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## **Electoral professionalism and the 2004 Australian federal election campaign**

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*Edith Cowan University*

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***ELECTORAL PROFESSIONALISM AND THE 2004 AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL  
ELECTION CAMPAIGN***

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***Bachelor of Arts (Politics and Government/History)***

***This thesis is presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of V75  
Bachelor of Arts (Honours)***

***Faculty of Community Services, Education and Social Sciences***

***Edith Cowan University***

***31 October 2006***

# Edith Cowan University

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### ***ABSTRACT:***

Electoral professionalism, a term first coined by Panebianco (1988), explains the changing organisational structure of modern political parties and changes to the way parties engage with the electorate. This thesis demonstrates the extent to which electoral professionalism was prevalent during the 2004 Australian federal election campaign. Australian democracy has undergone a process of professionalisation in recent decades. The Liberal Party and the Labor Party's ability to adapt to these changes has enabled Australia's two major parties to remain relevant and come to dominate Australia's political system. Campaign professionals skilled in areas such as polling, marketing, media management, computer technologies, direct mail technics, and public relations now dominate Australia's major parties. This thesis highlights the actions of these campaign professionals during the 2004 election campaign in order to demonstrate how electoral professionalism has evolved since Panebianco's first writings. Electoral professionalism sees parties create efficient and effective ways of communicating with the electorate. As a result, the 2004 election was characterised by the intensification of existing campaign techniques and the implementation of some new campaign techniques. The implementation of new political technology, the continued attempt to seek partisan advantage and the increased need to secure funds to pay for rising campaign expenditure were all on display in the lead-up to and during the 2004 federal election.

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

Panebianco (1988) first identified the changing organisational structure of political parties as they underwent a process of professionalisation. Ward (1991) was the first Australian political scientist to systematically apply the electoral professional model of party to Australia's major parties. The adoption of electoral professionalism by the major parties has enabled them to remain relevant in the wake of massive social change. Electoral professionalism has caused political parties to become increasingly dependent upon campaign professionals. The skills and expertise that campaign professionals provide political parties with enables them to successfully compete in a changing political environment. The most significant change caused by the adoption of the electoral professional model has been to the organisational structure of political parties. Australia's two major parties now have a more influential role for campaign professionals than they once did. The transformation from mass party, a party built around paid memberships, to an electoral professional party, has altered the way in which the major parties engage the electorate. Campaign professionals have therefore come to dominate political parties as they have become the new link between the party and the electorate.

The 2004 federal election campaign included many aspects of electoral professionalism. It saw the intensification of existing campaign techniques and the introduction of new campaign techniques, such as telephone messaging and email. The major parties intensified their efforts to extend control over the political messages that they conveyed to the public. The use of negative advertising by the major parties intensified as they attempted to attack the way in which their political opponents had been packaged. The 2004 election was also characterised by the way in which the incumbent government sought to extend its partisan advantage. This saw the tools of government harnessed to aid party campaign strategy. The 2004 election was conducted over a longer than usual six-week period and was preceded by a lengthy 'phoney' campaign.<sup>1</sup> The 'phoney' campaign is a period in which the major parties begin campaigning well before the announcement of an election date (Young 2004, 7). Mann and Ornstein (2000) have termed this 'permanent campaigning'. The extended length of campaigning led the major parties to seek out increased funding to pay for rising

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<sup>1</sup> With the exception of 1984, all recent election campaigns have been conducted over a 28 day period (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, August 30, 2004).

campaigning costs. In many instances this entrenches the major parties electoral dominance, contributing to what has been termed a 'cartelisation' of politics (Mair and Katz 1995). The extent to which cartelisation has taken hold in Australia remains highly contested (Marsh 2006).

#### **SIGNIFICANCE:**

This study builds on previous academic work in the area of political communication, contributing an assessment of electoral professionalism at the 2004 federal election. Electoral professionalism, a term coined nearly two decades ago, can be applied to many new developments in 21<sup>st</sup> century campaigning. It is important to highlight the extent to which Australia's two major parties act as electoral professionals because of the impact such practice has on representation and the delivery of governance. The adoption of the electoral professional model is a world wide trend from which the Australian political system is not immune. Mills (1986) was the first academic to discuss the influence of American campaign techniques on the professionalisation of Australian political practice. Ward (1991) demonstrated how the professionalisation of politics has led to a change in the organisational structure of Australia's two major parties. Several Australian academics including (van Onselen and Errington 2004 and 2005, Ward 2003 and Young 2002 and 2004) have published works on specific aspects of electoral professionalism including political databases, the public relations state and political advertising. This thesis examines the extent to which these political practices were prevalent during the 2004 election. This thesis describes and analyses these techniques at work in the last election, an area of study missing from the academic literature, in order to demonstrate the most recent impact of electoral professionalism on Australian federal election campaigns.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

A wide range of resources were consulted for information regarding electoral professionalism and its prevalence during the 2004 federal election. Sources included academic books, journal articles, political speeches, newspaper articles and opinion pieces, parliamentary reports including committee findings and election data. To establish the prevalence of electoral professionalism during the 2004 federal election a newspaper review of three major Australian newspapers was conducted. The newspapers included *The Australian*, *The Australian Financial Review* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* (See Appendix B). These were used to demonstrate specific events

within the campaign that highlighted electoral professionalism and have been referred to throughout this dissertation. Reports by the Australian Electoral Commission provided useful data on the 2004 federal election campaign. By triangulating the research the author has been able to establish the professional techniques used by the major parties, how significant they were to each campaign and most significantly how electoral professionalism has developed from previous campaigns. In this way this dissertation makes a substantial contribution to the literature on electoral professionalism. The author has also obtained important party materials relevant to campaigning. These materials, contained in the Appendices, have been useful in evaluating the extent to which parties are embracing new techniques and technologies for campaigning purposes.

#### ***FINDINGS:***

Electoral professionalism has become an integral part of Australian political practice. Growing partisan dealignment and changes to political technology have made political decision making increasingly complex. Political parties have become increasingly dependent upon campaign professionals to develop and operate political technology, particularly given declining party memberships. This has afforded campaign professionals an influential role within political parties as they have become the link between the party and the electorate. As a result campaign professionals have come to dominate political parties. The most significant aspect of electoral professionalism has been the shift from mass party to electoral professional party. This has altered the way in which political parties engage the electorate and has resulted in a reduction in ideological outlook and a decline in grassroots membership.

The 2004 federal election result meant that the Howard government was returned to office for a fourth term. The election was largely fought through the media and demonstrated the extent to which political information is now packaged in a format that is suitable for media consumption. This led the major parties to intensify their efforts to limit scrutiny of key policy announcements and to package complex political messages in ways that could be easily understood by voters. The 2004 election saw electronic telephone messaging and email used as new ways in which packaged political messages were delivered to voters.

Electoral professionalism has seen incumbent governments harness the tools of government for partisan purposes. The use of the public relations (PR) state intensified during the 2004 election with the government increasingly merging government communication with party campaign strategy. The 2004 election also saw the PR state harnessed to challenge the caretaker government convention. This resulted in the implementation of government advertising campaigns during the campaign period. The concept of the PR state will be explored in Chapter Three.

The permanent campaign has emerged as a feature of Australian election campaigns. During the 2004 election the formal campaign was preceded by a period in which both the government and opposition's political practice was dictated strongly by campaign strategies rather than traditional strategies of governance and accountability. This saw the major parties intensify their efforts to secure private donations and public funding to pay for the increased cost of campaigning over longer periods. Incumbent MPs are increasingly using parliamentary entitlements for campaigning purposes. During the 2004 election a large amount of direct mail was distributed using parliamentary entitlements. This amounted to a significant campaigning tool for incumbent MPs that challengers were not able to match.

#### **CHAPTER OUTLINE:**

Chapter One introduces electoral professionalism as a process of professionalisation that has developed over recent decades. Since the 'It's Time' campaign electoral professionalism has manifested itself in several different ways within Australian democracy. It has seen access to political information become highly controlled. The length of campaign periods stretch out longer and longer. It has also seen executive government increasingly coordinate the political messages that all arms of government convey to the public. Electoral professionalism has led the major parties to increasingly rely on political technology. As a result the cost of campaigning has risen dramatically leading the major parties to seek out increased funding. In many instances this entrenches the major parties electoral dominance within the Australian political system.

Chapter Two demonstrates how growing partisan dealignment and the development of new political technologies have caused political parties to become

dependent on campaign professionals. Campaign professionals have come to dominate political parties. This chapter outlines the significant organisational changes that Australia's major parties have undergone to accommodate this development. As a result the major parties have reduced their ideological focus and created numerous disincentives for the increasingly unwanted and unneeded grassroots members.

Chapter Three applies electoral professional theory to the 2004 federal election. The election saw an intensification of existing campaign techniques and the implementation of new techniques. The major parties intensified their efforts to package political information. This led to greater secrecy surrounding policy announcements and greater attempts to package complex political messages. During the 2004 election the PR state was harnessed to challenge the caretaker government convention and mount government advertising campaigns during the campaign period. The election also saw the emergence of the permanent campaign in Australia. As a result the major parties intensified their efforts to secure funding to pay for increases in campaign expenditure. Chapter Three presents an important set of findings regarding the ongoing intensification of political campaigning, and applies findings to Panebianco's Electoral-Professional party model.

## **CHAPTER 1: ELECTORAL PROFESSIONALISM**

### **UNDERSTANDING THE ELECTORAL PROFESSIONAL MODEL:**

Electoral professionalism explains both the changing organisational structure of political parties and changes to the way parties engage with the electorate. In his study of electoral professionalism, Panebianco (1988, 231-2) identified professionalisation as a common feature of organisational change that political parties undergo; it implied the decreasing importance of the old bureaucracy and the increasing importance of campaign professionals. Professionalisation has altered the way political parties function by changing their organisational structure. An electoral professional party has a reduced ideological focus and provides a greater role for campaign professionals, often at the expense of party members (Panebianco 1988, 264). The development of electoral professionalism has enabled political parties to adapt to a changing political environment. In a social climate conducive to partisan de-alignment, the preparedness of Australia's major political parties to adapt their organisation, strategy and policies has enabled them to remain competitive (Bean 1996, 136). The major parties have undergone significant organisational changes in recent years as their focus has shifted from party members to the electorate.

As a result of moves towards electoral professionalism the major parties have been experiencing a shrinking grassroots membership (Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 54, Jaensch 2006, 28, Johns 2006, 47 and Ward 1991, 153 and 2006, 73). A reduced ideological outlook and the increased infiltration of campaign professionals has aided in this process. It is estimated that the Labor Party had 370,000 branch members in 1939, fell to 56,000 by 1973 and had declined to 50,000 by the mid 1990s (Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 52 and Jaensch 2006, 28). The Liberal Party's membership, estimated at 220,000 in the early 1950s, fell to around 100,000 by 1984 and to 70,000 in the late 1990s (Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 52 and Jaensch 2006, 28).<sup>2</sup> Political parties once so dependent upon party members are no longer reliant on a large and active membership base for electoral success (Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 59, Jaensch 2006, 30, Marsh 2006, 8, Ward 2006, 75, and Young 2004, 109). The decline of the major parties membership numbers has been eased by the influx of campaign

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<sup>2</sup> According to Jaensch, Brent and Bowden (2005, 52) Australian political parties are under no obligation to release party membership numbers and generally keep them secret. However, it is estimated that membership of Australian political parties fell from four percent of the total population in the 1960s to less than two percent in the late 1990s (Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 54).

professionals who are equipped with the skills necessary in an era of electoral professionalism.

Party members have become less important due to changes to political communication and the professionalisation of election campaigns. According to Mills (1986, 2) the drive towards professional electioneering began in Australia with Don Dunstan's 1967-68 re-election campaign for South Australian Premier. This campaign used sophisticated market research and extensive television advertising. This marked a shift from the traditional way in which campaigns were conducted in Australia. The Dunstan campaign made a concerted effort to gauge the opinions of the electorate through the use of market research whilst also sidelining the party machine due to its suspicion of such techniques (Blewett and Jaensch 1971, 59-60 and 65). These techniques were replicated at a federal level in 1972 by the ALP in the historic 'It's Time' campaign. Mills (1986: 2) argues that the "...success of this campaign institutionalised market research and mass TV advertising into Australian political practice". Similar to the Dunstan campaign four years earlier, the 'It's Time' campaign embarked on gauging public opinion and a continuous publicity campaign to sell its image to the electorate. The 'It's Time' campaign demonstrated not only the changing nature of campaigning, but also the increasing professionalisation of the Australian Labor Party.

#### ***THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ELECTORAL PROFESSIONALISM:***

As Australia's two major parties have become electorally professional, access to political information has become highly controlled by politicians and parties. Franklin (1994) outlined the tendency of political parties and in particular governments to attempt to shape the way in which the media reports politics. This is an attempt to use the media to influence voter behaviour. Politicians and political parties increasingly seek to manage and control public representations of politics through media advisers (Street 2001, 185). Media advisers have become crucial to the way political parties and politicians manage the media.<sup>3</sup> The result of this is that political information is being manipulated to adhere to the political aims of those presenting it. This has resulted in the creation of highly scripted events that enable politicians and parties to sell political messages by harnessing the power of the mass media. Therefore the "...media no longer simply offer

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<sup>3</sup> Political parties have recruited armies of media advisers in order to develop strategies for promoting electorally favourable media images of their leaders and key policies (Franklin 1994, 6).



the public information about political affairs, but are increasingly being managed by politicians in ways that allow them undue and improper influence over voters choices” (Franklin 1994, 13). The desire of parties and politicians to exert greater control over the political messages that they present to the public is most obvious during election campaigns.

**Table 1.1 When voters made up their minds which way to vote**

	1987	1990	1993	1996	1998	2001	2004
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Along time ago	50.0	45.9	42.4	49.9	35.3	44.8	46.9
Before the election was announced	23.0	10.7	13.2	12.1	13.6	13.8	14.3
When the election was announced	n.a.	7.7	6.7	6.6	9.0	6.8	6.5
During the campaign (including polling day)	26.0	35.8	37.7	31.4	42.8	34.6	32.4
On polling day itself	n.a.	9.9	7.9	10.7	11.3	12.3	8.6

Source: Ward (2005, 4).

Electoral professionalism is also characterised by the way in which campaigning has become a continuous process that lacks a definite beginning and end.<sup>4</sup> The actual election campaign has become no more than an intensification or culmination of a campaigning process that has extended over months or years (Mills 1986, 110). The period where both parties begin campaigning before the announcement of an election date is stretching out longer and longer (Young 2004, 7). The 2004 election demonstrated the extent to which both major parties seek to shape voters perceptions about politics in the period leading up to an election campaign. Table 1.1 demonstrates that the majority of voters decide which way they will vote well before the campaign.<sup>5</sup> Therefore the official campaign period is used by parties to reinforce rather than change people’s perceptions about politics (van Onselen and Errington 2005a, 4). As a result there has been an increasing tendency to use campaign techniques in the process of governing in order to influence voter behaviour. Mann and Ornstein (2000, 219) argue that this has caused the process of campaigning and the process of governing to lose their distinctiveness. This has created greater incumbency advantage to sitting MPs because they are able to use the provision of resources by the state for campaigning purposes.

<sup>4</sup> Kelly (2006, 6 and 11) argues that a key innovation of the Howard government has been the fact that Howard campaigns on behalf of his government each and every day.

<sup>5</sup> Although the number of voters deciding which way they will vote during the election campaign is on the rise it still only amounts to 40 percent of voters. Therefore there are a significant number of people whose voting behaviour can be influenced before the campaign period.

The blurring of the line between the process of campaigning and the process of governing provides numerous advantages to incumbent governments. This is because governments are able to use public relations techniques to influence policy debates. Governments coordinate the use of public relations techniques throughout the machinery of government in an effort to seek partisan advantage (van Onselen and Errington 2005a, 2). This enables governments to better promote themselves and their policies. Governments routinely employ armies of media advisers and communications experts in order to promote themselves, their policies and their interests over that of the opposition (Young 2004, 77). Ward (2003) sought to examine the institutional framework that allows governments to coordinate and implement campaigns intended to steer, or manage, policy debates. According to Ward (2003) there are four main categories, including media advisers, media units, departmental public affairs sections and a whole of government approach that enable governments to better influence policy debates. It is essentially an attempt by executive government to coordinate the political messages that all arms of government convey to the public.

#### ***THE IMPACT OF ELECTORAL PROFESSIONALISM IN AUSTRALIA:***

The adoption of electoral professionalism by the major parties has increased the need to develop more efficient and effective ways of communicating with the electorate. This has resulted in an increasing reliance on campaign professionals and political technology.<sup>6</sup> The dynamics of the major parties have changed so that they are open to the importation of political technology from overseas (Weller and Young 2000, 157). The hiring of campaign professionals and the technology that they operate is expensive and has led to increasing campaign costs. This is because the acquisition of votes through political technology is a capital intensive, rather than a labour intensive exercise (Kobrak 2002, 110 and Ward 2006, 75). The fact that campaigns are highly competitive events and conducted over longer periods only serves to hasten the readiness of political parties to spend increasing amounts of money. Ward (2005) outlines the way in which Australia's two major parties routinely employ campaign professionals and political technology in order to communicate with voters during election campaigns. This demonstrates that only an electoral professional party can manage the more intense campaign methods of modern politics. Ward (2005) outlines the central role that

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<sup>6</sup> Political "...parties have become much more reliant upon marketers, pollsters, software designers and direct mail, advertising and public relations specialists – upon professionals with skills in persuasive communication" (Ward 2006, 78-9).

campaign professional's advice plays in shaping election campaign strategy. This fits Panebianco's (1988, 264) model for an electoral professional party and demonstrates the extent to which Australia's two major parties conform to the electoral professional model of party.

The adoption of electoral professionalism has led the major parties to intensify their efforts to secure private donations and public funding. These funds pay for the increased cost of campaigning over longer periods. In an era of electoral professionalism the major parties have sought to use parliamentary entitlements for campaigning purposes. The major parties tend to rely on resources provided by the parliament to members to fund national and local campaigns (van Onselen and Errington 2005b, 22). This provides the major parties with significant resource advantages that minor parties and independents cannot match. This is symptomatic of what Mair and Katz (1997) call cartel theory, whereby major political parties rely on the provision of resources by the state to maintain their existing electoral dominance. Australia's two major parties have shown a willingness to legislate to maintain and extend incumbency advantage and entrench the two-party system (See Young and Tham 2006). According to Mair and Katz (1997, 107-8) cartel parties are integrated into the state apparatus and collude with ostensibly competing parties to maintain their electoral dominance and to exclude new parties. The ongoing professionalisation of party activity in Australia means that those that can utilise the resources afforded to them for campaigning purposes are better able to compete in an era of electoral professionalism.

It is important to outline the changes that are occurring within Australian democracy. The ongoing professionalisation of Australian political practice has had a major impact on the organisational structure of the major parties and on the way that they engage with the electorate. Electoral professionalism has manifested itself in several different ways within Australian democracy. Each has had a profound impact on representation and the delivery of governance. The 2004 election demonstrated the extent to which the electoral professional model governs the way in which the major parties engage the electorate. The following chapter will examine the changes within Australia's major parties, and how these changes help to facilitate an electoral professional approach.

## **CHAPTER 2: CHANGES WITHIN AUSTRALIA'S MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES:**

Electoral professionalism has altered the way in which political parties operate within Australian democracy. The changing political environment caused by growing partisan dealignment has created conditions in which political parties have become increasingly dependent upon campaign professionals. Changes in social stratification and to political technology have made political decision making increasingly complex. Campaign professionals provide the skills necessary for political parties to adapt to this changing political environment. The result of this is that campaign professionals have come to dominate political parties. Their influence has grown as their reputation for tracking and targeting the electorate increases. The influx of campaign professionals has also altered the organisational structure of political parties. The most significant change has been the shift from mass party to electoral professional party, alluded to in the previous chapter. Electoral professional parties create numerous disincentives for party members because electoral success is no longer bound by a strong party membership.

### **THE INCREASING COMPLEXITIES OF POLITICAL DECISION MAKING:**

Political parties have become electoral professionals in response to the increasing complexities of political decision making. One such complexity is the growing dealignment within the electorate.<sup>7</sup> Electorates have become more socially and culturally heterogeneous and less controllable by parties (Panebianco 1988, 266). The social cleavages that political parties once represented have become increasingly diffuse.<sup>8</sup> Bean (1996, 136) argues that this "...suggests that social structure – in particular social class which in the past played such a central role in shaping party preference in many nations – is becoming decreasingly relevant to political choice, in the wake of massive social change". This has affected political parties by altering the way in which political issues are formed within the electorate.<sup>9</sup> The 2004 federal election presented a set of electors not wedded to either side of politics. For this reason the number of swinging voters was high and the major parties needed to compete to claim the majority of this

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<sup>7</sup> Dealignment is characterised by an erosion of traditional ties of party and class loyalty (Street 2001, 195).

<sup>8</sup> Social cleavages are divisions within society, such as race, class, religion, language, ethnicity, region & culture that differentiate groups of people (Jaensch 1983, 45).

<sup>9</sup> Smith (1997, 165) argues that the Labor Party has had to deal with increasing numbers of workers in 'middle class' and non-unionised jobs. For the Liberal Party the problem has been to balance business aspirations with those of its other supporters.

voting cohort. We therefore saw new and emerging techniques, as well as more professional practice of existing campaign techniques.

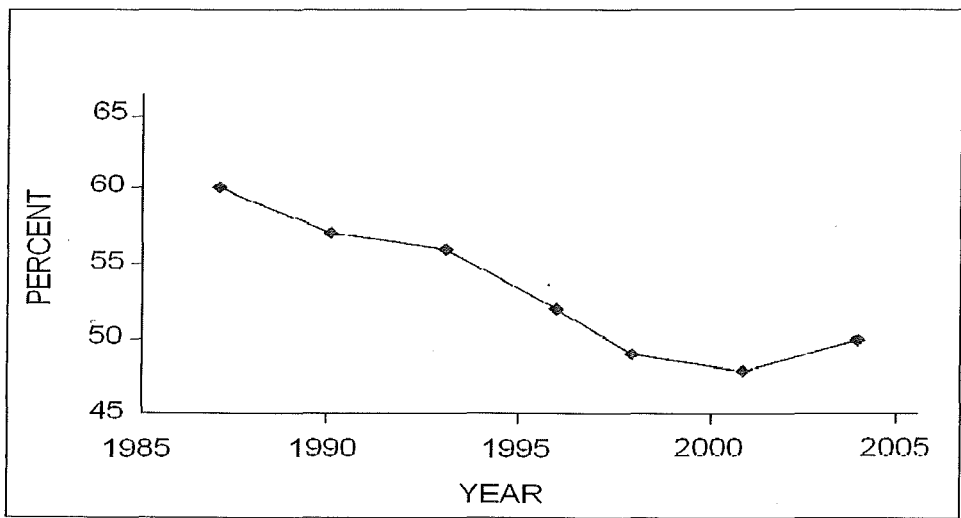
Political parties must now appeal to a wide segment of society whose interests are not as clearly defined as they once were. The changing nature of political parties is aimed at addressing the increasing social complexity caused by the breakdown of traditional political alignments (Street 2001, 193). Growing dealignment has created conditions in which political parties and politicians must sell themselves to the electorate. This is because a greater ambiguity in class identity has weakened partisanship (Kavanagh 1995, 23). The result of this is that the ideological aims of a party have become less of an issue to voters, who are now interested in other things that a party can offer. Therefore a person's vote is generally dictated by their perceptions of individual policies rather than traditional ideological or class based ties with particular parties. Political parties have responded to the growing complexities of political decision making by seeking out new methods of communicating with the electorate.

Changes to political communication have also resulted in the increased complexity of political decision making. Panebianco (1988, 266) argues that changes in communication techniques have caused an earthquake in party organisations by making old bureaucratic roles obsolete and changing the terms of political communication. Technology has become the key to communicating political messages to voters. "With TV the dominant means of political communication; with an increasing emphasis on surveys and direct mail; with the explosion of technology, parties are increasingly 'electoral professional'" (Jaensch 2006, 28). It has become increasingly important for political parties to harness these techniques in order to sell political messages to voters. Swanson and Mancini (1996, 251) argue that "...when the fortunes of political parties rest on opinion rather than membership and historical allegiances, the means for cultivating and shaping public opinion becomes crucial to electoral success". Political parties have turned to campaign professionals in order to effectively use political technology. This has facilitated a rise in the number of campaign professionals, who in turn have made politicians increasingly dependent upon them (Kavanagh 1995, 10).

The skills that campaign professionals provide enable political parties to compete in a changing political environment. Growing partisan dealignment has created

conditions in which an increasing number of voters have no political allegiance (See Figure 2.1) Compulsory voting compels all Australian's over the age of eighteen to vote, or at least have their name marked off the electoral role at a polling station. This relatively unique aspect of Australian electoral law means that political parties are freed from turning out voters and are largely assured the votes of their core supporters. As a result political parties can concentrate on isolating and communicating with swinging, undecided and soft voters in order to build a relationship with them that will influence their voting behaviour (Crosby 1996, 162). These voters are crucial in determining which party will form government and campaign professionals provide the means to track and target them.<sup>10</sup> The research that is conducted by campaign professionals is intended to provide an insight into the concerns of voters. This allows political parties to pitch policies and party image at parts of the electorate where it will be most effectively received. The process of tracking and targeting has become a crucial aspect of electoral professionalism and a major reason why political parties are so dependent upon campaign professionals.

Figure 2.1 Always vote for the same party



Source: Ward (2005, 3)

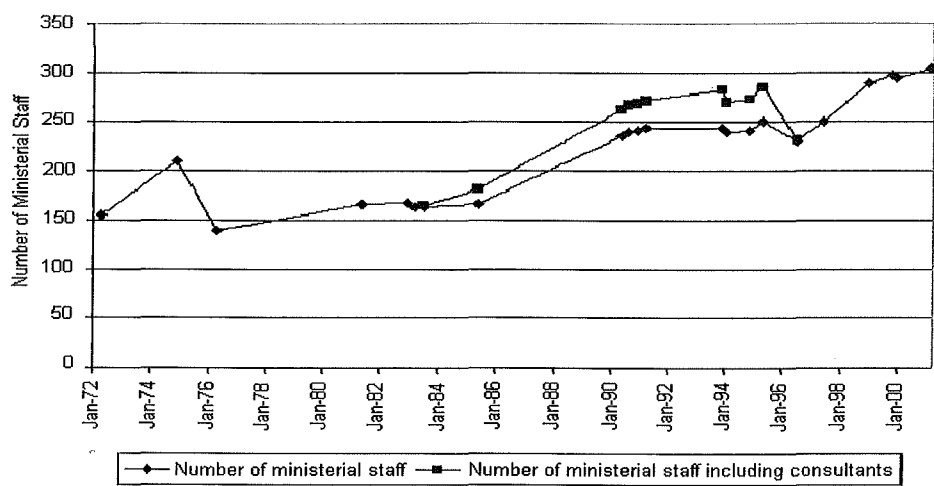
**CAMPAIGN PROFESSIONALS:**

'Campaign professional' is a term that encapsulates a wide variety of professionals that are integral to the way that politics now operates in Australia. These

<sup>10</sup> Mills (1986, 8) argues that tracking refers to the research conducted by pollsters that enables parties to listen to the electorate. Targeting refers to the communication that takes place based on the findings of the research, allowing parties to speak to the electorate.

'experts' are people who have traditionally operated in the commercial world or have been trained through long term party involvement. In the case of commercially trained persons, they have been integrated into Australian political parties with much ease.<sup>11</sup> Campaign professionals are skilled in areas such as polling, marketing, media management, computer technologies, direct mail technics and public relations. Internationally academics have discussed the role that campaign professionals play within both British and US democracy respectively (Kavanagh 1995 and Mann and Ornstein 2000). The term campaign professional has been less documented within its Australian context. Therefore it is important to outline how campaign professionals operate in Australia and where they are found within the political system. This is important because there are a growing number of hidden campaign professionals that operate for the benefit of the incumbent government (Ward 2006, 81).

FIGURE 2.2 INCREASES IN MINISTERIAL STAFF



Source: Holland (2002).

In Australia campaign professionals can be grouped into three categories; ministerial staff, party organisational staff and consultants. A growing number of campaign professionals are being employed as ministerial staff and are paid for by the taxpayer. The number of ministerial staff has grown in line with the increasing demands placed upon ministers and the creation of new ministerial positions (Grattan 1998, 35

<sup>11</sup> Young (2004, 63) argues that the key areas of political power brokers today are journalism, marketing, communications and PR.

and Holland 2002) (See Figure 2.2).<sup>12</sup> These campaign professionals are employed by government and provide ministers with a greater ability to develop and promote policy. This has enabled the parliamentary leadership to assume an increasingly dominant role over the other sections of party as well as the opposition (Jaensch 2006, 32-3 and Ward 2006, 81 and 87). The second form of campaign professionals are those who work within the state and federal secretariats of the major parties. Their numbers are not large and they are generally concerned with campaigning, fundraising and managing preselections. It is these types of professionals that tend to be committed partisans' working for certain factions within the party (See Page 2006). The third type of campaign professional is the consultant who comes into the party in the form of pollsters, image consultants and advertising consultants. Some are hired around the clock and can form part of the party leadership (Tiffen 1989, 138), whilst others are hired during election campaigns. The Liberal Party hires several advertising consultants known as 'the team' to develop political advertisements for election campaigns (See Young 2004, 97-9). The drive towards electoral professionalism has elevated these campaign professionals to dominant positions within the major parties.

#### ***THE DOMINANT ROLE OF CAMPAIGN PROFESSIONALS:***

The increasing dependence of political parties on campaign professionals has enabled them to dominate parties. This is because they provide the expert knowledge that is required to use political technology effectively. The old methods of going door to door and talking face to face with voters have been replaced with telephone, mail and Internet methods that are contracted out to campaign professionals (Jaensch 2006, 36 and Luntz 1988, 41). The result is that important decisions that the major parties make are increasingly being managed by campaign professionals in conjunction with other party elites. Jaensch (2006, 41) argues that the major parties have vested increasing power over policy-making, over intra-party relations, and over election campaigning, to party elites and campaign professionals. This has occurred because the advice that campaign professionals provide is seen as having real electioneering value. This has elevated their status within the party and enabled them to have a dominate role in determining the direction that the party takes.

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<sup>12</sup> The number of ministerial staff has at least doubled in the last thirty years, but this growth has been steady and not the product of a sudden explosion (Holland 2002). It is estimated that the Howard government currently employs 385 ministerial staff (Ward 2006, 81).



Modern society is characterised by the increased distance between political parties and citizens. During the 2004 federal election only 2.5 percent of voters regularly or occasionally attended any political meetings or rallies (Ward 2005, 3). A total of 71.2 percent of voters reported having no contact with any party or candidate during the campaign (Ward 2005, 3). In this environment political advertising has become a vital means of communication between political actor and citizen, particularly television advertising. During the 2004 election the major parties devoted sixty percent of their respective advertising budgets to television advertising (Miskin and Grant 2004).<sup>13</sup> Political advertising is used to sell politicians and parties to voters, but in an era of electoral professionalism, political advertising is increasingly negative. Negative ads are those which do not focus on the positive attributes of the party that has paid for the ad, but are ones that focus on the alleged weaknesses of the other party or its leader (McNair 1995, 94). Negative advertising has become more prevalent because political parties view it as the only vehicle they are able to use to grab the attention of swinging voters (See Mills 1986 and Young 2004).<sup>14</sup>

Campaign professionals also provide the expertise to effectively manage the media. Political parties invest much time and effort in attempting to shape the news coverage of political events. The battle for the 'free' media is borne out of the belief that news coverage is more authentic than paid political advertising. Whilst paid advertising is clearly partisan the "...lack of control and apparent spontaneity of most free media scenarios heightens believability" (McNair 1995, 111). Therefore a candidate's ability to win the battle for the 'free' media enables their message to be filtered through journalists to citizens. Ward (2005, 18) argues that parties "...approach campaigns as contests to control the way televised political news is reported, and thus the way in which issues are framed and understood". The 'free' media is not only cheaper than paid political advertising, but it is also seen as more effective because the messages that the media relay are not viewed in the same partisan manner. It is, however, fraught with danger because once the media are used to spread a message the candidate loses control over how that message is presented. Therefore, whilst politicians desire media exposure of

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<sup>13</sup> However, direct mail is now rivalling television as the preferred method of political communication used by the major parties (Young 2004, 67).

<sup>14</sup> Rod Cameron (cited in JSCEM 1997, 25) ALP pollster during the Hawke and Keating governments, argues that political advertising must now appeal to the lowest common denominator because it is directed at swinging voters who would not vote if they were not compelled to do so.

the more authentic kind, they also strive to reimpose some kind of control over its output (McNair 1995, 111). To achieve this they have turned to professionals, particularly media advisers who are trained in the workings of the media (McNair 1995, 111).

### **CHANGING PARTY STRUCTURE IN AUSTRALIA: THE ELECTORAL PROFESSIONAL PARTY**

Political parties were originally formed as a means of representing the interests of certain sections of society. Political parties have played a key role in mobilising a mass electorate and linking citizens to government (Marsh 2006, 3). Characterised by mass mobilisation they represented people's tangible interests; one to represent labour and the working classes, the other capital and the middle classes (Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 52). They represented well defined social cleavages within Australian society. The people within these social groups were crucial to the sustainability of Australia's two major parties. Traditionally political parties were "...sustained by loyal constituents who pass on their loyalty to subsequent generations" (Jupp 1963, 159). Therefore, the electoral stability of the two major parties was sustained by their ability to represent well defined sections of society. This gave them generational support that was extremely stable and unchanging. However, these divisions are less relevant in modern Australia. Subsequently Australians are finding fewer reasons to join the major parties (Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 52). As a result Australia's major political parties have altered their organisational structure in order to remain competitive in a changing political environment.

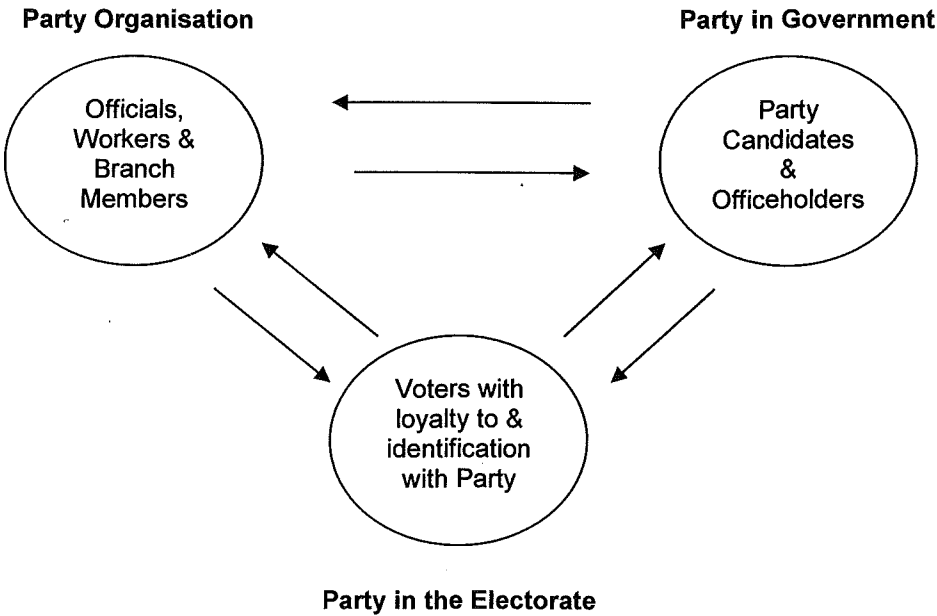
**TABLE 2.1 Characteristics of mass party and electoral professional party**

Mass Bureaucratic Party	Electoral Professional Party
Central role for party bureaucracy (political administrative tasks).	Central role for campaign professionals (specialised tasks).
Strong party membership, strong ties between party elite and party members, represents clearly defined social cleavages.	Declining party membership, weak ties between party elite and party members, appeal to broader society (opinion electorate).
Pre-eminence of internal leaders, collegial leadership	Pre-eminence of the public representatives, personalised leadership
Financing through membership and collateral activities (party cooperatives trade union etc.)	Financing through interest groups and public funding.
Stress on ideology, central role of the believers within the organisation.	Stress on issues and leadership, central role of careerists and representatives of interest groups within the organisation.

Source: Adapted from Panebianco (1988, 264).

The adoption of electoral professionalism has altered the organisational structure of political parties. Mass political parties, characterised by their strong ideology and the central role that they provided party members have transformed into electoral professional parties (See Table 2.1). Electoral professional parties are characterised by their reduced ideology and the larger role that they provide campaign professionals (Panebianco 1988, 264). Electoral professional parties are geared towards contesting upcoming election campaigns and have reduced their ideological outlook in response to changes within the electorate. In an environment where ideology is less conducive to peoples political choices the major parties have begun to appeal to larger sections of society. The electoral professional party "...marked the progressive move of individual parties away from mass membership and loyal electoral bases towards one that was contingently constructed from a less ideologically based program" (Marsh 2006, 8). This has resulted in similarities in policy as the major parties attempt to make broader appeals to voters in order to maximise their electoral support. The major parties have had to undergo significant organisational change for them to have reduced their ideological outlook and become increasingly accommodating of campaign professionals.

**FIGURE 2.3 Three Sections of party in Australia**



Source: Ward (1991, 154).

The major parties have undergone significant organisational change which has altered the relationship between the three sections of party. Figure 2.3 demonstrates the relationship between the three sections of party in Australia. Ward (1991: 154) argues that examining 'party organisation' is a key to understanding the changes which the Liberal Party and Labor Party have undergone. The party organisation played a crucial role in linking the party in government with the party in the electorate. The influx of campaign professionals has enabled the party in government to bypass the party organisation and communicate directly with the party in the electorate (Ward 1991, 162). This has enhanced the power of the party in government over the other sections of party. Jaensch (2006, 32) describes this as an internal power transfer that has vested power to the central bodies, in the Liberal Party to the leadership levels and in the Labor Party to the factions. The party in government has assumed the power to execute policy decisions and election campaign strategy, roles that were traditionally vested within the other sections of party. The 2004 election demonstrated the extent to which the parliamentary leadership is now placed to decide the detail of policy for the wider party as Mark Latham did for Labor (Ward 2006, 72). These developments have impacted on the role that party members play within the party.

The role of party members has been reduced in favour of the skills of campaign professionals. Party members were traditionally an important source of campaign funds and labour for the major parties (Ward 1991, 159, Young 2004, 110 and Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 53). Young (2004, 109) argues that the professionalisation of politics has meant that party members are often unwanted, unneeded and excluded from important party activities, especially in election campaign strategy. Political parties are less reliant on party members because modern electioneering is no longer dependent upon a large and active membership base (Jaensch, Brent and Bowden 2005, 59, Jaensch 2006, 30, Marsh 2006, 8, Ward 2006, 75, and Young 2004, 109). In fact party members are increasingly being seen as a hindrance to effective campaigning. Even the functions that the major parties believe that party members are capable of doing, such as leafleting and handing-out how to vote cards, are being contracted out to private organisations at an increasing rate (Jaensch 2006, 31). Campaign professionals provide parties with the skills required to compete in a changed political environment. It is for this reason that campaign professionals have replaced party members and become the new link between the party and the electorate.

### ***CONCLUSION:***

Electoral professionalism has altered the way in which political parties operate within Australian democracy. The changing political environment has created conditions in which political parties are increasingly dependent on campaign professionals. The increasing complexities of political decision making have led political parties to adopt the electoral professional model. Campaign professionals provide the skills necessary for political parties to adapt to this changing political environment. Campaign professionals have therefore come to dominate political parties. They now provide the link between the party and the electorate. The influx of campaign professionals has altered the organisational structure of political parties. Mass parties, characterised by mass mobilisation and heavy reliance on grassroots members are now electoral professional parties. Electoral professional parties are characterised by a reduced ideological focus and the greater role that they provide for campaign professionals.

### **CHAPTER 3: THE 2004 FEDERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN**

On August 29 2004 the Prime Minister announced that an election date of October 9 had been set. This meant that the 2004 federal election campaign would be conducted over an extended six-week period. The Coalition only needed to lose the votes of 3776 people in key marginal seats to fall from power (Young 2004, 43). This translated into 12 seats to lose government and 8 seats to confront a hung parliament (*The Australian*, August 30, 2004). The 2004 federal election shaped up to be a tight contest in which either party's ability to sell their political message to the electorate would be crucial in deciding which party would form government. The end result saw the Howard government returned to office with an increased majority and control of the Senate (See Appendix A). With the ALP winning just 37.64 percent of the primary vote the Coalition victory demonstrated Howard's ability to resonate in the mortgage belt seats of the capital cities (AEC 2005 and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, October 11, 2004) (See Tables 3.1 and 3.2). Electoral professionalism played a key role in determining how the major parties engaged the electorate during the 2004 campaign. The major parties have shown a willingness to develop more efficient and effective ways of communicating with the electorate (Ward 2005, 6). At the 2004 election this resulted in an intensification of existing campaign techniques and the development of new campaign techniques.

During the 2004 election the major parties extended control over the political messages that they conveyed to the public by packaging political information. This led the major parties to intensify their efforts to limit scrutiny of key policy announcements and to package complex political messages in ways that could be easily understood by voters. The 2004 election saw the emergence of telephone messaging and email as new means of delivering packaged political messages to Australian voters. The public relations (PR) state also emerged as a greater campaign weapon for incumbent governments. The use of ministerial staff to aid party campaign strategy and the merging of government communication with wider party campaign strategy intensified. The 2004 election saw the PR state extended to challenge the caretaker government convention and mount government advertising campaigns during the formal campaign period. The election also marked the intensification of the permanent campaign, as discussed by Mann and Ornstein (2000). This led to an extended campaign period in which the focus

of both the government and opposition was on campaigning rather than traditional roles of governance and accountability. The extended length of campaigning intensified the major parties' efforts to secure funding to pay for increases in campaign expenditure. This resulted in MPs using parliamentary entitlements for campaigning purposes, including direct mail.

**TABLE 3.1 PRIMARY VOTE 2004 FEDERAL ELECTION**

Political Party	House of Reps.	HOR swing	Senate	Senate swing
Liberal Party	40.47%	+3.39%	17.65%	+1.96
Labor Party	37.64%	-0.20%	35.02%	+0.70
Liberal/National	-	-	25.72%	+1.84
Nationals	5.89%	+0.28%	1.37%	-0.55
Greens	7.19%	+2.23	7.67%	+3.29
Democrats	1.24%	-4.17	2.09%	-5.16
One Nation	1.19%	-3.15	1.73%	-3.81
Family First	2.01%	+2.01	1.76%	+1.76

Source: adapted from the Australian Electoral Commission (2005).

**TABLE 3.2 TWO-PARTY PREFERRED VOTE 2004 FEDERAL ELECTION**

Political Party	Votes	%	Swing
Coalition	6,179,130	52.74%	+1.79
Labor Party	5,536,002	47.26%	-1.79

Source: Australian Electoral Commission (2005).

### **PACKAGING POLITICS:**

Politicians and parties are aware that the media are heavily dependent upon them for information.<sup>15</sup> Politicians are able to manipulate the media by exploiting its day to day work demands (Tiffen 1989, 77). They provide the right information, in the right format and at the right time of the day. Information is presented to journalists with the hope that it will be used without being questioned or investigated.<sup>16</sup> Packaging is an attempt by politicians to use the media's dependency on them to exert control over the political messages that they convey to the public (Grattan 1998, 34-5). The aim is to set the ground rules in the politicians favour, enabling them to present their political image

<sup>15</sup> Tiffen (1989, 77) cites former QLD premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen comparing his government's ability to provide information to needy journalists as 'feeding his chooks' as an example of how some politicians view the relationship between themselves and journalists.

<sup>16</sup> Street (2001, 146-7) argues that "what appears as a 'news story' can sometimes be nothing more than a minimal rewrite of a press release".

as they choose. In this environment television interviews and press conferences have become vehicles from which politicians can spread their political message rather than be effectively scrutinised (Street 2001, 188). Packaging also provides politicians and parties with the ability to sell key political themes and make complex messages understandable. Political parties have sought to use political marketing techniques to package themselves for easier public consumption. Beresford (1998, 24) argues that political marketing "...is best understood as the adoption of commercial marketing techniques applied to 'selling' a political party as a product". In this sense citizens are viewed as consumers who will choose their political allegiances based on how a political party is marketed.

The packaging of political information is criticised because of the harm it is perceived to impart upon democracy. Franklin (1994, 9-10) argues that "packaging politics impoverishes political debate by oversimplifying and trivializing political communications". However, packaging can also be seen as a way in which politicians and political parties have sought to address the changing political culture in which they operate. Packaging can be viewed as a rationale way in which parties and candidates behave in conditions of competitive mass democracy (Scammell 1995, 18-9). Prior to the 2004 election appearances by Opposition Leader Mark Latham on the set of Big Brother and Treasurer Peter Costello co-hosting the Kerri-Anne show demonstrated the ways in which politicians seek to present themselves as people just like everyone else (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, July 22, 2004). This can serve to bring politics closer to citizens by engaging people who may have otherwise been ambivalent. Packaging can therefore be seen as the consequence of general cultural shifts within society from which politics is not immune (Street 2001, 204) (See Chapter 2).

The 2004 election saw the major parties intensify their efforts to package political information. The secrecy surrounding policy announcements and attempts to make complex political messages understandable intensified. In modern campaigns it is common for journalists to be herded onto buses or planes without being informed about the policy announcement or even where they were going.<sup>17</sup> Prior to Labor's

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<sup>17</sup> Former Howard advisor, Grahame Morris (*The Australian*, September 30, 2004) argues that past discrepancies by journalists, such as leaking campaign itineraries to protestors has resulted in such information becoming a closely guarded secret. Protestors can divert media attention from the policy announcement resulting in the intended message being lost.



announcement of its Tasmanian forest policy journalists had taken-off from Sydney Airport and were well into their flight before they were informed of where they were heading (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, October 5, 2004). These new levels of secrecy serve to restrict a journalist's ability to ask probing questions because they have limited time to analyse the contents of the policy. This gave Labor the maximum opportunity to sell its message with little scrutiny in return. The 2004 election was also characterised by the way in which complex political messages were packaged in formats that voters could easily understand. In the early weeks of the campaign Mark Latham struggled to convince the media that interest rates would not rise under a Latham Labor government. Appendix C shows how Latham moved to neutralise these fears by signing a giant cardboard guarantee to keep interest rates low (*The Australian*, September 3, 2004). Latham's stage managed signature was designed to make the complexities of Labor's real policy intentions more easily understood by voters.<sup>18</sup> This packaged message was intended to re-assure voters about Latham's perceived inability to manage the Australian economy. However, this attempt failed and highlighted the limitations of packaging political information in this way. Negative advertising was used as a much more effective means of packaging during the 2004 election.

The packaging of political information also involves attacking the way in which a political opponent has packaged themselves. It is for this reason that the 2004 election was characterised by an intensification of negative political advertising. Cameron (*The Australian Financial Review*, September 13, 2004) argues that the key political marketing issues are the credibility of the chief presenter, the credibility of the brand and the selling of the message. The Liberal Party's negative advertising campaign was designed to turn Latham into a negative brand proposition by highlighting his inexperience as well as his alleged inability to manage Australia's economy. The L-plate mnemonic represented his inexperience and slogans claiming 'that if you can't run a council, you can't run a country' reinforced doubts about Latham's ability to handle the Australian economy (*The Australian*, September 20, 2004 and *The Australian*, October 7, 2004).<sup>19</sup> Appendix D and E are two examples of the Liberal Party's negative

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<sup>18</sup> These real policy intentions included a pledge to maintain budget surpluses for the next three years and to be economically responsible (*The Weekend Australian*, September 4/5, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> The National Party website contained an interest rate calculator that was able to calculate peoples individual monthly mortgage repayments under the Coalition (7%) and then what they would allegedly rise to under a Labor government (10% and 12%) (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, September 6, 2004).

advertising campaign during the 2004 election. The ALP responded to the Coalition's negative advertising campaign by attempting to use Peter Costello as a negative brand proposition. In one advert, a lottery scratchie with the Prime Ministers head on it, is scratched out to reveal Peter Costello's face underneath (*The Weekend Australian Financial Review*, September 25/26 2004) Appendix E contains the Labor Party's scratchie advertisement. This was designed to force voters to think that a vote for Howard may in fact be a vote for the less popular Costello.<sup>20</sup> The major parties attempts to attack the way in which their political opponents had been packaged led to an intensification of negative political advertising during the 2004 election.

Important weapons in the effort to package political information are the political databases that occupy the offices of major party MPs.<sup>21</sup> The Coalition database (Feedback) and the ALP database (Electrac) record constituent details allowing a collation of information in ways useful to political campaigning (van Onselen and Errington 2005b, 23 and van Onselen 2003, 17). Appendix I outlines how Feedback is used to record constituent details and the contact that they have with the electoral offices of MPs. Constituents have a personal profile that consists of 'tags' which can be updated by electorate office staff (See Appendix J). The stored information is intended to identify swinging voters in marginal electorates. Targeting swinging voters in marginal electorates has become the key to much electoral activity (Crosby 1996, 160). Political databases provide information that enables packaged political messages of varying kinds, to reach the right voters (See van Onselen 2003, 20). Political databases can identify which voters to contact about certain issues thus maximising the effectiveness of the message, whilst not harassing voters who have no interest in that particular issue. Political databases are an important tool in identifying and targeting swinging voters with packaged political messages. The Coalition database Feedback was instrumental to the effective implementation of new campaigning techniques during the 2004 election.

Information stored on Feedback provided the email addresses and voting preferences of constituents. This allowed Liberal candidates to send packaged political

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<sup>20</sup> In an interesting re-enforcement of the television advertisement the ALP sent a series of matching scratchies to 1 million voters in marginal seats (*The Weekend Australian*, September 25/26, 2004).

<sup>21</sup> van Onselen and Errington (2005b, 25 and 2004, 351) argue that minor parties, represented only in the Senate, lack the critical mass of parliamentary resources to run systems as complex as Electrac and Feedback.

messages to them via email. Internationally the internet has become an important campaigning tool for political parties, especially as means of raising campaign funds and mobilising large numbers of volunteers (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, October 9, 2004).<sup>22</sup> The major parties in Australia have been slow to adopt the internet as a campaigning tool because they do not need to mobilise large groups of volunteers and are able to use the provision of resources by the state for partisan purposes. This has seen the internet emerge as a useful means to deliver packaged political messages to voters. The major parties websites offer interested voters the opportunity to download policies, sign up for emailed campaign news, or view selected TV ads (Ward 2005, 15). During the 2004 election the Liberal Party used the Internet to email voters in selected seats. An exemption provided for parties in the Spam Act, enacted in 2003 allowed emails to be sent on behalf of Liberal candidates to voters (Ward 2005, 18). Although the effectiveness of the email campaign is unknown it does enable campaign material to be sent to voters electronically, thus saving money on printing and postage costs. During the 2004 election the Internet emerged as a useful medium to deliver packaged political messages to voters, particularly through email.

Feedback was also instrumental in providing the information on voters, such as telephone numbers and voting preference that that allowed the Coalition to use electronic telephone messaging to contact voters in marginal seats. Recorded messages from John Howard and Peter Costello urged those in marginal seats to vote for their local Liberal member or candidate (Costar and Browne 2005, 117 and Miskin 2005, 1). The use of electronic phone messaging in election campaigns in the US and the UK is commonplace. Yet, in Australia it is a relatively untapped campaign tool that provides political parties with several advantages. Miskin (2005, 3) argues that electronic telephone messaging enables parties to communicate with the electorate as a whole, or with specific groups without needing large numbers of volunteers to go door-to-door or to dial telephone numbers. The telephone messaging campaign did create a small media storm because some calls went to unlisted numbers and to mobile phones.<sup>23</sup> Yet Liberal

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<sup>22</sup> The Internet fuelled campaign of Howard Dean in the 2004 Democrat Party primaries in the United States mobilised large groups of supporters or 'Deaniacs' and vast sums of money, around \$50 million dollars before the first primary (Thomas 2004, 6 and 13).

<sup>23</sup> This is an example of how political databases can gain information, most likely through constituent contact with an electoral office that is not widely available and where the person may be unaware that the information has been gathered (See Appendix I and van Onselen and Errington 2004, 354).

Party pollster Mark Textor believed that the calls had a positive effect and were successful in giving people an unfiltered political message (Costar and Browne 2005, 117 and Miskin 2005, 1). The effectiveness of the telephone messaging campaign remains questionable, but it fits neatly into what parties want to achieve in professionalised campaigns. That is to communicate with voters using political technology rather than party members.

### **THE PUBLIC RELATIONS STATE:**

The PR state provides government with significant resource advantages over oppositions. Governments have numerous resources, including ministerial advisers at their disposal that can be harnessed for partisan advantage. The 2004 election saw the use of ministerial advisers for partisan campaigning purposes intensify. Prior to the election Latham accused Ian Hanke, an adviser to Workplace Relations Minister Kevin Andrews of engaging in dirt digging (*The Age*, July 8 2004). The accusation made reference to the fact that whilst Ian Hanke was being paid to provide professional advice to Kevin Andrews he was researching Latham's record as Mayor of Liverpool Council in the 1990s.<sup>24</sup> This did not concern the Workplace Relations Minister and was intended to provide the government with ammunition that it could use in its upcoming election campaign. During the formal campaign period, Ian Hanke again performed a function to aid the Liberal Party. Hanke was tasked with sending SMS messages to journalists in order to provide them with precise information and lines of questioning towards the opposition (*The Australian*, September 9, 2004). This information is provided in the hope that journalists will use it to pursue the opposition and thus destabilise their campaign. The partisan role that Hanke played during the 2004 election demonstrates how the use of ministerial advisers for partisan purposes has intensified and become an important campaign weapon for incumbent governments.

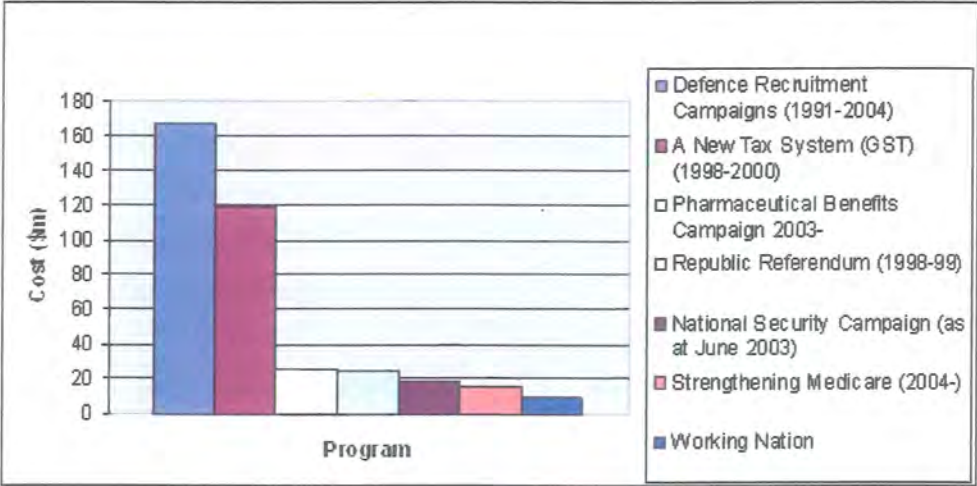
The PR state enables governments to harness media units for partisan advantage. Media units are funded by the taxpayer and provide government with the ability to communicate more effectively than their political opponents (Barns 2005, 70). Successive governments have established media units in order to sell themselves and

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<sup>24</sup> John Howard defended this as a reasonable and important function of any public servant (*The Age*, July 8 2004).

their policies.<sup>25</sup> The Howard government established the Government Members Secretariat (GMS), which plays a key role in coordinating government communication with party campaign strategy (Errington and van Onselen 2005, 29-34). The GSM disseminates government information to Coalition MPs.<sup>26</sup> This involves providing training and advice for the effective operation of Feedback. Appendix K is a confidential letter written by a staff member at the GSM informing Liberal MPs of the results of a Feedback stat audit. The letter demonstrates how the GSM aides party campaign strategy by ensuring that Liberal MPs are using Feedback effectively. During the 2004 election the use of the GSM to merge government communication with party campaign strategy intensified. The GSM distributes generic pamphlets which campaign offices personalise to suit their particular candidate. Appendix L shows a generic pamphlet from the 2004 election that includes the line 'Strengthening Medicare'. This slogan had been used prior to the campaign in a series of government advertisements. The dissemination of campaign literature and the inclusion of the line 'Strengthening Medicare' demonstrate the important role that the GSM played in coordinating government communication with party campaign strategy during the 2004 election.

**FIGURE 3.1 Major Government Advertising Campaigns 1991-2004**



Source: Adapted from Grant (2005, 2).

<sup>25</sup> The Whitlam government established the Australian Government Liaison Service (AGLS), the Fraser government established the Government Information Unit (GIU), and the Hawke-Keating government established the National Media Liaison Service (NMLS) (See Barns 2005).

<sup>26</sup> The GSM filters and checks information before it is circulated into the public domain, without actually being the agent of that information (Errington and van Onselen 2005, 30).

It has become common for governments to use government advertising for partisan advantage.<sup>27</sup> In 2004 the government spent \$40 million dollars advertising issues such Medicare, apprenticeships, superannuation, the pharmaceutical benefits scheme, overseas travel, family payments, the environment, telecommunications and domestic violence (Young and Tham 2006, 80 and Young 2005, 2). Figure 3.1 provides an overview of some of the major government advertising campaigns since 1991. The use of government advertising for partisan advantage intensified prior to the 2004 election. According to the guidelines for government advertising campaigns information should not be directed at promoting party political interests (n.a 06/12/2005). The Howard government's \$15.7 million dollar advertising campaign for its 'Strengthening Medicare' policy was roundly criticised because it appeared to advocate government policy. Criticism emerged because the ads portrayed the government as the defender of Medicare when in fact it had been focused on scaling Medicare back since coming to power in 1996 (*The Age*, June 24, 2004). The PR state enables government to implement a whole of government approach towards advertising campaigns. This ensures that all government communications are coordinated towards the government's overall goals. The establishment of the Ministerial Committee on Government Communication (MCGC) and the Government Communication Unit (GCU) ensure that executive government, particularly the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has increased oversight over the approval of departmental publicity campaigns (Stewart and Ward 2006, 200-1 and Ward 2003, 10).<sup>28</sup> This means that the approval process for government advertising is dominated by executive government. The 'Strengthening Medicare' advertising campaign demonstrated that their desire is to promote government policy and to aid party campaign strategy.

For the 2004 election the government used the PR state to implement government advertising during the campaign period. This signalled an increasing willingness to use permanent campaign techniques during the election period. The public affairs capacities of government departments are used to promote government

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<sup>27</sup> Young (2004, 123-4) argues that the ability of government to run 'public information' campaigns on all manner of issues has become a political communications resource that governments have sought to abuse, particularly in election years.

<sup>28</sup> Executive government gives final approval to all departmental publicity affairs sections that wish to implement a publicity campaign (Ward 2003, 10).

policies.<sup>29</sup> These information units are staffed by public servants and therefore have a duty to provide a non-partisan public service.<sup>30</sup> However, ministers have increasingly been able to harness the public affairs capacities of their departments for partisan purposes (See Weller 2002). The caretaker government convention was challenged at the 2004 election as government advertising was used during the campaign. The terrorist bombings in Jakarta saw the government run anti-terrorism advertisements, with the approval of Labor (Young and Tham 2006, 90). However, after the campaign Labor withdrew its support claiming that the government did not keep to an agreement and ran adverts at peak times and during major sporting events (Young and Tham 2006, 90). The caretaker government convention was further challenged when Centrelink continued a mail-out through the early stages of the campaign. Centrelink sent a mail-out to 2 million families informing them of a \$600 family tax benefit (*The Australian Financial Review*, August 31, 2004 and Young and Tham 2006, 90). This meant that the public affairs capacities of government were continuing to be harnessed during the 2004 election to inform voters of government initiatives, extending permanent campaign techniques into the federal election period.

#### **THE PERMANENT CAMPAIGN:**

The 2004 federal election seamlessly followed from an emerging permanent campaign in Australia. This saw the major parties intensify their campaigning efforts in the months preceding the announcement of an election date. This was important for Mark Latham who used this period to introduce himself to the electorate after having become leader a relatively short time before the election was due. Latham eschewed traditional political logic by speaking about social issues rather than the economy, as a means of improving the lives of Australians (Simons 2004, 107). His plainspoken style of communication and his injection of new ideas into the political arena helped him set the news agenda. Latham was able to wrong-foot the government on several issues, including parliamentary superannuation and forced amendments to the US free trade agreement (van Onselen and Errington 2005a, 7). By contrast Howard struggled to gain the political initiative and several issues began to put pressure on his government. The failure to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq coupled with the resurfacing of the

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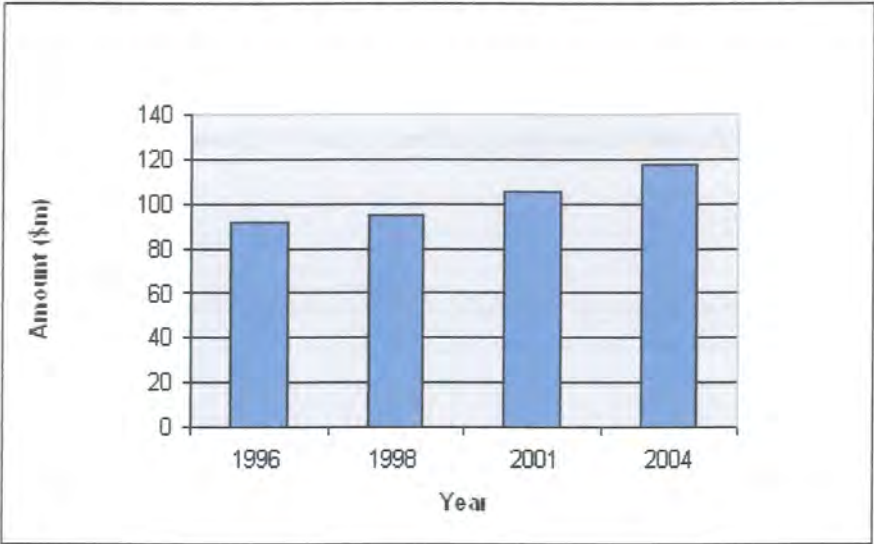
<sup>29</sup> The majority of public service departments have public affairs units which fulfil a necessary public relations role (Stewart and Ward 2006, 199).

<sup>30</sup> According the Australian Public Service Values, public servants are required to be apolitical, performing their functions in an impartial and professional manner (APS: n.d accessed 30/06/06).



children overboard allegations from the 2001 election increased the pressure on the incumbent government (Browne 2005, 7-8).<sup>31</sup> The intensification of campaigning in the months preceding the announcement of the election enabled Latham to introduce himself to the electorate and set the political agenda. This placed considerable pressure on the incumbent government and added to the feeling that the election would be a tight contest.

FIGURE 3.2 OVERALL CAMPAIGN COSTS 1996-2004



Source: AEC federal election reports 1996-2004.

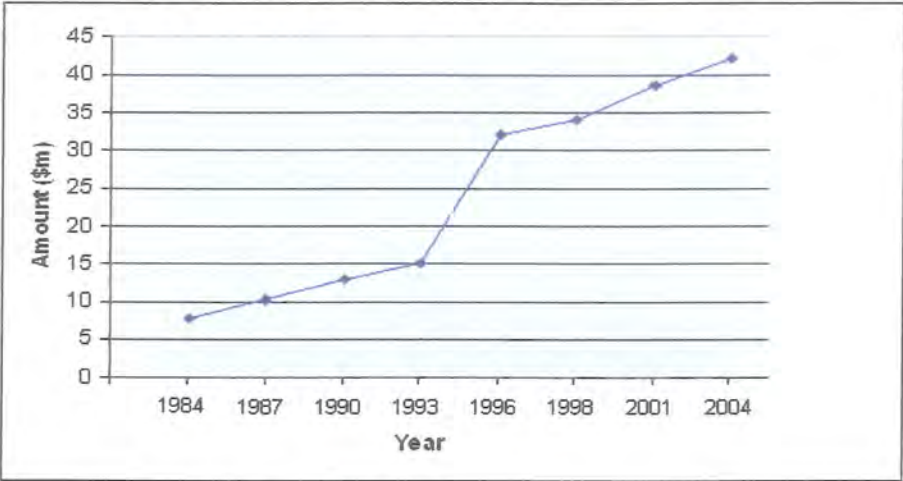
The 2004 election campaign was conducted over a longer than usual six-week period. Longer campaign periods have resulted in rising campaign costs as the major parties spend increasing amounts over longer periods. The 2004 election saw the cost of campaigning increase significantly on previous years (See Figure 3.2). Rising campaign costs intensified the major parties' efforts to secure large private donations. Today private donations amount to more than 80 percent of total funding for the major parties (JSCM 2005, 286). As a result a large percentage of MPs time is now spent fundraising for upcoming elections. Ministers and shadow ministers regularly auction off their time for large private donations (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, September 24, 2004). The increasing need to solicit large private donations has led to an increasing abuse of the

<sup>31</sup> The children overboard affair was the claim by the Howard government that a boatload of asylum seekers had thrown their children overboard in an attempt to force Australian sailors to rescue them and land them on Australian shores (Veller 2002, 1). This claim was repeated by the government during the 2001 election even though many within government were aware the claims were false.



financial disclosure scheme.<sup>32</sup> During the 2004 election the Liberal Party received a one million dollar private donation that was not disclosed until sixteen months after the campaign (*The Canberra Times*, March 27, 2006). Recent amendments to the Electoral Act increasing the disclosure threshold from \$1500 to \$10,000 mean that a higher proportion of political donations will be hidden from public scrutiny.<sup>33</sup> A single donor is now able to donate \$10,000 to a party's state, territory and federal bodies, a total of \$90,000 and still remain anonymous (Tham 2006, 14). The onset of the permanent campaign has intensified the efforts of the major parties to solicit larger private donations and to do so with limited scrutiny.

Figure 3.3 Public funding payments 1984-2004



Source: AEC federal election reports 1996-2004.

Longer campaign periods have intensified the major parties attempts to secure public funds to pay for increases in campaign expenditure.<sup>34</sup> Levels of public funding have risen in line with increases in campaign expenditure, reaching \$42 million during the 2004 election (See Figure 3.3). Public funding provides the major parties with several campaigning advantages. The allocation of public funding is based on past electoral success and therefore allocates significant funding to the major parties compared to independents and minor parties. During the 2004 federal election the major

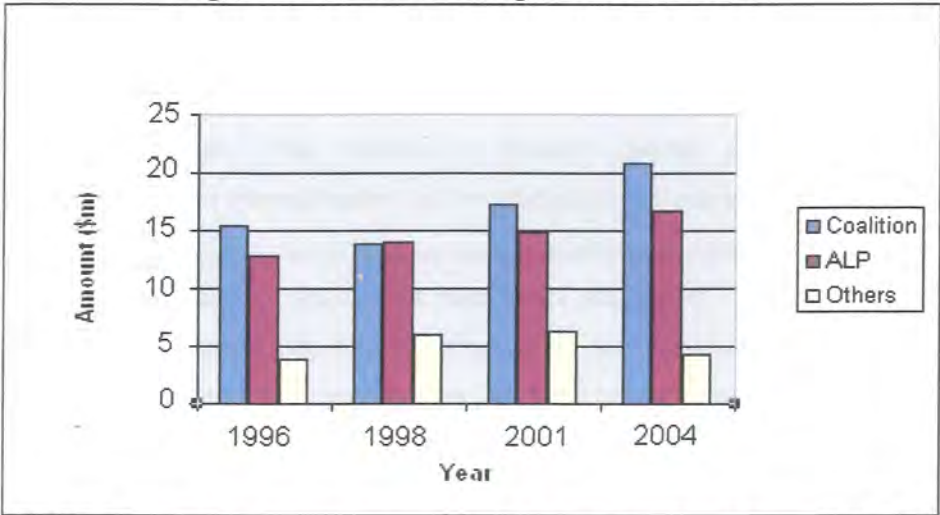
<sup>32</sup> The financial disclosure scheme was established to inform the public of major sources of party and candidate funding (AEC 2005, 12).

<sup>33</sup> Britain requires significant donations to be reported quarterly, whilst Canada limits individual donations to \$6,000 per annum (*The Canberra Times*, 27 March 2006 & Tham, 2006: 14).

<sup>34</sup> The public funding system was established to support parties by weaning them from private donations as well as creating healthier parties better able to devote resources to policy development (Orr 2004, 66).

parties received a combined \$34,666,369.91 in public funding whilst minor parties such as the Greens received only \$3,316,702.48 (AEC 2005, 4 and AEC 06/09/05) (See Figure 3.4). Young (2002, 90) argues that levels of public funding are strongly linked with political party expenditure on advertising. Therefore, the major parties are able to use public funding as a means of implementing sustained advertising campaigns which the minor parties are unable to replicate. The major parties also use public funding as a means of paying for the majority of party campaign activity. During the 2004 election the major parties delayed the launches of their official campaigns, allowing them to claim travel and staff costs until the last week of the campaign period (Ward 2006, 82). The 2004 election saw the major parties intensify their efforts to secure public funding as a means of paying for the increased cost of campaigning over longer periods. This provided the major parties with significant resource advantages over minor parties and independents.

Figure 3.4 Public Funding Levels 1996-2004



Source: AEC funding and disclosure reports 1996-2004 and Young and Tham (2006, 45).

MP's distributed a large amount of direct mail using parliamentary entitlements in 2004. Parliamentarians receive a number of support services to help them perform their duties including salaries and allowances, support staff, an office, equipment, postage, printing costs and travel entitlements (Costar and Browne 2005, 113, Johns 2006, 55 and Young and Tham 2006, 52). In an era of the permanent campaign MPs have become inclined to use these entitlements for campaigning purposes for the duration of their term. Recent legislation allocated MPs \$125,000 per annum in printing entitlements

for the printing of direct mail (Young and Tham 2006, 58-9).<sup>35</sup> During the 2004 election these entitlements helped to fund the \$6,000,000 that each major party spent on direct mail (JSCM 2005, 298). This was a significant increase on previous elections with the total of all direct mail at the 1996 election being \$5,490,735.45 (AEC 1996).<sup>36</sup> Direct mail has become an increasingly important campaigning tool because it can be targeted to a single street, enabling the candidate to make an extremely personalised pitch on the issues and themes that they believe will have the greatest impact on their recipients (Luntz 1988, 156 and Young 2004, 68-9).<sup>37</sup> Challenging candidates are unable to use parliamentary entitlements to target the electorate in such a precise manner and must therefore canvass larger portions of the electorate. The use of parliamentary entitlements to pay for direct mail provided incumbent MPs with a powerful taxpayer funded campaigning tool at the 2004 election.<sup>38</sup>

### **CONCLUSION:**

The 2004 election demonstrated the degree to which electoral professionalism governs the way the major parties engage the electorate. The 2004 election saw an intensification of existing campaign techniques and the implementation of new campaign techniques. The major parties extended control over the political messages that they conveyed to the public. This resulted in greater secrecy surrounding key policy announcements and an intensification in the packaging of complex political messages. The use of negative political advertisements intensified as the major parties attacked the way in which their political opponents had been packaged. The 2004 election saw electronic telephone messaging and email used as new means of delivering packaged political messages to Australian voters. The PR state became an important campaigning weapon for the incumbent government. The use of ministerial advisers and government advertising for partisan purposes intensified. As did the use of government media units to merge government communication with party campaign strategy. The PR state was also used to challenge the caretaker government convention. This saw the government

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<sup>35</sup> The \$125,000 in printing entitlements was subsequently boosted by postage entitlements of 50 cents per constituent in 2005, thus covering both the cost of producing direct mail and the cost of postage (Young and Tham 2006, 58-9).

<sup>36</sup> The 1996 election was last election in which the AEC provided a concise breakdown of the expenditure of parties and candidates. Therefore since 1996 it has been difficult to gauge spending on individual advertising methods, but increases in public funding demonstrate that the parties are spending more. Particularly given that public funding constitutes such a small proportion of the major parties election expenditure.

<sup>37</sup> During the 2004 election one MP described direct mail as the Rolls-Royce form of voter contact (Miskin 2005, 3).

<sup>38</sup> The significant advantages of incumbency were evident in the fact that only 6 percent of sitting members lost their seats in parliament at the 2004 election (Costar and Browne 2005, 113).

implement government advertising campaigns during the 2004 election to inform voters of government initiatives. The permanent campaign also emerged as a feature of Australian election campaigns. The permanent campaign intensified the major parties efforts to secure larger private donations and increased public funding. Rising campaign costs caused by the extended length of campaigning resulted in MPs using parliamentary entitlements for campaigning purposes. As a result a large amount of direct mail was distributed using parliamentary entitlements. This gave incumbent MPs a significant campaigning weapon that challengers were unable to replicate.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Elections are the process through which citizens provide elected representatives with a mandate to govern. Swanson and Mancini (1996, 247) argue that "electoral practices are one of the fundamental forms through which democratic societies constitute and express their nature...". The 2004 election saw electoral professionalism strongly dictate the way in which the major parties engaged the electorate. Ward (1991) was the first Australian political scientist to systematically apply the electoral professional model of party to Australia's major parties. The major parties have undergone significant organisational change in recent years. A key indicator that both the major parties have become electoral professionals is their declining party membership numbers. Electoral professionalism has manifested itself in several different ways within Australian democracy. It has seen access to political information become highly controlled by politicians and parties. Electoral professional parties seek to exert control over the political messages that they convey to the public. Electoral professionalism has also caused campaigning to become a continuous process which lacks a definite beginning and end, but involves a clear intensification closer to election day. This has created greater incumbency advantages for sitting MPs because they are able to use the resources of the state for campaigning purposes. This has led to an increasing use of campaign techniques in the process of governing as governments have sought to use public relations techniques to influence policy debates.

Political parties were originally formed as a means of representing the interests of certain sections of society. Australia's two major parties have become electoral professional parties with a more influential role for campaign professionals. The transformation from mass party to electoral professional party has altered the way in which the two major parties approach the electorate. This has also led to a reduced ideological outlook and less reliance on a large and active membership. The result of this is that political parties have become increasingly dependent upon campaign professionals. The skills and expertise that campaign professionals provide political parties with enables them to compete in a changing political environment. Campaign professionals have begun to dominate political parties as their reputation for tracking and targeting the electorate has grown. Campaign professionals enable political parties to communicate their political messages more effectively and the research that they

conduct has been influential in mapping out the major parties understanding of the electorate.

The 2004 federal election saw the Howard government returned to office for a fourth term. The campaign displayed many of the characteristics of electoral professionalism. There was an intensification of existing campaign techniques and the implementation of new campaign techniques. The major parties extended their efforts to package political information and to exert control over the political messages that they conveyed to the public. Electronic telephone messaging and email became new means of delivering packaged political messages to voters. The use of ministerial advisers and government advertising for partisan political purposes intensified. Government media units were also used to merge government communication with party campaign strategy. The PR state was harnessed during the 2004 election in order to challenge the caretaker government convention signalling the use of permanent campaign techniques during the formal campaign period. The lengthy campaign resulted in rising campaign costs. This led the major parties to intensify their efforts to secure funds to pay for the increased cost of campaigning over longer periods. As a result incumbent MPs used parliamentary entitlements to pay for the distribution of direct mail during the 2004 election. This dissertation has examined the continued development of the electoral professional party in Australia. Modern campaign techniques and technologies are filling the void of declining mass party memberships whilst at the same time improving how parties professionalise their operations. The 2004 election was a continuum in this process. Existing approaches intensified whilst new approaches were trialled.



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# Appendix A Mackerras Pendulum for the Commonwealth Parliament (November 2004)

## The Mackerras pendulum

COALITION SEATS	
LIBERAL	75
NATIONAL	12
INDEPENDENT	2
TOTAL	89
MAJORITY	28

150	34.8	Mallee (Nat, Vic)	
149	34.1	Murray (Lib, Vic)	
146	33.9	Ararua (Nat, Qld)	
144	33.7	Mitchell (Lib, NSW)	
142	33.7	Kiverua (Nat, NSW)	
140	33.3	O'Luncheon (Lib, WA)	
139	33.1	Moncrieff (Lib, Qld)	20

136	32.9	Harker (Lib, SA)	
134	32.8	Latter (Lib, NSW)	
132	32.8	Gorman (Lib, Qld)	
130	32.8	Bradfield (Lib, NSW)	
128	32.5	Gwydir (Nat, NSW)	
126	32.3	Indi (Lib, Vic)	
124	32.3	Mackellar (Lib, NSW)	15
122	32.3	Ladden (Lib, Qld)	

120	32.3	Curtin (Lib, WA)	
118	32.3	Parkes (Nat, NSW)	
116	32.3	Hume (Lib, NSW)	
114	32.3	McPherson (Lib, Qld)	
112	32.3	Grey (Lib, SA)	
110	32.3	Cook (Lib, NSW)	
108	32.3	Abaya (Lib, SA)	
106	32.3	New England (Nat, NSW)	
104	32.3	Aston (Lib, Vic)	
102	32.3	Lyne (Nat, NSW)	
100	32.3	Forde (Lib, Qld)	
98	32.3	Fraser (Lib, Qld)	
96	32.3	Pearce (Lib, WA)	
94	32.3	White Bay (Nat, Qld)	
92	32.3	Wannon (Lib, Vic)	
90	32.3	Werriwa (Lib, NSW)	
88	32.3	Tangney (Lib, WA)	
86	32.3	Casey (Lib, Vic)	
84	32.3	Blair (Lib, Qld)	
82	32.3	Finke (Lib, Vic)	
80	32.3	Salinas (Lib, Qld)	
78	32.3	Higgins (Lib, NSW)	
76	32.3	Moore (Lib, WA)	
74	32.3	Menzies (Lib, Vic)	
72	32.3	Forrest (Lib, WA)	
70	32.3	Warrigal (Lib, NSW)	
68	32.3	Ryan (Lib, Qld)	
66	32.3	Dawson (Nat, Qld)	
64	32.3	Ginnery (Lib, NSW)	
62	32.3	Goldstein (Lib, Vic)	
60	32.3	North Sydney (Lib, NSW)	10
58	32.3	Leichhardt (Lib, Qld)	

56	32.3	Kooyang (Lib, Vic)	
54	32.3	Canning (Lib, WA)	
52	32.3	Macarthur (Lib, NSW)	
50	32.3	Bonville (Lib, Vic)	
48	32.3	Bowman (Lib, Qld)	9
46	32.3	Kennedy (Nat, Qld)	
44	32.3	Macquarie (Lib, NSW)	
42	32.3	Higgins (Lib, Vic)	8
40	32.3	Petrie (Lib, Qld)	
38	32.3	Gippsland (Nat, Vic)	
36	32.3	Dickson (Lib, Qld)	
34	32.3	Longman (Lib, Qld)	7

32	32.3	Patterson (Lib, NSW)	
30	32.3	Robertson (Lib, NSW)	
28	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
26	32.3	Cowper (Nat, NSW)	
24	32.3	McKenzie (Lib, Vic)	
22	32.3	Kalgoorlie (Lib, WA)	
20	32.3	Herbert (Lib, Qld)	6
18	32.3	Dobell (Lib, NSW)	
16	32.3	La Trobe (Lib, Vic)	
14	32.3	Wentworth (Lib, NSW)	
12	32.3	Donohy (Lib, SA)	
10	32.3	Corangamite (Lib, Vic)	
8	32.3	Lindsay (Lib, NSW)	5

6	32.3	McMillan (Lib, Vic)	
4	32.3	Deakin (Lib, Vic)	
2	32.3	Hinkler (Nat, Qld)	
0	32.3	Bannellong (Lib, NSW)	
2	32.3	Page (Nat, NSW)	4
4	32.3	Moreton (Lib, Qld)	
6	32.3	Solomon (Lib, NT)	3
8	32.3	Bass (Lib, Tas)	
10	32.3	Eden-Monaro (Lib, NSW)	
12	32.3	Stirling (Lib, WA)	2
14	32.3	Hadlock (Lib, WA)	1
16	32.3	Brookton (Lib, WA)	
18	32.3	Makin (Lib, SA)	
20	32.3	Wentworth (Lib, SA)	
22	32.3	Commey (Lib, NSW)	
24	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
26	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
28	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
30	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
32	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
34	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
36	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
38	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
40	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
42	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
44	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
46	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
48	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
50	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
52	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
54	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
56	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
58	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
60	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
62	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
64	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
66	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
68	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
70	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
72	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
74	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
76	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
78	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
80	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
82	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
84	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
86	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
88	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
90	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
92	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
94	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
96	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
98	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	
100	32.3	Sturt (Lib, SA)	

OPPOSITION SEATS	
LABOR	80
INDEPENDENT	1
TOTAL	81

0%	Grayndler (NSW)	32.7	150
	Fowler (NSW)	31.4	149
	Batman (Vic)	31.4	146
	Calare (Ind, NSW)	31.3	144
20	Melbourne (Vic)	31.0	142
	Wills (Vic)	31.0	140
	Sydney (NSW)	30.5	139
	Watson (NSW)	30.2	136
15	Throsby (NSW)	30.1	134
	Gallibrand (Vic)	30.0	132

	Gorton (Vic)	30.0	130
	Stallan (Vic)	29.9	126
	Hunter (NSW)	29.8	126
	Fraser (ACT)	29.7	124
	Demson (Tas)	29.3	122
	Chifley (NSW)	29.1	120
	Port Adelaide (SA)	29.0	110
	Dundas (NSW)	28.9	116
	Heid (NSW)	28.9	114

10	Lanningham (NSW)	28.8	112
	Newcastle (NSW)	28.8	110
	Oxley (Qld)	28.8	108
	Canberra (ACT)	28.7	106
	Shortland (NSW)	28.6	104
	Marrinyong (Vic)	28.5	102
	Werrima (NSW)	28.4	100
	Kingford Smith (NSW)	28.1	98
9	Lalor (Vic)	28.0	96
	Griffith (Qld)	27.7	94
	Calwell (Vic)	27.7	92

8	Charlton (NSW)	27.6	90
	Fremantle (WA)	27.6	88
	Lingari (NT)	27.6	86
	Franklin (Tas)	27.6	84
	Barton (NSW)	27.6	82
	Holtman (Vic)	27.6	80
	Prospect (NSW)	27.6	78
7	Port (WA)	27.6	76
	Corio (Vic)	27.6	74
	Chifley (Qld)	27.6	72

6	Capricornia (Qld)	27.6	70
	Brand (WA)	27.6	68
	Lyons (Tas)	27.6	66
5	Lyons (Tas)	27.6	64
	Melbourne Ports (Vic)	27.6	62
	Bruce (Vic)	27.6	60
	Lowe (NSW)	27.6	58
	Hankin (Qld)	27.6	56
4	Chisholm (Vic)	27.6	54
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	52
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	50

3	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	50
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	48
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	46
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	44
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	42
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	40
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	38
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	36
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	34
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	32
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	30
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	28
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	26
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	24
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	22
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	20
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	18
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	16
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	14
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	12
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	10
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	8
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	6
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	4
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	2
	Ballarat (Vic)	27.6	0

Coalition majority  
28 seats

KEY  
15 Swing required  
in take seat  
16 Majority in seat  
Source: Malcolm Mackerras

## APPENDIX B

### Newspaper review of three major Australian newspapers during the 2004 federal election campaign period

#### The Australian

Date	Title	Reporter(s)	Page
30 August	Choice: old or new, stability or change	D. Shanahan	2
30 August	'Guerilla warfare' chiefs shape up	S. Maiden	3
1 September	Latham wins the war of words	S. Lewis	1
1 September	Ads go for subliminal yuck factor	L. Sinclair and S. Canning	7
3 September	Labor counters rates scare campaign	Steve Lewis and Sid Maher	5
4/5 September	Leaders wives seen but not heard... much	E.K. Symons	11
4/5 September	Populism and prudence	P. Kelly	32
9 September	Let's have a real debate, Mr Howard	G. Walsh	13
9 September	Party's on in the engine rooms	S. Maiden	17
9 September	The best democracy that money can buy	L. Sinclair	20
10 September	Tough times as leader faces politics in the raw	S. Lewis	9
10 September	John Howard, a chicken debater	M. Costello	15
16 September	Ad-Lib on Hawke's 'learner'	L. Sinclair and D. Box	8
17 September	Don't be honest, scares the voters	G. Megalogenis	8
20 September	Leader's son on preschool wait-list	S. Maiden	5
20 September	Parties gear negative visions for prime-time seats	L. Sinclair and S. Maiden	8
20 September	Coalition rolls out Latham bogeyman	S. Lewis	11
22 September	Party ads pull their punches and put trust in key issues	L. Sinclair	9
22 September	In a close race, Howard's backing inertia	P. Kelly	15
25/26 September	Latham okays new series of terror ads	L. Sinclair and B. Hickman	8
28 September	ALP goes crazy in ad blitz	L. Sinclair	6
30 September	Lacy lodges claim for a new era of political wives	L. Scott and E. K. Symons	8
30 September	Election ads get up close and personal	S. MacLean and R. Dalton	17 and 22

30 September	Dodgy journos to blame for all the secrecy	G. Morris	18
1 October	Lacy 'co-brands' Mark cool	E. K. Symons	8
1 October	Senators accused of misusing resources to bolster campaign	M. Wiese Bockmann	9
4 October	Labor ads throw it back with interest	L. Sinclair	6
5 October	Timber worker fury, but green groups happy	B. Norington and M. Denholm	6
6 October	Howard puts his promises on the line	S. Maiden	11
7 October	Hang up on PM, but it'll cost you	S. Maiden and M. Sainsbury	7
7 October	Ads fail to settle the tug of war	G. Walsh	13
7 October	In the great polling crunch, it's the thoughts that count	G. Morris	18
7 October	It's a party as voters blitzed	L. Sinclair and S. MacLean	20
7 October	Fear the only certainty in political pitch for hearts and minds	L. Sinclair	20
8 October	The campaign winner is...	S. Canning	13

#### The Sydney Morning Herald

Date	Title	Reporter(s)	Page
30 August	It's a matter of trust	L. Dodson	1
30 August	Still no guarantee of serving out a full term	M. Metherell	7
1 September	They're off and running in the great slogan game	C. Marriner	7
3 September	Leaders follow the tight script, with a nod to the extras	L. Dodson and M. Metherell	8
3 September	PM hammers a Big Lie to keep the big job	P. Hartcher	15
9 September	Friendly audience fires up a nervous starter	M. Secombe	6
10 September	Flash of extremism moves the electoral game into a darker setting	L. Dodson	5
11/12 September	Making political gain out of a national crisis	P. Hartcher	36
13 September	Blow for blow, but no killer punch	L. Dodson	1
13 September	A clear advantage to scrapper who accentuated the positive	M. Secombe	7
20 September	Week four, and it's time to rip the gloves off	C. Marriner and L. Dodson	7
24 September	The fear of living dangerously	P. Hartcher	15
27 September	Now \$6 billion for Howard's heroes	L. Dodson	1

29 September	An election cash rich but morally poor	A. Ramsey	15
30 September	Party and the person summed up by the one woman in the know	P. Totaro	7
30 September	An exercise in getting to know the man who would be prime minister	T. Stephens	7
2/3 October	It takes policy and personality	H. Mackay	12
4 October	Fear and loathing on TV as campaign gets personal	M. Seccombe	6
4 October	Our leaders invite you to a swingers' party	A. Anderson	17
5 October	Please fasten your safety belt for a mystery policy launch	T. Allard	6
7 October	Howard chips away in Tasmania	M. Metherell, S. Peating and A. Darby	1
7 October	Howard's forest plan splits factions	S. Peating and A. Darby	9
7 October	Liberal phone spam doesn't ring true, say unhappy targets	M. Seccombe and C. Marriner	11
8 October	The puppeteers carry the day	M. Seccombe	16
9/10 October	On the money	P. Hartcher	32
9/10 October	Clicking with voters	A. Loewenstein	33
11 October	Primary lessons for Latham.	A. Green	10

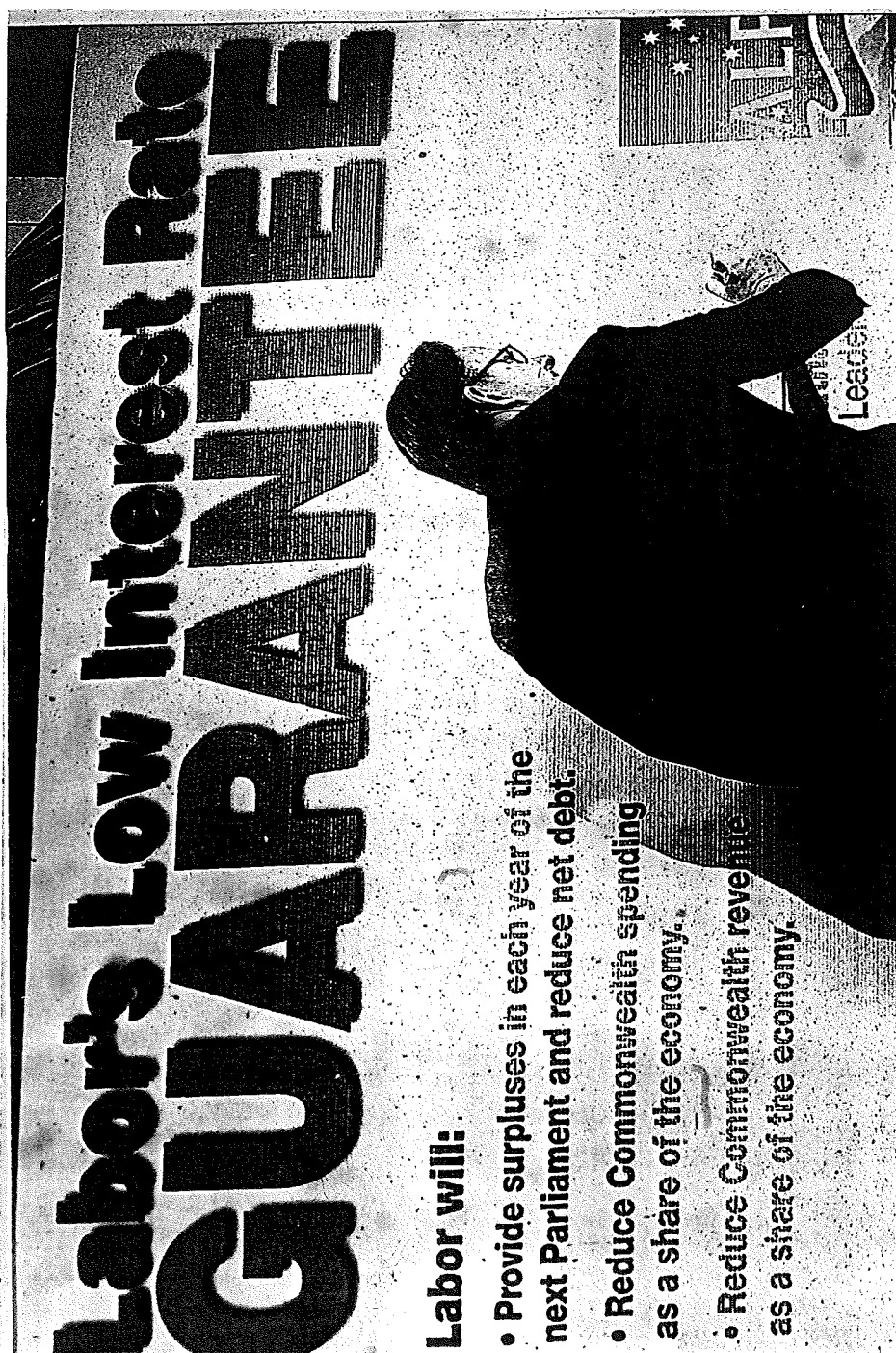
#### The Australian Financial Review

Date	Title	Reporter(s)	Page
30 August	Untried team sticks near home	M. Davis	S11
30 August	We've come a long way. There's no turning back	J. Howard	64
30 August	It's time to put back rungs in ladders of opportunity	M. Latham	64
31 August	Mogadon Man strays off-message	M. Davis	5
31 August	Mail-out to go ahead	S. Morris	8
1 September	Mind-altering battles	N. Shoebridge	61
6 September	Trust them: ad men come to the party	N. Shoebridge and R. Burbury	9
7 September	Labor stays mum even as Libs take to the airwaves	N. Shoebridge	10
9 September	Enough of the bribes, bring on the biff	D. Jaensch	63
10 September	Bomb will be a bigger test for Latham	L. Tingle	75
11/12 September	The labours of Mark Latham	L. Taylor	19



13 September	So much taken for granted, but no more	L. Tingle	6
13 September	Marketing the key to victory	R. Cameron	10
16 September	The unsubtle art of selling pollies	N. Shoebridge	11
16 September	Short-term equation fails endurance test	H. Morgan	63
20 September	True believer fights on his own terms	M. Davis	9
23 September	Mixed views on negative turn	N. Shoebridge	10
24 September	Dog whistle blows again	M. Davis	27
25/26 September	Labor is rubbing out the PM	J. Hewett	7
25/26 September	How they say it still counts	B. Pearson and A. Fabro	7
28 September	Aggressive turn in advertising strategy	N. Shoebridge	11
30 September	Lofty vision stirs true believers	J. Hewett	8
30 September	Janine speaks – ending a long tradition	J. Hewett	10
30 September	It's the message not just money	L. Taylor	12
4 October	Insulting our intelligence	G. Barker	54
5 October	Forests fig leaf could cost Latham dearly	L. Taylor	7
7 October	'We'll be steady and disciplined'	M. Davis and C. Murphy	8
8 October	One last, staid show of confidence	L. Taylor	15
8 October	Discretion a virtue for PM's pollster	M. Skulley	16
8 October	Ready steady: ALP leader is off 'L' plates	L. Taylor	S3
9/10 October	The hidden election campaign: what the voters never see	J. Hewett	20 and 21

Appendix C  
Labor Party campaign stunt: Low interest rate  
guarantee



# Labor's Low Interest Rate GUARANTEE

**Labor will:**

- Provide surpluses in each year of the next Parliament and reduce net debt.
- Reduce Commonwealth spending as a share of the economy.
- Reduce Commonwealth revenue as a share of the economy.

Leader

Source: *The Australian*, p.5. (2004, September 3).

Appendix D  
Liberal Party political advertisement: Mark Latham attack ad

**MAYOR LATHAM**

UP 17% UP 25% UP 60% UP 200% UP 45%

**Liverpool Rat... Car spa... UP TO 200% INCREASE IN FEES**

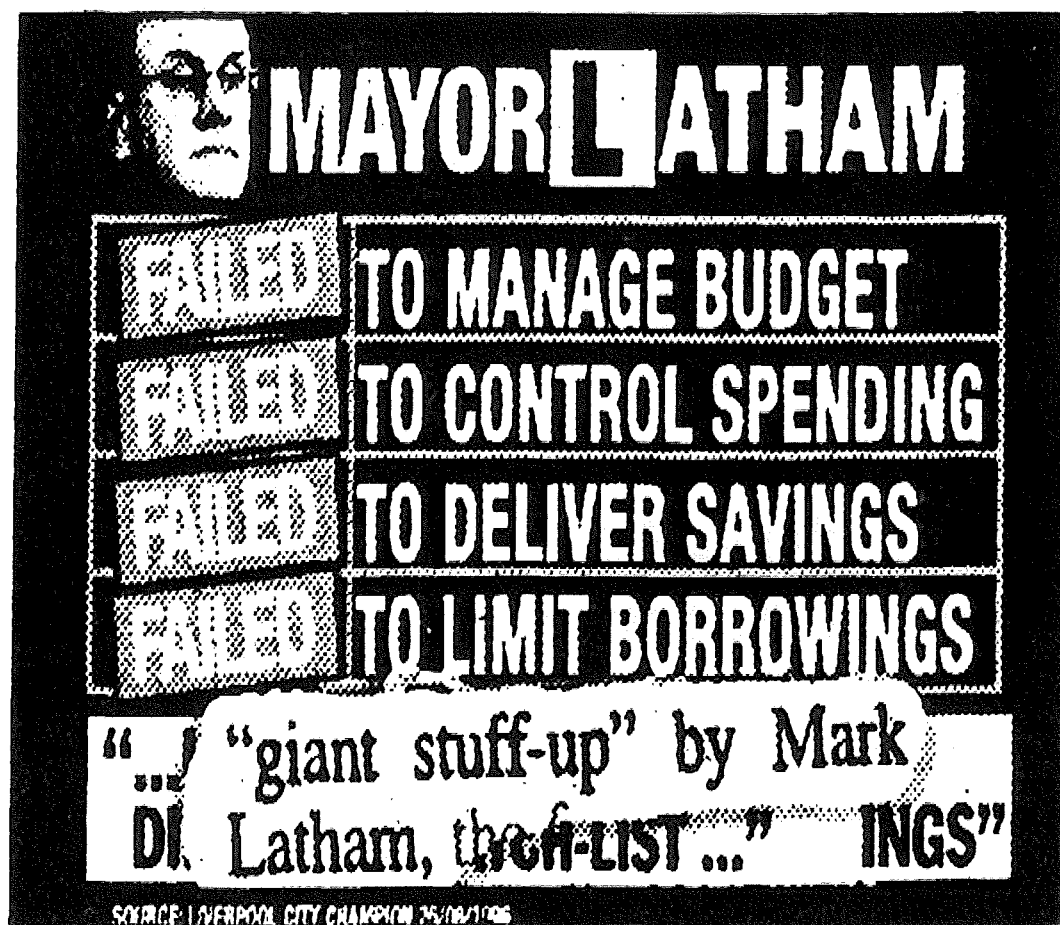
**Borrowing UP 45%** LIVERPOOL COUNCIL'S deficit could blow out to \$10 million

**...PUT LIVERPOOL COUNCIL ON A WATCH-LIST.**

SOURCE: LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL PRESS CIRCULAR 27 OF 04 AND TOS RESHMOY

Source: *The Australian*, p.8. (2004, September 20).

APPENDIX E  
Liberal Party political advertisement: Mayor Latham



A political advertisement for Mayor Latham. At the top left is a small, high-contrast black and white portrait of a man. To the right of the portrait, the name "MAYOR LATHAM" is written in large, bold, white capital letters on a black background. Below the name is a table with four rows. Each row has a shaded box on the left containing the word "FAILED" in white capital letters, and a black box on the right with white capital text. The rows are: "TO MANAGE BUDGET", "TO CONTROL SPENDING", "TO DELIVER SAVINGS", and "TO LIMIT BORROWINGS". Below the table is a white speech bubble containing the text: ".../ 'giant stuff-up' by Mark D. Latham, the f-LIST ..." followed by "INGS" in a larger font. At the bottom left of the advertisement, in small white capital letters, is the text: "SOURCE: / NEWPORT CITY CHAMPION 25/10/05".

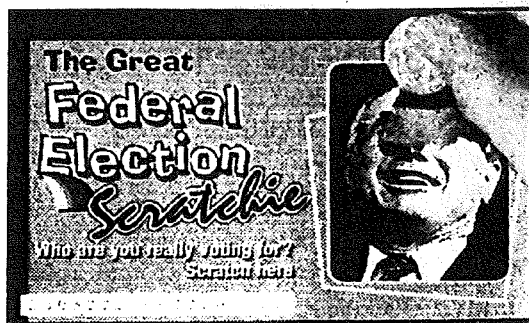
FAILED	TO MANAGE BUDGET
FAILED	TO CONTROL SPENDING
FAILED	TO DELIVER SAVINGS
FAILED	TO LIMIT BORROWINGS

".../ "giant stuff-up" by Mark D. Latham, the f-LIST ..." INGS"

SOURCE: / NEWPORT CITY CHAMPION 25/10/05

Source: *The Australian*, p.20 (2004, October 7)

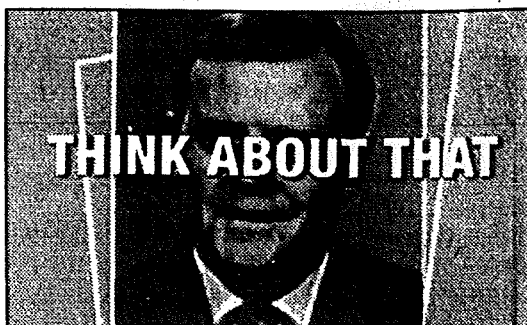
Appendix F  
Labor Party Political Advertisement: Scratchie Ad



Scratch off Mr Howard . . .

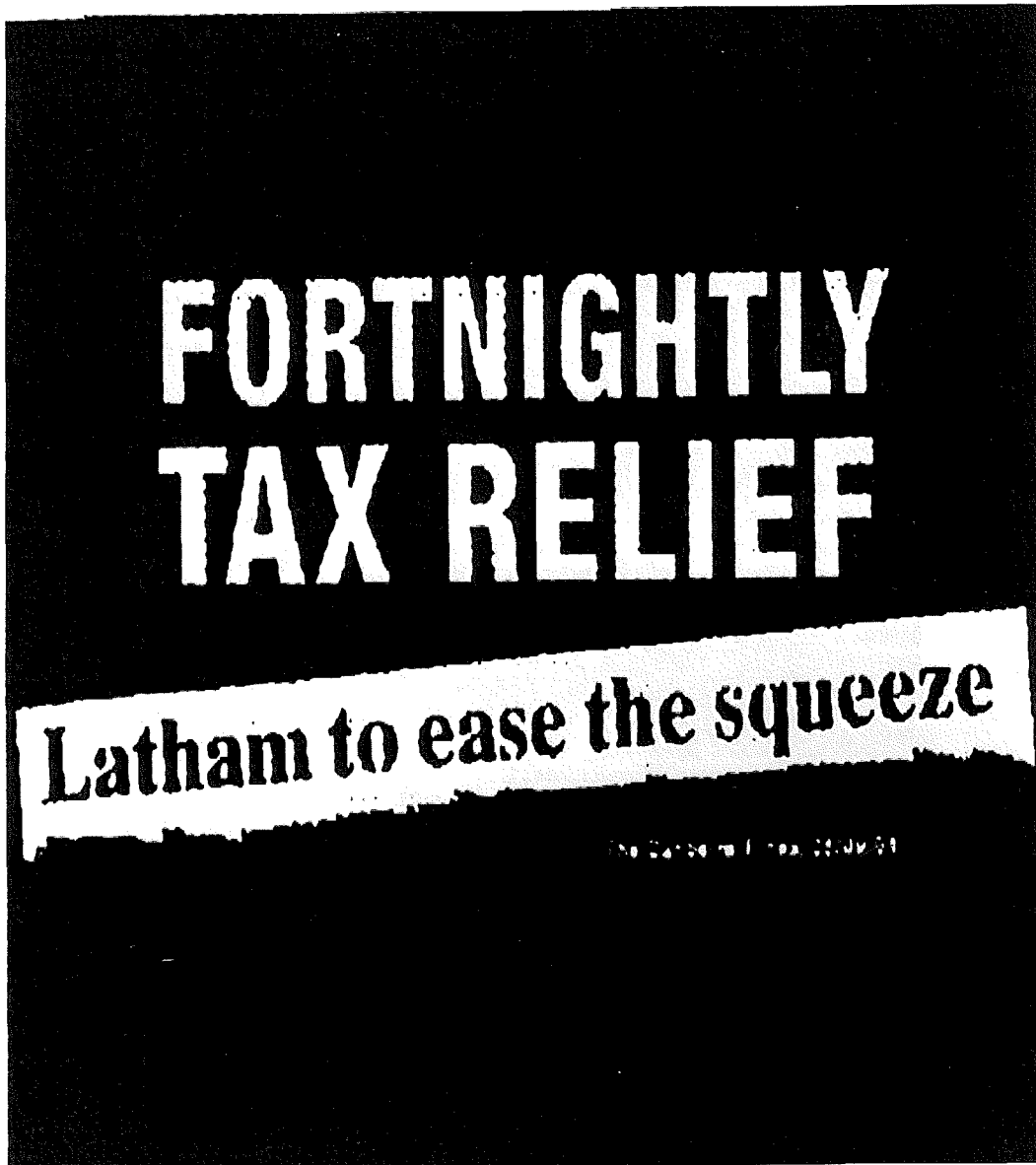


. . . and Mr Costello is revealed . . .



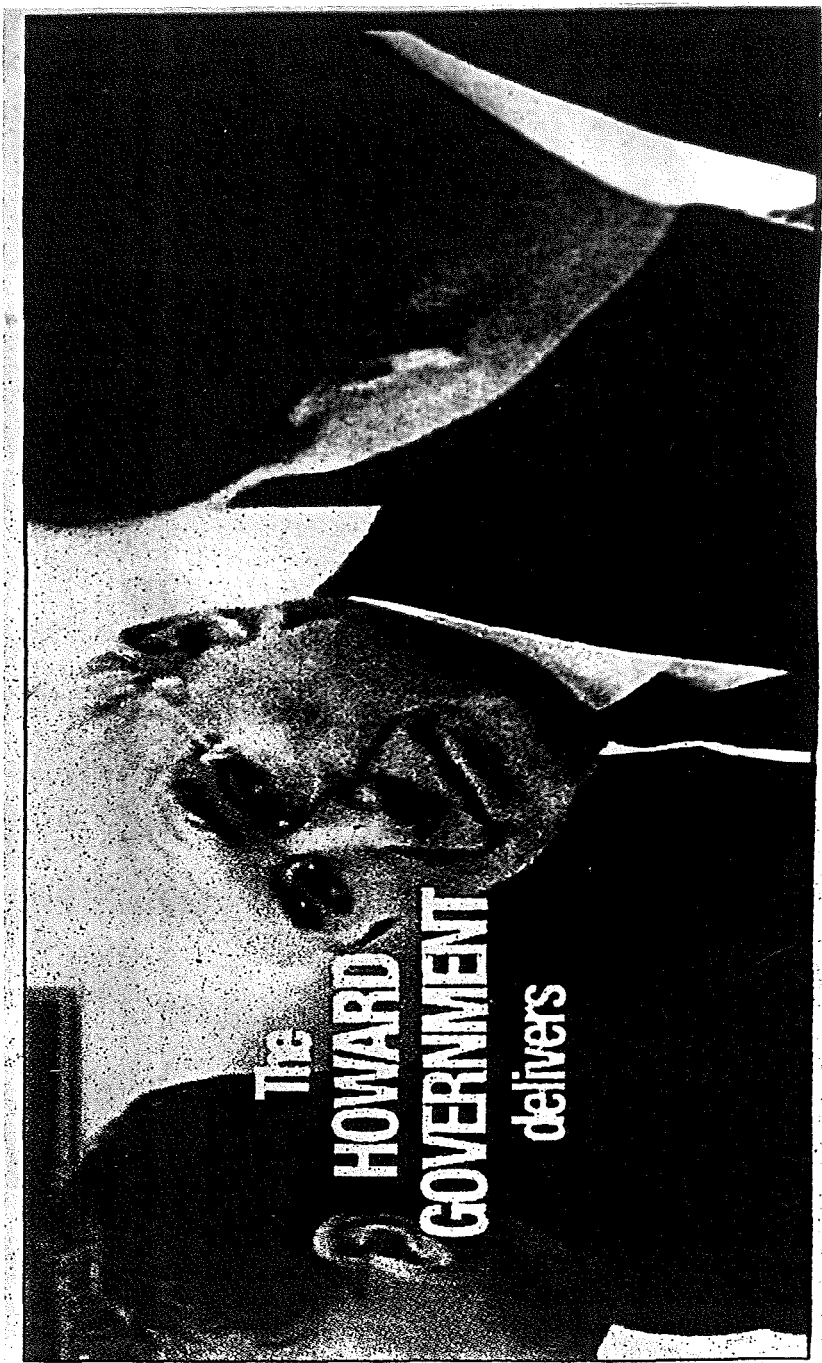
Source: *The Weekend Australian*, p.8 (2004, September 25/26).

Appendix G  
Labor Party Political Advertisement: Ease the Squeeze



Source: *The Australian Financial Review* p.11 (2004, September 16).

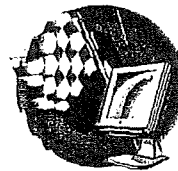
Appendix H  
Liberal Party Advertisement: The Howard Government delivers



Source: *The Australian*, p.7. (2004, September 1).

# Feedback 3

**Best  
Practice  
Tips  
for F3**



**FEEDBACK**

## Running Feedback

- All office staff should know how to use Feedback - training is paramount to understand the programme
- Feedback can be operated at all times of the day
- All workstations should have Feedback running and staff should enter data all day
- When working in other programmes minimise Feedback
- Ensure that constituents cannot read the computer screen if Feedback is open



## Feedback – Groups for Targeting



**FEEDBACK**

### HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING GROUPS IN YOUR ELECTORATE?

- ✓ Strong Liberals
- ✓ Strong Nationals
- ✓ Strong Labor (tagged as no future contact)
- ✓ Swinging voters
- ✓ Green/Democrat voters
- ✓ Party members, supporters and potential boothworkers
- ✓ Previous donors to the party/member's campaign
- ✓ People living near weak or swinging booths
- ✓ People living in specific streets, suburbs or towns
- ✓ People concerned about specific federal, state or local issues
- ✓ Census Collection Districts (CCDs)
- ✓ New enrollees - new elector letters
- ✓ Members of local industry or community groups

**If you can't tick all of these - you need  
to get busy with Feedback!!**

## Feedback Overview



**FEEDBACK**

### WHAT IS FEEDBACK - WHAT DOES IT PROVIDE?

Feedback is an electronic database of your electoral roll to which you can add information and notes about your electors. A Feedback package provides as standard:

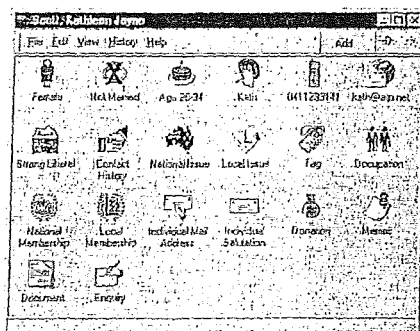
- ✓ Full name of every elector enrolled in your electorate
- ✓ Full address details
- ✓ Phone number, where matched with the White Pages
- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Date of Birth
- ✓ Occupation (where available)
- ✓ Monthly updates which add new electors and delete electors who have been removed from your roll
- ✓ Transfer of contact data when people change electorates
- ✓ Electors are rationalised into surname groups at an address for cost efficient mailing
- ✓ Feedback generates salutations for voters with the option to override a salutation
- ✓ Realignment of boundaries after redistribution
- ✓ A separate Community Database to store local organisations, sporting groups
- ✓ Telephone support
- ✓ Training and support for staff
- ✓ Regular *Tips of the Week*

## Appendix J Extract (on tagging) from the Feedback Training Manual

Every Constituent has a unique Feedback ID. This ID can be searched for by pressing F12 or by selecting Find, then Feedback ID from Edit on the main menu.

### Adding tags to a constituent

Double clicking on a constituent's name will take you into that person's Details Screen. This screen is where you Add, Edit and Delete information for the constituent. Here is an example of Kathleen Scott's well-tagged Details Screen:

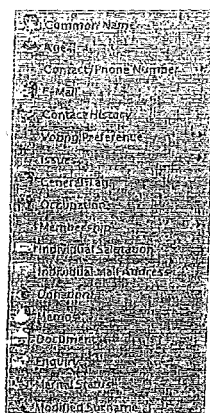


The toolbar at the top provides standard actions like Cut, Copy & Paste etc - as well as other features such as viewing Kathleen's enrolment history.

The up/down arrow buttons at the top right hand corner will move back and forth throughout all the constituents at the current address, repopulating the Details Screen for each different constituent.

#### How Do I Add a piece of Contact Data?

Simply click on the Add button in the Details Screen and you will get the following drop-down menu:



Click on the tag you wish to add and you will be taken into the relevant screen to add, edit or delete tags.

*Because the actual process of adding tags is very simple and self-explanatory, these notes do not cover the details of adding each individual tag.*

*However the following notes will help you add Individual Mail Addresses, Individual Salutations, Documents and Enquiries (these actions are a little more complex).*

Appendix K  
Confidential Letter to Liberal Party MP

**PRIVATE &  
CONFIDENTIAL**



[REDACTED]  
Federal Member for [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thankyou for your recent participation in the 2002 Feedback Stat Audit.

We were pleased to see that this year almost every office participated in the Audit and as a result we are in a good position to gauge the level of Feedback activity across all offices.

Across the nation, we have identified over 500,000 federal voting preferences of which over 106,000 have been identified as strong liberal and over 30,100 as strong National. More importantly we have identified over 203,000 swinging voters and 75,500 soft or minor party voters.

Across all users, the average number of voters identified as strong Liberal was 1,489. Amongst Liberal Party users that number rises to 1,802, whilst amongst users in New South Wales the number drops to 1,019. Your office has identified 1,366 Strong Liberal voters in the federal seat of Lindsay.

Across all Coalition users, the average number of swinging voters identified was 2,204 whilst Liberal users have identified 2,580 swinging voters on average. Your office has identified 1,232 swinging voters, and a further 224 soft voters: weak, persuadable or unknown Liberal Party or Labor Party voters, or else voters of the minor parties. It is important that soft voters are not neglected when you target your swinging voters, as these voters are also one of our key target groups. Ideally you will target this group with a different message, however if you chose to write to all soft-and-swinging voters collectively, your staff will need to use multiple report filters to ensure that all target voters hear from you over the course of the current term.

At this stage of the current term, your office should be aiming to increase the number of swinging and soft voters to at least 3,000 before the next election. With a margin of 0.055, these 3,000 voters could make a huge difference to the results of the next federal election.

The average number of issues identified across all federal Feedback users was over 18,355, whilst the average number across New South Wales was 25,488. Your office has identified [REDACTED]

Over the course of the current term your office should consider making use of these issues, informing voters of Federal Government initiatives in an area where you have identified they have an interest. These mailouts may be small in number but will

have a big impact in the long run. If your office doesn't already have a communications plan, or would like assistance in integrating Feedback into your existing Communications plan, I would be more than happy to assist you and your staff in this area.

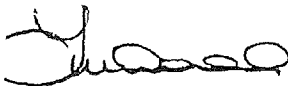
We have also scheduled a number of training courses in Canberra dealing with the Feedback package. These include Feedback training at beginner, introductory and advanced level and community database training. Your staff may benefit from attending one or all of these courses.

While Feedback is one of the greatest assets available to you as a member of the Coalition, its success or failure is a measure of the commitment in time and effort put into the program by you and your staff over the course of your term. In the long run, it will aid not just in your re-election, but also in the re-election or election of your Coalition colleagues. To that end, I would like to encourage you to continue the excellent work undertaken by your staff in the previous term.

If you have any comments on any of the contents of this letter, I would be more than happy to hear from you. Please feel free to contact either Damien Mantach or myself at the GMS on (02) 6277 7088 or on mobile 0409 563 660.

Again I thank you for your participation in the audit and I would encourage you to continue to support your staff in making Feedback a valuable part of your electoral office management.

Yours sincerely



**Lisa McDonald**  
Feedback Trainer

[Redacted]

Audit Summary:

	Average – Coalition users	Average – Liberal users	Average – NSW Coalition users	[Redacted]
Issues	18,355	19,399	12,275	[Redacted]
Strong Liberal	1,489	1,802	1,019	[Redacted]
Swingers	2,204	2,580	1,405	[Redacted]
Swingers + soft voters*	3,003	3,556	2,072	[Redacted]

(\*soft voters are all voters who are neither strong Liberal, strong National nor strong Labor voters)

**PRIVATE &  
CONFIDENTIAL**

Family Photo here



Candidate  
portrait  
here

### About {Candidate Name}

- Married to XXX and have X number of children, XXX, XXX, XXX.
- Lived in the electorate X years
- Has worked as XXX manager for XXX company.
- President of XXX
- Involved in XXX community group.
- Volunteer at XXX
- Actively involved in the community with XXX
- Experience in XXX
- Has a XXX University degree
- Awarded XXX for XXX

{Candidate Name} is a part of John Howard's Liberal team in {Electorate} that is committed to:

- ✓ Keeping interest rates low
- ✓ Strengthening Medicare
- ✓ Supporting older Australians
- ✓ Standards in schools
- ✓ Tough on Drugs
- ✓ More apprenticeships
- ✓ Supporting our Defence Forces
- ✓ New anti-terrorism laws
- ✓ Protecting our borders
- ✓ Providing safer roads
- ✓ Work for the Dole

Printed & authorised by and with the compliments of

{Candidate Name}

Liberal for {Electorate}

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Tel: 0000 0000 Fax: 0000 0000

Email: candidate@electorate.com.au

## Appendix L GMS Generic Brochure (2004 Election)

# {Candidate NAME}

Candidate Photo here

Liberal for {Electorate}



Candidate portrait  
photo here

**"We need to keep our economy strong  
so jobs are secure, interest rates are as  
low as possible and families can plan  
for the future with confidence."**

{Candidate Name}

### Keep our economy strong

is of responsible economic management by  
ard Government means Australia is now a more  
us and secure nation.  
e than 1.3 million new jobs have been created;  
employment is at twenty year lows;  
ne loan mortgage rates are at their lowest level  
generation; and  
e than \$70 billion of Labor's \$96 billion debt has  
in repaid.

r, we cannot take our economy for granted.

itinue the responsible economic management  
re Howard Government;  
port small businesses to create local jobs; and  
le new opportunities for Australian businesses  
oninuing to expand our international trade.  
ig our economy strong, we can make sure we  
er on our priorities for Australia, to deliver a  
ure nation, able to meet the challenges of the

### Protect the interests of Australians

- ▶ Bolster our defence forces with \$1.5 billion in new funding for new equipment and facilities; and
- ▶ Upgrade our intelligence services, invest in new technology and install new equipment to help further secure our borders against drug trafficking, terrorists and illegal entrants.

### Invest in our future generations

- ▶ Provide direct payments to families to assist with the cost of raising their children;

- ▶ Deliver a stronger Medicare that provides more doctors in areas of need, a reliable safety net for out of hospital expenses and increased incentives for bulk billing for children under 16 and Commonwealth Concession Card holders; and
- ▶ Retain the Howard Government's 30% rebate for private health insurance.

### Respect the needs of older Australians

- ▶ Continue the Senior Australians Tax Offset and access to the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card for independent retirees;
- ▶ Commit \$2.2 billion in new funds for aged care to provide new places and upgrade the standard of facilities; and
- ▶ Provide increased financial support for 'carers' and expand access to respite care.

### Release potential in our schools

- ▶ Dedicate new funding for values, civics and citizenship education in all schools;
- ▶ Ensure parents receive better information from schools about their children's education; and
- ▶ Increase overall funding for schools by over \$8 billion to \$32 billion for the next four years.

**{Candidate Name} – Liberal for {Electorate}**