

On the Effects of the Strength of Leaders in Political parties

Benoit S Y Crutzen

Erasmus Universiteit and Tinbergen Institute
Rotterdam

Sabine Flamand

Nova School of Business and Economics
Lisbon

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Abstract

We develop a formal theory of intraparty competition to analyze how the strength of party leaders impacts on their party's capacity to deliver a united front, a clear and coherent message to voters. The party leader and the followers have their own ideologic preferences and an exchange procedure governs intraparty relations between these agents. The leader is weak or strong. A strong leader biases the exchange towards their favorite ideology. A weak leader cannot bias this exchange. Activists are careerists or believers. Careerists care about receiving rewards that accrue to them only. Believers strive to obtain collective benefits, like the possibility of influencing the party manifesto. We show that only with careerists and a strong leader can the party generate a united front. We then use our findings to offer a novel rationale for the observed positive correlation between the presidentialization of politics and recent intraparty organizational changes.

1 Introduction

Parties wish to be as effective as possible in elections. This requires a coherent political platform that voters are willing to adhere to. Perhaps even more importantly, the key party representatives, be them the party leader, the other candidates or the party activists must be willing to defend and explain this platform and to behave in accordance with it.

Indeed and more than ever before, a clear and coherent communication strategy across all available media that strengthens the voters' understanding of what the party stands for – the *united front*, as we call it in our theory – is key for a party's success. Parties and their key representatives are under the scrutiny of all media at all times. Thus, whereas in the past the party leadership could perhaps control to a certain extent the communication between the party, its supporters and the electorate, such control has become harder in the last few years: the multiplication of the media and their tools implies that any dissenting voice or behavior will most likely be immediately caught by the media, and this can easily jeopardize the entire party strategy. What steps can parties take to improve on this situation then?

When one thinks about the communication between parties and the rest of society, it is clear that party leaders are the pivotal party member in this exercise, as they are the party member receiving most media attention. They are also the party representative who is supposed to lead and control all party troops. That party leaders are a focal point in elections (but not only) is certainly not a new phenomenon. Leaders such as Eisenhower, de Gaulle, Churchill or Thatcher are cases in point. Yet, such centrality has grown in the last few decades, among other things because of changes in information and communication technology. Aarts et al. (2011) provide empirical evidence that corroborates this. The evidence is consistent with the presidentialization thesis of Mughan (2000), which states that, even in non-presidential systems, party leaders have become the center of attention of voters and the media and thus any choice or action by these leaders has the potential of swaying important sections of the electorate against or in favour of their party.

A particularly important trait of leaders when it comes to electoral success seems to be their charisma, their character or popular appeal. For example, Campbell et al. (1960, p. 527) recognize that the personality and “popular appeal of Eisenhower was unquestionably of paramount importance” in the presidential election of 1956. Bittner (2011, p. 99), using data from 1968 to 2008 on 35 elections in 7 different countries, shows that the probability that voters leaning toward a party will vote for that party increases by between 43 and

70 percent if that party switches from a leader whose charisma and character are one standard deviation below the average to a leader whose charisma and character are one standard deviation above the average.¹

Yet, charismatic leaders may be an asset for their party not only because charisma is valued by voters, but also because, as explained by Northouse (2012, p. 3, *italic added*), leadership is a process whereby “an individual *influences* a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” – such as electoral victory – and conventional wisdom suggests that strong and charismatic leaders are typically more capable of influencing and controlling the party machine and their party fellows, thus ensuring that the party speaks with a clearer and more coherent voice. To exemplify, Labour’s landslide victory of 1997 is widely considered to have been facilitated by Tony Blair’s popularity and charisma. Yet Tony Blair quickly got to be described as a control freak who strived to mute all dissenting views and voices within his party: during the 1998 London mayorship campaign, Ken Livingstone, one of Labour’s candidates whom Tony Blair tried (in vain, as Livingstone eventually became London’s mayor) to prevent from running, famously said that the party vetting committee Blair had set up to screen Labour candidates was part of the “Dalek’s faction’s attempt to remove him from the mayoral race”.² But Tony Blair’s desire to have his party speak and behave in unison may not have been such a misguided idea. In introducing their informational theory about leadership, Dewan and Myatt (2007) state too that, referring to Tony Blair’s Labour party in the election of 1997, “a unified party could challenge for power; a split would have relegated the party to the wilderness.” Our theory aims to analyze exactly under what circumstances a party can indeed be unified behind their leader, especially if that leader is strong.

Another more recent example of this association between charisma and influence is Italy’s current Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, who is widely considered to be the most charismatic and popular politician of his generation: Fortune magazine³ puts him third in the group of the 40 most influential people under 40 years of age and a poll in early September 2014 showed that more than two out of three Italians were (very) satisfied about his leadership. This notwithstanding, he is also lively criticized within his own party (but not only) for having in his team followers whose views are (very) close to his and for going out of his way to ignore, sideline and mute the dissenting voices in his party. In this sense, charismatic leaders also tend

¹It is interesting to remark too that her findings suggest that a leader’s competence is (much!) less important than their charisma and character in swaying voters.

²See The Economist, Nov 12 1998.

³See www.fortune.com/tag/40-under40.

typically to exert a strong influence on their party's stance.⁴

A priori intuition suggests that strong and charismatic leaders should be more capable than weak leaders of making their party appear as cohesive. Yet, is this actually and always the case? After all, if charismatic leaders exert a stronger influence on their party's stance, the different activists, representatives and factions present within the party will react differently to the advent of such a strong leader. Those activists who are ideologically closer to the leader may believe they will be given more prominence by their leader, all else equal, which may push them to be either more active inside their party, or perhaps slack off as they now know that they enjoy an advantage over the other activists whose preferences are less aligned with the leader. And how will the activists who are less in unison with the leader react? They may fear being sidelined, which may push them to multiply their efforts to compensate for their disadvantage; or, perhaps, they will indeed give in to their fear and give up on their quest to influence the decisions of the leader. Thus, the mapping from the strength of the party leader to the distribution of choices and actions of the different activists, and thus to the image the party gives to voters, appears not to be straightforward. In a nutshell, if strength and charisma are typically depicted as electoral assets in the literature, we wish to remark that there may also be an intraparty dark side to this force. To the best of our knowledge, this mapping has not been analyzed so far. We aim to fill this gap with our theory. Further, we also aim to understand how the reaction of the activists to their leader being strong or weak depends on the type of activist we consider.

Turning to the model we develop, we study a game between the party leader and the different activists. The leader wants the party activists to engage in the necessary party-wide activities – what we call party work – that are valuable (electorally, but not only) to the whole party: party work is the set of actions activists will carry out for their party and in their party's name. In exchange for their contributions to party work, the leader offers a set of rewards. As explained vividly by Panebianco (1988) and others, the activists' participation in party work must indeed be governed by a process of exchange as party work conflicts, at least potentially, with the activists' own individual goals and activities.

The way we model the exchange between the leader and the activists involves some specificities that are worth highlighting. First, and consistently with the above remarks and real world accounts, we assume that strong leaders bias the exchange in favor of the activists who are closest to them ideologically, whereas weak

⁴How could a leader be qualified as strong if they cannot manage to control their party? Indeed, such party cacophony would inevitably end up weakening electorally the leader. Recent works in the economics literature have shown that visionary CEO's also tend to influence the strategic choices of the organizations they lead; see for example Rotemberg and Saloner (2000).

leaders do not manage to bias this exchange to their liking, so that all activists are on an equal footing.

Secondly, following Downs (1957), Wittman (1977), Panebianco (1988) and Wilson (1974), we split the population of party activists into two types, namely careerists and believers. To be precise, careerists include factions of *interest* (to use the terminology of Bettcher (2005)) and individuals who are mainly driven by the prospect of obtaining what Panebianco (1988) and Wilson (1974) call *selective benefits*. These are rewards that accrue only to the careerist who obtains them. An obvious example of such a benefit is party funds. Indeed, in most advanced democracies, parties receive or control (public or private) funds to help them finance their activities and strategies and implement their policies. A large part of these funds is distributed by the party leadership to the different factions and activists, for instance to let legislators carry out their work effectively and distribute pork to their local constituencies and to let factions of interest maintain and develop their particularistic goals and activities. Factions of interest and other careerists thus compete for these funds, and it is only too logical to conclude that such competition can and should be expected to be used by the party leadership to influence the participation of careerists in party work in its attempt to form a united front.⁵ What we just said also implies that careerists care only about how the other careerists present in the exchange influence their chances of obtaining any selective benefit. The actual identity and thus ideologic color of the other careerists is of no *direct* interest to them. Nevertheless, the set of careerists who participate in the exchange with the leader is thus of interest to the party. Indeed, as careerists will use the funds they receive for activities that should be expected to have an ideologic color equal or at least close to their own, the distribution of this set of rewards will also influence how well the party presents itself in front of voters with a united front.

The group of believers is made of factions of *principle* (again using the terminology of Bettcher (2005)) and individuals who are mainly driven by the prospect of obtaining what Panebianco (1988) and Wilson (1974) call *collective benefits*. These are rewards that have to do with the overall appearance and stance of the party. A typical collective benefit is therefore the possibility of influencing the party manifesto. Believers thus understand that the set of activists who are present in their exchange with the leader determines the

⁵The U.S. is a notable exception here, as there is no public funding of parties and a large share of the private funds flowing into the political arena accrues directly to individuals. Readers should then think of the rewards the leadership can use as being the important positions in government, the legislature or elsewhere that need to be distributed to the different key actors within the two main U.S. parties. Earmarks were funds that used to play an important role in the leadership-representatives exchange, as Herlem (2014) shows forcefully, but these have been abolished in 2012. That earmarks were part of the ‘grease’ the party leadership used to exploit in its exchange with the other representatives is exemplified by the following 2012 statement by John Boehner, Speaker of the US House of Representatives: “No earmarks. [...] It’s made my job a lot more difficult in terms of how to pass important legislation because there’s no – there’s no grease. I got no – no grease.”

global shape, the global stance of the party message to the electorate and its supporters. Hence, and contrary to careerists, believers do care about the identity of other believers present in the exchange. Also, and as was the case for careerists, the distribution of influence and party work contribution among the different believers present in their exchange with the leader will determine how focused and coherent the party message stemming from this exchange will be. Turning to our results, we first solve for the contribution to party work careerists choose when their leader is weak or strong and contrast their equilibrium behavior under these two leadership scenarios in terms of 1) the distribution of individual contributions to party work; 2) participation – how many activists participate in party work; and 3) fairness – are the careerists who are more devoted to party work being rewarded more?

Starting with the level and distribution of the careerists' participation in party work, we prove that only when the leadership is strong do the different choices and actions of the careerists generate what we label an electorally advantageous *united front*. Indeed, when the party leader is strong, we have that the contribution to party work of the different careerists is larger the closer ideologically a careerist is to the leader; further, the careerists who are closest to the strong leader also typically contribute more to party work than what they would have decided to do had the leader been weak, whereas the careerists who are furthest away from the strong leader contribute less (or not at all) compared to what they would do under a weak leadership. Thus, when activists are careerists, not only does a strong leader typically boost the participation of their closest allies, but they somehow also push their potential intraparty dissenters to refrain from voicing their different views too loudly. This implies that party work with a strong leader and careerists is ideologically focused and coherent.⁶ Further, the distribution of rewards always follows the distribution of party work contributions. Thus, as the different careerists use the funds they receive to finance activities that have an ideologic color that they agree with, the presence of a strong leader also implies that the use of such funds will be ideologically coherent and focused too.

Finally, as activists who contribute more to party work are also rewarded more, the move from a weak to a strong leader does not generate any excessive feelings of unfairness in the party funds exchange between the leadership and the careerists: all followers understand and see that the way funds are distributed among them is based on party work.⁷

⁶When the leadership is weak, no united front can be generated as careerists of too different an ideology contribute equally to party work.

⁷With a strong leader, careerists closer to the leader do receive more funds, but they also contribute more.

All in all, strong leaders are a double asset for parties when activists are careerists because leaders are electorally valuable themselves and they create a cohesive and consonant supporting team behind them – what we coined the *united front*.

What about believers? With believers the party cannot generate a united front as the believers who are closer to the leader typically participate less in party work than those who are further away ideologically, making party work incoherent and unfocused. Further, looking at the distribution of party manifesto influence across the different believers, we also find that the electorate could wonder about the merits of voting for an apparently incoherent party, as the political projects that make it into the manifesto are not always of close ideologic colors.

To make matters even worse, if the exchange with believers turns out to be fair when the leader is weak, it becomes relatively unfair when the leader is strong: it is always the active follower who is closest to the leader who is granted the most influence on the manifesto, even though this activist is never the one who is contributing most to party work. Thus intraparty tensions will certainly surface among believers, thereby weakening further the party's electoral appeal.

We then use these results to offer a novel rationale behind the observed twin evolution of party choices when it comes to their leadership styles – the presidentialization of politics thesis – and the selection of those activists who will be in charge of selling the party's views and stance to the electorate. Given that a strong leadership generates a united front with careerists but not with believers and that the exchange remains fair with careerists but (much) less so with believers, our theory suggests that, as the benefits of having a strong leader and showing a united front increased – for example because of innovations in information and communication technology – parties may have had an incentive to allocate their key positions to careerists – what Linz (2002) calls the professionalization of politics.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. The next section reviews the relevant literature. Section 3 introduces our formal model, Sections 4 and 5 solve for the equilibrium of the game for careerists and believers respectively. Section 6 discusses our findings and their implications. The last section concludes and offers avenues for further research. The appendix contains all proofs.

2 Related Literature

The main contribution of our work is to offer a formal model to analyze how the presence of a strong leader impacts on the incentives of factions and activists to participate in partywide work, be they careerists or believers, and on the party's capacity to appear in front of its polity with a united front, that is, a clear, focused and coherent political program.

We view a party as an organization composed of multiple actors with distinct, individual objectives. This view and our desire to understand the intra-party determinants of the individual choices of the key party members and their impact on the electoral appeal of the party and its platform relates to Caillaud and Tirole (1999, 2002), Snyder Jr and Ting (2002), Adams and Merrill (2008), Patty (2008), Crutzen et al. (2010) and Serra (2011), among others, and extends this growing literature to the analysis of the effects of leadership strength.

Our distinction between the two main types of party activists borrows from the terminology of Panebianco (1988) and Bettcher (2005) and complements the formal theories of Persico et al. (2011) and Dewan and Squintani (2012) in that, if these previous works focused on the role of factions in the determination of party choices, we focus on the role of the party leader's strength.

Our findings concerning the impact of the increased presidentialization of politics in the last few decades – as documented by Swanson and Mancini (1996), Schmitt-Beck and Farrell (2002), Samuels and Shugart (2010), Aarts et al. (2011) and Bittner (2011), among others – on the professionalization of politics also offer a novel rationale for the thesis and the findings of Katz and Mair (1995, 2003) according to which parties who were previously populated mainly by believers – such as several Green parties throughout several European parliamentary democracies – had to allow the share of careerists to grow once these parties mutated from anti-establishment to government parties. In this sense, our theory also contributes to the literature on party organization and party change.

Our modelling philosophy concerning the exchange between activists and the leadership borrows from the economics literature on contests, which is typically employed to model multi-person competitions for a prize, and which originates back to the classical work of Tullock (1980) and the literature that has grown subsequently. See Konrad (2009) and Corchón (2007) for recent surveys of this literature.

Finally, our thesis regarding the benefits a party may derive from being able to offer voters a united front behind its leader complements the thesis of Dewan and Myatt (2007, 2008, 2012) regarding the benefits

to activists of having a leader to guide them in their choices. As Dewan and Myatt (2012, p. 20) report: “followers would like to do the right thing and do it together, but are incompletely informed; [a strong] leadership allows them to make informed choices and to coordinate”. We complement their analysis by showing under what circumstances a strong leadership can generate another key electoral benefit to the party, the united front, as this front allows the electorate to have a clearer idea of what each party stands for.

3 The Model

The game we consider is one between the party leader and the key party activists and representatives who interact with the electorate and civil society at large in an attempt to create and maintain support for the party and its cause. The party wishes to see these key followers devote time and energy to such party work, that is, to any activity that allows followers to explain, defend and publicize the party line, for example when fundraising and competing in the electoral contest or when participating in the legislative and executive processes. The leader thus engages in an exchange with the followers, to motivate the latter to contribute to party work.

Followers are either careerists who care about receiving personal rewards – such as party funds – in exchange for party work – these are Panebianco’s (1988) selective benefits – or believers who care about influencing the party ideologic platform – Panebianco’s (1988) collective benefits. The party thus runs two exchanges (one for careerists and one for believers), offering party funds and ideologic influence in return for party work.⁸ Party work is obviously costly to activists: as they also belong to party factions or other groups and can also have their own local constituencies to cater to, they would rather devote (more of) their time and energy to faction-specific activities or their local constituency matters. This is why the party needs to offer them rewards in return for party work. Let there be three careerists and three believers in the party.⁹ As the contests between careerists and believers are distinct, we can index both careerists and

⁸We wish to stress that we split the exchange between the leader and the followers into two different contests for the sake of expositional ease only. Indeed, as the rewards available to careerists and believers differ, the choices of one set of activists does not influence directly the choices of the other set of followers. Thus there is no real loss of generality in splitting the exchange the way we do. To exemplify, our strategy is similar to that of works examining electoral forces under plurality rule in single-member districts: voters and candidates in a district may care about what is going on in other districts, but they cannot do anything about this as they can only influence the outcome in their district. Thus focusing on their options in their district is the only rational thing to do.

⁹In the Discussion section, we analyze the consequences of increasing the number of activists.

believers with the same index, to save on notation. Let these indices be A , B and C .

The bliss ideologic position of the leader is the party electoral platform before the leader opens it to influence.¹⁰ This (initial) party position can be anywhere on the $[0,1]$ segment of the real numbers. As the results of our analysis are symmetric depending on whether the bliss ideologic position of the leader is located somewhere in $[0, 1/2]$ or $[1/2, 1]$, we focus below on the case of $L \in [0, 1/2]$.

On top of defining initially the current party platform, the leader can be weak or strong. Parties compete in an electoral system where a strong, charismatic party-wide leader is an electoral advantage.¹¹ Yet, the strength of a leader could also have a dark side: as a strong leader also influences, biases the exchange with activists to the advantage of those activists who are ideologically closer to them, intraparty work, which is also essential for a party to survive and thrive in the political arena, may suffer. Parties may then have to trade off the purely electoral benefits of having a strong leader with the potentially negative, party work related effects a strong leader has on activists. The potential existence of this trade off and the effects of leadership strength on the choices of activists are the focus of this paper.

The bliss ideologic positions of the three careerists or believers are such that A 's ideologic position is in 0, C 's position is in 1 and B can be located anywhere between 0 and 1.¹² In the spirit of Tullock (1980), the mapping governing the exchange from party work to the individual shares of the party funds or the individual impacts on the party manifesto is given by the following standard imperfectly discriminating contest success function:

$$Sh_i = \frac{b_i w_i}{\sum_{j=A,B,C} b_j w_j}$$

where Sh_i is activist i 's share of party funds or party manifesto influence and where the different b_i 's are the weights the leader uses in evaluating each activist's contribution to party work. All weights are between zero and one. The closer to one is b_i , the more the leader favors activist i .

More precisely, if the leader is weak, the exchange with activists is unbiased and thus $b_i = 1$ for all $i = A, B, C$. If the leader is strong, the exchange is biased and the biases the leader uses are given by one

¹⁰Even though we do not model this stage of the game, the party thus selects its leader keeping in mind the ideologic colour of the likely median voter of the next election.

¹¹See, for example, Zudenkova (2011), for a formal theory of leaders generating such an advantage.

¹²Obviously, careerists are modelled as not caring about ideology *per se*, but their ideologic bliss points determine the biases strong leaders will discount their party work contribution with. Also, the activities these careerists finance with the party funds they receive obviously have their ideologic color.

minus the Euclidean distance between the leader's bliss point and that of any activist:¹³

- If $B \geq L$, then:

$$\begin{aligned} b_A &= 1 - L \\ b_B &= 1 - B + L \\ b_C &= L \end{aligned}$$

- If $B < L$, then:

$$\begin{aligned} b_A &= 1 - L \\ b_B &= 1 - L + B \\ b_C &= L \end{aligned}$$

Let V denote the party funds available to careerists. In line with the available empirical evidence,¹⁴ we view these funds as being determined mainly by the party's performance at the previous election, and thus careerists realize that their choices regarding their current contribution to party work cannot influence the value of V , which is predetermined at the moment they make their choice. Also, we make the conservative assumption that the leader's type does not influence V .¹⁵

Given this, a careerist politician $i = A, B, C$ solves:

$$\max_{w_i} \frac{b_i w_i}{\sum_{j=A,B,C} b_j w_j} V - w_i \quad (1)$$

where the second, negative term in the objective function of careerist i stands for the cost of participating in party work.¹⁶

Turning to the reward available to *believers*, it is given by the possibility of influencing (a part of) the party manifesto. Let I be the share of the manifesto that the leadership decides to leave open to influence

¹³Allowing the biases to be (moderately) concave or convex functions of these distances does not alter qualitatively our results.

¹⁴See for instance IDEA (2003).

¹⁵Assuming that the amount of available party funds under a strong leader is at least as large as that available under a weak leader reinforces all the results that follow.

¹⁶This objective function is the standard function used in the literature on contests.

by believers. The contest success function governing the exchange between believers and the leader then determines the share of I a believer is allowed to craft to their wishes. Again, we do not take a strong stance on how leadership strength impacts on the share of the manifesto that is open to influence: in what follows I is independent of the leader's type.¹⁷

Contrary to careerists, believers, as they care about the overall ideological stance of the party, also care about how the other believers influence the party manifesto. And, logically, any believer would rather see believers who are ideologically close to them influence the manifesto. Thus, for believers, the objective function takes into account the influence of other believers, and the weight attached to each of the other believers' influence is decreasing in the (Euclidean) ideologic distance between them and these other believers. This implies that a believer $i = A, B, C$ solves:

$$\max_{w_i} \frac{b_i w_i}{\sum_m b_m w_m} I + (1 - d_{ij}) \frac{b_j w_j}{\sum_m b_m w_m} I + (1 - d_{ik}) \frac{b_k w_k}{\sum_m b_m w_m} I - w_i \quad (2)$$

where $d_{AC} = 1$, $d_{AB} = B$, $d_{BC} = 1 - B$.

4 Equilibrium Careerist Behavior

Suppose first that the leader is weak and thus the exchange procedure for the allocation of the party funds is unbiased: all careerists compete for the funds on an equal footing. In such case, each contestant's share of the funds is exactly proportional to their contribution to party work:

$$Sh_i = \frac{w_i}{\sum_j w_j} \quad (3)$$

In this case, equilibrium behavior is symmetric across the three careerists, as each of them contributes equally to party work and receives the same share of party funds:

Proposition 1. *Suppose the leader is weak so that the exchange with careerists is unbiased. Then, for all $i = A, B, C$, it holds that:*

- $w_i^* = \frac{2V}{9}$

¹⁷Assuming that a weak leader opens to influence at least as large a share of the manifesto as a strong leader, which would seem the obvious assumption to make in case we wish I to depend on L , reinforces all the results that follow.

- $Sh_i^* = \frac{1}{3}$

Thus the exchange between a weak leader and careerists reduces to a standard Tullock (1980) contest with identical players, in which the contribution to party work in equilibrium is increasing in the value of the available reward and decreasing in the number of participants in the contest. Also, as each careerist receives the same share of party funds, the exchange with the party leadership has the advantage of being totally fair. Yet, as the contribution to party work and the use of the party funds by every careerist will obviously have an ideologic color that corresponds to their own, such uniform participation by all careerists is unlikely to deliver a very focused and coherent party message and image.

Can the party deliver a more focused message and image when the leader is strong? With a strong leader, the exchange procedure is biased towards those activists who are closer to the leader, and equilibrium behavior across careerists is more involved. First of all, when one of the three careerists is ideologically too far from both the leader and the other two careerists, this isolated activist decides not to contribute to party work and thus only two out of three careerists work for the party. The intuition for why this isolated activist decides to drop out of the exchange is quite simply that they feel that the procedure is so biased against them that there is no point in participating in it. Further, whenever one activist does not participate in party work, the two active activists behave symmetrically, even though they are subject to different biases in the exchange procedure. This implies in turn that the active careerist who obtains the largest share of the party funds is the one whose bliss ideologic point is the closest to the one of the leader. We thus have:

Proposition 2. *Suppose the leader is strong. In any equilibrium in which only careerists i and j contribute to party work, it holds that:*

- $w_i^* = w_j^* = \frac{b_i b_j}{(b_i + b_j)^2} V$
- $Sh_i^* > Sh_j^*$ if and only if $d_{Li} < d_{Lj}$

Examining the above level of the contribution to party work by the two active activists, it is easy to check that this is either higher or lower than what the activists choose to contribute to when the leader is weak (namely $2V/9$). We return to this important point below, when we derive Proposition 4.

What if the positions of the three careerists and the leader are such that the three activists actively participate in party work? Then we have the following equilibrium party work choices and party fund

shares:¹⁸

Proposition 3. *Suppose the leader is strong. When all three careerists participate in equilibrium in party work, we have:*

1. *If B is closer to L than A (namely if $B < 2L$), then B participates most actively in party work, followed by A and then C: $w_B^* > w_A^* > w_C^*$; further, B also receives the largest share of party funds, followed again by A and then C: $Sh_B^* > Sh_A^* > Sh_C^*$*
2. *If B is further away from L than A (namely if $B > 2L$), then A participates most actively in party work, followed by B and then C: $w_A^* > w_B^* > w_C^*$; further, A also receives the largest share of party funds, followed again by B and then C: $Sh_A^* > Sh_B^* > Sh_C^*$*

Figure 1 below depicts all the equilibria of the exchange with the careerists as a function of the ideologic position of B and L.

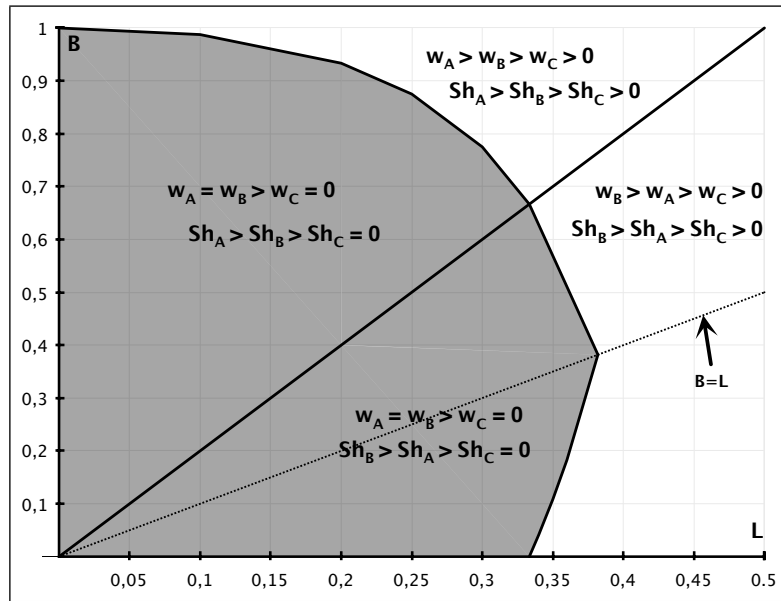


Figure 1: Party Work Contributions and Fund Shares of Careerists

¹⁸In the proof of this proposition in the Appendix, we pin down precisely all parameter configurations leading to all candidates participating in party work.

An intuition for the shapes and locations of the areas where C , the careerist furthest away from L , is inactive is as follows. Remember that careerists only care about the share of party funds they will manage to obtain. Imagine that L is close to A , in 0.2, say, and so is B , in 0.3 say. Then C has a very low probability of receiving any funds because of his very low bias and the large biases that both A and B enjoy. As party work participation is costly to C , C is better off dropping out of the exchange. Now move B closer to C and further away from L , keeping all else equal. Then the share of funds C can hope to obtain increases because the leader favors B less and C (and A) relatively more (the bias of B decreases hence the expected share of funds of C increases because of the decrease in the denominator of Sh_C). Hence, as B gets closer to C , there can be a position of B beyond which C starts to participate in the exchange.

Let us now turn to the intuition for why the grey set has a missile-like shape. Focus on the area in the figure with L around 0.35. Start from a point where all three careerists are active, say at B in 0.9. Then, as B gets closer and closer to L , B 's expected share of party funds increases, to reach a pinnacle for $B=L$. This must depress (A 's and) C 's incentives to participate in the exchange (or more generally the incentives of the careerist who is furthest from L) which implies that there can be an area around L such that C does not participate.

Now that we have all the pieces of the puzzle at hand, we can turn to the main question of interest, namely the analysis of the effects of having a strong versus weak leader. We can combine propositions 1 to 3 above to conclude that having a strong leader allows the party to speak more clearly and show more unity behind its leader, that is, the party can show a stronger *united front*. Indeed, define the united front as a location configuration for the three activists and the leader such that 1) activists who are closer ideologically to the leader contribute more than activists who are further away from the leader; and 2) a majority of activists contributes more to the party cause under a strong than a weak leader.¹⁹ Then only in the shaded areas of Figure 2 below can the party not achieve such a united front.²⁰ Yet, the existence of these shaded areas should not be a matter of high concern for the party. Indeed, for any given ideologic position of its careerists, the party can always select a strong leader in such a way that the united front is ensured, that is, that 1) the party ensures that a majority of activists who are closest to the leader – namely A and B –

¹⁹It is easy to check that using a stricter definition of the united front that relies on both the different activists' participation in party work (which is the definition used in the main text) and the rewards they obtain from the exchange does not change any of the results that follow. For ease of exposition, in what follows, we thus focus on party work contributions only.

²⁰The figure is drawn under the conservative assumption that the size of available party funds is independent of the leader's type. Letting these funds grow with the strength of the leadership would reinforce our results, obviously.

contributes more to party work than what they would have decided to do had the leader been weak; and 2) the distribution of party work follows ideologic proximity to the leader. We thus have:

Proposition 4. *Suppose the leader is strong. For any position of B, there always exists a strictly non-empty range of positions for the party leader L such that the united front is ensured.*

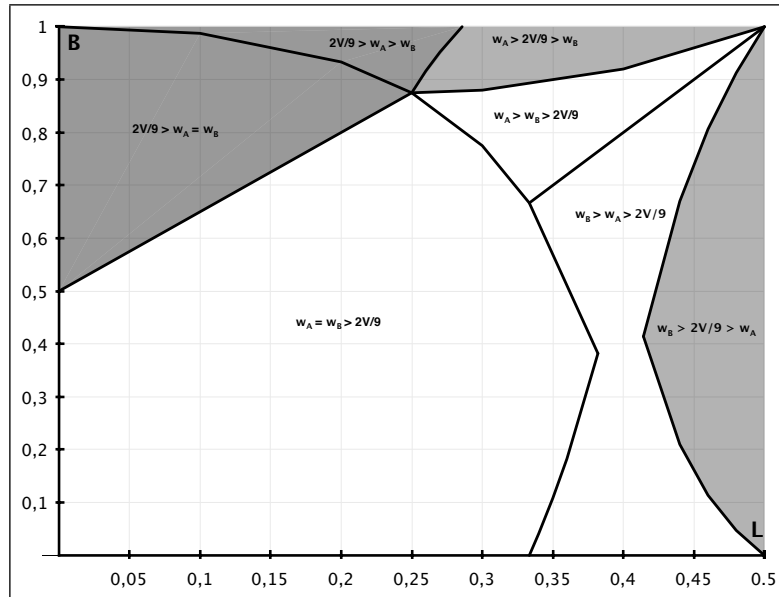


Figure 2: The United Front for Careerists

Why should the possibility of creating such a united front be important? Because a united front implies that both party work and the use active careerists make of the funds they receive are in sync with the party leader’s ideologic views. Thus, the party gives voters a clear sense of the direction that the party has taken or wishes to take – This is Tony Blair’s *New Labour*, to use again U.K.’s Labour party as an example. In this sense, our findings complement those of Dewan and Myatt (2007, 2008, 2012): in their model the leader provides a sense of direction to *their careerists* in a world where activists are ill-informed about where to go; in our model the (strong) leader provides *voters* with a sense of direction about where that party intends to go, by shaping the party work choices of its different key careerists.

The flip side of the fact that strong leaders generate a united front behind them is that they may push some careerists, namely those who are furthest ideologically from the leader, to decide not to contribute to party work: in Figure 1 above, *C* does not participate in party work whenever *B* and *L* are such that we are in the shaded area. Thus the party may find itself in need to balance its desire to chose a leader whose

ideologic color is in line with the bulk of the electorate with the need to ensure that its activists contribute to party work. Yet, as long as the party's choice regarding the ideologic color of the current leader is a response to the current preferences of the electorate, the possibility that certain careerists decide not to participate in the exchange is no cause for concern. Indeed, at the next election with a new leader, these same careerists may become the ones who are ideologically closest to the leader. Thus, just like parties and voters accept that political alternation is a defining characteristic of a well functioning democracy, activists should have no problem accepting that leadership alternation is a defining characteristic of a democratic party. The ideologic swings U.K.'s Labour exhibited when it switched from John Smith to Tony Blair (and Gordon Brown) to the current leader Ed Milliband are a prominent example of this type of intraparty ideologic alternation.

Finally, there are three cases to consider when examining the fairness of the mapping from party work contributions to fund shares. First, if the leader is weak, then all activists contribute equally and receive the same fund shares. Thus in this case the exchange is fully fair. Second, when the leader is strong and biased, C may or may not contribute to party work. If C does not contribute, then A and B contribute equally but the activist who is closest to L receives more funds. In this sense, the exchange is no longer fully fair, but nor is it totally unfair. If C contributes, then the orderings of party work contributions and of fund shares always coincide, ensuring that the exchange remains fair in this sense. We thus have:

Proposition 5. *With careerists, the exchange always remains fair: activists who participate more in party work receive more funds.*

All in all, the analysis of the exchange between the leader and the followers when these are careerists teaches us that strong leaders are a double asset for their party: voters value strong leaders, and strong leaders generate a united front behind them. Now, we turn to the analysis of the exchange with believers.

5 Equilibrium Believer Behavior

How do believers behave when their leader is weak and thus the exchange is unbiased? Then believers are all on an equal footing but these activists also care about how their fellow believers influence the manifesto, so we should expect believers' behavior not to be symmetric even when the exchange is unbiased. Indeed, when the leader is weak and thus the exchange is unbiased, we have:

Proposition 6. *Suppose the leader is weak so that the exchange with believers is unbiased. Then, in equilibrium we have:*

- $w_A^* = w_C^* = \frac{I}{4}$ and $w_B^* = 0$
- $Sh_A^* = Sh_C^* = \frac{1}{2}$ and $Sh_B^* = 0$

Only believers A and C actively participate in the exchange. Furthermore, their behavior is symmetric and thus, as the exchange is unbiased, they are offered the same influence on the manifesto. Hence, when the leader is weak, B does not find it worthwhile to participate, that is, B prefers to free-ride on the participation and thus influence of the other two believers. Whereas this result may seem a priori surprising, it actually turns out to be consistent with similar findings in the economics corporate governance literature. For example, Osborne et al. (2000) and Flamand and Troumpounis (2014) provide two different but related formal models in which moderate individuals – like believer B in our model – tend to not participate in costly meetings when participants are believers, to use our terminology. Thus, with a weak leader and believers, party work is incoherent and unfocused, as the only two activists who participate are the believers of the most extreme and opposite ideology. Further, the message to the electorate that comes out of the party manifesto after the different activists have influenced it is also highly unclear and unappealing to voters, as the views that are contained in there are incompatible.

Suppose now that the leader is strong so that the exchange is biased towards those believers who are ideologically closer to the leader. As was the case for careerists, whenever one believer does not participate in party work in equilibrium, the two active believers behave symmetrically even though they are subject to different biases in the exchange procedure. Hence, the believer who ends up being most influential over the party manifesto is the one whose bliss ideologic point is closest to the one of the leader. Thus our first finding regarding the exchange between believers and a strong leader is very similar to Proposition 2 above:

Proposition 7. *Suppose the leader is strong. In any equilibrium in which only believers i and j contribute to party work, it holds that:*

- $w_i^* = w_j^* = \frac{b_i b_j d_{ij}}{(b_i + b_j)^2} I$
- $Sh_i^* > Sh_j^*$ if and only if $d_{Li} < d_{Lj}$

The only difference with Proposition 2 pertains to the *level* of each believer's contribution to party work, and, examining the level of this contribution, it is easy to check that it is always lower than what the two active believers choose to contribute to when the leader is weak (namely $I/4$). Thus, if the identity of the two active believers may differ depending on whether the leader is weak or strong,²¹ their contribution to party work is unambiguously depressed by the presence of a strong leader.

What does participation look like when all three believers are active in the exchange? We have:

Proposition 8. *Suppose the leader is strong. When all three believers participate actively in party work, which can happen only if B is closer to L than A (i.e., $B < 2L$), we have:*

1. *If A and B are on opposite ideologic sides of L , then A participates most actively in party work, followed by B and then C ; nevertheless, it is B who has the largest influence on the manifesto, followed by A and then C*
2. *If A and B are on the same ideologic side of L , then it is C who participates most actively in party work, followed by B and then A ; nevertheless, it is again B who has the largest influence on the party manifesto, followed by A or C*

Figure 3 displays the set of equilibria of the believers' exchange with the leader.

An intuition for the shapes and locations of the areas where C , the believer furthest away from L , is inactive is as follows. Imagine that L is close to A , say at 0.2. If B is very close to C , say at 0.9, it means that (i) the contest is strongly biased in favour of A , (ii) C has high incentives to free-ride on B , as their ideology is very close, and (iii) A and B have low incentives to free-ride on each other, hence the amount of party work they provide is rather large. Thus, it is not worthwhile for C to contribute to the party cause. As B moves closer to A , C has lower incentives to free-ride on B , whereas A and B have higher incentives to free-ride on each other, meaning that the amount of party work they provide decreases. The fact that the bias of B increases reinforces this process, as it allows B to reduce his contribution to party work while keeping the same expected influence. After some point (namely once $B < 2L$), C finds it worthwhile to devote some time and energy to the party cause. This mechanism goes on as B moves even closer to A until reaching the position of L , at which the three believers participate equally in party work. Finally, when

²¹It is A and C who are active when the leader is weak, whereas it is A and B who are active when the leader is strong.

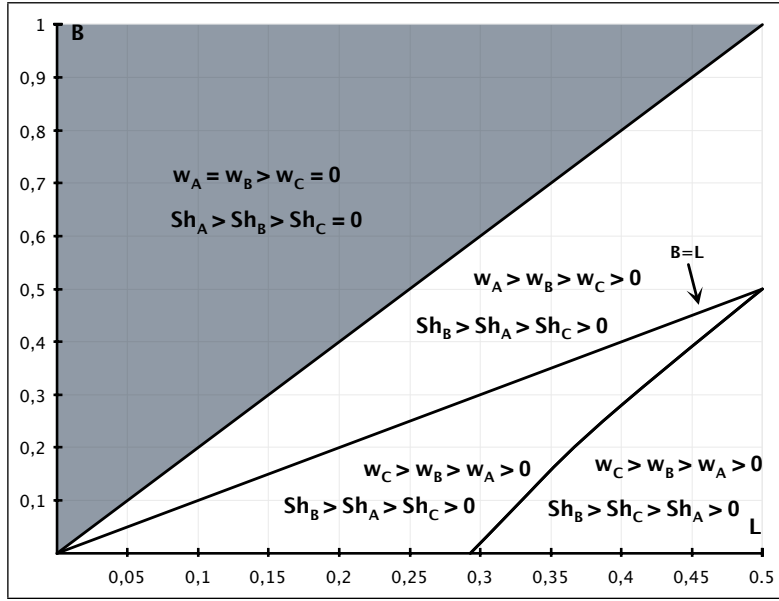


Figure 3: Party Work Contributions and Influence Shares of Believers

$B < L$, and thus A and B are very close to each other, it is C who contributes the most to party work: he has to compensate for the large biases in favour of A and B , whose ideology he dislikes a lot.

Further, notice that the followers' location configurations such that C is inactive are very different from the ones relative to careerists. With careerists, C does not exert any party work when L is too far from them, unless B is quite close to C so that C does not feel isolated ideologically. To the contrary, with believers, C does not participate in party work if (L is too far from C and) B is quite close to C , as then C can free-ride on B 's participation to party work to see the manifesto being influenced along lines that C does not dislike too much. Thus, in a nutshell, the effect of B 's ideologic position on C 's behavior is substantially different depending on whether we are dealing with believers or careerists.

Let us now turn to the comparison of the behavior of the three believers when the leader is strong or weak. Starting with the relationship between party work and ideologic distance with the leader, contrary to what we found when examining the exchange with careerists, when the leader is strong and all three believers contribute to party work, it is no longer true that the believers who contribute more to party work are those who are closer to the leader. Further, when C does not contribute to party work, we know from our discussion of Proposition 7 that B does participate, but contributes less than what C would have contributed if the leader had been weak – namely $I/4$ – while A 's contribution to party work is also lower than $I/4$. All in all, this implies directly that the party can never achieve a united front with believers

under a strong leader, either because believers closer to the leader are not contributing more to party work than believers who are further away from the leader or because their contribution is lower than what it would have been had the leader been weak. With believers, regardless of whether the leader is weak or strong, party work is not focused and coherent. The message stemming from it will be one underscoring disagreement and disunity. The same can also hold for the party manifesto, as the influences that shape the manifesto can also be inconsistent (this happens when the positions of the three activists and the leader are such that we are in the bottom right part of Figure 3; this problem worsens when we let the number of believers grow beyond three, as we show in section 6.2 below).

Finally, regarding the fairness of the exchange, the orderings relative to party work contributions and influence on the manifesto do not coincide. The exchange is thus unfair. It is true that when C does not participate in party work, the exchange has the same characteristics as that with careerists when C is inactive: the other two believers contribute equally, but it is the believer who is closest to the leader who is most influential. Yet, when all three believers are active, the believer contributing the most never has the largest influence on the party manifesto: it is always either A or C who participates the most (except when $L = B$, in which case the three believers behave symmetrically), while it is always B who has the largest influence on the party manifesto. Actually, we can even have that the activist who devotes most time and energy to the party cause is the one who has the least influence on the party manifesto! Our analysis of the exchange with believers thus implies the following:

Proposition 9. *Suppose the leader is strong.*

- *With believers, the party can never achieve a united front;*
- *With believers, the allocation of influence on the party manifesto is partially or totally unfair: it is always the follower who is closest to L who exerts the highest influence, irrespective of how much they participated in party work compared to the other two believers.*

All in all, we have just shown that, with believers, a charismatic leader does not bring strong added value to the party, besides the leader's very own electoral appeal, as a united front cannot be engineered and the exchange with believers becomes unfair. This contrasts quite markedly with our analysis of the effects of a strong leadership with careerists, where the presence of a strong leader was a double asset for the party, as a strong leader is electorally appealing in themselves and allows for the creation of a united

front behind them, even though the presence of a strong leader does reduce partially the fairness of the leadership-followers exchange.

To wrap up the analysis of our formal model, the main prediction of our theory is that the innovations in communication and information technology and in the number and types of media present in the political arena that we have witnessed in the last few decades imply that parties may be better off if they can ensure that their leader is strong and charismatic *and* that their key activists are mainly careerists. In the next section we first present evidence that is consistent with this prediction, and then discuss how robust our findings are to generalizations of the model.

6 Discussion and Implications of our Findings

6.1 Professionalization of Politics and the Growing Importance of Careerists

Our main theoretical prediction offers a novel and powerful rationale behind the observed twin evolution of party choices when it comes to their leadership styles – the presidentialization of politics thesis – and the selection of those activists who will be in charge of selling the party’s views and stance to the electorate. Given that a strong leadership generates a united front with careerists but not with believers, our theory suggests that, as the benefits of having a strong leader increased, for example because of innovations in information and communication technology, parties may have had an incentive to allocate their key positions to careerists – what Swanson and Mancini (1996) and Linz (2002) labelled the professionalization of politics – so as to generate a united front behind the leader (and to maintain the morale of the troops, as the allocation of funds remains fair).

A particularly evident example of such a change in the organization of parties comes from the Continental European Green parties that have experienced government. As Katz and Mair (1995, 2003) noted before us – without offering any formal theory rationalizing such changes though – these Green parties replaced many of their believers with careerists once they mutated from anti-establishment to governing parties which tried to maintain their established positions. Our theory offers a clear rationale for this internal change: as long as Green parties were anti-establishment parties that focused most of their efforts on green issues, these were narrow in their ideologic focus and had a fairly homogenous set of party activists and representatives, let alone of supporters in the electorate. Thus, those parties could voice their main political message relatively

clearly even if there were many believers among their key party activists, as all activists somehow agreed on what ideology to defend and voice.²² Yet, once they joined other parties in government, and had to accept the inevitable compromises characteristic of any government activity, the Green parties had to widen their party platform and message beyond narrow green issues and also found themselves in need of maintaining, if not actually increasing their set of supporters in the electorate. This broader, less focused party platform required the implementation of internal party reforms that would allow them to still turn to voters with a united front behind their leader and with a relatively clear and focused message. Our theory predicts that this is when these parties had to start giving more way to careerists. Indeed, with careerists the Green parties could ensure a more secure, stable future by offering a clear message to the electorate, even if this message could no longer focus on their ecological concerns only.²³

6.2 Increasing the number of activists

In our main theory we assumed that the number of activists was restricted to three. Yet, as reported for example by Persico et al. (2011), in many parties, the number of factions of interest typically exceeds three. What happens to our results if we follow these facts and increase the number of activists? The short answer is that our results carry through, or are actually reinforced. In Figure 4 and 5 we plot equilibrium behavior when there are five activists in the party.²⁴ The first activist is in 0, the last in 1 and the other three are in $1/4$, $1/2$ and $3/4$ respectively. Each activist's contribution to party work is given by the grey bar and their associated share of party funds or influence on the party manifesto by the black bar. The first panel on the left reports activist behavior when the leader is weak. The other two panels report activist behavior when the leader is strong and located in $1/2$ or $1/4$. Figure 4 relates to careerists and each panel confirms that a strong leader is associated to the creation of a united front.²⁵

What about our findings relative to believers? Figure 5 confirms that our results carry through to parties with more believers. Actually, the figure suggests that, if anything, things gets **worse** for the party if we

²²Essentially, all we are claiming is that the original ideologic spectrum of Green parties was fairly narrow. Thus this remark applies to any other party which has a narrow ideologic platform.

²³As Katz and Mair (1995, p. 23) put it, these parties had come to view “[s]tability [as] more important than triumph.” Stability brings regular funds and functions to a party and its activists, rewards that are valued by careerists. Ideologic triumph in the form of party manifesto influence is what believers are after, even if this implies ending up with a party platform that is less appealing to voters and thus putting their party's electoral performance at risk.

²⁴Equilibrium behavior is derived here under the conservative assumption that the leader's type has no influence on the amount of party funds or ideologic influence available to activists.

²⁵Results are similar when the five careerists are not uniformly distributed over the party's ideologic spectrum.

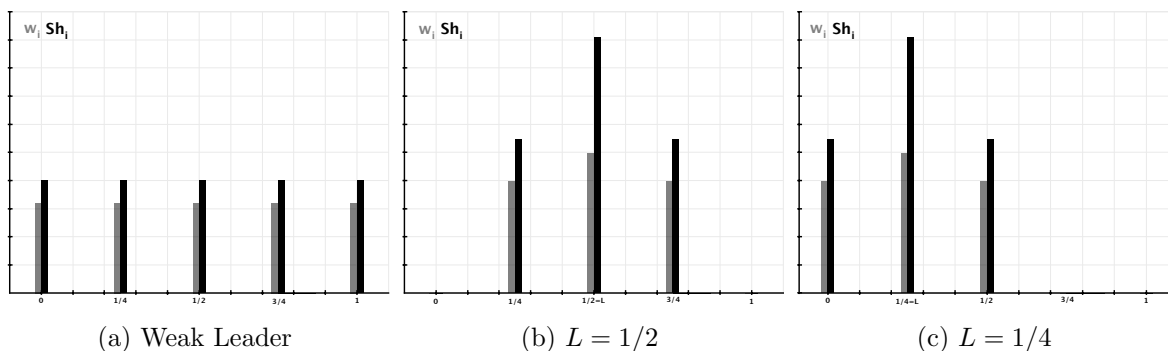


Figure 4: Five careerists

increase the number of believers. Indeed, notice the especially disturbing finding that, when the leader is in $1/4$ and thus not centered on the party’s ideologic spectrum, the activist who is most influential is not the one located in $1/4$, who fully shares the leader’s ideologic views, but, rather, the one located in 0 . Further, the two believers who contribute most to party work are very distant ideologically, as they are located in 0 and $3/4$.²⁶ Thus with believers, the most influential activist is not necessarily the one closest to the strong leader and the highest contributors to party work are typically the followers at the opposite sides of the party’s ideologic spectrum!

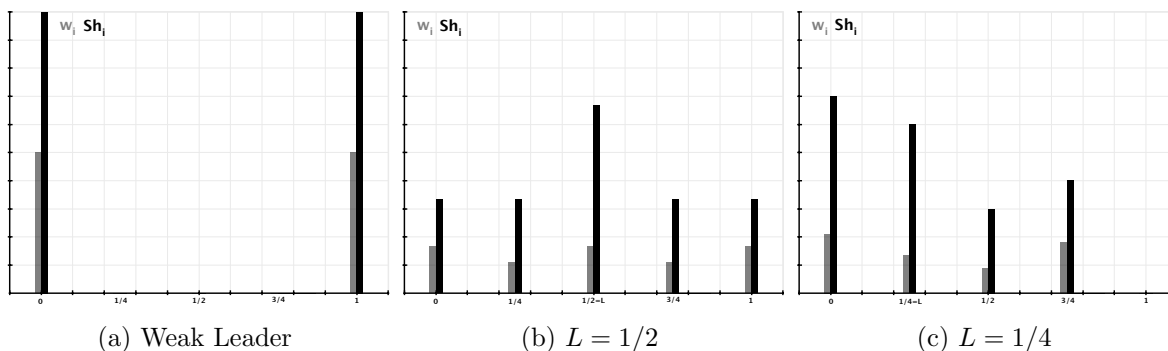


Figure 5: Five believers

7 Conclusion

We proposed a formal theory that improves our understanding of how the presence of a strong or weak leader impacts on the individual incentives of party activists to participate in party work, depending on whether

²⁶Things are not much rosier when the leader is in $1/2$ though, as the believers who are most active are also in substantial ideologic disagreement, these being the activists located in 0 , $1/2$ and 1 .

the latter are careerists or believers. We allowed the party leader to be either strong and capable of biasing the party exchange between them and their followers towards their own views, or weak and incapable of biasing this exchange. We showed that only when activists are careerists can the presence (and biases) of a strong party leader impact on the party activists' decisions in a such a way that an electorally appealing *united front* is generated. We then used our findings to provide a novel rationale for the internal changes many parties – like the continental European Green parties but not only – have undergone in the last few decades and which have resulted in careerists gaining the upper hand over believers.

While we focused on the effect of leaders on the activists' choices in terms of participation to party work, another important research question concerns the effects of the characteristics of a leader on the characteristics of the pool of followers who may wish to work for or with them. Dewan and Myatt (2010) and Dewan and Squintani (2012) offer two formal theories in which some characteristics of the leader interact with the decision by potential followers to team up with the leader.

Our theoretical construct could also be applied to the analysis of other effects of leadership strength and biases. For example, how do the effects of strong leaders vary across electoral systems? Embedding our theory in the different electoral environments Myerson (1993) considers could deliver a rich and intriguing set of findings on how careerists, believers, their leader and the electoral system interact in shaping a party's electoral fortunes. We believe these are other central questions that we need to answer in order to gain a better understanding of the cross-country differences in the evolution of parties and political systems.

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Appendix: Proofs

Proof of Proposition 1. Careerist $i = A, B, C$ chooses his contribution to party work by maximizing

$$\frac{w_i}{\sum_j w_j} V - w_i$$

The first order condition yields the best response

$$w_i = \sqrt{(w_j + w_k)V} - w_j - w_k$$

and thus

$$w_i^* = \frac{2V}{9} \text{ and } Sh_i^* = \frac{1}{3} \text{ for all } i = A, B, C$$

□

Proof of Proposition 2. When only two careerists are active, the game reduces to a contest with two players.

Careerist i chooses his contribution to party work by maximizing

$$\frac{b_i w_i}{b_i w_i + b_j w_j} V - w_i$$

The first order condition yields the best response

$$w_i = \frac{1}{b_i} \sqrt{b_i b_j w_j V} - b_j w_j$$

and thus

$$w_i^* = w_j^* = \frac{b_i b_j V}{(b_i + b_j)^2}$$

Finally, the share of party funds are given by

$$Sh_i^* = \frac{b_i}{b_i + b_j} \text{ and } Sh_j^* = \frac{b_j}{b_i + b_j}$$

For $b_i = 1 - d_{Li}$ and $b_j = 1 - d_{Lj}$, we have that $Sh_i^* > Sh_j^*$ if and only if $d_{Li} < d_{Lj}$.

□

Proof of Proposition 3. Careerist $i = A, B, C$ chooses his contribution to party work by maximizing

$$\frac{b_i w_i}{\sum_j b_j w_j} V - w_i$$

The first order condition yields the best response

$$w_i = \frac{1}{b_i} \left[\sqrt{b_i (b_j w_j + b_k w_k) V} - b_j w_j - b_k w_k \right]$$

and thus

$$w_i^* = \frac{2b_j b_k [b_i (b_j + b_k) - b_j b_k] V}{[b_j b_k + b_i (b_j + b_k)]^2}$$

$$Sh_i^* = \frac{b_i(b_j + b_k) - b_j b_k}{b_i(b_j + b_k) + b_j b_k}$$

where $b_i = 1 - d_{Li}$. If $B < L$, we have the following equilibrium contributions:

$$w_A^* = \frac{2(1 + B - L)L [(1 - L)^2 + B(1 - 2L)] V}{(1 + B - L^2)^2}$$

$$w_B^* = \frac{2 [B + (1 - L)^2] (1 - L)LV}{(1 + B - L^2)^2}$$

$$w_C^* = \frac{2(1 + B - L)(1 - L) [(4 - 3L)L - 1 - B(1 - 2L)] V}{(1 + B - L^2)^2}$$

We have that $w_A^* > 0$ and $w_B^* > 0$, while $w_C^* > 0$ if and only if $B < \frac{3L^2 - 4L + 1}{2L - 1}$. Observe that the latter condition is never satisfied for $L \leq 1/3$, while it is always satisfied for $L \geq \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$.

If $B > L$, we have the following equilibrium contributions:

$$w_A^* = \frac{2(1 - B + L)L [1 - 3L^2 - B(1 - 2L)] V}{[B - 1 - (2 - L)L]^2}$$

$$w_B^* = \frac{2(1 - L)L(1 - B + L^2)V}{[B - 1 - (2 - L)L]^2}$$

$$w_C^* = \frac{2(1 - B + L)(L - 1) [1 - L(2 + L) - B(1 - 2L)] V}{[B - 1 - (2 - L)L]^2}$$

We have that $w_A^* > 0$ and $w_B^* > 0$, while $w_C^* > 0$ if and only if $B > \frac{L^2 + 2L - 1}{2L - 1}$. Observe that the latter condition is always satisfied for $L \geq \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$.

Consider the parameter configurations in which all three activists are contributing to party work:

1. $L \leq \frac{1}{3}$ and $B > \frac{L^2 + 2L - 1}{2L - 1}$
2. $\frac{1}{3} < L < \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$ and $\frac{L^2 + 2L - 1}{2L - 1} < B < \frac{3L^2 - 4L + 1}{2L - 1}$
3. $\frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5}) < L \leq \frac{1}{2}$

If $B < L$, we have

$$w_A^* - w_B^* = \frac{2BL [1 + B(1 - 2L) + L(3L - 4)] V}{(1 + B - L^2)^2} < 0$$

$$w_A^* - w_C^* = \frac{2 [B + (1 - L)^2] (1 + B - L)(1 - 2L)V}{(1 + B - L^2)^2} > 0$$

$$w_B^* - w_C^* = \frac{2(1 + B - 2L)(1 - L) [(1 - L)^2 + B(1 - 2L)] V}{(1 + B - L^2)^2} > 0$$

If $B > L$, we have

$$w_A^* - w_B^* = \frac{2(2L-B)L[1-L(2+L)-B(1-2L)]V}{[B-1-(2-L)L]^2} > 0 \text{ if and only if } B > 2L$$

$$w_A^* - w_C^* = \frac{2(1 - B + L)(1 - 2L)(1 - B + L^2)V}{[B - 1 - (2 - L)L]^2} > 0$$

$$w_B^* - w_C^* = \frac{2(1 - B)(1 - L) [1 - B(1 - 2L) - 3L^2] V}{[B - 1 - (2 - L)L]^2} > 0$$

and thus:

- $w_A^* > w_B^* > w_C^*$ if $B > 2L$
- $w_B^* > w_A^* > w_C^*$ if $B < 2L$

We know that for careerist $i = A, B, C$, the equilibrium share of party funds is given by

$$Sh_i^* = \frac{b_i(b_j + b_k) - b_j b_k}{b_i(b_j + b_k) + b_j b_k}$$

Hence, it follows directly that $Sh_i^* > Sh_j^*$ if and only if $b_i > b_j$. Therefore, as the biases are linear in the distance:

- $Sh_A^* > Sh_B^* > Sh_C^*$ if $B > 2L$
- $Sh_B^* > Sh_A^* > Sh_C^*$ if $B < 2L$

□

Proof of Proposition 4. Define the united front as a location configuration for the three activists and the leader such that 1) activists who are closer ideologically to the leader contribute more than activists who are further away from the leader; and 2) a majority of activists contributes more to the party cause under a strong than a weak leader.

Regarding (1), we know from Proposition 3 that whenever the three careerists are active, the orderings of individual contributions and distances from the leader coincide: If $d_{CL} < d_{AL} < d_{BL}$ (or, equivalently, $B < 2L$), we have $w_B^* > w_A^* > w_C^*$, whereas if $d_{CL} < d_{BL} < d_{AL}$ (or, equivalently, $B > 2L$), we have $w_A^* > w_B^* > w_C^*$.

From Proposition 2, we know that whenever only two careerists are active (namely, careerists A and B), we have that $w_A^* = w_B^*$ and $w_C^* = 0$ for all $d_{iL} < d_{CL}$, $i = A, B$. In this case, therefore, the orderings of individual contributions and distances from the leader also coincide, although weakly only.

Regarding (2), when the leader is weak, we know from Proposition 1 that each careerist $i = A, B, C$ devotes an amount of work to the party given by $w_i^* = 2V/9$. Consider the positions of L and B such that the three careerists are active. From the equilibrium values of w_i^* given in the proof of Proposition 3, we can compare the party work contributions under a strong and weak leader:

1. If $L \leq \frac{1}{3}$ and $B > \frac{L^2+2L-1}{2L-1}$, we have that
 - (a) $w_A^* > \frac{2V}{9}$ if and only if
 - i. $\frac{1}{4} < L < \frac{2}{7}$ and $B < \frac{7L^2+4L-1}{6L-1}$
 - ii. $L > \frac{2}{7}$
 - (b) $w_B^* > \frac{2V}{9}$ if and only if $L > \frac{1}{4}$ and $B < 2L^2 - L + 1$
 - (c) $w_C^* < \frac{2V}{9}$
2. If $\frac{1}{3} < L < \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$ and $B < \frac{3L^2-4L+1}{2L-1}$, we have that
 - (a) $w_A^* > \frac{2V}{9}$
 - (b) $w_B^* > \frac{2V}{9}$

(c) $w_C^* < \frac{2V}{9}$

3. If $\frac{1}{3} < L < \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$ and $B > \frac{L^2+2L-1}{2L-1}$, we have that

(a) $w_A^* > \frac{2V}{9}$

(b) $w_B^* > \frac{2V}{9}$ if and only if $B < 2L^2 - L + 1$

(c) $w_C^* < \frac{2V}{9}$

4. If $L > \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$, we have that

(a) $w_A^* > \frac{2V}{9}$ if and only if

i. $L < \sqrt{2} - 1$

ii. $L > \sqrt{2} - 1$ and $\frac{4L^2+L-1}{3L-1} < B < \frac{2L^2-3L+1}{3L-1}$

(b) $w_B^* > \frac{2V}{9}$ if and only if $B < 2L^2 - L + 1$

(c) $w_C^* < \frac{2V}{9}$

Therefore, for all $L \geq \frac{1}{4}$, there is always a position of B such that careerists A and B (who are the careerists closest to the leader ideologically) participate more in party work when the leader is strong than when the leader is weak.

Consider now the positions of B and L such that only careerists A and B are active. Comparing the contributions under a strong and weak leader, we get:

1. If $L \leq \frac{1}{3}$ and $B < \frac{L^2+2L-1}{2L-1}$, we have that $w_A^* = w_B^* > \frac{2V}{9}$ if and only if

(a) $L < \frac{1}{4}$ and $B < \frac{1}{2}(1 + 3L)$

(b) $L > \frac{1}{4}$

2. If $\frac{1}{3} < L < \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$ and $B > \frac{3L^2-4L+1}{2L-1}$, we have that $w_A^* = w_B^* > \frac{2V}{9}$

3. If $\frac{1}{3} < L < \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$ and $B < \frac{L^2+2L-1}{2L-1}$, we have that $w_A^* = w_B^* > \frac{2V}{9}$

Therefore, for all $L \leq \frac{1}{2}(3 - \sqrt{5})$, there is always a position of B such that careerists A and B (who are the careerists closest to the leader ideologically) contribute more to the party when the leader is strong than when the leader is weak.

From the two sets of conditions above, for all $L \in [0, \frac{1}{2}]$, there is always a position of B such that careerists A and B (who are the careerists closest to the leader ideologically) contribute more to the party when the leader is strong than when the leader is weak. □

Proof of Proposition 5. Follows directly from propositions 1 to 3. □

Proof of Proposition 6. Believer $i = A, B, C$ chooses his contribute by maximizing

$$\frac{w_i}{\sum_m w_m} I + \frac{w_j}{\sum_m w_m} I(1 - d_{ij}) + \frac{w_k}{\sum_m w_m} I(1 - d_{ik}) - w_k$$

The first order condition yields the best response

$$w_i = \sqrt{(d_{ij}w_j + d_{ik}w_k)I} - w_j - w_k$$

and thus

$$w_i^* = \frac{2d_{ij}d_{ik}(d_{ij} + d_{ik} - d_{jk})d_{jk}^2 I}{\left[d_{ij}^2 + (d_{ik} - d_{jk})^2 - 2d_{ij}(d_{ik} + d_{jk}) \right]^2}$$

Given that $d_{AB} = B$, $d_{BC} = 1 - B$ and $d_{AC} = 1$, this yields:

$$w_A^* = w_C^* = \frac{I}{4} \text{ and } w_B^* = 0$$

and the equilibrium individual influences on the party manifesto are given by

$$Sh_A^* = Sh_C^* = \frac{1}{2} \text{ and } Sh_B^* = 0$$

□

Proof of Proposition 7. Whenever one believer does not contribute to party work, the game reduces to a contest with two players. Believer $i = A, B, C$ chooses his contribution by maximizing

$$\frac{b_i w_i}{b_i w_i + b_j w_j} I + \frac{b_j w_j}{b_i w_i + b_j w_j} I(1 - d_{ij}) - w_i$$

The first order condition yields the best response

$$w_i = \frac{1}{b_i} \sqrt{b_i b_j d_{ij} w_j I} - b_j w_j$$

and thus

$$w_i^* = w_j^* = \frac{b_i b_j d_{ij} I}{(b_i + b_j)^2}$$

Finally, the individual influences on the party manifesto are given by

$$Sh_i^* = \frac{b_i}{b_i + b_j} \text{ and } Sh_j^* = \frac{b_j}{b_i + b_j}$$

As $b_i = 1 - d_{Li}$ and $b_j = 1 - d_{Lj}$, we have that $Sh_i^* > Sh_j^*$ if and only if $d_{Li} < d_{Lj}$.

□

Proof of Proposition 8. Believer $i = A, B, C$ chooses his contribution by maximizing

$$\frac{b_i w_i}{\sum_m b_m w_m} I + \frac{b_j w_j}{\sum_m b_m w_m} I(1 - d_{ij}) + \frac{b_k w_k}{\sum_m b_m w_m} I(1 - d_{ik}) - w_i$$

The first order condition yields the best response

$$w_i = \frac{1}{b_i} \left[\sqrt{b_i (d_{ij} b_j w_j + d_{ik} b_k w_k) I} - b_j w_j - b_k w_k \right]$$

and thus

$$w_i^* = \frac{2b_j b_k d_{ij} d_{ik} d_{jk}^2 (b_i b_j d_{ij} + b_i b_k d_{ik} - b_j b_k d_{jk}) I}{\left[b_i (d_{ij} - d_{ik}) (b_j d_{ij} - b_k d_{ik}) - (b_j (b_i + b_k) d_{ij} + b_k (b_i + b_j) d_{ik}) d_{jk} + b_j b_k d_{jk}^2 \right]^2}$$

$$Sh_i^* = \frac{d_{jk} [b_j b_k d_{jk} - b_i (b_j d_{ij} + b_k d_{ik})]}{b_i (d_{ij} - d_{ik}) (b_j d_{ij} - b_k d_{ik}) - (b_j (b_i + b_k) d_{ij} + b_k (b_i + b_j) d_{ik}) d_{jk} + b_j b_k d_{jk}^2}$$

If $B < L$, we have the following equilibrium contributions:

$$w_A^* = \frac{(1 + B - 2L)LI}{2(1 + B - L)}$$

$$w_B^* = \frac{(1-L)L[1+B(1-2L)-2(1-L)L]I}{2(1-B)(1+B-L)^2}$$

$$w_C^* = \frac{(1-L)[2(1-L)L-B(1+B-2L)]I}{2(1-B)(1+B-2L)}$$

and thus $w_i^* > 0$ for all $i = A, B, C$.

If $B > L$, we have the following equilibrium contributions:

$$w_A^* = \frac{L[2L(B-L)-(1-B)B]I}{2B(1-B+L)}$$

$$w_B^* = \frac{(1-L)[B-2L(B-L)]I}{2B(1-B+L)^2}$$

$$w_C^* = \frac{(2L-B)(1-L)I}{2(1-B+L)}$$

and thus $w_A^* > 0$ and $w_B^* > 0$, while $w_C^* > 0$ if and only if $B < 2L$.

Consider the parameter configurations such that all three believers are active, hence $B < 2L$. If $B < L$ we have:

$$w_A^* - w_B^* = \frac{(B-L)[2L(1+B-L)-B(1+B)]I}{2(1-B)(1+B-L)^2} < 0$$

$$w_A^* - w_C^* = \frac{(L-B)[2L(1+B-L)-(1+B)]I}{2(1-B)(1+B-L)} < 0$$

$$w_B^* - w_C^* = \frac{(1+B)(1+B-2L)(L-B)(1-L)I}{2(B-1)(1+B-L)^2} < 0$$

If $B > L$ we have:

$$w_A^* - w_B^* = \frac{(2-B)(2L-B)(B-L)LI}{2B(1-B+L)^2} > 0$$

$$w_A^* - w_C^* = \frac{(B-L)[B(1-2L)+2L^2]I}{2B(1+L-B)} > 0$$

$$w_B^* - w_C^* = \frac{(B-L)(1-L)[B(1-B)+2L(B-L)]I}{2B(1-B+L)^2} > 0$$

and thus:

1. If $B < L$, we have $w_C^* > w_B^* > w_A^*$
2. If $B > L$, we have $w_A^* > w_B^* > w_C^*$

Further, if $B < L$, the equilibrium influences on the party manifesto are given by

$$Sh_A^* = \frac{1+B-2L}{2(1+B-L)}$$

$$Sh_B^* = \frac{(B+1)-2L(1+B-L)}{2(1-B)(1+B-L)}$$

$$Sh_C^* = \frac{2L(1+B-L)-B(1+B)}{2(1-B)(1+B-L)}$$

and thus we have

$$Sh_A^* - Sh_B^* = \frac{2L(2B-L)-B(B+1)}{2(1-B)(1+B-L)} < 0$$

$$Sh_A^* - Sh_C^* = \frac{2L(L-2)+(1+B)}{2[1-B(1-L)-L]} > 0 \text{ if and only if } B > 4L - 2L^2 - 1$$

$$Sh_B^* - Sh_C^* = \frac{(1+B-2L)^2}{2(1-B)(1+B-L)} > 0$$

Finally, if $B > L$, the equilibrium influences on the party manifesto are given by

$$Sh_A^* = \frac{2L(B-L)+B(1-B)}{2B(1-B+L)}$$

$$Sh_B^* = \frac{B - 2L(B - L)}{2B(1 - B + L)}$$

$$Sh_C^* = \frac{2L - B}{2(1 - B + L)}$$

and thus we have

$$Sh_A^* - Sh_B^* = -\frac{(B - 2L)^2}{2B(1 - B + L)} < 0$$

$$Sh_A^* - Sh_C^* = \frac{B - 2L^2}{2B(1 - B + L)} > 0$$

$$Sh_B^* - Sh_C^* = \frac{B(1 + B) - 2L(2B - L)}{2B(1 - B + L)} > 0$$

Therefore:

- If $B < 4L - 2L^2 - 1$, we have $Sh_B^* > Sh_C^* > Sh_A^*$
- If $B > 4L - 2L^2 - 1$, we have $Sh_B^* > Sh_A^* > Sh_C^*$

□

Proof of Proposition 9. Define the united front as a location configuration for the three activists and the leader such that 1) activists who are closer ideologically to the leader contribute more than activists who are further away from the leader; and 2) a majority of activists contributes more to the party cause under a strong than a weak leader.

From Proposition 8, we know that when the three believers are active (i.e., $B < 2L$), the ordering of the party work contributions by the three believers does not coincide with the ordering of their ideologic distance to the (strong) leader. In particular, it is always believer B who is closest to the leader, while it is always believer A or C who contributes most. Therefore, the united front is not achievable when the three believers are active (part (1) in the above definition is never satisfied).

When only two believers (namely, believers A and B) are active (i.e., $B > 2L$), we know from Proposition 7 that $w_A^* = w_B^* \leq I/4$. Further, we know from Proposition 6 that with a weak leader, only the two extreme believers are active: $w_A^* = w_C^* = I/4$ and $w_B^* = 0$. Hence, it is never the case that a majority of party members contributes more to party work under a strong than a weak leader. Therefore, the united front is not achievable when only two believers are active ((2) in the above definition is never satisfied).

The second part of Proposition 9 regarding the fairness of the allocation of influence on the party manifesto follows directly from propositions 7 and 8.

□