in the government when in the second meeting of the caucus, Ken Fry argued that a need for greater consultation with the caucus committees on policy was needed. “According to the caucus minutes, Bob Hawke replied that he could not give a categorical statement that no decision would be taken without consultation with caucus committees” (Stekete, 2001: 143). This in itself reveals much about the changing nature of executive government for the FPLP. No longer could the caucus be seen as having ultimate sovereignty on anything except leadership ballots and in very rare instances, they may impose their will on the leadership, similar to what happened during the MX crisis. But ultimately, the relationship between the leader and caucus as well as cabinet and caucus had been fundamentally altered.

In Steketee’s (2001: 140) opinion, two decisions “set the parameters for the relationship of Caucus to the rest of the party”. This included the splitting up of the cabinet as well as the decision to bind anyone in the inner and outer ministry who participated in decision making to these decisions in the caucus. These decisions Steketee (2001: 140) argues, while formally preserving the supremacy of caucus, also weakened its authority, effectively allowing a small group of economic ministers to control the agenda of the government. As a result, the will of the cabinet, and as a by-product, the will of the leadership, could be forced on caucus. This situation was best demonstrated when “Science Minister Barry Jones asked Communications Minister Michael Duffy on one occasion after an economic policy announcement following a meeting of the full ministry: How did that happen? It’s purely a matter of numbers, Duffy replied, there’s four of them and only 23 of us” (Stekete, 2001: 141-2).

73 Ken Fry was member for Fraser 1974-1984 and FPLP backbencher.
It is clear that not repeating the mistakes of the Whitlam administration was central to this strict discipline. But it was also clear that the leadership wanted to take the party in a different direction, in particular on economic matters. According to Maddox (1989: 85), they achieved this by imposing an “unusually rigorous discipline, since in June 1985 it was reported that they had threatened to throw all Cabinet positions open to re-election if the ministers refused to support the Treasurer’s ‘white paper’ on restructuring the tax system – a report that the Prime Minister refused to confirm or deny”. This discipline in the cabinet was supplemented by certain ministers attempting to avoid consultation with caucus, as many of these decisions involved varying levels of austerity (Steketee, 2001: 144). Thus, the disempowerment of caucus was a central feature of the Hawke administration and in Jaensch’s (1989: 164-5) view, a key difference existed between the Hawke period and others;

Decisions such as the MX matter, continuation of uranium mining, deregulation of the banking industry, the presence of US bases, changes in social benefits, brought rumblings from Caucus and, on a few occasions, threats of revolt. But Caucus, dissent has been limited, especially in comparison with the Whitlam years, to demands that Hawke and his inner Cabinet at least attempt to involve the parliamentary party more in policy making. One reason for this relatively low-key reaction to what is, in effect, a questioning of the ethos, is that the Hawke electoralism has been remarkably successful. The ‘presidential’ style may offend a number of individuals within the party, but it has, after all, produced the historic third successive term of a Labor government. And that result is a powerful argument with which to confront dissent within the party. In 1988, of course, there were suggestions that the ‘presidential’ style was becoming a dis-asset. But rather than engender Caucus action, the leadership of the party, especially the Prime Minister’s minders, have proffered their less public advice.

Of course, it is not unusual for leaders to use political capital to make decisions independently or to over-rule their colleagues from time to time, and in all of the case studies examined, there are instances of this. The question for this thesis however is does this constitute structural presidentialization? Similar to Whitlam, Hawke provided something that the FPLP wanted: success. This certainly is not structural presidentialization but does provide a partial answer to how Hawke and other key actors were able to usurp caucus. But it was more than this also. Due to technological advances and globalisation the nature of governing had also been fundamentally altered through this period dramatically shrinking the response time government’s had to make key decisions. These changes provided leaders a rationale the when they were attempting to usurp traditional channels of authority, but their effect did not alter the locus of power within the executive. It is this which is seminal when identifying
presidentialization in the executive face and shows that it is more that the locus of power within the party had shifted, not within the executive. In the next section, the increasing use of cabinet committees will be examined. This will be done to establish if there are any other signs of presidentialization in the executive face.

Cabinet Committees

As had become the norm for Australian governments from the Whitlam period onwards, the Hawke government established cabinet committees before they came to office as a way of better managing the task of governing. This approach had been mooted within the party before the 1980 election and discussed in the years leading up to the party taking office (Tiernan, 2007: 52-54; Weller, 1990: 16-25). The key difference between Hawke and his Labor predecessors however, was the establishment of the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ cabinet. This system while intended to streamline cabinet and the decision making processes, had the capacity to create tension, especially with the ‘outer’ cabinet. In theory, this tension was meant to be alleviated by making those from the ‘outside’ cabinet members of the committees that impacted on their portfolios (Weller, 1992: 12-13). This system was maintained till 1987, when the departments were re-organised, meaning that every department had a cabinet minister in the ‘inner team’.

Nevertheless, it was clear that one committee was more powerful than the others, the Expenditure Review Committee (ERC). d’Alpuget (2010: 79) noted that “the ERC was established soon after the government took office and was in full swing by May 1983. Its purpose was to cut all the fat it could from the government’s program. Hawke chaired it. The other members were Keating, Walsh, Willis and Dawkins, at the time Minister for Finance”. According to Bramston (2003: 67-68), the ERC “was a key mechanism for bypassing the broader Cabinet in formulating budget policy”. While in Blewett’s (2003: 78) view, the ERC soon after being formed “monopolised all economic policy formulation, vetted all expenditure, and designed the budget...and thus the policy debates were fought out in the ERC”. There were differences between those

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74 It is worth noting that neither of the reports argued for an ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ cabinet though (Weller, 1990: 17).
75 Peter Walsh was a minister from 1984-1990 in the Hawke Government most notably as Minister for Finance. Ralph Willis was a minister for almost the entirety of the Hawke and Keating Governments serving as Minister for Finance and Treasurer both twice among other positions. John Dawkins served as Minister for Finance, Minister for Trade as well as Treasurer among other positions in the Hawke and Keating Governments.
within the ERC on specific decisions such as the consumption tax debate in 1985. But the ERC became the “inner inner Cabinet” (Blewett, 2003: 86), and “ERC decisions were de facto Cabinet decisions” (Walsh cited in Blewett, 2003: 86). While perhaps not as grand as Whitlam’s ‘Platform’, the parliamentary leadership had a clear vision of where it wanted to go during this period. However, they also knew that many within the caucus would vehemently disagree, so internal democracy was reduced to a minimum. At its core, this is unambiguous evidence of centralisation. Does this also constitute presidentialization? The answer to this is yes. However, it is not due to a formal rule change that empowered the leadership ala structural presidentialization. The establishment and dominance of cabinet committees is a clear example of a norm in Australian federal politics where the behaviour of the parliamentary leadership has become by their colleagues without any formal rule change. It is now worth examining whether prime ministerial resources increased during this period.

Growth of Prime Ministerial Resources

As was noted in the Whitlam chapter, the establishment of PMC in 1971 provides the executive with advantages that similar systems do not have. Yet it is clear that during the Hawke leadership period that these resources expanded even further. According to Weller (1992: 38-40), PMC “broadened its range because the prime minister wanted advice on everything, and became a strong department because the prime minister wanted a strong department”. 76 Moreover, despite attempts to streamline the government machine during this period, this led to “an even more centralised government machine, with PMC integral to its operation” (Weller, 1992: 42). Furthermore, while the numbers of staff in the PMO from the Whitlam period (21) to the Hawke period (24 in 1990) only increased slightly77 (Holland, 2002), the type of staff member was more specialised than previously with experts on economics or particularly important industries added to the staff to compliment the traditional political advisers. This coincided with the organisational wing becoming increasingly professionalised as well (Bramston, 2003: 67 and Tiernan, 2007: 54). Hawke’s PMO staff became so influential that it led Keating to describe Hawke’s office as a “Manchu court” (cited in Tiernan, 2007: 54), while backbenchers would refer to Hawke’s staffers

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76 This growth in the prime ministers portfolio during the 1970s and 1980s included attaching the Office of National Assessments (ONA) and the Economic Policy Advisory Council (EPAC) (Weller, 1992: 43).

77 The numbers ranged from 16 in 1983 to 24 by 1990. This compared quite reasonably with the Whitlam period, which had 21 staff, but was part of a broader trend which increased further under Keating and later Howard (Holland, 2002).
as “de-facto ministers” (Bramston, 2003: 54). Thus, while this system and use of staffers was still developing, a trend from Whitlam to Hawke can be identified. This is that staffers around the prime minister were becoming more involved in the day to day functioning of the government. This increase in resources at the disposal of the prime minister is a clear sign of structural presidentialization occurring.

The Executive Face Summary

Hawke has been described throughout the literature in the period as a conciliator, someone who wanted consensus and someone who consulted as widely as he could. However, it is also apparent through this period that Hawke and the ERC wanted to remake Australian society and the economy. Primarily, they used electoral success as a justification to bypass the traditional locus of authority in the executive for the FPLP, the caucus. However, this highlights the changing nature of the relationship between the leader and the party rather than any structural changes to the executive. However, there is evidence of decision making becoming centralised during this period and a growth in resources available to the prime minister as well. While staffing numbers may not have been increasing, the type of staff were becoming more specialised and playing a greater role in the institutions of the political executive of the state and this coincided with greater professionalisation and gentrification of the ranks of the ALP generally. Therefore, there is some evidence of presidentialization in the executive face, although there are signs that greater changes will be found in the party face, which will be examined in the section that follows.

The Party Face

When examining the party face, it is important to remember that while inter-connected with the examination of the executive face, Poguntke and Webb (2005: 343) were looking for “evidence of party rule changes which give leaders more formal power, the growth of the leaders’ offices in terms of staff or resources...a shift in intra-party power to the benefit of the leader”. During the Hawke leadership period it is clear that the leadership were able to implement the policies that they wanted despite having to navigate through the internal institutions of the FPLP, as this was merely a formality. Thus, while the power of the leadership to impose their will on the party increased
during this period, they still were required to engage with the institutions of the party even if the outcome of many decisions were certain. As a result, this section will argue that increasing evidence of presidentialization in the party face is clearly identifiable during the Hawke leadership period. Key to this was Hawke’s electoral success and his re-defining of the relationship between leader and the institutions of the party which was multifaceted. First, Hawke and the parliamentary leadership supported the manipulation of internal democracy through the use of the factions when it came to the conference, and second, they disregarded the widely accepted importance of the platform as a codified expression of Labor values. The section that follows will trace the changes to the structure of the party through the Hawke leadership period.

Changes to the Structure of the Party

The Hawke leadership period shares many similarities with the Whitlam period, though one contrast is the length of time the leader spent as Leader of the Opposition. Whitlam had two periods totalling in excess of seven years. In the first of these periods, Whitlam had the time and the desire (along with others) to change the structure of the FPLP before taking office. However, Hawke was the sitting prime minister for almost the entirety of his leadership. Therefore any changes to the intra-party institutions would have been harder to resist for a rank and file membership desperate for electoral success, even though some of these changes impeded internal democracy. Jaensch (1989) in particular has been critical of what happened during this period arguing that what occurred was a “Hijack”. Adding that:

The circumstances of the elevation of Hawke to the leadership contained a potential for problems. Writing in the 1950s, Miller suggested that among the authority sources of a Labor leader are that: he is usually a man of long parliamentary experience and one who, in his own right, occupies a prominent position in the public eye. Hawke had the latter through his term as ACTU president, but not the former. His career within the industrial wing was a solid apprenticeship for the party leadership task of manipulating the Byzantine Labor Party – Caucus and organisation – but he had more than a little trouble accommodating himself to another important role of a Labor leader, of using the symbols and rhetoric of the movement to reassure his followers that he is really only the first among equals (1989: 135).

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78 Poguntke and Webb (2005: 343) argued that “[W]hereas power within the party might be thought of as the capacity of leaders to get the party to do as they want, autonomy from the party can be thought of as the ability to ignore or bypass the party altogether”.
79 This is deeply ironic considering that the 1979 National Committee of Inquiry, Report and Recommendations to the National Executive, in which Hawke was the Joint Chairperson and in the 2002 National Committee of Review which Hawke delivered along with Neville Wran, key recommendations were for greater democratisation and reducing factionalism.
Thus, while Hawke knew how to manage people and was politically able, some within the party doubted whether Hawke shared the same ideals of many within the movement. In fact, Uren (1991) and Blewett (1999: 16) went so far as to argue that Hawke had very few strong views or convictions.\textsuperscript{80} So when the party subsequently lost the 1975 and 1977 elections and conducted an inquiry into the changes in the Australian body politic\textsuperscript{81} and concluded that Labor had to change its approach due to the traditional social cleavages breaking down,\textsuperscript{82} Hawke was determined to ensure that this happened. For Jaensch’s ‘hijack’ to occur though, Hawke and key powerbrokers were going to have to re-define the relationship between the parliamentary leadership and the institutions of the party, which would set a precedent for future leaders. Jaensch (1989: 155) argued that for many of these powerbrokers, who he referred to as the “electoral realists”, the message was clear: “if the old cleavage bases were breaking down, if swinging voters were increasing in number and increasingly were middle class, then if the Labor Party sought electoral victory the policies and practices, even the platform, had to change to meet the new environment”. However, the leadership would still need to have these seismic changes to ALP policy ratified through the traditional democratic institutions of the party, namely the caucus and the conference. As a result greater organisation within and manipulation of these institutions was required and the burgeoning influence of the factions was critical to this during the Hawke leadership period.

Factions

In discussing the factions, Hayden (1996: 315) observed that if a leader “misjudges the extent to which he can confront a faction, the leader can unravel the splicing which holds together that extraordinary heterogeneity”. During the Hawke leadership period, it is the absence rather than the presence of any unravelling that is most striking. Of all the developments during the Hawke leadership period, it is perhaps the increasing role of the factions which has received the most criticism within the literature (See Jaensch, 1989: 168, Leigh, 2000: 428 and Jones, 2003: 423 as examples). While the factions and

\textsuperscript{80}This view, which many within the ALP obviously held, led Hayden (1996: 505) in his autobiography to defend Hawke: “Hawke was a deeply committed Labor person; those who suggest otherwise, explicitly or implicitly, are being grossly unjust”.

\textsuperscript{81}This included “shifts in social class identification, stimulated by occupational changes, educational expansion, increased social mobility and rises in expectations” (Jaensch, 1989: 159-160).

\textsuperscript{82}The 1979 National Committee of Inquiry, Report and Recommendations to the National Executive noted: “It is our conclusion that the coming decade will be among the most momentous in Australian history” The report went on to cite the continued “malaise” in Western capitalism, the “structural faults in the Australian economy” and “the maturing of a social revolution in Australia” which included changes to educational standards, ageing population, declining population and a greater role for women as part of this transformation.
factionalism has been a consistent thread within the Labor Party since federation, for many, it was from the Hawke leadership period that the modern, national factions developed, organising almost everyone within the caucus into one of the groupings (Grattan, 2001: 250; Faulkner, 2006: 59).83

The origins of this development, in Faulkner’s (2006: 59) view, can be tracked to the Hawke-Hayden leadership struggle. The subsequent transition from Hawke to Hayden, led to a more disciplined system within the FPLP. This system of organisation and discipline was according to Grattan (2001: 252), critical in how the Labor Party in the 1980s successfully executed a huge policy transition, as it swallowed deregulatory programs that were essentially being imposed on Australia and its national government by globalisation. In the process, the factional system transformed the way power was shared in the party generally and in the Caucus particularly. In the party, a national factional system supplanted the traditional state based power grid, in the Caucus, key factional leaders, most notably Senator Graham Richardson and Senator Robert Ray of the Right and Gerry Hand of the Left, enjoyed as much power, even while still backbenchers, as senior ministerial colleagues.

Another development that was important in ensuring organisational cohesiveness was the adoption of Proportional Representation (PR) in 1981. The introduction of PR was part of broader changes that were endorsed at the 1981 Federal Conference following the third major intervention into a state branch of the decade, namely Queensland (Lloyd, 1983: 234-235). The introduction of PR meant that the unaligned could unite under the banner of the ‘Centre-Left’ and “moderate the authoritarianism of existing factions” (Faulkner, 2006: 60). While the ‘Centre-Left’ argued that they would play a balancing and stability role, it was clear that they shared the ‘Right’s’ economic views in almost all cases. Inevitably, this led to a shutting out of the ‘Left’ and explains why the ‘Left’ referred to the ‘Centre’ faction as the ‘Centre-Right’ (Cockburn, 1985: 11). Jaensch (1989: 168) explained this new paradigm in the following way:

The successes of the Hawke-Keating proposals may have been partly due to the logic of the argument, but they were essentially the result of tight factional voting in which the Right and the Centre-Left had the numbers. There are problems for the party arising from the slaughter of the Left, and from the apparently increasing factionalism and factional discipline. The benefit of disciplined factions is in party management. National organisation, administration, policy-making, and overall management are all much more efficient as a result of factions. But this efficiency may result in developments which will not be positive for the party. The immediate problem was identified by Lloyd and Swan: the progressive enfeebled that heightened

83 For example, Uren (1991: 6: 8) noted that it wasn’t until 1982 that the national ‘Left’ formalised and elected executives.
The slaughter of the ‘Left’, as Jaensch (1989: 169) described it, was most apparent at the 1988 Conference. In his view, the problems were bigger than the ‘Left’ “merely losing on every vote”. More troubling was the reduced representation of the ‘Left’ on and in key decision making bodies. This contrasts greatly with the view Lloyd (1983: 246) presented on the eve of the 1983 election victory. “[T]here is now no strong countervailing force to the ‘Left’ within the Caucus”. Grattan (2001: 258) has argued that this changed over time and the ‘Left’ were gradually integrated into more positions of responsibility, including Brian Howe\(^\text{84}\) taking up a position on the ERC in 1987 (Grattan, 2001: 257). However, for those who were a part of the ‘old-Left’\(^\text{85}\) such as Tom Uren, Howe represented a change in the focus of the parliamentary ‘Left’.\(^\text{86}\) According to Uren, his agreement with the ‘Right’ over issues such as privatisation and the Gulf War were out of step with the traditions of the ‘Left’ as well as the rank and file of the party (1995: 369 and Uren, 1991).

This organisational precision stood in direct contrast to the historical processes of the party. Traditionally, all appointments to the front bench and to committees were decided by open ballots. By the mid 1980’s “[F]action leaders would agree between themselves how many positions each grouping was entitled to, based loosely on the proportion of the Caucus who supported each faction. Once this was settled, each faction would conduct an internal ballot for the number of positions they had been allocated. All that remained for the Caucus to do was to rubber-stamp the agreed ticket” (Leigh, 2000: 428). Hence, the factions were the key to the control of the party that Hawke was achieving and their importance was signified in that by 1987, “94 per cent of federal Labor MPs were in a faction” (Cockburn cited in Grattan, 2001: 258). The evolution and professionalisation of the factions also coincided with a weakening of ties to ideology. While traditionally clear areas of difference were apparent, in Grattan’s (2001: 259-263) view “the lines between them on policy were becoming increasingly blurred”.

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\(^\text{84}\) Brian Howe served as a minister in a variety of portfolios in the Hawke and Keating Government’s and later became Deputy Prime Minister between 1991 and 1995.

\(^\text{85}\) The term ‘old-Left’ is used with some caution as Uren (1991) acknowledged that even during his time as one of the leading members of the Left “we really had got past the old trot mentality days”.

\(^\text{86}\) For example, Uren (1991) argued that “Howe was a good minister, but he really doesn’t understand class attitudes”.
Therefore, with the metamorphosis of the factions into more of an organisational institution, with a weakening of ideological ties and with a changing of the guard - in particular for the ‘Left’, where, Uren and Giezelt were starting to move aside—Hawke and the parliamentary leadership were able to, in Blewett’s (1999: 16) words, bring a “historically fissiparous party through a period of profound change without any serious fracture”. This is not to say that Hawke always had the support of the factions and he did as an example receive a censure across factional lines over the MX missile decision, and initially failed to have his privatisation policies implemented. But the factions during this period were more clearly organised than at any other prior time. This allowed the leader to deal directly with factional leaders, which would subsequently mean support for various policies would be ensured.

In summation, the increased factionalism of the Hawke leadership period was the key to Hawke, as leader of the parliamentary wing, succeeding in radically changing the types of policy that a Labor Government would embrace. In terms of presidentialization, this change to the party clearly highlights a shift in intra-party power towards the leadership. While some elements of this increasing factionalism were conditional and based on what Grattan (2001: 261) described as the “towering personalities” of the period and the death of the ‘Centre-Left’ after 1995 is an example of this, the basis of the relationship between leader and party had been altered by the expanded franchise the factions enjoyed as they became central institutions in their own right. This fundamentally shifted the locus of power from the traditional, sovereign institutions of the party such as the conference, the platform and the caucus to the factions, the factional leaders and the leader of the parliamentary party. An examination of the conferences held during the Hawke leadership period will provide further evidence of this as well as highlight the changing dynamic between the leader and the traditional institutions of the party.

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87 Grattan (2001: 261) considered these towering personalities to have been critical in the rigid factionalism of the Hawke leadership period; Arthur Gietzelt was Minister for Veterans Affairs between 1983 and 1987.
88 More on factions during this period is discussed in Faulkner (2006: 51-55) and she cited Duverger (1964) who argued that death was “preordained for a centre grouping”. 
The Conference

In Jaensch’s (1989: 168) view, “the concept of the Conference, in the ethos of the party, is akin to democracy in microcosm. There are decision makers, advisers, lobbyists, observers, reporters, critics, supporters and opponents. All are confined for one week in close proximity to one another, all making accommodation”. By the end of the Hawke period, the conference was unrecognisable from this picture with two changes fundamental to this transformation. First, the dominance of certain factions not only stifled debate but re-wrote the platform and party policies. Second, calls for unity from an electorally successful government and prime minister provided those in the leadership with the capacity to wriggle free of the party’s democratic organisational structures (Maddox, 1989; 73). The section that follows will examine these changes as well as the way changes to policy occurred at the conferences of the Hawke leadership period.

For Maddox (1989: 67-8), the 1984 conference was the first of many with a familiar tone. He argued that it was from this point that the party shifted away from established policy agendas without much protest from the caucus. Conference became merely a “set piece exercise of party legitimation and media publicity”. Central to this set piece were appeals to trust the leadership and what they were trying to achieve, and the leadership pursued two major policy changes. First, conference legitimised a decision taken in the cabinet in November 1983 over the so called ‘three mines’ uranium policy (Panter and Kay, 1994: 11-12). Second, the conference endorsed the float of the Australian dollar which had already occurred, financial deregulation and foreign bank entry, all of which Kelly (1993: 88) argued were positions that “would have been heresy two years earlier”.

The ‘three mines’ policy and the wider debate on uranium had been a barometer for where one stood in the Labor Party during the 1970s and remained so in the 1980s (Weller, 1999: 130). So when, the ‘Centre-Left’ and Hawke’s supporters in the ‘Right’ “succeeded in having the government’s 1983 decision accommodated by changes in the party platform” (McMullin, 1991: 425), it was clear how much of a role this new factional alignment was going to play in the government. In Grattan’s (2001: 255) view,

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89 However, a specific ban had been inserted on direct sales of uranium to France.
“[T]he Centre-Left delivered to the government in spades” at the 1984 conference. What made the decision even more troubling for some members of the ‘Left’ was Hawke’s betrayal on the issue. According to Uren, he had a conversation with Hawke before he became leader and asked him if he would adhere to the party policy which was clearly outlined in the platform if he became prime minister. Hawke said he would despite wanting to change the policy (Uren, 1991). For many within the ‘Left’, this deception confirmed the view held by some of their members, that Hawke had very few convictions and that he failed to understand the importance of this issue for them. In fact, it was Hawke’s claim that he would adhere to the platform of the party, which led many on the ‘Left’ to support Hawke instead of Hayden in late 1982 as Hayden had indicated that he would not be directed by the conference (Uren, 1991). As a result, the 1984 conference illustrated the “innate financial conservatism of the Hawke-Keating Government” (Clarke, 2002: 173) and set the tone for the rest of the decade in the way that the parliamentary party ignored the platform.

The issue of uranium sales was also a central issue at the 1986 conference. According to McMullin (1991: 426), the conference “implicitly reaffirmed the ban” on the sale of uranium to France. However, in the period shortly after the conference, the resolution was ignored. According to Panter and Kay (1994: 12): “[A] Federal Government decision to resume sales of uranium to France was made to increase budget revenue. After a reportedly bitter debate, a Special Caucus meeting endorsed the decision (74-42)”. The justification for the decision was that the party “cannot afford the luxury of divisions at this time” (Keating cited in Maddox, 1989: 68). This rejection of the legitimate and prescribed institutional sources of authority within the party signifies a fundamental alteration to the intra-party power dynamic and established a norm for what would follow (Kitney, 1986: 11).

For Maddox (1989: 77) and Jaensch (1989: 166-7), the 1988 Conference was the end game for parliamentary control. It was at this conference where the aspiration that Whitlam held for the parliamentary wing to control proceedings came to fruition. As Jaensch (1989: 167) explained:

*The potentially fissive issues in 1988 included uranium, privatisation, and free tertiary education. The last was dealt with by an amendment which, by deleting the reference to ‘free’, gave the Hawke government a completely open book in regard to policies on funding and*
taxation in this area. In essence, the new plank granted authority in policy-making to Caucus, and deleted it from conference. The issues of uranium and privatisation contained the potential for bitter debates and embarrassing public brawling, but the party machine had planned and arm-twisted well, and the issues were removed from the conference floor. Both were sent to committees for further discussion, and resolution if necessary by a postal vote of delegates. By this, the machine had turned the conference into a parliament; rather than a congress, into a discussion arena rather than a decision making collective of delegates.

Viewed in its historical context, this was merely a continuation of the trend established at the 1986 conference. In Howe’s view “the Government was laying the groundwork for throwing away elements of the Labor movement’s history that had been fundamental to maintaining the unity of this movement” (cited in Maddox, 1989: 77). The most obvious change was the deferral of “key platform issues to sub-committees” that finally formalised the departure from the conference being the supreme decision making body in the party and “perhaps unhappily, conceded a fundamental change in ethos” (Jaensch, 1989: 167-8). One of the issues that were dealt with in this way was the privatisation of publicly owned assets. As the conference rejected the proposals for privatisation, a new committee was formed to study the privatisation of a merged Qantas and Australian Airlines. The hypocrisy of this position are apparent if Hawke’s attacks on Howard in the lead up to the 1986 election and his 1985 Chifley Lecture are examined. Hawke (cited in Kelly, 1993: 391) argued: “What in the name of reason is the justification for breaking up and selling off the great and efficient national assets, like the Commonwealth Bank, Telecom, TAA and Qantas? The fact is that this recipe for disaster represents the height of economic irrationality”.

In McMullin’s opinion, the proposed sell-offs, and discussion about the sale of the Commonwealth Bank and Telstra, were “inconsistent with the commitment to public enterprise embodied in the ALP Platform, but Hawke argued that the Platform was not immutable” (1991: 442). This view, deeply inconsistent with the traditions of the party was also revealed in an interview about possible changes to tertiary education fees, when Hawke made the point that the party used to have a policy on uranium once as well, however that was changed. Maddox (1989: 78) argued; “and while he clearly meant to imply that a leader with remarkable powers of persuasion can convince the party to change its mind, his taunt conveyed the impression that the party had no policy on uranium since he had decided to negate it”. These revelations by Hawke according to Kelly (1993: 392) served as “a reminder that Hawke’s primary relationship was with the
people, not the party” and this is partially the case, but it also showed the emptiness of Hawke’s earlier statements about subscribing to the traditional authority of the party. Moreover, when resistance was shown to the policies, it was dealt with so fiercely by Hawke and Keating that it led Sheridan (1988: 11) to argue that the conference had become “democracy by faction”.

After the 1990 election victory, Hawke decided to return to the privatisation issue. After the Commonwealth Bank had to be partially sold to assist the Victorian State Government, a Special Conference (1990) was called to discuss the privatisation of Australian Airlines, the partial privatisation of Qantas and the sell-off of Telstra (AJPH, 1991a: 303). Thanks to support from the ‘Right’ and the ‘Centre-Left’ all but the sell-off of Telstra was endorsed (Blewett, 1999: 36). This was in spite of the fact that “a number of state branches and affiliated unions had rejected privatisation as an option” (AJPH, 1991a: 302). The smooth passage through conference of these proposals further highlighted the dominance of the parliamentary leadership.

When one examines the conferences of the Hawke leadership period, the evidence suggests that the conference lost much of its authority to constrain the parliamentary leadership. Pragmatism and financial considerations were at the forefront of decision making which was controlled by an alliance between the ‘Right’ and the ‘Centre-Left’. This is most obvious when the sale of uranium, privatisation of assets and fees for higher education are examined. In Maddox’s (1989: 87-88) opinion, Hawke traded off the fact that the party’s collectivist structures were unpopular and wishes to reassure the public that while he is leader it has no need to fear the policy formulation processes of the Labor Party. So whereas Whitlam had laboured to rid the party Conference of its thirty six faceless men image, and unveiled its workings to public scrutiny, Hawke projected Cabinet, Caucus, Conference and party as a network of organisations there to make legitimate the independent, autonomous decisions of a prime minister in mystical communion with his wider constituency, the Australian public. Of course it will never really be like that, since the party structures are so entrenched, so carefully adjusted (over a long evolution) to democratic procedures; yet Bob Hawke sometimes seems to present his party as a vehicle for allowing the Australian people to maintain him in office.

While Maddox’s (1989) antipathy to the Hawke period is palpable, the evidence suggests he was largely correct as the relationship between the parliamentary leadership and the conference was fundamentally transformed during this time.
The Platform

As we have seen in the examination of the conferences in this period, the rules of the party and the institutions of the party were often ignored and the platform was part of this denial. Without doubt, the key to these changes was the force of the ‘Right’ faction within the party, the deals that the ‘Centre Left’ did with the ‘Right’ and the decline of the ‘Left’. However, more than this was required. Key coteries of power could have ignored the conference or the platform previously, but continued rejection would have led to a rebuke. However, the electoral success that Hawke delivered allowed him to push these boundaries further than ever before.90 In Jaensch’s (1989: 163-4) view, power has gradually been shifting away from the platform and conference to cabinet since 1967 and this was accentuated during this period as the parliamentary party not only ignored the platform - such as in the decision to sell uranium to France - but legislated in ways that directly conflicted with it.91 Hawke made it plain “that he saw Labor’s platform as simply a statement of principles and commitments at a particular time, which as a consequence of changing circumstances, might become redundant” (Kitney, 1983: 3). Hawke was not the first to hold such a position, as Hayden had indicated as much also (Uren, 1991). Thus, from at least the Hayden leadership period, but exemplified most obviously in the Hawke leadership period, it appears that the importance of the platform had been downgraded from “the Old Testament” as Beazley Snr had referred to it, to a broad set of principles (Beazley cited in Freudenberg, 2009: 261).

Other changes

Another key change to the structure of the party was the continued professionalisation of the non-parliamentary hierarchy. This meant that not only were the independent state branches becoming more tightly controlled on national issues by the federal administration, but the staff of the federal party were becoming more powerful and more closely aligned with the leader of the parliamentary party than ever before. The shift towards a top-down approach of policy making and co-ordination was part of the broader strategy as evidenced by the control of the conference and the denial of the

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90 Of course it should be noted that a shift to the ‘Right’ was not solely an Australian phenomenon. Social Democrat and ‘Labour’ parties alike made this move shortly after the post-war boom. This highlights the structural aspects of this shift (See Lavelle, 2008: 11-14 for more on this).
91 Jaensch (1989: 163-164) cited the “issue of Aboriginal Land Rights in 1984” as an example of this.
platform. In Weller’s (1992: 207) mind, to see the changes that have occurred over time, one only needs to compare

the need of John Curtin to court and cajole the semi-independent Labor Party state branches in 1943 to change party policy...with the arrogance with which the Hawke government used the Labor Federal Conference to bring the party’s policy into line with the policy of the government.

Moreover, when the growing power of the federal secretariat is harnessed by the prime minister, the ability to co-ordinate party wide consensus only accentuates the power the leader possesses. While it could have been said previously that power within the ALP was relatively dispersed among various roles and institutions, in relative terms this became greatly concentrated during the Hawke leadership period.

The Party Face Summary
In summary, when examining the party face during the Hawke period, the evidence suggests that the signs of presidentialization, first identified in the Whitlam leadership period, continued on and in some instances accelerated. While Whitlam made changes to the party to make the party more electorally viable, the changes of the Hawke period shattered any remaining control the organisational wing had over the parliamentarians. In Uren’s (1991) view “Bob Hawke is the Prime Minister who’s broken so many of the traditions of the Party it’s just unbelievable”. The rejection of the platform which set a precedent for later Labor leadership periods, the domination of the conference and the caucus via the factions and the continued push towards a national direction rather than a federal party with separate state branches, all added to the level of intra-party power that the parliamentary leadership possessed during this period.

The Electoral Face
In examining the 1990 media campaign, Lloyd (1990: 92-93) observed that “[G]iven the importance, and fascination, of the media’s role in election campaigning, the Australian literature is singularly sparse”. This observation could be stretched to include the literature on voting behaviour as well. Nevertheless, the following section will examine the three factors which encompass the electoral face: campaign style, media focus and

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92 One recent example of this has been the decision of the Gillard Government to send asylum seekers to Malaysia for processing despite the platform stating “[P]rotection claims made in Australia will be assessed by Australians on Australian territory”. This will be discussed more in the conclusion.
voting behaviour. This section will argue that presidentialization in the electoral face had extended beyond what was evident during the Whitlam period. This increase was due to both structural changes to the body politic as well as conditional factors relating to Hawke as a leader and the rapport he had with the Australian voting public.

Campaign Style

Of all the elections in Australian political history, the 1983 poll was surely the one that changed most dramatically in one day. Of course, this was the day that Hawke replaced Hayden as leader, and also the same day that the election was called. The switch from Hayden to Hawke was a big risk for the FPLP but according to Kelly (1984: 396) “[H]awke stole Fraser’s prime ministerial mantle during the campaign”. Hawke’s first action during the campaign was to emerge triumphant after meetings with the ACTU after they decided to call off their industrial campaign against the oil industry. Hawke followed this up by announcing that the ACTU had agreed to what would become the basis for the Accord (Singleton, 1990: 152). The Accord had been a policy much vaunted for some time in the wider labour movement, but the fact that Hawke could establish an agreement further added to his prestige in the party and in the electorate (Singleton, 1990: 151).

The campaign followed this theme and Summers (1983: 186) argued that:

[N]ot even with Neville Wran91 had Labor run so hard with a phenomenon, a personality, a cult figure, as its leader. The Wran’s the Man State election campaign which attracted criticism for being merely ego-politics looked modest beside the promotion by the so-called socialist party of Bob Hawke, the man who could bring Australia together. It suited Labor’s strategists for the campaign to run in this fashion.

The advertising that the ALP used in the broadsheet newspapers were either large pictures of Hawke with the words, ‘This Saturday vote for the Future of Australia’ (See SMH, 1983a: 6), large pictures of Hawke asking for donations (See SMH, 1983b: 11), or concerned with interest rates (See The Australian, 1983: 4).

91 Neville Wran was a popular state premier of New South Wales between 1976 and 1986.
The 1984 federal election, called less than two years since its predecessor, coincided with attempts to introduce electoral reforms via referendum (Maley, 1985: 69). Central throughout most of the campaign was the rising support for nuclear disarmament, which propelled the newly formed Nuclear Disarmament Party (NDP) to front and centre of the debate. In Rydon’s opinion (1985: 325), throughout the campaign Hawke “constantly boasted of his governments’ achievements”. The result of which was to encourage every “sectional group to act in its own selfish interests”. The election advertising that the FPLP used in the broadsheet newspapers was focussed either on Hawke (See SMH, 1984a: 5 and The Australian, 1984: 4) or about inflation (See SMH, 1984b: 7).

According to Maley and Green the 1987 federal election campaign “was widely denounced as the most boring in living memory” (1988: 68). In McAllister’s (1988: 438) opinion

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\text{Labor’s campaign strategy was to offer a minimum number of new policies, to rely on its record in government since 1983, and to feature Bob Hawke, its popular leader, as frequently and prominently as possible. To avoid gaffes, government ministers were discouraged from being interviewed on television or radio, while the sometimes emotional Hawke was constantly kept under the control of his press officers and away from penetrating questions about economic policy. As in the 1987 British general election, the result was a packaged campaign, stage-managed around the ‘photo opportunity’, always carefully timed to be available for broadcast on the early evening television news. Debates about the issues involved in the election, such as the state of the economy, and even occasions on which politicians were questioned about their policies were rare.}
\]

Labor’s focus on leadership and stability ensured that “the election was presented as a presidential-style contest between Bob Hawke and John Howard, in which the activities rather than the words of the leaders dominated the nightly television news” (McAllister, 1988: 439; See also Kelly, 1993: 343). The advertising the FPLP used in the broadsheet newspapers maintained a focus on Hawke (See SMH, 1987a: 4 and The Age, 1987a: 11 for example), but also focussed on the nature of the economy, with benefits to small business (See SMH, 1987b: 6 for example) and tax cuts for workers (See SMH, 1987d: 4; The Age, 1987b: 6 for example).

The 1990 federal election held on 24 March, was according to Compston (1990: 237) dominated in order of prominence by “the economy, the environment, tax, industrial
relations and welfare”. The focus for Labor was on highlighting the continued popularity of Hawke, while continuing to highlight the disunity within the opposition parties (Compston, 1990: 238). For Compston (1990: 240) and McAllister and Bean (1990: 176), the 1990 election demonstrated that the environment had finally arrived as a central issue in Australian politics. During the campaign, Hawke matched up against Andrew Peacock for a second time in a leader’s debate and while it was generally perceived that Peacock had done well in the 1984 version, he was widely viewed to have done less well in 1990 and Labor’s National Secretary, Bob Hogg, considered this was the night the campaign effectively began (Warhurst, 1990: 20). The party’s policy speech was roundly criticised for being “long on images and subliminal messages...lacking in content, full of slogans and largely offered more of the same. Perhaps what reveals the most about Labor’s focus during the 1990 poll was their slogan; Bob Hawke for Australia’s Future” (Warhurst, 1990: 23). The approach Labor had settled on was once again based on clear advantages Hawke held in personal popularity over his opponent which was evidenced in the opinion polls (Warhurst, 1990: 26). The campaign advertising that the FPLP used in the broadsheet newspapers focussed on a few main themes. Opposition division (See SMH, 1990a: 7; The Age, 1990a: 22 and The Australian, 1990: 19 as examples), jobs or the economy, with pictures of Hawke (See SMH, 1990b: 11 and The Age, 1990b: 8 as examples) and convincing Democrat and Greens voters to preference Labor instead of the opposition (See SMH, 1990c: 12 as an example).

In summation, the campaign focus during the Hawke years was based on the personal popularity of Hawke compared to Fraser, Peacock and Howard. When the economy was a negative for Labor, the focus would shift to nuclear disarmament as it did in 1984 or the environment as it did in 1990, as these were issues that the FPLP believed were vote-winners.

94 See Senior (2008) for more on the importance of televised leader debates in Australian federal politics.
Media Focus

Throughout Hawke’s prime ministership and perhaps even earlier, much was written on an apparent special relationship that Hawke shared with the Australian people. However in Buckley’s (2003: 31) view, it was not as much a special relationship with the Australian people but with the Australian media.

As an example of a pair of star crossed lovers it would be hard to beat Bob Hawke’s relationship with the media...he owed much of his popularity to early favourable media portrayals...in his early days as a public figure the media could not get enough of him. Hawke’s face was marvellously photogenic, his voice unmistakable. He was always accessible, always good copy, always at the heart of an interesting story in industrial or ALP politics. And this was no accident. Coming up through the trade union ranks, Hawke set out to deliberately court good publicity. 

The focus of the media during the 1983 campaign was quite diverse. However issues that were prominent included; the accord, state aid, the bushfires in Victoria and South Australia, BHP and steel industry issues, and the oil industry dispute over worker pay. The typical leader profiles once again were present (See Table 5.1; Grattan and Barton, 1983: 11) and while Kelly (1983a: 1 and 1983b: 7) identified Hawke as the “super-pragmatist” or as a “President untied by promises”, the coverage by the media was not consumed by Hawke. In fact, an array of Hawke’s colleagues received extensive coverage including Uren, Wran, Keating, Hayden, Button, Young and Blewett. However Summers (1983: 188-9) contended that while these actors were still visible they were more a part of the local campaigns.

The 1984 election, held less than two years since the previous poll was unusually long for an Australian federal election campaign and the media viewed this as one of the reasons why the Nuclear Disarmament Party (NDP) were able to gain maximum exposure (See Table 5.1; Steketee, 1984a: 13 and Haupt, 1984: 5). Of all the issues in

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95 In his memoirs he wrote: “[A]s I mixed with Australians from all walks of life and of every station, they came to reciprocate the sincerity of my feelings...I understood them, and out of the rapport between us, I derived both strength and the certainty that I could speak for them” (Hawke, 1994: 99).

96 Buckley (2003: 31) noted that Hawke was frustrated by the class based suspicions of his predecessors at the ACTU, towards the media and thought the media could be used to their advantage. Hayden (1996: 361) noted that Hawke used his friends in big business, to influence the media to assist in destabilising his leadership.


100 See Barton (1983b: 18), Hill (1983: 1).


the campaign, it was the emergence of the NDP and the impacts on the Labor vote in the Senate which dominated the headlines.\textsuperscript{103} Other issues that received comprehensive coverage included: the ALP’s shift to the right and the support Labor was receiving from business;\textsuperscript{104} taxation;\textsuperscript{105} and higher education.\textsuperscript{106} The coverage of Hawke was once again generous, however other cabinet members including Hayden,\textsuperscript{107} Dawkins,\textsuperscript{108} and in particular Keating received substantial coverage also.\textsuperscript{109}

The 1987 Australian federal election was called following a double dissolution over the Australia Card legislation. Taking place on 11 July, the election was held against a backdrop of worsening economic conditions globally and the economy remained the primary focus of the campaign. The extensive coverage given to welfare payments,\textsuperscript{110} interest rates\textsuperscript{111} and wages\textsuperscript{112} were symptomatic of this. The coverage of Hawke as the leader of the parliamentary party remained relatively consistent with previous elections, but the amount of coverage that Keating in particular was enjoying showed how powerful he had become in the eyes of the print media at least.\textsuperscript{113} Other ministers such as Button, Blewett, Dawkins, Hayden and Evans received coverage in addition to this.\textsuperscript{114}

The 1990 election held on 24 March 1990 was to prove Hawke’s final election as leader of the FPLP. The election was dominated by environmental concerns and the print media followed this policy area comprehensively.\textsuperscript{115} The economy as always was a key battleground, and problems in the automotive industry were also prominent.\textsuperscript{116} But more than anything else, it was clear that Keating was receiving a very high level of

\textsuperscript{105} See SMH (1984: 9), Colebatch (1984: 4) and Grattan and Barton (1984: 1) as examples.
\textsuperscript{106} See Humphries (1984: 18) and Trincia (1984: 9) as examples.
\textsuperscript{108} See Smithers (1984: 11); Peake (1984: 3).
\textsuperscript{114} For the economy see Cleary, McKnight and Clark (1990: 1); Burton and Humphries (1990: 6) and Wetherell (1990: 18). For the automotive industry see Clark and Seccombe (1990b: 12); Grattan, Howard and Metherell (1990: 3) as examples.
coverage. As a result, Hawke received his lowest level of coverage in terms of mentions over the four campaigns he contested. Critical in the campaign, according to Lloyd (1990: 98) was the ‘Great Debate’ between the leaders. A leader debate, which had not appeared since the 1984 campaign, placed the leaders of the parliamentary parties at the front and centre of the campaign and the print media once again dissected the winner and loser at great length.

In analysing the election campaigns of the Hawke leadership period, the evidence indicates that the broadsheet newspapers focussed on Hawke at similar levels as Whitlam in terms of mentions. This stability can also be seen in the types of articles as well. Only the 1990 campaign had less than one in ten articles focussing on personality and/or polling. Therefore, the evidence from the print media suggests that the argument, often put forward, that the elections Hawke contested were the most presidential or leader dominated in the history of Australian federal politics is questionable (See Table 7.2; Graph 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3). In fact, the coverage that Hawke received was relatively consistent with that of Whitlam in terms of mentions in the print media.

**Table 5.1 -Media Focus during the Election Campaigns of the Hawke Leadership Period in The Age, SMH and The Australian**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Articles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles that</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentioned Hawke</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(64%)</td>
<td>(53.3%)</td>
<td>(56.2%)</td>
<td>(51.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles Focussed</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on Policy</td>
<td>(88.2%)</td>
<td>(87.2%)</td>
<td>(88.8%)</td>
<td>(90.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles Focussed</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on Personality or</td>
<td>(11.8%)</td>
<td>(12.8%)</td>
<td>(11.2%)</td>
<td>(9.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

See Kingston and Millett (1990: 6); Burton and Clark (1990: 7); Grattan (1990a: 1 and 1990b: 11); Howard (1990: 22); Howard (1990: 29); Tingle and Milne (1990: 1); Robbins and Tingle (1990: 9) as just some examples.

As previously mentioned, all of the articles from the final two weeks of each election campaign in *The Age, The Australian and SMH* were coded to determine these figures.
Voting Behaviour

When it comes to leader effects on voting behaviour, it is perhaps Hawke’s leadership more than any other which is cited as an example of how leaders can form a bond with voters and change their voting intentions (Maddox, 1989: 92; Blewett, 2003: 388). Hawke’s internal opponent in the early days, Bill Hayden, acknowledged as much arguing that “Hawke’s powerful appeal to the public was undeniable, just as it is indefinable” (Hayden, 1996: 475). It was this ‘special relationship’ which Hawke and his supporters used as evidence that Hawke should be the leader of the party going into the 1983 election and Hayden argued that during any discussions he had with Hawke over the leadership, Hawke was always armed with some polling report (Hayden, 1996: 352). In spite of this, the actual impact that leaders have on the way people vote is heavily contested in political science. For example, King (2002) opposes the idea that they significantly matter, while Bittner (2011) argues that they most certainly do. Weller’s (1983: 276) view in the Australian context is that, “leadership ratings or perceived suitability for the prime ministership do not necessarily translate into votes for the party”. While this is a difficult proposition to test, Hawke’s standing in the polls were sufficiently better than his opponents in the 1983 polls, namely Fraser and Hayden, that Labor was prepared to make a change “to make sure of electoral victory” (Weller, 1983: 277; See also Hughes, 1983: 302). Soon after Hawke took the leadership there was a boost in the party’s fortunes in the polls and while it could be argued that this was a result of the moderate approach the party were taking and the worsening economic conditions for the government, this does not fully explain the timing of the increase in support. It can thus be inferred that Hawke had some impact on voting intentions (Kelly, 1984: 397; Weller, 1983: 277; Haupt & Grattan, 1983: 126 and Summers, 1983: 13).

The 1984 election was one of the longest campaigns in federal history and McMullin (1991: 424) argued that Hawke was not at his best. Moreover, the acceptance that Labor would win encouraged some to register a protest vote or vote for the NDP. Once again how much of an impact Hawke individually had on the election outcome is debatable, but he was dominant in terms of the preferred PM rankings throughout the campaign. The SMH (1984: 7) described Hawke’s lead over Peacock as “immense” and that “[B]oth leaders set records at opposite ends of the poll”. The poll showed those who
thought Hawke was doing either a very good or good job at 65 per cent of those questioned compared to Peacock’s 14 per cent.\textsuperscript{119} Furthermore, on 24 November, \textit{SMH} (1984b: 12) had the preferred PM poll at 72 per cent to Hawke, 21 per cent to Peacock with 7 per cent undecided. Interestingly, the polls leading up to the election showed the ALP winning easily with them registering between 54 and 56 per cent for voting intention on first preferences (See \textit{SMH}, 1984c: 6; \textit{SMH}, 1984e: 6; Colebatch, 1984b: 6 as examples). Yet on election day, the party actually only received 47.5 per cent of first preferences in the House of Representatives and on a two-party preferred basis actually lost ground to the opposition since 1983. Thus, it would be easy to argue that the Hawke factor ultimately did not impact on voting behaviour in 1984. However, a number of factors must be acknowledged, which reduce the veracity of such an assertion. First, the houses of parliament were increased in size greatly, with the House increasing from 125 to 148 and the Senate increasing from 64 to 76. Second, a change in voting system for the Senate, it has been argued, confused some voters. Third, a much larger than normal informal vote was registered of 6.8 per cent, which was up from 2.1 per cent in the 1983 poll (Newman, 2005).\textsuperscript{120} As a result, the 1984 election is very difficult to analyse in terms of a Hawke effect on voting behaviour, but at the very least his commanding lead in the preferred PM stakes would have had some impact, even if only slight.

The 1987 election paradoxically delivered Labor an increased majority by 4 in the House of Representatives while sustaining a decrease in its two-party preferred vote by one per cent. In examining the 1987 poll, Bean and Kelley (1988: 91) argued that their estimates:

\begin{quote}
\textit{suggest that the public’s attitudes toward Hawke helped Labor, producing a swing of about 1.4 per cent in its favour. Attitudes toward the Liberal and National leaders, and toward Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, hurt the Liberals and Nationals, producing a swing of over 2 per cent against them. In all, these effects were enough to determine the outcome of the election. If Hawke had been no more popular than his party; if the Liberal and National leaders had been at least as popular as theirs; and if nothing else had changed, Labor would probably have lost the election by at least four seats.}\n\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{119} Similar results were found in Colebatch (1984a: 5).

\textsuperscript{120} However, Tom Uren for one disagrees with this argument and argued that “Labor’s base was weakened in 1984” and “we failed to understand the needs of our own people”, in particular he cited some of the dramatic changes to economic policy (Uren, 1995: 367).
In the leader polls leading up to the election, Hawke frequently had a lead of 20 points in the question of ‘what do you think of the leader’s performance’, and this lends further weight to Bean and Kelley’s argument.\(^{121}\)

“The 1990 election was only one of five occasions in the period 1949–2004 when a party was elected to government with less than 50 per cent of the two-party preferred vote. The ALP received 49.9 per cent of the two-party preferred vote yet won 78 (or 52.7 per cent) of the seats in the House of Representatives” (Newman, 2005). Hawke once again led his opponent Peacock in the satisfaction ratings; however the level of support for the job Hawke was doing was well below earlier levels.\(^{122}\) Undoubtedly the environment was a critical issue during the campaign and Labor’s campaigning for second preferences from Greens and Democrats voters was critical in their success. For example, one advertisement the party ran noted “Why Democrats and Green’s voters must give their preference to the ALP ahead of the Liberal’s/National’s”. The advertisement then listed the reasons why\(^ {123}\) and one of the last points was the following; “The only preference choice for Democrat and Green voters is: Who do you prefer as Prime Minister of Australia: Bob Hawke or Andrew Peacock?” (SMH, 1990c: 12). As a result, while the impact of Hawke on voting behaviour is less clear than in 1987 for example, the standing of Hawke, in comparison to Peacock, who led a relatively divided opposition, delivered at the very least a small advantage for the FPLP.

In summary, when it comes to voting behaviour, the evidence suggests that Hawke had some impact on voting behaviour throughout the four elections that he contested. The level of actual impact however is debatable. Hawke led all of his opponents in preferred PM or leader performance questions conducted in the various polls during the election campaigns and this by its very nature would have to translate into some advantage. Bean and Kelley (1988: 91) showed through their analysis of the 1987 election that

\(^{121}\) The question asked in the poll was, ‘What do you think of Mr Hawke/Howard’s performance as Prime Minister/Leader of the opposition?’ On 02 July in The Age (1987a: 3), Hawke had 46 per cent of respondents who thought he was doing a very good or good job while Howard had 26 per cent and on 07 July (1987b: 4) in The Age, the same question produced 49 per cent to 29 per cent for Hawke. In SMH the results were very similar. On 02 July (1987c: 4), the same question produced a result of 46-25 for Hawke and on 03 July (1987: 1) in The Australian, the question posed was, ‘Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Mr Hawke/Howard is doing his job?’, the result was a net satisfaction rating of +5 for Hawke, while for Howard, the net result was -17.

\(^{122}\) In fact, Hawke was recording negative net satisfaction ratings during this period. For example, on 06 March (1990c: 5) in The Australian, Hawke received a net satisfaction of -9. However, this was offset by the fact that his opponent, Peacock, received a net satisfaction of -34. Further to this, on 21 March (1990d: 4) in The Australian, the question asked was, ‘which do you think has the best leadership?’ 50 per cent answered, ‘The ALP with Mr Hawke’, while only 18 per cent answered, ‘The coalition with Mr Peacock’.

\(^{123}\) The other reasons listed were: The Liberal/Nationals will let miners into Kakadu; The Liberal/Nationals will build uranium enrichment plants; The Liberal/Nationals stand for just about everything the Democrats and Greens oppose (SMH, 1990c: 12).
Hawke was responsible for a swing towards the FPLP of 1.4 per cent, and even if in the other elections it was less than this, it is clear that Hawke was an extremely popular leader and did have some effect on voting behaviour.

The Electoral Face Summary

Haupt and Grattan (1983: 126) argued in 1983 that “Bob Hawke won the Australian Prime Ministership with an American formula. The Flinders by-election was close to being the equivalent of an American primary election… and however much people might long for some re-creation of a ‘Westminster style’ of contest between local candidates, or even between parties and their promises, such a world, had it ever existed, was long past”. While this may be a contentious claim, the evidence suggests that some form of Hawke effect did exist. This effect led the party to adjust their campaign style to fit a leader they correctly viewed as more popular than any of his opponents. The focus of the media and in particular the print media is less supportive of such a trend though, as policy issues and other key actors also received extensive coverage.

Conclusions on the Hawke leadership period

When one examines the Hawke leadership period, evidence of presidentialization is varied. However, three important points are central to understanding the change in approach of the party during this period. First, there was a determination to not repeat the mistakes of the Whitlam period. Second, many within the party – in particular the ‘Right’ faction, who Uren (1991) called “the electoral realists” - viewed their only path to success as a change in focus as outlined in the 1979 Committee of Inquiry. This meant changing the party’s economic policies to meet this changing environment which included the breaking down of the old social cleavages. Third, there was a level of continuity between the Hawke and Hayden leadership periods. Hawke, similar to Hayden, decided to interact with the party in a vastly different way to previous periods, which included for example ignoring the platform. These points are fundamental in understanding the period and highlighted the type of behaviour the party were willing to accept moving forward.
By using the conceptualisation of presidentialization as outlined by Poguntke and Webb (2005), it is clear that in the executive face, centralisation of policy making was occurring, in particular through the ERC; though this did not differ greatly from the Whitlam period and their use of cabinet committees. One area that did see a visible change in the executive face was the growing influence and professionalisation of the staff who worked with the prime minister. The most dramatic changes were evident in the party face. Factions became national and better organised, and the prime minister used the dominant alliance of the ‘Right’ and ‘Centre-Left’ factions to ensure much of his policy was implemented in the caucus as well as at conference. In terms of the platform, Hawke continued on where Hayden had left off, by rejecting its traditional importance.

In the electoral face, a much heavier emphasis was placed on Hawke in the campaigns that he contested compared to Whitlam, as the FPLP were sharply aware of Hawke’s personal popularity compared to his opponents in each of these elections. Any analysis needs to acknowledge that changes to the way politics is conducted in the electoral face can have an element of conditionality about them. In other words, the party will always do what it sees is in its best interest electorally. If the leader is popular they will focus on them or if they are not, they will focus on the team or other more popular figures. In summation, evidence of presidentialization during the Hawke leadership period is mixed, although in the party face changes to the way the party was run and controlled entrenched the power of the parliamentary leadership over the rank and file and organisational wing.
Chapter Six - The Rudd Leadership Period 2006-2010 –The Hollowing out of the Party Below

This chapter will examine the period in which Kevin Rudd was the Leader of the FPLP between December 2006 and June 2010. The evidence underpinning presidentialization will once again be assessed using “the three-dimensional framework” of Poguntke and Webb (Webb et al, 2011: 3-4). Preceding this, the historical background of the Rudd period will be sketched out. This chapter will conclude by highlighting how this period showed signs of increasing presidentialization in the party face, while in the other faces the evidence is mixed.

Historical Background

Kevin Rudd became the Leader of the FPLP at a time when their fortunes were on the rise. In November 2006, Labor was ahead in the two-party preferred vote (51-49), however the then leader Kim Beazley was struggling in the preferred PM polling question, trailing both Rudd and Julia Gillard as the preferred leader according to Newspoll (2006a). When a leadership ballot did take place on 4 December, Rudd defeated Beazley 49 votes to 39 (Jackman, 2008: 74). Immediately following this, Labor received a boost in the polls and in the two party preferred polling in Newspoll (2006b), Labor moved into a commanding position (55-45).

In a sign of the changing times in Australian politics, Rudd had become well-known through his appearances from 2001 on the morning television show Sunrise (Jackman, 2008: 30-33 and Macklin, 2007: 5). However, this was not Rudd’s only vehicle for self-promotion and he became a frequent contributor in the print media. In October 2006 he wrote the first of his essays for The Monthly magazine titled ‘Faith in Politics’ (2006a) and followed it up the following month with ‘Howard’s Brutopia’ (2006b). The diversity of exposure led Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno (2011: 187) to observe that “Rudd seemed to have both the battlers and the chattering classes covered”.

As 2007 unfolded, a growing crisis in the US credit markets was becoming apparent. However the depth of the crisis was taking some time to make its way into the Australian discourse which was firmly grounded in the jargon of an election year (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 7). Throughout the year, Labor was always comfortably in front in the polls despite the government’s best attempts to wedge Labor on climate change and indigenous affairs. The government’s efforts to discredit the Your Rights at Work campaign by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), developed to oppose the deeply unpopular Work Choices industrial relations legislation, also failed and on 24 November 2007 Kevin Rudd became Australia’s 26th Prime Minister. The result included the FPLP receiving the largest swing towards it since 1969 of 5.45 per cent (Jackman, 2008: 233 and Megalogenis, 2008: 348-350). For many voters, their decision had been made early and Newspoll reported post-election that “53 per cent of voters reported that they had decided their vote choice more than six months before the polling day, the highest level of early deciders since before 1996” (cited in Williams, 2008: 123).

Soon after being sworn in, Rudd and many within the media promoted the fact that he had made good on a promise he made before the election: to choose his own ministry rather than allocating portfolios after the caucus or the factions had decided on the makeup of the ministry (Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno, 2011: 189). In confirming the generational change that seemed to be at the heart of the election result, Rudd ratified the Kyoto Protocol, delivered an apology to the Stolen Generations, and altered the hugely unpopular Work Choices legislation (Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno, 2011: 189).

As 2008 began, the turmoil that had been gripping the financial markets in the US was starting to spread across the globe and the economic outlook was looking decidedly uncertain. As the contagion continued to spread, Rudd and some of his senior ministers decided on a course of action that was out of step with Australian policy for three decades: a Keynesian inspired stimulus package. In all, the government would spend $75 billion in an attempt to boost the beleaguered retail sector, and to “support jobs by

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124 Following the release of the “Little Children are Sacred” report which examined abuse sustained by indigenous children in the Northern territory, the Howard Government announced that it would take drastic action due to a ‘national emergency’ and the ‘Intervention’ as it became known, involved the Commonwealth seizing control of remote Aboriginal townships (Jackman, 2008: 155).

125 For more on how the environment had an impact on the 2007 election, see Rootes (2008).
building new projects and facilities that will have lasting benefits across the nation” as part of the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan (ALP, n.d).

Among the advanced nations, Australia stood alone as the only nation to have avoided recession in 2009 and the Treasury argued that without the stimulus spending, the economy would have shrunk by 1.3 per cent rather than the 0.6 per cent growth recorded (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 3-4). In February 2009, Rudd, in The Monthly once again, wrote an essay entitled, ‘The Global Financial Crisis’. In it, Rudd described what had just happened as of “truly seismic significance” and argued that the “great neo-liberal experiment of the past 30 years has failed...Neo-liberalism, and the free-market fundamentalism it has produced has been revealed as little more than personal greed dressed up as economic philosophy” (Rudd, 2009: 20-29).

Towards the end of 2009 the consensus that acting on climate change was essential, established before the 2007 election came crashing down. With the elevation of Tony Abbott to Leader of the Opposition, Labor was wedged between the Coalition - who now viewed the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) as a ‘great big new tax’ - and the Greens who wanted even deeper action than the government had proposed. At the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen very little real action was taken and after having the ETS legislation rejected twice in the Senate, the government had the opportunity to go to a double dissolution election, but instead abandoned the policy until 2013 at the earliest (Taylor, 2010a).

In 2010, Labor became tangled in the decade long debate on refugees and boat arrivals as well as being involved in a nasty exchange with the mining industry over the proposed Resource Super Profits Tax (RSPT). As the year reached its mid-point, Labor’s primary vote in Newspoll was starting to trend downwards and between April and June, Labor’s primary vote went from 43 down to 35, but was still leading in the two-party preferred 51-49 (Newspoll, 2010). The media had for some time been discussing the possibility of a leadership challenge (See for example Coorey, 2010: 4; Farr, 2010: 5; Maiden, 2010: 4), however this was hard to imagine considering this was a first term government. Yet, on 24 June 2010, Rudd dramatically resigned as prime
minister after it was clear that he no longer had the required caucus support to continue on and his deputy, Julia Gillard, had the overwhelming support of the parliamentary party.

**Analysis of the Rudd Leadership Period**

The Rudd leadership period, which lasted up until June 2010, provides an interesting case study in which to examine presidentialization. This is in large part due to the fact that during and since his leadership period he was accused of being autocratic (Stuart, 2010: 263; Kelly, 2009: 1). Moreover, the spectacular fashion in which Rudd was removed from office ties into a central tenet of the thesis. Namely, that candidate’s who possess electoral appeal, but very little support within their parties, may potentially increase in number in presidentialized systems (Webb et al, 2011: 9). Furthermore, the 2007 election was one of the more memorable in recent decades due to the victory of Labor from Opposition for only the third time since 1949 and for Labor breaking new ground in their use of new media and alternative electioneering techniques. The section that follows will examine the Rudd leadership period using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model of presidentialization. This will begin with an examination of the executive face.

**Executive Face**

When examining the executive face of presidentialization, a seminal question to ask is whether “a shift in intra-executive power to the benefit of the head of government” has occurred (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 8). Poguntke and Webb (2005: 8) argue that this “increased leadership power flows from the combined effect of growing autonomy and enhanced power resources”. The Rudd leadership period has been widely criticised for the level of autonomy that Rudd possessed and it has even been claimed that Rudd was the most powerful prime minister in Australian history (See Stewart, 2009: 14), or that he was bringing a new brand of governance to Australia (Kelly, 2009: 1). These assertions will be examined in the context of the presidentialization debate beginning with an analysis of the management of the decision making process. This will be followed by an investigation into the use of committees and finally, any growth of resources at the disposal of the prime minister during this period will be analysed.
Management of the Decision Making Process

The way Kevin Rudd ran his government has received extensive coverage and *The Australian* as an example, spent the week of November 9-15 2009 focusing on “How Rudd Governs” (See Hewett, 2009: 11; Steketee, 2009: 11 and Elliot and van Onselen, 2009: 13 as examples). In almost every article, Rudd was accused of centralising decision making; however this was not only the claim of the mainstream media. For example, former Labor power-broker “Robert Ray says Howard’s model was a pyramid, but Rudd’s dominance is more like Nelson’s column, with Rudd sitting up on top. It is, he says, centralisation of power in the extreme” (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 147; Stewart, 2009: 12).

As soon as Rudd took office, it was apparent that he wanted to be involved in the micro-aspects of decision making (See as example Kelly, 2010 and Taylor, 2010b). One of the more widely publicised examples of this micro-management according to David Marr, journalist and writer of a biographical account of Rudd, was in the way that cabinet interacted with decisions of the Strategic Priorities and Budget Committee (SPBC). According to Marr (2010: 68), cabinet ministers were allowed to look at a folder which contained the decisions of the committee, but the folder was not allowed to be taken out of the room. There were also reports that Rudd and the other members of the SPBC - Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard, Finance Minister Lindsay Tanner and Treasurer Wayne Swan were marginalising cabinet (Kelly 2009, 1; Taylor and Uren, 2010: 83); that cabinet submissions were only being circulated the day before meetings; and that the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) was becoming the choke point for all decisions of the government (Marr, 2010: 68; Stuart, 2010: 167-8; Stewart, 2009: 16). This approach led political journalist Paul Kelly (2009: 1) to argue that “Rudd is conducting a grand experiment in process and content. Decision-making tends to be centralised and focussed in the four person strategic priorities cabinet committee (Rudd, Gillard, Swan and Lindsay Tanner) and in bilateral dialogue between Rudd and individual ministers”.\(^{126}\) When Marr (2010: 69) discussed the issue with Rudd for his *Quarterly Essay* on the then prime minister, Rudd predictably argued that “[T]his is a Cabinet-led government...There are Cabinet meetings each week. There are Cabinet committees who determine the core decisions of the government and that is the way which we have

\(^{126}\) Wayne Swan was Treasurer during the Rudd Government and has remained in that position in the current Gillard Government. Lindsay Tanner was Finance Minister in the Rudd Government and retired from politics at the 2010 federal election.
operated this government from the beginning”. However, the evidence and some of Rudd’s later comments do not support such a conclusion (See Coorey, 2011b and Tiernan, 2008 as examples).

One consequence of Rudd’s desire to be involved in the minutiae of policy making was that his colleagues had difficulty gaining access to him. On occasions, his colleagues would have to catch flights with him just so they could spend time with him (Stuart, 2010: 187-8 and Stewart, 2009: 16). Time constraints for a prime minister are not unusual, as the demands are extensive, but according to Marr, who cited unhappy colleagues of Rudd’s, “[A]t the top of the ministry is a small group of men and women with easy access to the boss, though it’s said there are times and moods when even these heavyweights have trouble getting through the door. They are regarded as conduits to power” (2010: 69). In Stuart’s view, Rudd’s inability to delegate was central to his failures and that “[T]his style of decision making left the PM continually snowed under as issues piled up until he could address them. He failed, for example, to act immediately on Garrett’s recommendation to terminate the insulation scheme. The leader continued to persist with his autocratic style, and failed to develop a more inclusive approach” (Stuart, 2010: 263).

The other issue stemming from this approach was that the public service had also become sidelined, relegated to simply administering Rudd’s decisions (Stuart, 2010: 167-8). Stuart argued: “Rudd consistently failed to allow others to have any input into the process of framing policies. The prime minister was not simply the arbiter of disputes between ministers, as in previous Labor governments...Cabinet was reduced to a ‘gang of four’, and even this was dominated by Rudd” (Stuart, 2010: 262). Brett (2010; See also Taylor, 2010b) argued that what Rudd (and perhaps others in the government) failed to understand is that the changes to the public service since the 1980s under the guise of New Public Management have reduced the ability of the state to implement broad sweeping reforms. “He doesn’t understand the complexity and the limits of the exercise of public power” (Brett, 2010). Whether this is correct is unclear, but the evidence of centralisation, in particular concerning the SPBC is overwhelming and this will be explored in the section that follows.
Cabinet Committees

During the Rudd Government, one committee in particular was more powerful than most, the SPBC. The SPBC became the key forum in which responses to the GFC were discussed, however, even before taking office the group had been regularly meeting throughout 2007 under the guise of the ‘planning group’ (Milne, 2009: 8). As the GFC was unfolding throughout 2007 and 2008 it became clear that the US credit crisis was going to spread globally and when the Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSE) Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, who had been around since the Great Depression were beginning to falter, on 6 September, the US Federal Government took control of both companies. Nine days later, Lehman Brothers, the fourth largest investment bank in the USA, filed for bankruptcy and throughout September it seemed that the only thing that could save the entire system was a massive bailout from the US federal government.

“On 29 September, Congress dramatically rejected Paulson’s proposed US $700 billion bail-outs. For the previous ten days this had been seen as the only thing that could save the banking system. Wall Street suffered its biggest one day fall since 1987, dropping 7.8 per cent in a day” (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 40). However, on 3 October the amended bill was passed, enacting the Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP).

While Australia had very little direct exposure to the toxic assets that were threatening the financial system globally, the nation was still exposed to the growing contagion for a number of reasons. First, it is estimated that four million Australians own shares directly and second, as a result of Australia’s superannuation system, “Australian households have more of their savings exposed to the share market than any other nation” (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 41). When the SPBC met in Brisbane in early October, initial planning for a stimulus package took place. However, it was revealed at this meeting that planning had been going on for some time, even though Gillard and Tanner had not been present (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 70-1). Before the SPBC had time to act though, the Australian share market fell sharply, including a fall of 7.6 per cent on Friday 10 October. While the marginalisation even within the inner circle is interesting, it is what followed that reveals the most in terms of presidentialization in this period.
When the SPBC met to discuss the stimulus package, it was clear that besides the four ministers, the other key voice at the table was that of Ken Henry, the Treasury Secretary. While this input would have been useful, it was clear that cabinet was being marginalised. Taylor and Uren (2010: 83) put it this way: “Labor’s own Cabinet had been completely bypassed in the biggest decision the government had made. It met only on the Tuesday to ratify the package when all the decisions had been made and the press releases printed. Resentment of the SPBC by other ministers grew from this time”. In discussing the issue with Taylor and Uren (2010: 83) Swan used time as well as extreme market sensitivities as justification for this style. However this was an enormous expenditure for an Australian government and while centralisation could be considered conditional and related to the difficulties of the times, the evidence suggests that this became a template for decision making (Marr, 2010: 80 and Stuart, 2010: 68-70). The subsequent dumping of the Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) as well as the health and hospitals policies only serves to substantiate this point (Grattan, 2010: 1).

While a few others were involved in the debate about whether the ETS should be dumped, namely the National Secretary Karl Bitar and NSW Senator Mark Arbib (who were supportive of this option), and Senator Penny Wong (who opposed it), the decision was still made without consultation with cabinet and caucus colleagues. The Age noted that Environment Minister Peter Garrett revealed that most of the caucus heard about the decision when the story broke in the Sydney Morning Herald (Taylor, 2011 and Hartcher, 2010: 9). The consequence of making decisions in this manner is of course that those who may offer an opposing view or who understand the difficulties of implementing large policy initiatives are marginalised, and these examples highlight this point. According to Taylor and Uren (2010: 83) “As it turned out, the first stimulus package was simple and relatively easy to deliver. But a second package crafted the following year contained some serious policy blunders”.

For the second round of stimulus spending, the initial SPBC meetings occurred on 19 January 2009 and while Swan argued that the ideas came from the ministers’ offices, the evidence suggests the SPBC centralised the key decision making.

*It was an iterative process, said one minister. Chaotic, said another...Some Treasury and finance officials think that if the bureaucracy had its traditional level of influence it would have provided*
more backing for the finance minister’s views. But after just a year in office, Kevin Rudd had already centralised power in his own office, even more than John Howard had done before him. The financial crisis was used to justify and exacerbate the trend (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 146-147).

The pre-eminence of a particular committee certainly was not new, especially when one considers the elevated position of the ERC during the prime ministership of Bob Hawke. However, the evidence suggests that Rudd was sidelining cabinet more than even Hawke had done. The SPBC and Rudd were deciding on government policy with very limited input from cabinet (Stewart, 2009: 14; Grattan, 2010: 1; Taylor, 2010b). When Labor insiders were interviewed by Cameron Stewart for his article in the Weekend Australian magazine, they told him, “[T]his isn’t a kitchen cabinet... Rudd’s in the kitchen, the others are in the dining room”. Claims another: “Rudd brings in the decision for them to swallow. And increasingly the full Federal Cabinet is a rubber stamp for pre-cooked decisions made by these core Rudd-dominated sub-groups” (Stewart, 2009: 14).

“Hugh White, a former staffer for Bob Hawke and Kim Beazley, puts it this way: Rudd has set out to replicate the style of government created by [former British PM] Tony Blair, by moving away from the collective responsibility of cabinet to executive responsibility of the prime minister. This growing concentration of power has led some to suggest that Rudd has become the most powerful Australian prime minister since Federation” (Stewart, 2009: 14; see also Walter in Grattan, 2010: 1). Of course these analyses need to be placed in a broader context to test their validity and Kelly (2010) for one, disagrees with some of these assessments. Leaving these judgement calls to one side, it is evident that the central problem in many of the mistakes the Rudd Government made was the speed that the packages were rolled out. In many instances, this was only achieved “because Cabinet processes were short-circuited by the SPBC” (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 242). While no panacea for guaranteed policy success, a greater collective role, as is envisioned in the Westminster tradition, for their cabinet colleagues, certainly would not have hurt the policy making process (Taylor and Uren, 2010: 242).

The Rudd period in office was dominated by Rudd and the SPBC, and leading political journalist Paul Kelly (2009: 1) argued that “Kevin Rudd brings a new brand of
governance to Australia marked by political control yet policy compliance, a contradiction at the heart of Labor’s rule”. This attempt to control the process was central to Rudd’s modus operandi and while internal discipline of the government was very good, with very few leaks or re-shuffles, Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno (2011: 193) were correct when they argued that “Rudd’s early success concealed some deeper weaknesses...during the economic crisis a style of highly centralised decision-making was allowed to develop, and this prevented some wiser heads from influencing key debates”. Taylor (2009: 13) noted as much also and argued that one of the main reasons provided for centralising decision making was preventing leaks but as the cabinet was almost leak-free

the government would be risking little and gaining a lot by bringing the full team in on more decisions. Business leaders have similar complaints. ‘There’s a pretty broad consensus that cabinet is not functioning properly. We keep coming up against issues where one minister doesn’t seem to know what another is doing, or where the policy runs counter to one another. If they talked things through properly in cabinet then presumably that wouldn’t happen’, says one well connected business lobbyist.

Furthermore, twenty months after losing the leadership, Rudd acknowledged that his governing approach was not consultative when he noted: “[T]he bottom line is, I think you do learn. And what I’ve tried to learn from all of that is, do less in a given working day rather than try to do everything.... I think it’s also important to delegate more and be sort of happy and contented about that. And on top of that, most importantly, consult more broadly as well” (Rudd cited in The Daily Telegraph, 2012). Rudd however, is not solely responsible and one needs to recognise that in the Australian system, prime ministers are ultimately accountable to their parties. The other part of this story is that the caucus failed to act when it was being marginalised, allowing an electorally popular prime minister to act autonomously. Oakes put it this way: “Not all the blame should be lumped on Rudd. Cabinet has the power to pull a prime minister into line. The truth is that a group of weak ministers allowed themselves to be comprehensively rolled by the PM” (Oakes, 2010a: 50, See also Oakes, 2010b: 10). Instead of warning the prime minister early on in their tenure as happened to Hawke during the MX missile controversy, and Whitlam when he wanted to split the ministry, the caucus allowed Rudd to continue on, unchecked until it finally “issued an overdue reminder of its enormous potential power in June 2010” (Dyrenfurth and Bongiorno, 2011: 193). What the Rudd Government highlights is that in a system like Australia that has such dominant parties, that in many cases it is the relationship between party and leader that
determines the decision making in government, not the other way around. From the Whitlam period onwards, a clear norm had been created in Australian federal politics. This was that centralised policy making within cabinet committees was an accepted behaviour for the parliamentary leadership. While many of Rudd’s colleagues have been willing to attribute his downfall to his centralisation of policy making, cabinet committees continue to be used in the Gillard Government. Therefore, if we take the allegations of Rudd’s colleagues as *prima facie* evidence, but the accepted behaviour of centralised policy making remains in place, Rudd’s downfall can be possibly contributed to a variety of factors. However, his use of cabinet committees cannot be one of them. There is the possibility that his behaviour went beyond what his colleagues were prepared to accept (norm violation) although this appears to under appreciate the complexity of the relationships between the governing elites.

Growth of Resources at the Disposal of the PM

It is clear that over time the resources that Rudd had at his disposal increased exponentially. Stuart (2010: 69) argued that “[T]he duties of a prime minister are not codified. The position is, extraordinarily, not even mentioned in the Constitution. There was never any intention by the founding fathers that anyone would aggregate power to the extent that occurred”. As has been noted in the previous case studies, a trend of growing resources in the PMO is an example of the increased power the prime minister now has at their disposal. In Stuart’s (2010: 167-8) view, for Rudd, it was the desire to micro-manage everything out of his office that led to a “massive expansion of the prime minister’s department”.

In 2007 Rudd and Labor had promised to cut ministerial staffing numbers by around 30 per cent. However, in a continuation of the trend identified in the previous case studies, the size of staff in the PMO rose during the Rudd leadership period. Compared to the Hawke period which ranged from 16-24 advisers, the Rudd period jumped up to 41 as of February 2008 and peaked at 50 in May 2010 (Department of Finance, 2008a; 2008b; 2009a; 2009b; 2010a). Similar to the Hawke period, it was also clear that the advisers in the Rudd Government were playing a critical role. Taylor and Uren (2010: 68) for example, argued that “Rudd’s senior economic advisor, Andrew Charlton, was an
influential voice” during debates on the stimulus packages in response to the GFC. Moreover, Stuart (2010: 170) argued that not since Keating has a Labor politician built up such an immense personal office. Hence, the evidence overwhelmingly shows an increase in resources during this period.

The Executive Face Summary

Rudd has been described as the most powerful prime minister in Australia’s history (See Stewart, 2009: 14) however there is little evidence to support such an assertion. When examining the changes to the executive face during the Rudd leadership period it is clear that Rudd wanted to centralise decision making, control the policy agenda and be involved in the minutia of policy; he followed a long-running norm in Australian federal politics but the evidence suggests that he went too far for his colleagues The dominance of the SPBC highlights a trend in Australian politics which is at its most basic level, undemocratic, and highlights the gap that is forming between some key actors, including the leader, and their parties when in government. This phenomenon is enhanced by the continued growth of staffing numbers in the PMO. Naturally, prime ministers can be more or less inclusive dependent on their own approach to governing, but the growing focus on powerful cabinet committees who make decisions without cabinet approval, and the growth of the PMO is enhancing the capacity for leaders to act autonomously from their parties. For these reasons, the Rudd period can be seen as part of a broader trend that shows some evidence of presidentialization in the executive face.

Party Face

As previously mentioned, the party face is concerned with signs of a shift in intra-party power that benefits the leader (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 343). During the Rudd leadership period, the evidence indicates that the trend of increasing leader domination of the party, initially diagnosed during the Whitlam period, continued uninterrupted. Central to the parliamentary leadership’s desire to bypass and/or dominate the internal institutions of the party was their zeal for controlling outcomes, and how events were perceived in the media. Therefore, this section will argue that the Rudd leadership period shared some similarities to the Hawke period, but a new type of control and coordination was also displayed. This was most clearly manifested in the leadership’s
fixation on the paradoxical promotion of a dominant leader along with internal ‘unity’. This section will highlight this point by examining two changes in the leader-party relationship. First, the way that Rudd interacted with his parliamentary colleagues, most notably over the method in which the front bench was selected will be dissected. Second, the relationship between leader and intra-party institutions during this period will be explored. Specifically, this section will identify changes in this power dynamic by focussing on the way the leadership controlled and manipulated the conferences and intervened in pre-selections.

Changes to Party Rules

When Rudd took the leadership of the FPLP on 4 December 2006, he outlined immediately that he would not be tied down by a rule established in 1905 that said caucus alone had the right to pick the front bench (Hartcher, 2009: 146). When he appeared on The 7.30 Report that night, he stated, “I’ll be leading this show and when it comes to the outcomes that I want, I intend to get them. I don’t particularly care if anyone has opposing views; that’s what’s going to happen” (cited in Jackman, 2008: 92-3). According to Jackman, “Said one Rudd backer: Kevin basically told the faction leaders, I know there is a rule in place, but I’ll have who I like, thank you. By Thursday, when he met with the Right, he walked in and said, ‘You know who I want, please self-nominate’. And the people who would normally stand up, didn’t. That’s how we got fresh blood” (2008: 92-3). The decision was reported as a major shift in thinking for the party and a way to “ignore jobs-for-the-hacks demands from the ALP’s faction bosses” (The Australian, 2006b: 11). The process was continued when Labor took office and once again was promoted as a key change to the way the party was organised (See for example Karvelas, 2007: 4; Stuart, 2007: 23; Franklin, 2007: 3; The Mercury, 2007: 2).

However, the reality was much different to what was being portrayed in the mainstream media. In fact, it was clear that Rudd was still dealing with factional leaders despite what he said publicly (See Hartcher, 2009:145-6 and Stuart, 2010: 69). When the initial plan for the ministry was drawn up, the ‘Right’ faction was under-represented dramatically. After consulting factional leaders, the ministry was re-drawn to better reflect the make-up of the caucus. Rudd was advised by John Faulkner from the ‘Left’
and Robert Ray from the ‘Right’ that it was not a wise idea to simultaneously declare war on the ‘Right’ faction and their union supporters (Hartcher, 2009: 146-7; Stewart, 2009: 17). In Lindsay Tanner’s (2010) view:

> It’s debatable exactly how much change in personnel that produces, most of the people who end up in the positions that they are in are reasonably obvious and because to be a leader of an organisation of the parliamentary Labor Party, one of the things you have to be able to do is to balance all of the competing ambitions and ego’s and claims, you have got to balance regional and factional elements and if you don’t then you sow the seeds of longer term instability. So although the shift to unilateral leader choice looks like a dramatic change, in practice it produces some change but on balance the line-up you get is less different than what you’d get with caucus election than people would expect.

Bob McMullan (2010) largely agreed with Tanner, arguing: “I think the change in the rule is a transition to a better process but I don’t think it made much difference on this occasion.” I think the same people got chosen that would have been chosen if there’d been a ballot”. Gary Gray (2010) added that “at any time, the Prime Minister has been able to shape the Ministry as they wish it to be shaped and even when you are picking your own Ministry, you don’t get a completely free hand”. Chris Evans (2010) had a similar view, arguing that “before the leader had the sole power to pick the Ministry, there were still negotiations and considerations made and so as I say, I think it’s probably more symbolic”. Therefore, while Rudd and others may have viewed the promotion of Rudd’s power to control this process as important for one reason or another, very little actually changed. The weighing up of various state and factional interests is something the leader will always have to confront therefore there is very little evidence of presidentialization in this instance.

Conferences

In the period that Kevin Rudd was leader of the FPLP, two national conferences occurred. Both were criticised for being stage managed and ‘politically safe’ (See Schubert and Murphy, 2007: 4). The 2007 National Conference held in an election year was always going to be a tightly run affair and the most divisive issue leading into the conference was once again the issue of uranium mining. According to Williams, “Ziggy

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127 Bob McMullan was a minister in the Keating Government, served as a Senator for the Australian Capital Territory (1988-1996) and then became a member of the House of Representatives from (1996-2010).
128 Gary Gray was formerly the National Secretary of the party (1993-1999) and later became a member of the House of Representatives and Special Minister for State (2007-present).
129 Chris Evans became a Senator for Western Australia in 1993 and served as a minister in the Rudd and Gillard Governments (2007-2013) as well as leader of the party in the Senate (2004-2013).
130 One possible explanation for this is the long-held view that the party are dominated by shady backroom figures. The ‘faceless men’ issue is something Whitlam tried to address and the pervasive influence of this perception remains even today thanks in large part to the mainstream media.
Switkowski delivered his report on nuclear energy and recommended there be no limit on uranium mines in Australia. Few were surprised when Howard endorsed Switkowski’s report and attempted to wedge Labor on the issue” (Williams, 2008: 109). The issue was portrayed as a test of Rudd’s leadership by some (See The Age, 2007) and was expected to deliver a raucous old-style debate over the policy. Of course, this never occurred as Rudd was able to have the amendment which he favoured, pass. This change effectively over-turned the ‘three-mines policy’. However, the perception that the debate over uranium at the conference was sterile was deeply contested by Gray (2010). In his view, “the uranium debate that was held in 2007 was as vigorous and as hard fought as the uranium decision in 1982”.

The other controversial aspect of the 2007 conference was the decision to give Labor’s head office the power to intervene in pre-selection battles. It was reported by Farr (2007: 13) that some delegates viewed this as “another example of the party bosses abusing their power”. The conference resolution noted that the election is only months away and to maximise the chance at success, the conference gives the national executive “specific authority to pre-select candidates in the House of Representatives for the 2007 federal election” (ALP, 2007). The resolution also noted that this would only apply to 2007 federal pre-selections and that this process would be applied exclusively to New South Wales (NSW) or where “application is sought by the Administrative Committee of another State or Territory Branch, and only in those seats where the National Executive Committee has unanimously agreed upon a process to select a candidate” (ALP, 2007). In reality, the application of the policy was much wider than was initially envisaged and this will be discussed in more detail further along.

The 2009 National Conference was described as the most “carefully stage managed ALP Conference ever” (Keane, 2009) and “pre-approved water torture” (Crook, 2009). At the heart of these criticisms was the way decisions were handled with very few formal votes actually taking place. According to Stewart (2009: 16, also see Crabb, 2009 and Cavalier, 2010a: 184), “the Government appointed a four-man troubleshooting team to the ALP national conference to intervene when any of the 400 delegates strayed from the script. These measures are seen by some as the very model of an efficient modern government. Others warn they are stifling democracy, by muzzling independent voices and alternative views”. This heightened level of control led Grattan (2009) to recall how “[M]any years ago, these conferences were vitally important, on
issues as central as the US alliance and uranium mining. Now all power is in the hands of the parliamentary party, and Rudd has further strengthened the role of leader within that party”. However, a number of federal parliamentarians disputed this analysis. In Evans’ (2010) view, the function of the conference has changed as most of the work is done before-hand. While Tanner (2010) argued that “the Labor Party is more intellectually and ideologically united, even though there are obviously differences of views on all kinds of things, in my view than at any other time in its history... a lot of people in the media do not understand the real dynamic that now drives national conferences. The real dynamic is an accountability dynamic”. Ultimately, the question for this thesis is whether a shift in intra-party power to the leader has occurred. When one examines the two conferences during the Rudd leadership period it is apparent that the leadership were increasingly controlling the conference more than previously. As has been noted elsewhere, an intra-party norm has been created when it comes to conferences. This continues a trend first identified during the Whitlam leadership period and which continued through the Hawke period.

Pre-Selections
As mentioned previously, following the 2007 National Conference, it was widely reported that a key change was made to the pre-selection procedures for federal elections. According to Tasker and Hawthorne (2007: 1; See also Farr, 2007: 13), delegates voted to reduce the role that rank-and-file members play in pre-selection battles and gave the national executive the final say on pre-selections. While Farr (2007: 13), reported that “[S]enior Labor figures won the extraordinary powers to pick candidates by promising it would be a one-off situation brought on by the nearness of the election campaign and to ensure top quality nominees”. However, the interjection of the national executive meant that at least 10 seats in NSW alone had candidates chosen in this way for the 2007 election (Coorey and Humphries, 2007). Speaking before the 2010 election, Tanner (2010) argued that

“the leader has a certain amount of what you might call reserve power in regard to pre-selection which can enable him or her to determine the outcome of an individual pre-selection on the odd occasion...and in my view can only be exercised pretty rarely. If we ended up with a position where we had a leader who was seeking to directly interfere in pre-selection contests across the board and to determine outcomes across the board that would create a lot of controversy and political upheaval”.

What became apparent in the lead-up to the 2010 election though, was that this process was not a ‘one-off’ as the resolution at the 2007 National Conference had noted. In fact, the evidence indicates that the level of intervention actually increased for the 2010 poll. Moreover, the national executive were not using any motion passed at the 2007 National Conference, but were instead using the plenary powers under Section 7 (f) in the ALP Constitution (Cavalier, 2012a). These powers, which had been used extremely rarely until 2007, were now being used extensively to decide candidates for pre-selection. In the Southern Highlands ALP Branch Newsletter (no.159 – Holiday 2010), the situation in NSW was described in the following way:

The electorates represented by candidates imposed on local memberships constitute a critical mass among the NSW Members of the House of Representatives. Those electorates are as follows. Blaxland, Charlton, Eden-Monaro, Fowler, Kingsford-Smith, Lindsay, Macquarie, Robertson, Throsby, Werriwa,+ Greenway (to become Labor). Ten out of 28, soon to be 11. Only Eden-Monaro and Kingsford-Smith are examples of imposing a candidate with special qualities.

The situation in QLD was similar, with at least three seats decided in this manner in the lead up to the 2010 election, namely, Dawson, Bowman and Herbert (See Bowe, 2010 and Maddison, 2010). Rodney Cavalier (2010a: 185), a former NSW Labor Minister, argued that the leadership group has “presumed to determine pre-selections for any seat that Labor has a chance of winning wherever the local membership might select a candidate unacceptable to that group”. Ironically, the centralisation of decision-making was one of the key criticisms outlined in the 2010 National Review, and was one of the key issues that was meant to be discussed by the 2011 National Conference but it was rejected by the delegates. The level of intervention was summed up by Faulkner (2011: 8) when he argued: “Fractional fixes, log-rolling and back-room deals – in those few pre-selections not determined by an intervention – see the candidates who don’t get the nod gracefully withdrawing to allow the pre-determined winner to claim unanimous support”. Cavalier (2010b) put it this way: “No previous Labor Leader (Rudd) has so casually but consistently used the National Executive to impose his will in candidate selection”.

When asked about the influence of the leader in pre-selections, Tanner (2012) argued:

Growing intervention by the NE is not necessarily reflective of growing power or intervention on the part of the leader. In some instances the leader has played an active role, but more
commonly NE intervention is driven by factional and sub-factional interests. In some cases, particularly in New South Wales, competing factions collaborate to advance their common interest in not being hostage to the vagaries of rank and file ballots among an ever more tiny and unrepresentative local party membership. An increased premium on putting genuine quality candidates in safe seats, rather than a minor local powerbroker who has significant numbers, has also fuelled greater intervention. Redistributions, the need to accommodate star candidates who don't emerge from within the local rank and file membership, and the increasing tendency of senior union officials to seek pre-selection have all contributed to growing interventionism. Each situation is of course driven by specific and sometimes unique dynamics.

Tanner’s comments certainly aid in understanding the subtleties of the process and highlight the various forces which are at play in some of these decisions. However, it is also tacit acknowledgement that as a result of structural changes within the FPLP, that the capacity for leaders to influence has dramatically increased. One needs to only contrast this with the situation when Whitlam took the leadership and the parliamentary leadership were not even a part of the national executive to see the size of the shift. Consequently, it is because the leadership has an increased capacity to exert authority over this process that this can be taken as evidence of presidentialization and as will be shown, the intervention into pre-selections has set a precedent that his successor has subsequently followed.

**The Party Face Summary**

When it comes to the party face during the Rudd leadership period it appears that Rudd positioned himself as a candidate owing nothing to the factions. In Hartcher’s (2009:145-6) view, “Rudd ultimately succeeded in the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party not because of the unions and the factions but in spite of them. Rudd had never worked for a union and did not enjoy the patronage of any union. Lacking such support automatically put him outside the faction system, the union-based machine for creating Labor politicians”. However, when Rudd became leader he showed that he understood the importance of the factions within the party. This was evident by the manner in which he selected his front-bench and the increasing intervention into pre-selections. Put simply, Rudd’s capacity to exert power within the various institutions of the party was substantially higher at the end of his leadership than it was at the start; a significant marker of presidentialization.
Moreover, Rudd’s leadership within the party face is almost uniquely consistent with what Poguntke and Webb (2005: 9) described as being the logic of presidentialization. They argued: “It is likely that leaders who base their leadership on such contingent claims to a personalised mandate will seek to consolidate their leadership by enhancing their control of the party machinery, not least through appropriate statutory changes which give them more direct power over the party”. Almost prophetically they noted that (2005: 9) “This may be a risky strategy in that it could provoke reactions by the party’s middle-level strata. While they may have been prepared to accept leadership domination as long as it was contingent on (the promise of) electoral appeal, they are likely to resent the formalisation of such power”. In the end, Rudd, who Faulkner (cited in Stewart, 2009: 17) argued was as “dominant as any Labor leader we’ve seen since the birth of the modern Labor party under Whitlam”, had solely electoral appeal to base his leadership upon.

The Electoral Face

As mentioned previously in this thesis, when examining the electoral face, three factors need to be examined: campaign style, media focus and voting behaviour. This section will argue that presidentialization in the electoral face was clear during the Rudd leadership period as there were signs of “increasingly leadership-centred electoral processes” (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 5). Presidentialization in the electoral face reached new heights during this period with the one campaign that Rudd contested as leader becoming known as the ‘Kevin 07’ election. Although in the final element of the electoral face, leader effects on voting behaviour, the evidence suggests that Rudd’s impact was largely negligible.

Campaign Style

During the 2007 election campaign, the FPLP remained united and disciplined throughout and ultimately rode to power on a wave of support. Their decade-long nemesis John Howard was not only defeated, but he also suffered the ignominy of losing his seat. According to Williams (2008: 108) the electioneering wasn’t kept to within the clearly defined limits of the actual campaign. In his view, the campaign began at the start of 2007 as both major parties engaged in the “long faux campaign”.

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While the government attempted to buy their way back into power with “new policies, new public information taxpayer-funded advertising, or dirt files on the ALP” (Flew, 2008: 7), Labor focussed on marketing Rudd. Soon after he became leader, the party released two television commercials. “The first introduced Rudd to voters as the man who grew up in rural QLD, the bloke who cared about kids’ education and the future. It became known as the Eumundi ad, after the tiny town where Rudd spent his childhood. The other branded him as an ‘economic conservative’. Before Howard could vandalise Rudd’s image in the public mind, Labor leapt in and digitally enhanced it” (Hartcher, 2009: 175; See also Stuart, 2010: 34).

Throughout 2007, the ACTU also continued their Your Rights At Work campaign and it gained enough traction that the government attempted to reduce hostility to the Work Choices legislation by adding a fairness test. “But this amendment appeared only tacit confirmation from the Coalition’s own lips that its original laws were, indeed, unfair” (Williams, 2008: 108). In August of 2007, the FLP launched its ‘Kevin07’ marketing blitz with t-shirts, websites and blogging from Rudd in the form of his ‘KMAIL’ (Jackman, 2008: 159). The approach, which was meant to tie into the ‘New Leadership’ theme, focussed on attracting young voters. Rudd’s appearances on FM radio and youth television programs, as well as the use of YouTube, MySpace and Facebook were meant to provide clear contrasts with the government and in particular the ageing prime minister, John Howard (van Onselen and Senior, 2008: 172-3; Megalogenis, 2008: 326-330).

When the election was finally called, the government’s tactics were clear, they believed a long campaign would test Rudd’s discipline and endurance (Hartcher, 2009: 241-2). The campaign which lasted six weeks, mirrored much of the year with climate change and the Work Choices legislation being central. In the first week the focus was on leadership. Rudd argued that “he was offering new leadership” while Howard responded by arguing that what the country needed was “the right leadership” (Williams, 2008: 112). The leader’s debate was staged in the second week of the campaign. According to van Onselen and Senior (2008: 128-9),

_The leader’s debate loomed as a key moment in the campaign. As PM, Howard had always set up debates early in campaigns...The first Sunday of the campaign proper, 21 October, saw the_
leaders go head to head before a live television audience in their one and only campaign debate. Rudd had wanted three debates, including one on YouTube and one late in the campaign, but Howard would have none of it.

Rudd was almost unanimously declared the winner and from this moment on the FPLP never looked like losing (Williams, 2008:113; See also van Onselen and Senior, 2008: 130-135). As weeks three and four of the campaign passed, promises to keep interest rates low, climate change, the Work Choices legislation and cost of living pressures remained front and centre. In particular, the Reserve Bank lifting the official cash rate during the fourth week of the campaign by 0.25 basis points to 6.75 was seen as pivotal as this was “an eleven year high, the sixth rise since the 2004 election, and the first ever during an election campaign” (Williams, 2008: 116).

At the FPLP campaign launch on 14 November, two days following the Coalition’s, Labor and Rudd again promoted their ‘economic conservatism’ by pledging to stop the ‘reckless spending’ . In the final week of the campaign, Rudd appeared on the television show ‘Rove’, further highlighting the age difference between the leaders. The Coalition and the Greens chose the traditional campaigning method, as they both advertised heavily in the print media. In comparison, no FLP advertising could be identified in The Age, SMH or The Australian in the three weeks leading up to the 2007 election. The ALP had changed its approach, broadening its electioneering techniques to include skywriting as well as advertising  

en masse via SMS, with 40267 text messages scheduled to be sent to mobile phones listed to addresses in thirty-six target seats...In addition, in the final ten days of the campaign, Labor HQ would chalk up another campaign first by sending out almost 300,000 copies of a DVD that featured Rudd speaking about his plans for the future to homes in twenty marginal seats around the country” (Jackman, 2008: 193).

These techniques were complimented with the use of electronic media including YouTube, Facebook and MySpace as well as links to the ‘Kevin07’ website on major news portals. The sum of these techniques only served to further accentuate the deeply personalised campaign the FPLP were running.

Media Focus

When examining the media focus, the key is to examine whether “media coverage of politics focuses more on leaders” (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 345). In particular,
“growing emphasis on leadership appeals in election campaigning” should be noticeable (Poguntke and Webb, 2005: 10). Throughout 2007, it was clear that as the economy was still strong, the perceived ability to maintain this strength would be a key issue. The focus of the media was developed within this framework, with the key issues being “climate change, water shortages, interest rates, industrial relations and the Coalition Government’s Work Choices legislation” (Youmane, 2008: 62). When it came to the leader of the FPLP, Rudd had become well known to the Canberra press gallery before taking the leadership. Megalogenis (2008: 325) described him as a “shameless self-promoter”. When the FPLP launched its ‘Kevin07’ campaign, and with the ACTU’s Your Rights At Work campaign continuing, there appeared to be little chance of exposure for other key actors. Goot (2008: 102–6) found that Rudd received 58.8 per cent of all the mentions of FPLP candidates in the press during the campaign in over 1400 publications between October 15 and November 21.\footnote{This figure (58.8 per cent) is based on Goot’s (2008: 102-6) finding that the FPLP received 38.9 percent of total mentions in the press. Hence, Rudd’s figure of 22.9 per cent equals 58.8 per cent of mentions of FPLP candidates.} While the research design of Goot’s article is different to the focus of this thesis, this is relatively consistent with the results in Table 6.1. Of the 973 articles examined in the final two weeks of the 2007 campaign, 62.3 per cent mentioned Rudd, while 18.1 per cent focussed on personality related issues or on polling (compared with 81.9 per cent on policies). This finding indicates that the level of coverage focussing on the personal attributes of the leader, their family or on polling substantially increased from the Hawke period. This is indicative of a second wave of personalisation. Possible explanations for this increase may include that polling results have become an even more frequent source of debate and that as ideology based politics continues to decline in relevance in Australia, that party campaigns are becoming increasingly personalised as well. One of Goot’s key findings was that in terms of mentions compared to their colleagues, “Rudd, like Howard, scored highest on television (26.5%) and lowest in the press (22.9%)” (Goot, 2008: 104). This indicates that while the shift to a more personalised coverage is sizeable in the print media, it still reports on substantive policy issues far more than the other mediums. Therefore, when it comes to print media coverage of the 2007 election campaign, the level of coverage Rudd received remained relatively stable from the Hawke and Whitlam periods. However, the type of articles focussing on personality or polls dramatically increased.
As a result, when it comes to media focus for the Rudd leadership period, the 2007 election showcased how much the media can focus on leaders during a campaign (See Table 6.1). This was a result of the type of campaign the FPLP ran which was highly personalised, as well as the trend of focussing on the leaders rather than their teams when in opposition.

Table 6.1 - Media Focus during the 2007 Election Campaign of the Rudd Leadership Period in *The Age, SMH* and *The Australian*[^132]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles Surveyed</td>
<td>973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles that Mentioned Rudd</td>
<td>606  (62.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles Focussed on Policy</td>
<td>797  (81.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles Focussed on Personality or Polls</td>
<td>176  (18.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Voting Behaviour

The 2007 election is significant in the annals of Australian politics for many reasons but one was that it included “the largest swing towards a party assuming government since 1949” (Williams, 2008: 120). In his examination of the 2007 election, Williams (2008: 108) argued that “[L]eadership was pivotal to the 2007 election campaign. This, more than most Australian electoral contests, was a ‘presidential’ race where the personal traits, integrity and future visions of the major party leaders came under unprecedented scrutiny”. This line of thinking became the accepted wisdom during the campaign, however, a number of studies released since provide evidence that suggests leadership was not one of the key factors in the 2007 election result. When Rudd took the leadership, Labor’s electoral fortunes were already on the rise and according to *Newspoll*, the FPLP were leading 51-49 on the two-party preferred (Newspoll, 2006b and Hartcher, 2009: 265). In the next poll, the position improved to 55-45 on the two-party preferred (Newspoll, 2006b; Megalogenis, 2008: 330).

[^132]: The 2007 campaign includes articles from the final two weeks in *The Age, The Australian and SMH*. 
When Hartcher (2009: 148) examined the Liberal Party’s research on the election outcome, he found little evidence to suggest Rudd was a critical factor. In his view, “the three principal reasons for the Howard Government’s defeats were the Prime Minister’s long incumbency, the Government’s position on climate change, and Work Choices”. The ACTU substantiated this as their figures were relatively similar. They noted that “Work Choices was driving 8 per cent of Coalition voters to the Labor camp, while only 1 per cent were going the other way, from Labor to the coalition. Newspoll showed that half of all Labor voters and critically, one in ten Coalition voters, thought they were worse off under Work Choices” (Megalogenis, 2008: 340).

Moreover, Watson and Browne (2008: 5), who conducted an exit poll to find out which issue mattered most to voters, discovered:

*Overall, the issue with the greatest impact among Labor voters was industrial relations. Those who regarded this as very important (compared with not important) were 11 times more likely to vote ALP rather than LNP. The next most important issue was global warming, with an odds ratio of nearly 5. Refugees and prices also featured, with odds ratios of about 3 for each. Finally, the Iraq war was also a factor, with those who considered it very important more than twice as likely to vote ALP than LNP...On the other hand, those issues which had the least impact among Labor voters were leadership, tax, jobs and immigration. Those voters who felt leadership to be very important (compared with not important) were only about one quarter as likely to vote ALP, compared with LNP.*

Furthermore, when Newspoll did their post-election poll they found that 52 per cent of respondents voted the way they did based on their disliking of the other parties, compared to 38 per cent liking of the party they voted for, with 10 per cent uncommitted (Newspoll, 2007a). In addition, when asked to rank issues as very important, fairly important or not important, respondents ranked leadership behind health, education, water, the economy and the environment (Newspoll, 2007a).

During the 2007 election it is clear that Rudd was more personally popular than the alternative. However, contrary to some of the media analyses that were done, the evidence suggests that Rudd’s leadership was not central to the victory. Industrial relations, climate change and an ageing government were more important drivers of electoral choice. Rudd’s leadership provided enough stability so that concerns previously held about the FPLP were negated enough for voters to shift without fearing any radical departure from the status quo. However, it appears that this did not translate
directly into a personal impact on the voting behaviour of the electorate. This adds further weight to McAllister’s (2007: 3) argument that, during elections, leaders clearly matter but usually much less than is often supposed.

**Electoral Face Summary**

The electoral face of Kevin Rudd’s leadership has highlighted a few key things. First, that in 2007, the FPLP ran their most personalised campaign out of those that have been examined in this thesis. Second, that the focus of the media during the campaign was leader-centric but this was not at unusually historical levels. In fact, if one examines the level of coverage (in terms of mentions) that the leaders received in the broadsheet newspapers for the elections that Whitlam, Hawke and Rudd won from opposition, there is relative consistency in this coverage. However, it is when the type of articles is examined that a clear difference emerges. The 2007 election far exceeds any prior election for the amount of articles that were focussed on the leader’s personality, the polls or his family (See Table 7.2). When it comes to leader impact on voting behaviour, the impact that Rudd personally had was clearly much less than others have previously thought. Rudd was able to neutralise the scare campaigns and negative publicity often associated with Labor leaders. In essence, it appears that any personal support for Rudd was ‘soft’ support as it was based more on a dislike for the alternative than any new policies the FPLP were offering. As a result, the electoral face of presidentialization has once again produced mixed results.

**Conclusions on the Rudd Leadership Period**

The Rudd Leadership period, as brief as it was, has already produced countless interpretations of what happened. Many analyses of this period view the demise of Rudd as unrelated to the manner of his rise. This fundamentally misdiagnoses the basis of Rudd’s leadership. Rudd was only able to take the leadership with the support of his Deputy Leader, Julia Gillard. It was his electoral popularity that was critical in the decision to elect him as leader. However, Rudd’s dealings with his colleagues in the government and within the party did not resemble those of a leader whose legitimacy within the party rested on fragile foundations. This is central in understanding the period. When Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) framework is applied to this period, the
executive face highlights the level of centralised policy making that was occurring. The PMO also continued to expand in this period, further highlighting how far away from cabinet government the system had come. In the party face, control over the conference and pre-selections was also increasingly centralised. Often, the exertion of this control was exercised in conjunction with the factions, highlighting their continued organisational strength. Rudd’s attempt to employ a deeply personalised style of leadership, focussed on appealing to the electorate at large rather than the party for his support. In the electoral face, the ‘Kevin07’ campaign demonstrated how personalised election campaigns can become, especially in opposition. The media naturally focussed on Rudd as a consequence of this. Yet the evidence suggests that Rudd had little direct impact on voters shifting towards the FLP. Hence, while the party and the media may have focussed on the leader more than in previous campaigns, the evidence suggests that what made voters switch between the major parties were still key issues and the most critical of these were industrial relations and climate change.
Chapter Seven – Conclusion

Has Australian Federal Politics Become Presidentialized?

Presidentialization has been an under-researched area in the Australian context. While in Europe, Latin America and in parts of Asia the thesis is continually updated, Australian academics for the most part have viewed the thesis with suspicion (For Europe see Poguntke, 2009; For Latin America see Cason and Power, 2009; For Asia see Krauss and Nyblade, 2005). This thesis argues that the Poguntke and Webb (2005) volume is an invaluable contribution to the study of political leadership. However, their conception is not without flaws and this thesis highlights some of these. This was achieved by producing one of the more systematic investigations into presidentialization internationally and the most systematic study of the phenomenon in Australia. But what this thesis did differently too many other examinations of presidentialization was reduce the number of variables within the study by focussing solely on leaders from one party. The purpose of this was to plunge deeper into the inter-play between actors and institutions. This immersion has, hopefully at least, generated a more systematic understanding of how leaders exert power within institutions such as political parties.

The primary purpose of the Poguntke and Webb (2005) presidentialization framework was to identify signs of structural presidentialization and to differentiate this from the variables which may conditionally empower leaders. Australia has an institutional architecture that provides an opportunity for political leaders to be extremely powerful. Preferential voting in the lower house, publicly funded elections and the prime minister having their own department are just some of the advantages that leaders of Australia’s federal political parties possess.133 These advantages have also been held for some time. It is for this reason, that Australia shows very few signs of increasing presidentialization in some facets of Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) framework. This will be discussed more in the section that follows which compares and contrasts the four leadership periods examined.

133 Australia’s system of funding elections is explained in Holmes (2012). Put simply, candidates and political parties are eligible to receive public funding if they receive at least four percent of first preference votes. While contentious, Holmes (2012: 5) notes that one of the negatives of such a system is that it reinforces the status quo.
The Periods Compared and Contrasted

At the heart of the Poguntke and Webb thesis is the idea that a variety of causal factors have coalesced producing the presidentialization of modern politics. Each of the four periods examined in this dissertation were unique in a number of respects. The Chifley leadership period (1945-51) is the most different from the other three periods. Central to this was the technological difference in terms of communication mediums and electioneering. Radio was the dominant medium of the period and far less focus was given to individuals and their families than in later campaigns. In terms of the relationship with the party, Chifley as leader was still required to not only engage with the extra-parliamentary institutions of the party, but to adhere to their decisions. This highlights the different location of the locus of power during this period compared to the later cases examined, where the FPLP leader has at times ignored the decisions of the extra-parliamentary institutions. In the executive arm of government, it was during this period that the entrenchment of executive power started to emerge with the creation of the new post-war departmental setup, including the shift of much of Chifley’s “official family” from the Department of Post-War Reconstruction to the Prime Minister’s Department (Walter, 1992: 28-30). In the three key areas Poguntke and Webb (2005) focus on, the executive, the party and during elections, the evidence from the Chifley leadership period supports much of Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) hypothesis about when many of the causal factors which led to the presidentialization of politics emerged. As a result, the evidence from the Chifley leadership period shows very few signs of presidentialization. While it is an inexact science to speculate on the validity of their 1960 hypothesis, the evidence from this dissertation indicates that very few (if any) of these factors had emerged during (or before) the Chifley leadership period.

By the Whitlam leadership period (1967-77) much had changed. Not only had television become the dominant medium, but the traditional social and economic cleavages which tied the Labor base together were starting to unravel. The age of prosperity, which was all many had known, came to a shuddering halt in 1974 with the oil shocks and stagflation crippling the reformist agenda of the Whitlam Government. In the executive, the Whitlam period coincided with a large increase in the number of ministerial staffers and the use of the committee system became more entrenched as the complexity of
government increased exponentially (Holland, 2002). In the party face clear changes to the relationship between party and leader emerged as well. While many of these changes are linked to the causal factors that Poguntke and Webb (2005) have identified, agency also played some role. In fact, it is hard to imagine that the changes to the structure of the party would have occurred at that time had it not been for Whitlam. In terms of elections, the change in the media and the parties was stark when compared with the Chifley period. While not uniform across all elections, the rise of more personalised, less policy driven election campaigns were on show and the 1972 ‘It’s Time’ election was where this effect was at its most apparent. However, the effect on individual voting intentions was unclear despite signs of a growing emphasis on personalised campaigning. Most importantly though, it is this period in which the first signs of increasingly presidentialized politics emerges in the Australian case.

The Hawke leadership period (1983-91) consisting almost entirely of the time in government, highlights above all else, the ability of an electorally popular Australian prime minister to dominate the executive and their party. Compared to the British prime minister for example, they are in much more powerful position, with centralised advice through the PMO and PM&C and with a variety of resources that would be the envy of their British equivalent. During this period, the relationship between the leader and party changed once again. While it could be argued that Whitlam shifted the pendulum from extra-parliamentary dominance to a more balanced model, Hawke destroyed any notion of extra-parliamentary control over the parliamentarians and even more so over a successful prime minister. The platform was ignored, conference resolutions rejected and the factions, not the party, became the engine that drove decision making. The factions (in particular the ‘Right’ and the ‘Centre-Left’) which started to lose their ideological distinctions, became the central cog in delivering Hawke his reform agenda. This is despite many of these changes not only contradicting the party’s guiding principles and platform, but also despite large sections of the rank and file opposing the policy agenda. The elections during this period highlighted the increasingly personalised nature of Australian election campaigns. As ideological differentiation between the major parties diminished, elections became symptomatic of brand style politics that many had become accustomed to in presidential elections. The level of newspaper coverage that Hawke received remained relatively consistent with the Whitlam period which dispels some of the myths about the Hawke period. While once
again difficult to measure, based on preferred PM polling data during this period, the evidence suggests that Hawke had some impact on voting behaviour even if this figure was small.

The Rudd leadership period (2006-2010), while short-lived, is a proto-type case of the phenomenon Poguntke and Webb (2005) described. In the executive face, Rudd’s attempts to totally dominate the bureaucracy and the cabinet, became a touchstone for deeper problems, but were solely about his approach to governing, rather than any structural changes to the system. However, the number of advisers in the Prime Minister’s Office did increase (Department of Finance, 2008a; 2008b; 2009a; 2009b; 2010a). The relationship and interaction between the leader and the party, which by its very nature is elastic, ostensibly snapped during this period. Rudd showed very little regard for the extra parliamentary elements of the party and this was demonstrated by the authoritarian manner in which the conference was run as well as the involvement of the leadership in pre-selection battles. Put simply, the presidentialization metamorphosis was complete. The one election Rudd contested was atypical of presidentialized elections with deeply personalised slogans and social media being the order of the day. Rudd’s elevation to the leadership was based solely on his electoral appeal and as soon as his electoral utility began to fade, he was unceremoniously dumped. The atypical nature of Rudd’s reign was further played out in that he could not even compete sufficiently enough in a leadership ballot to not be humiliated.

While this section has described some of the differences and key themes of each of the periods highlighting their contextual differences, the section that follows will more explicitly identify trends across the cases. It will then conclude by comparing the findings from the Australian case to the comparative data Poguntke and Webb (2005) compiled. What will be shown is that the Australian case does not fit neatly into any of the common case types as articulated by Lijphart (1971: 691). In fact, the Australian case seems to have elements of both the “theory confirming” and “deviant case” types (Lijphart, 1971: 691). According to Lijphart, (1971: 692) “the theory-confirming type, strengthens the proposition in question”, while the deviant case can “uncover relevant additional variables that were not considered previously”. The importance of the Australian case is that it supports many of the conclusions of Poguntke and Webb
Identification of Trends

When one examines the leadership periods through the lens of the presidentialization thesis conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005), some clear trends emerge. Some of these add weight to the thesis; others raise questions about the current conceptual parameters. Poguntke and Webb have addressed many of these, but the evidence from the Australian case draws attention again to some of these (See Webb et al, 2011: 2 as an example of Poguntke and Webb responding to conceptual issues). Having applied the model systematically to the four cases, this part will identify the trends using the ‘three-faces’ framework as an organising principle.

The Executive Face

As has been mentioned throughout this thesis, the Australian prime minister has a long history of possessing institutional advantages that far surpass those of comparable leaders. These advantages have continued to increase. In fact, relatively consistent with the case studies examined in the Poguntke and Webb (2005) volume, the resources the Australian prime minister enjoys have steadily increased over time (See Table 7.1). Most notably this has been evident in the growth of the PMO and the PM&C since the Whitlam period. Of course, whether increasing pluralisation of advice equates to increasing power is an altogether different question, and one which core-executive theorists and court politics advocates, would have a very different view of compared to Poguntke and Webb (See Rhodes, Wanna and Weller: 2009; Rhodes: 2013). Additionally, there is evidence of policy making becoming increasingly centralised. Data supporting this could be found in all three of the later cases examined. Both centralisation and the pluralisation of advice, it could be argued, are an effect generated by the existence of a myriad of global forces. Poguntke and Webb (2005: 13-6) touched on some of these when they outlined what causal factors were contributing to the presidentialization of modern politics. This included the “internationalization of politics” and “the changing structure of mass communication” (Poguntke and Webb,
Despite the large resource pool Australian prime ministers already had to call on, it is plausible that these global forces drove increases in the Australian executive further. Naturally, some of this accumulation would have been due to the actors involved, and their influence has been traced in various works in the literature (See Tiernan, 2007). But ultimately, prime ministers have responded to an environment where the requirements on their time have been ever expanding. Thus, while the Australian case may not exhibit as clear a trend as some other polities in the executive face, the evidence suggests that it has still been effected by the same elements which have altered liberal democratic governance globally.

The Party Face

In the party face, the domination of the elites over not only their parliamentary colleagues but the extra-parliamentary institutions increased from the Whitlam period to the Rudd period (See Table 7.1). Each period further alienated the rank and file and entrenched the autonomy and resources that the leadership had within the party. In a party with such prescriptive institutions as the FPLP, this development has come sometimes through the drive of individuals and at other times through a variety of causal factors which have structurally altered the political process. For instance, the decline of cleavage based politics has meant the death of pure ideological separation between the factions. Hence, the leadership has been able, as occurred in the Hawke leadership period, use the factions to have their policy agenda implemented as they became nothing more than organisational tools and policy delivery instruments. The evidence of presidentialization, as conceptualised by Poguntke and Webb (2005), clearly points to the importance of the Whitlam period. It is here where the interplay of structure and agency is at its most complex; there were structural pressures on the party to change course during this period, however agency also played some role as well. Most importantly, the ability of the leadership to exert influence and power within the institutions of the party increased dramatically during this period. The rise of the parliamentarians only increased from this point onwards. While the leadership style of Whitlam, Hawke and Rudd were all vastly different, as was the way they attempted to exert influence, each of these leaders was able to extend the influence of the leadership. Whitlam was able to provide the parliamentarians with much greater control over the

134 This is in terms of having policies adopted by the caucus, cabinet and conference, rather than actual policy implementation.
intra-party institutions due to structural changes to the party. Hawke, aware of this control, ignored the conference and rejected the platform, his control exerted due to a combination of behavioural and structural factors. While Rudd simply abandoned any form of internal democracy. Using, similar to Hawke, a combination of structural and behavioural components to exert power over the party. Of course, a myriad of other actors are involved in such huge changes, however, in each period a combination of structure and agency accentuated the capacity of the leadership to exercise intra-party power.

The Electoral Face

In the electoral face, from Whitlam to Rudd there is evidence of campaigns and the focus of the media becoming clearly more personalised. While some sporadic evidence existed in the Whitlam period of personalisation and even more during the Hawke period without being overwhelming, the Rudd 2007 election was the most personalised of all. However, the path of the media focus section has a less linear trajectory. In fact, a few interesting observations emerge from this component of the thesis. The first concerns the actual coverage of leaders, while the other is concerned with the type of coverage. In terms of the actual coverage of the leaders across the periods, the samples from the final two weeks of each election campaign in the broadsheet newspapers shows a slight increase overall in terms of the number of articles that mentioned the leader. This can be seen all the way from the Chifley period to the Rudd period (See Graph 7.1). However, more interesting is when the elections from opposition are examined from the Whitlam period onwards. 1969, 1972, 1983 and 2007 all have higher than average coverage of the leader (in terms of percentage of mentions) in these campaigns. This certainly adds empirical data to the claim that leaders are more central to campaigns from the opposition benches. When the types of articles are examined, two spikes in the data can be identified. The first occurs sometime before the Whitlam period started and after the Chifley period ended. While the second clearly happens between the end of the Hawke period and the 2007 election campaign (See Graph 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3). The first spike could plausibly be explained as a reaction to the type of campaigns the party was running and the emergence of polling. While the second spike could conceivably be related to the increasing centrality of polling, the demise of ideology based politics and increasing personalisation. These waves of personalisation
provide clear empirical data to support the hypothesis that Australian election campaign coverage by the print media has fundamentally changed.

Ultimately, when the four periods are viewed chronologically using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model, the least convincing aspect is that which Poguntke and Webb have already accepted, namely the leader effect on voting behaviour (Webb et al, 2011: 2). This acceptance comes with a caveat though. It is the lack of clear empirical data to support or negate this hypothesis that Poguntke and Webb emphasise as problematic for this part of the thesis. However, they contend that more and more evidence internationally is supporting their hypothesis. Further to this, they argue that the direct impact of leaders may be “further back in the funnel of causality” than can be measured (Webb et al, 2011: 27). Nevertheless, this still provides us with an interesting insight into the problems of modern democratic leadership. That is: if the media and political parties are personalising their electioneering more and more, why is there little or no impact on voters? This conundrum highlights an obvious disconnect between the political class, namely the media and the politicians and the electorate at large. This thesis would put forward the hypothesis that either something is broken in the democratic relationship between Australian voters on the one hand and the political class on the other, or alternatively, that the data on voting intentions does not produce a true picture of what drives individuals to vote the way they do.

**Conclusions on the Australian Case**

When the evidence is examined from this thesis, it is apparent that much of it supports many of the claims of Poguntke and Webb (2005) and is largely consistent with the other cases examined in *The Presidentialization of Politics: A Comparative Study of Modern Democracies*. However, the Australian case also highlights some of the conceptual weaknesses of the model and of the presidentialization thesis more broadly. When the cases in the Poguntke and Webb (2005: 338-9) volume are examined, it appears that the Australian case most closely resembles the Canadian case. Although a level of caution is required here. First, as this thesis only examined leadership periods from the one party, generalisations about the whole system need to be made with a qualification. Second, in the Poguntke and Webb (2005) volume, the contributors were
advised to examine changes only after 1960 and their analysis is less systematic than the level of depth this thesis has gone to.

What the evidence from the Australian case highlights most strikingly, is that in a comparative sense, the pathology of Australian politics provides a larger than normal capacity for leaders to exert power or authority over the institutions that comprise the body politic. This structural provision for ‘strong leadership’ manifests itself in a myriad of ways in the Australian political system. For instance, when the perception of strong leadership is not provided, the media, and sometimes the electorate, call for its elevation. This cycle is further perpetuated by the political class as election campaigns are increasingly personalised and leaders attempt to appeal to an independent, rather than a collective mandate (i.e. provided to the party). There appears to be a central paradox at the core of Australian politics: the electorate want leadership as well as democratic institutions. The materialisation of this dilemma plays out repeatedly in Australian federal politics. Of course, these things are not incompatible and Lijphart (1999) has implicitly shown how consensus, rather than majoritarian democracies appear to achieve this balance better. Nevertheless, what this thesis shows is that using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model that each new period of government for the FPLP, shows more evidence of the presidentialization phenomenon. This is not to say that the presidentialization phenomenon is linear in trajectory and will continue in this direction. However, for the case studies examined, with some minor exceptions, this appears to be the case (See Table 7.1). Australia naturally has its idiosyncrasies and by focussing on the FPLP, the evidence will be different than if you focussed on the Liberal Party of Australia. However, by using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) model and by adding in a behavioural focus, the evidence highlights the presidentialized nature of Australian federal politics for at least one of the two major political parties.

**Structure and Agency**

Central to the presidentialization thesis is understanding the difference between conditional dominance and structural presidentialization. Often critics will cite one leader or another as an example that presidentialization is not a new phenomenon and is

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135 In *Patterns of Democracy: Government forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, Lijphart (1999: 275-300) argues that consensus democracies provide better representation and democratic quality. He also argues (1999: 259) that while majoritarian democracies may be able to make decisions faster, there are a huge number of examples where this type of decision making has had catastrophic consequences. In the Australian case, some of the decisions of the Whitlam, Hawke and Rudd Governments could fit this observation.
merely symptomatic of differing leadership styles. However, these critiques add very little to the debate. As Lijphart (1971: 686) has pointed out, “it is nevertheless a mistake to reject a hypothesis because one can think pretty quickly of a contrary case”. This remains a truism of political science. Moreover, this is not what Poguntke and Webb (2005) set out to capture in their framework. Poguntke and Webb (2005: 6) were explicitly looking for causal factors that shifted systems along the axis of “partified government” towards their ideal form of presidentialized government. This is an important point to re-emphasise as critics such as Dowding (2012), assume the thesis is about the US model of presidential system. Therefore, while an individual could be extremely dominant, and Rudd is a good example of this in the executive, the level of dominance is not an indicator of presidentialization and often more to do with conditional factors.

Although, while Poguntke and Webb’s (2005) binary demarcation between conditional and structural factors means that the model is conceptually clear, it does at times also mean that the sources of leader power are fundamentally misdiagnosed. This produces a normatively structuralist account of how the inter-play between elites and institutions actually occurs. But as has been shown throughout this thesis, the source of leader power can often be behavioural rather than institutional. One obvious example of this is the capacity of leaders of the FPLP to exert increasingly larger amounts of authority over pre-height selective. This fits neither well as a structural enhancement or conditionality. No rules have been amended and only temporary authority was provided. What has really changed is the accepted behaviour for agents within the system, namely the leader. Using the Poguntke and Webb (2005) framework, this would be classified as a conditional factor. However, if leaders continue to replicate this behaviour without any formal rule change, what really develops is the establishment of a norm. This has perhaps been no more apparent than when one examines the manner in which Rudd and his successor Gillard have involved themselves in pre-height selections. For example in January 2013 in the lead up to the Australian federal election, Gillard chose to use what she described as a “Captain’s pick” to select Nova Perris for pre-height selection for the top...
spot on the Northern Territory Senate ticket for the FPLP. This is despite current Senator, Trish Crossin, wanting to contest top spot on the Senate ticket again (Cullen, 2013). This totally ignores the processes of the party and in one of Crossin’s media appearances after the decision was announced, she noted that:

_Last night, I was told by the Prime Minister that it was her intention to seek the endorsement of the national executive to firstly approve the membership of Nova Peris and to let her into the party, and then secondly to have her endorsed as the Northern Territory ALP Senate candidate (cited in Cullen, 2013)._\

This serves to highlight a few things. First, it highlights the conceptual weakness in simply differentiating between structural and conditional factors in this way. Greater conceptual clarity needs to be inserted into the presidentialization debate as some of the logic underpinning it is at present ambiguous. Second, it demonstrates the authority that the leader is wielding in relation to the national executive which is particularly difficult to obtain information on. Third, it also provides a stark contrast to how far things have changed since the beginning of the Whitlam leadership period in 1967. This and other findings throughout this thesis, highlight how the pathology of Australian politics manifests itself in strong leadership.

Another variable that is under-played in the Poguntke and Webb (2005) presidentialization concept is the role of agency in driving some of these changes. Undoubtedly, Marx was correct when he argued that “Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please...but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past” (cited in Callinicos, 1983: 81). However, in three of the periods examined and one specifically, agency played some role in key changes. During the Whitlam period, as the old social cleavages were breaking down, the calls for the party to be the ‘delegates of the working class’ were being swamped by calls for accountability and for the parliamentarians, not the ‘faceless men’ to control party policy. Whitlam obviously did not act alone through this process, but he was central to the campaign to alter the make-up of the conference and the executive despite fierce opposition from within the party. Would the changes have been made without Whitlam? Most likely they would have considering the criticism the FPLP had received over the ‘faceless men’ for decades. However, it may not have happened when it did. Though, the primary changes to the party during the Whitlam period happened before he became prime minister, so electoral success alone was not a strong enough justification for the changes. In the later periods this was more important. During the Hawke leadership
period, conference resolutions were ignored, the platform re-written and the ‘Left’ faction marginalised. These changes to the leader-party relationship through a greater national rather than federal focus proceeded directly on the back of electoral success. The Rudd period shares many similarities with the Hawke leadership period, yet some differences as well. The most obvious similarity being that the relationship was altered on the back of Rudd’s electoral success. However, by this stage, unlike Hawke, Rudd was not required to build a power base within the party, cultivated over years and years before he attempted to change the fabric. Rudd’s elevation was solely about his electoral popularity and the way he so easily changed components of the leader-party relationship leaves many questions unanswered. For instance, would the changes to the party that happened during the Hawke and Rudd periods have occurred without the presence of these leaders? It would appear they may not have. Questions of this nature remain prescient to debates about why institutions change and how and this highlights once again, a central issue in the current conceptual parameters of the model.

The Presidentialization Thesis

The presidentialization thesis continues to divide the academic community. The thesis has been criticised for being too broad, for failing to adequately understand the complexities of the core executive, for over-stating the changes, for being the same as the personalisation thesis and for being superficial (See Karvonen, 2010; Dowding 2012, 2013a, 2013b; Rhodes, Wanna and Weller, 2009 as examples). These criticisms will undoubtedly continue but many of them obscure what the thesis is truly about; most notably, whether leaders have more power resources than previously and what they can actually achieve with this increase. Based on this dissertation, and on the Poguntke and Webb (2005) volume, the best use of the model is in long-run, in-depth analyses. This can then be compared to the comparative literature which already exists. By holding one of the variables constant, this will allow for detailed analysis within the party face, which considering the central focus on the relationship between the leader and party in the model, should receive much more attention in the literature than it so far has. Furthermore, this will allow for the less obvious, exogenous changes in power dynamics to be explored more than the Poguntke and Webb (2005) framework currently allows. In addition, as Poguntke and Webb (2005: 7) explained, the three faces of presidentialization “revolve around the tension between political parties and individual
leaders”. Increasing the weighting given to this central relationship, should also mean that the presidentialization thesis can tie into broader debates about changes to the nature of political parties as well as to political leadership (For example the work of Michels, 1962; Schumpeter, 1961 and Weber, 1978).

The presidentialization thesis, despite its many critics, will remain central to leadership debates in the literature for the foreseeable future. This is for a few central reasons. Most notable would be that even critics of the thesis concede that much of the empirical data is accurate (See Dowding, 2012: 15-16; Rhodes, Wanna and Weller, 2009: 86-97). Although, whether any changes should be viewed under the one umbrella, using a label such as presidentialization is still hotly debated. Often these debates about the changing modes of political leadership in liberal democracies have become bogged down in semantics and in what Bennister (2012: 24) has called the “definitional minefield”. Therefore, advocates of the presidentialization thesis, if they still want to use this label, need to further clarify and stretch the model of Poguntke and Webb (2005). Otherwise the debates will remain about adjectives rather than actual changes to the body politic.

**Future Research Opportunities**

The findings from this thesis should hopefully be able to guide the direction of some of the future research by helping scholars re-shape the theoretical basis of the debate. This thesis has examined presidentialization over an extended period of time, within the one polity and focussed on one party. This has allowed the thesis to move beyond superficial assertions about the changing nature of institutions or leadership to a more nuanced understanding of the causal factors driving changes within the executive, within parties and during elections. This opens up a clear field of future research. The expansion and stretching of the framework to better reflect the sources of leader power and the manner in which they exercise that power is certainly one component that requires more work. Moreover, if the Australian case does partially represent a deviant

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137 To be precise, Dowding (2012: 15) argued (with specific reference to the British prime minister) that: “British prime ministers have become more powerful in the past 40 years—a claim that has much truth but is also exaggerated by some”. While Rhodes, Wanna and Weller (2009: 97) argued that: “clearly some of the claims about the changing pattern of political leadership are accurate”.

case, the new propositions inserted into the framework require further comparative testing as well (Lijphart, 1971: 692).

A further research opportunity would be to investigate leadership periods of the Liberal Party. This would help to allay some of the concerns of critics who argue proponents of the presidentialization thesis fail to acknowledge counter-trends as well as to examine if changes are predominately the domain of a party such as the ALP as Michels (1962) argued (Rhodes, Wanna and Weller, 2009: 97). Furthermore, an examination of how minority government impacts the presidentialization thesis would be a useful addition to the literature. If the phenomenon was still identifiable within a power-sharing arrangement, this would certainly highlight the structural component of the thesis further.
Tables and Graphs

Table 7.1 – Signs of Presidentialization Identified During the Four Leadership Periods Examined in This Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Executive Face</th>
<th>Party Face</th>
<th>Electoral Face</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicators of presidentialization</td>
<td>Shift in intra-executive power to benefit of leader</td>
<td>Increasing autonomy of executive leader vis-à-vis party</td>
<td>Shift in intra-party power to benefit of leader</td>
<td>Increasing autonomy of party leader from intra-party power holders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chifley (1946-1951)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitlam (1967-1977)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawke (1983-1991)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudd (2006-2010)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In this table + represents a change towards presidentialization; - change away from presidentialization; and 0 represents none or very little change at all. See Table 5.1 for a comparison of the leadership periods.

**The 1972 campaign in particular showcased how increasingly personalised campaigns were becoming. However, it was also clear during this period, that as soon as Whitlam became less personally popular, especially in the final two elections that he contested, that the ALP avoided focussing on him. If these circumstances were transferred to later periods, it is debatable whether Whitlam would have remained the leader for the 1977 election as personal electoral popularity became an increasingly central criterion for the selection of leaders.

***Due to the difficulty in measuring the impact of leaders on voters, the evidence of this has been taken primarily from polling throughout the campaigns. However, Bean and Kelly (1988) have provided some empirical date from the 1987 election.

****As is mentioned elsewhere, the direct impact that leaders have on voters has been hard to establish and Webb et al (2011: 8) have noted this. However, they also argue that while it seems obvious that leaders have at least an indirect impact on voting behaviour, “a leader’s impact can also lie further back in the funnel of causality” (2011: 27).

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138 This table is similar to that used by Poguntke and Webb (2005: 338-339) which examined the evidence across the 14 case studies analysed in The Presidentialization of Politics: A Comparative Study of Modern Democracies.
Table 7.2 – Print Media Focus During the Election Campaigns

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles Surveyed that mentioned the ALP</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles that Mentioned the leader</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles Focussed on Policy</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles Focussed on Personality or Polls</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chifley</th>
<th>Whitlam</th>
<th>Hawke</th>
<th>Rudd</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles Surveyed that mentioned the ALP</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>165</td>
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<td>Articles that Mentioned the leader</td>
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<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles Focussed on Personality or Polls</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graph 7.1 – Percentage of Articles That Mentioned the Leader

Graph 7.2 – Percentage of Articles Based on Policy
This table has replicated a table from Holland (2002) but has added in the figures from the Rudd period. While these numbers changed throughout the course of the leadership periods the highest number of that period was taken. "Hawke's office ranged from 16 shortly after the election that brought Labor to power, up to 24 by 1990" (Holland, 2002). While the Rudd period jumped up to 41 as of February 2008 and peaked at 50 in May 2010 (Government Personal Positions as at 1 February 2008-1 May 2010 - Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration). No figures were readily available for the number of staffers that Chifley used and moreover, as was mentioned during the Chifley chapter, he used a variety of staff from across the public service.
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Appendix

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