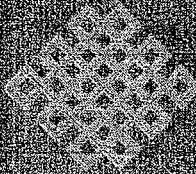


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RESEARCH STRATEGIES RESULTS

Federal State of Play – OzTrack 33

Mark Textor

21st June 2007



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21st June 2007

What is regression analysis?



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This is a statistical technique that allows you to:

- > Estimate the influence of a range of inputs on a given outcome.
- > Attempt to predict an outcome from these known inputs.

Basically measures correlation between a given outcome and the range of inputs.

- > The more times that an input agrees with the outcome the stronger the influence it is deemed to have.
- > The more times a given input agrees with the outcome, whilst others disagree, the greater the certainty we have that it is a 'real' influence, i.e. is not just a coincidence.

■ In reality there are potentially an infinite number of inputs for any given outcome, so we must try to use the most inclusive model possible and recognise its limits.

Understanding regression results

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- Regression analysis provides three types of result...
- A variable coefficient for each input (mapped on chart);
 - > This tells us the degree of influence each individual input has on the outcome result, i.e. how important it is.
- An error value for each input (noted on chart);
 - > Like the significance tests we use on survey percentage results, this is a measure of confidence we have for individual input coefficients, i.e. to what extent the results can be trusted.
- A single constant factor (given in slide footer);
 - > This provides us with an idea of the overall accuracy of the regression model, i.e. how many input factors we are missing and the model's limitations.

Why use regression in polling?



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Knowledge of the influence of factors on vote is key to formulating strategy to gain vote;

[high influence on vote] + [positive positioning] = [vote]

- > For example, if water is found to be a significant influence on voting intention we know to concentrate on this issue to gain positioning, and consequently vote.
- > Noting that importance of an issue is not necessarily a measure of its influence on vote (though very weak influences are never found to be highly important issues).
- Furthermore, open-ended responses used previously to determine important 'issues versus positionings' do not allow direct or accurate comparison on every positioning.
- > Not all nominate each issue (lower sample to work from) and issues do not directly match positioning statements (inaccuracy).

Regression for political polling

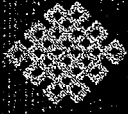
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We use a variety of inputs to estimate their influence on [usually] TPP voting outcome, including;

- > Party positionings; leadership, economy, defence, etc.
- > Preferred PM; Howard versus Rudd.
- > National mood; right or wrong direction.
- > National election win expectations; Coalition or Labor.

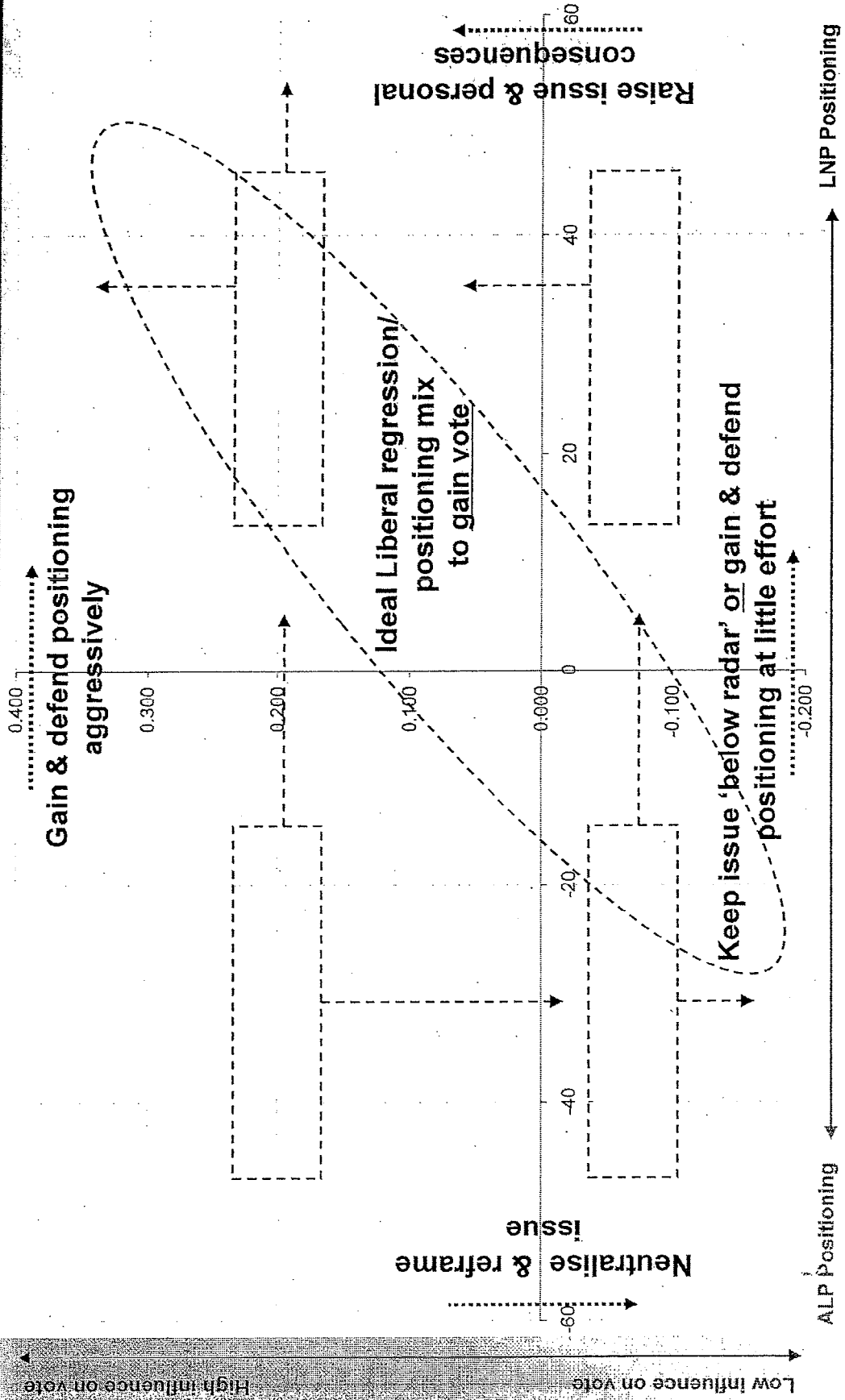
Like all regression models this one cannot take into account all likely inputs, and will be limited by this;

- > For example, we do not ask traditional party affiliation, local mood or seat win expectations at present.
- > 'I vote Labor because my father voted Labor' Nicole Kidman
- Also, soft voters will often be influenced by different factors to other voters, and to a lesser or greater extent.



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Generic Liberal strategy formulation using regression versus positioning chart



Overall Model Constant = #.### (High/Limited Accuracy)

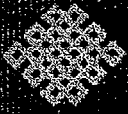
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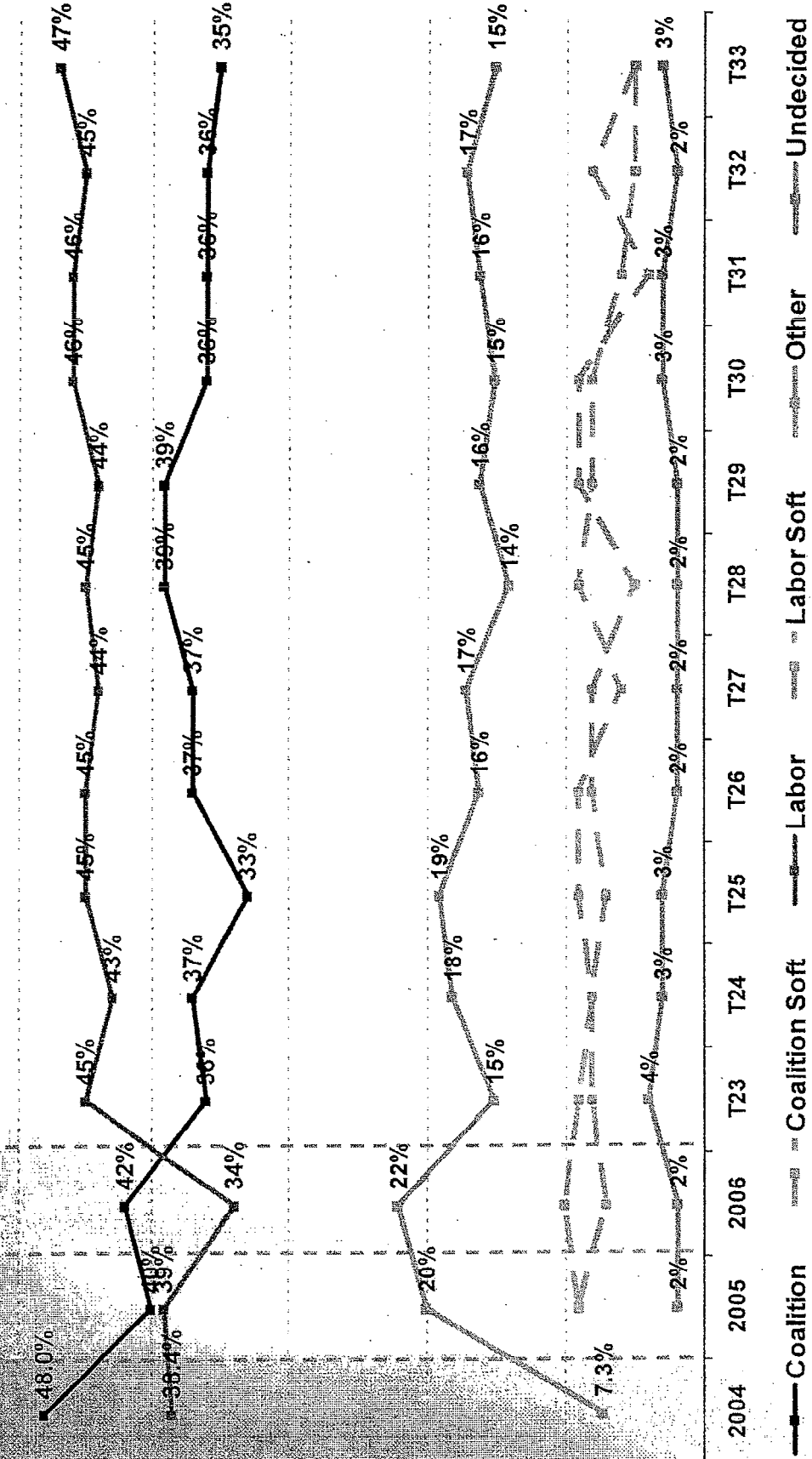
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Overall Voting Trends & Swing Groups



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Labor and Rudd continue to increase lead on primary vote in Track 33

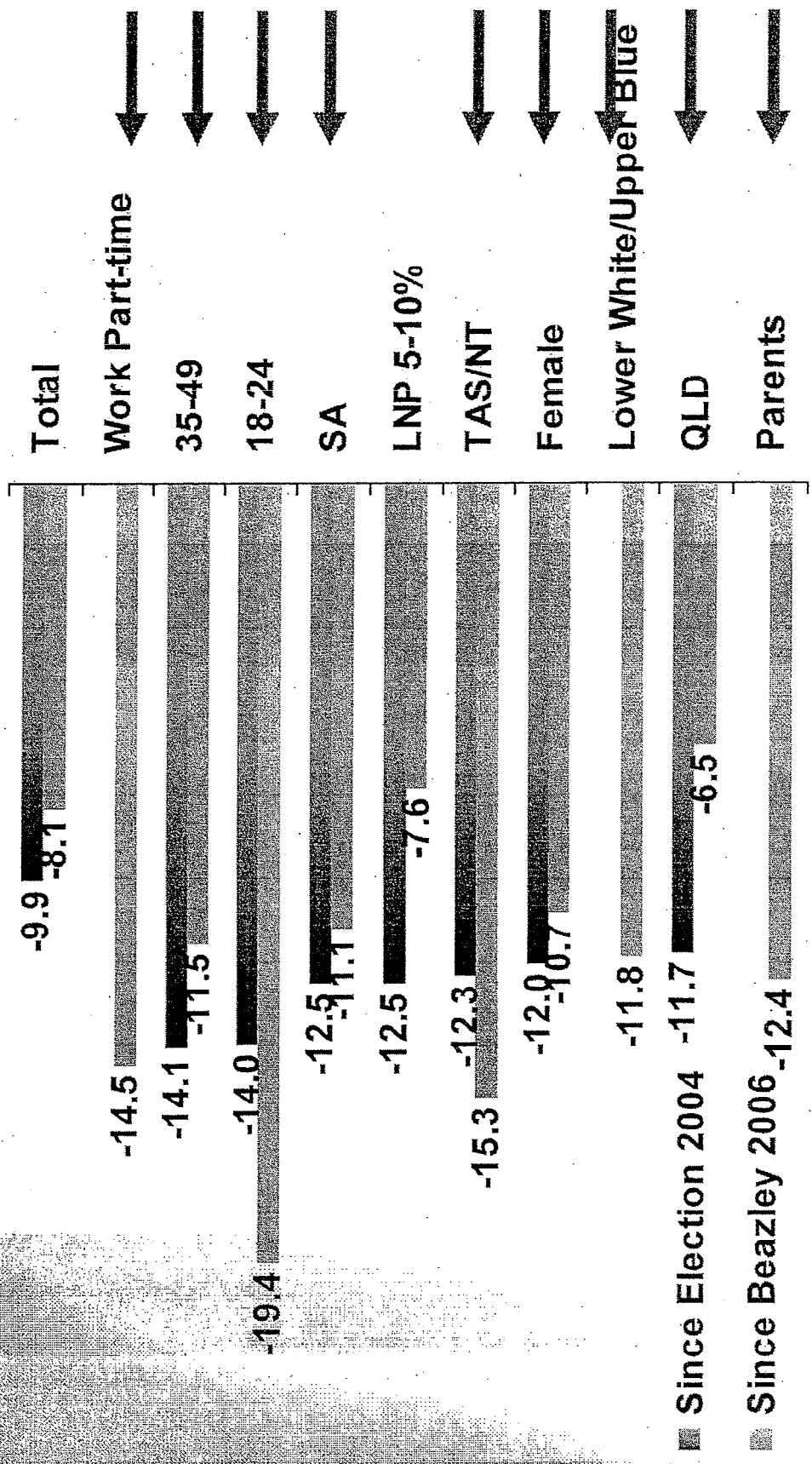


Single track primary vote (plus leaning) T22 - T33

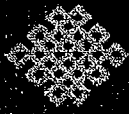
Young, middle-aged & selected states responsible for primary swing to Labor



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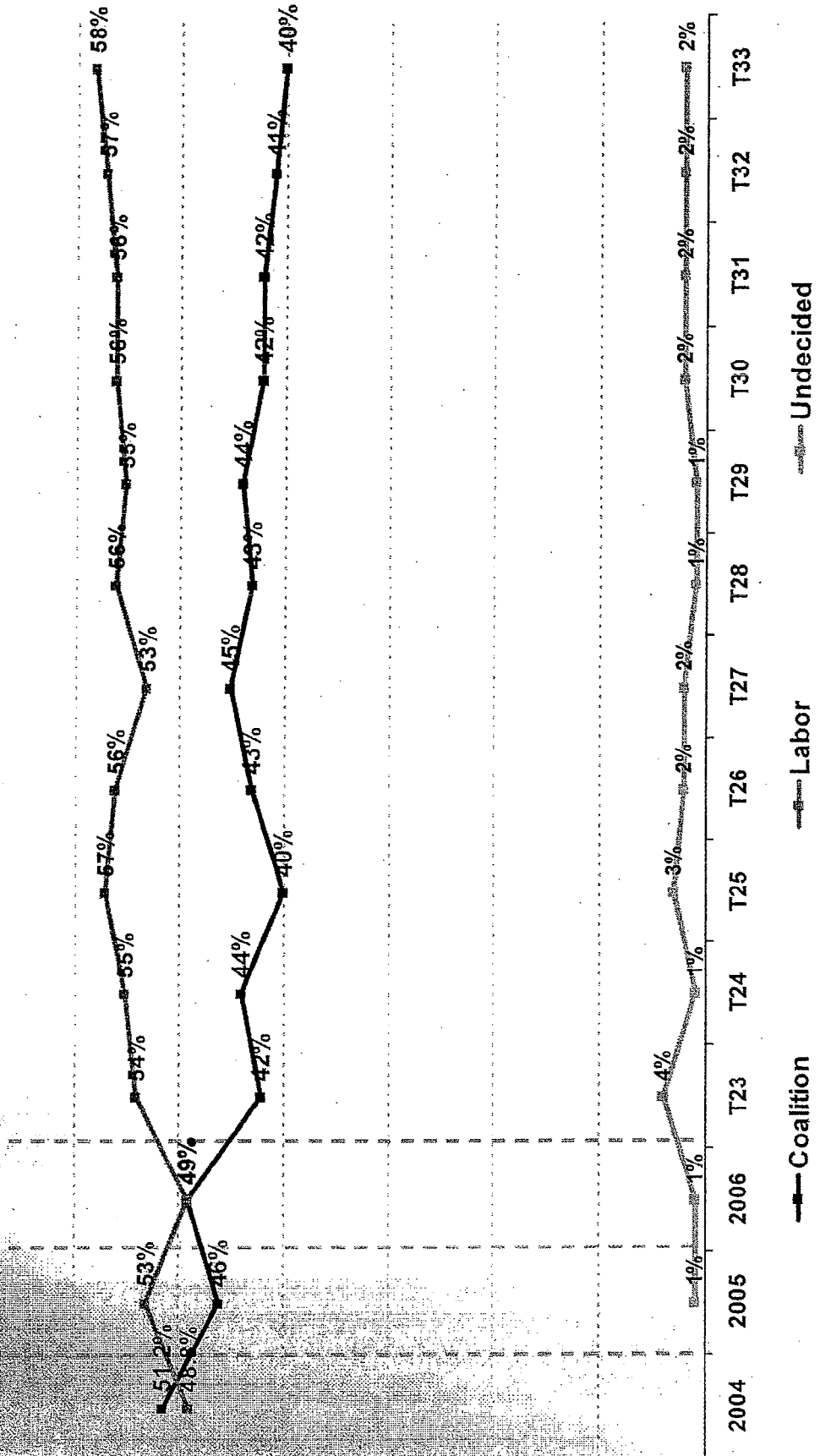


Rolled-track primary vote (plus leaning) T30-T33 & T19-T22

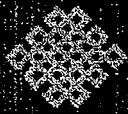


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Labor and Rudd also continue to widen lead on TPP basis in Track 33

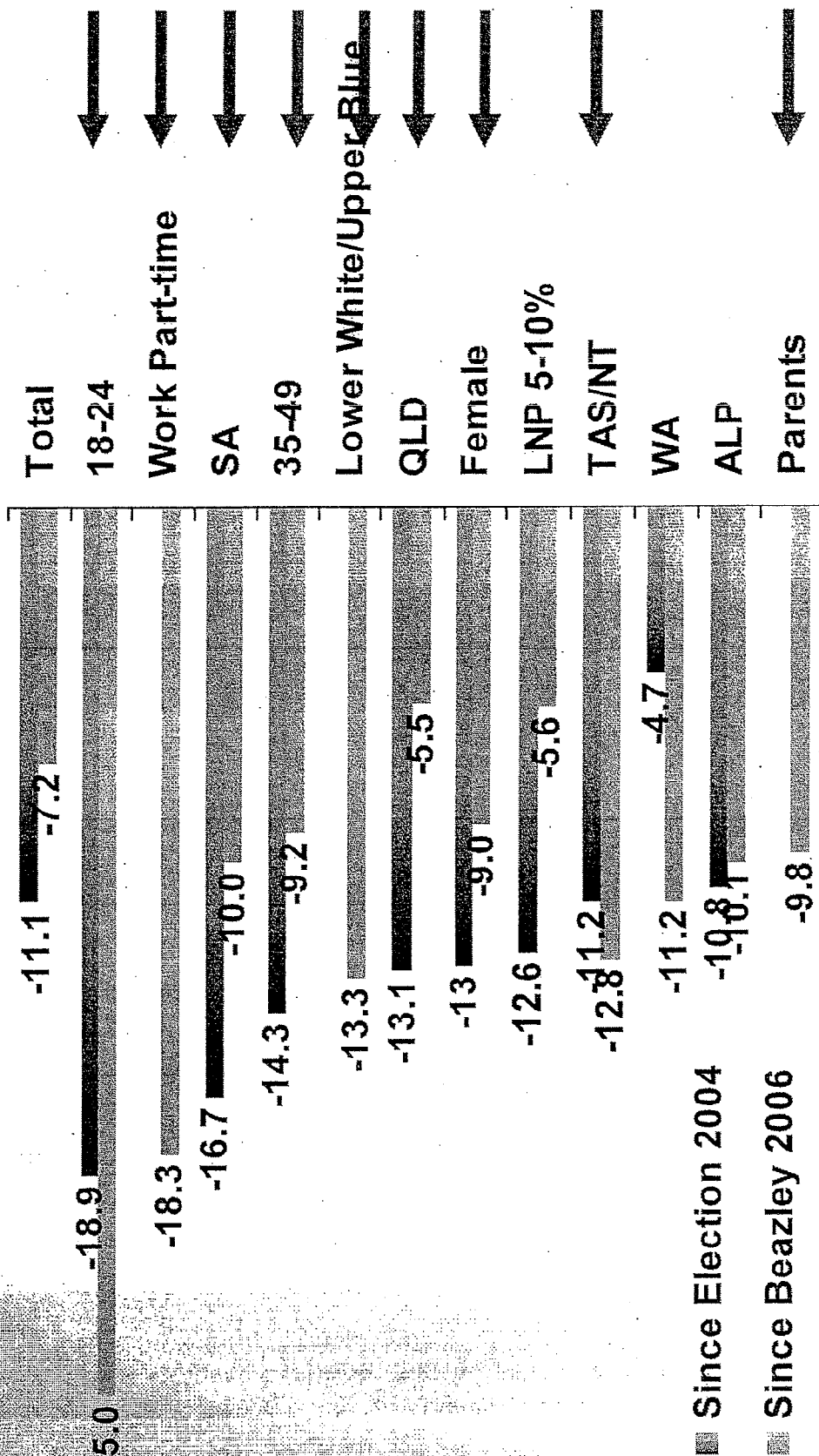


Single track TPP vote T22-T33



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Same groups responsible for TPP swing — 18-24 years are 'new Labor'





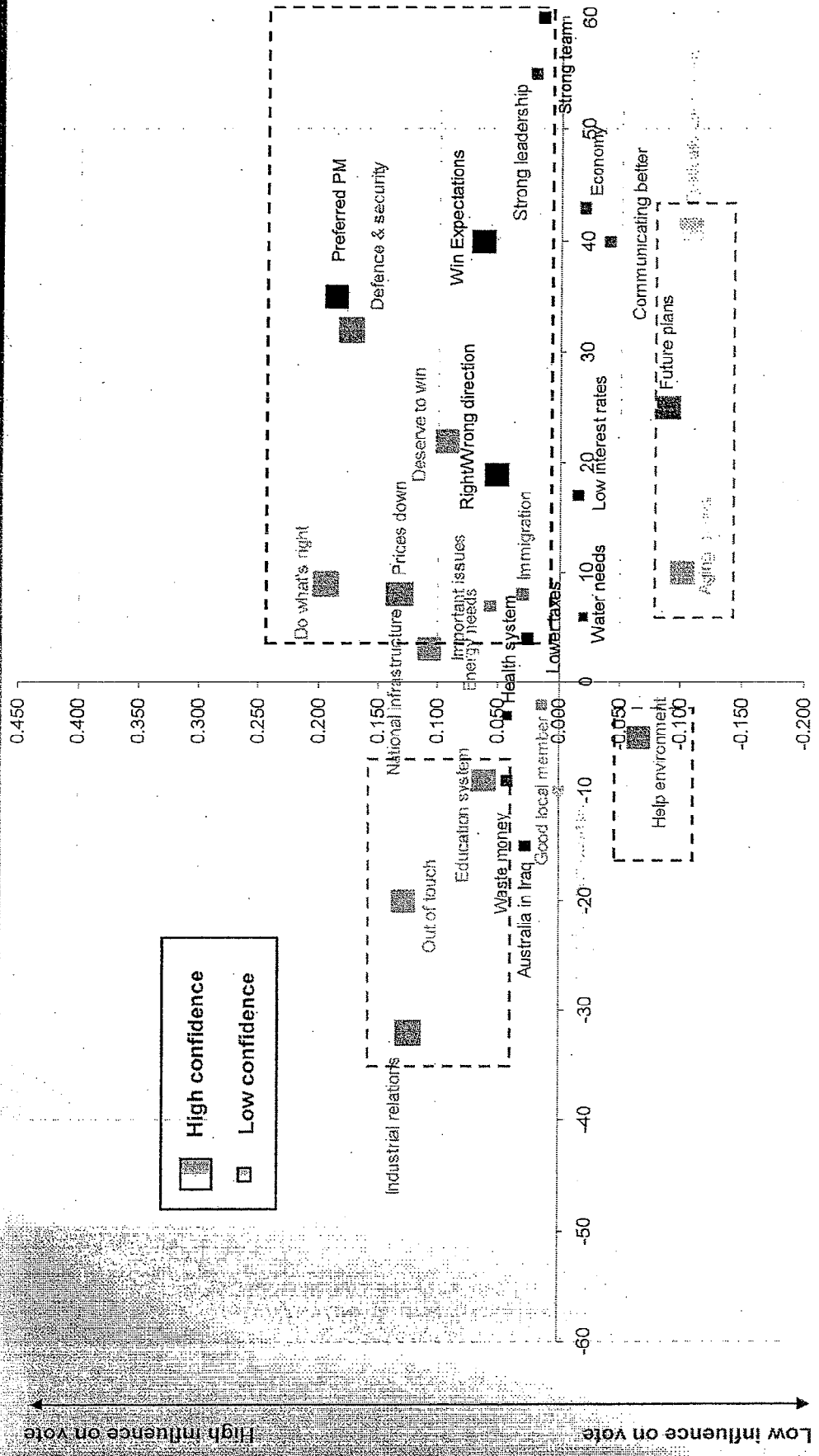
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Reasons for Overall Vote Swing



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Against Beazley (T22) Coalition held a positive influence & positioning profile



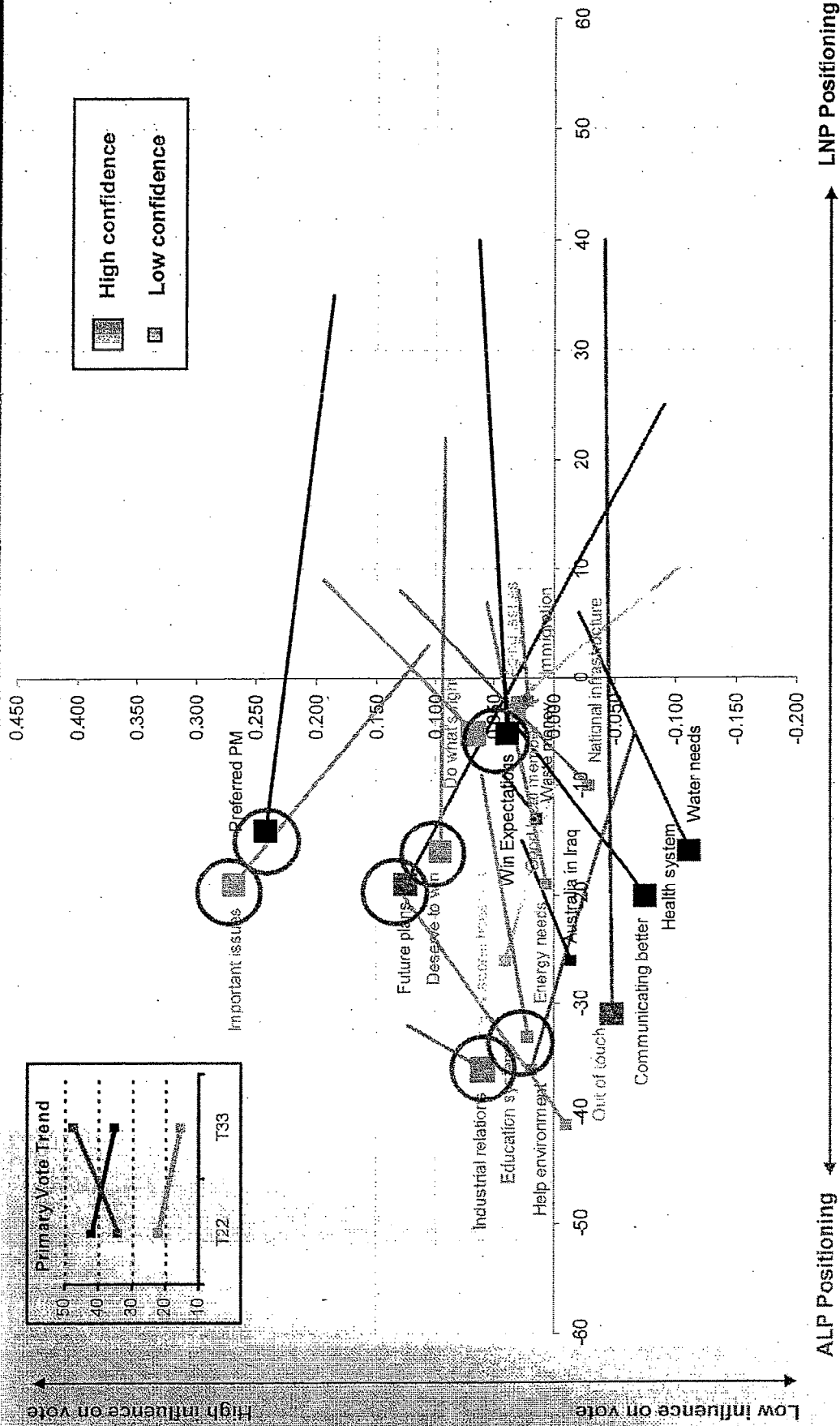
ALP Positioning ← → LNP Positioning

Overall Model Constant = T22 -0.422 (Good Accuracy)



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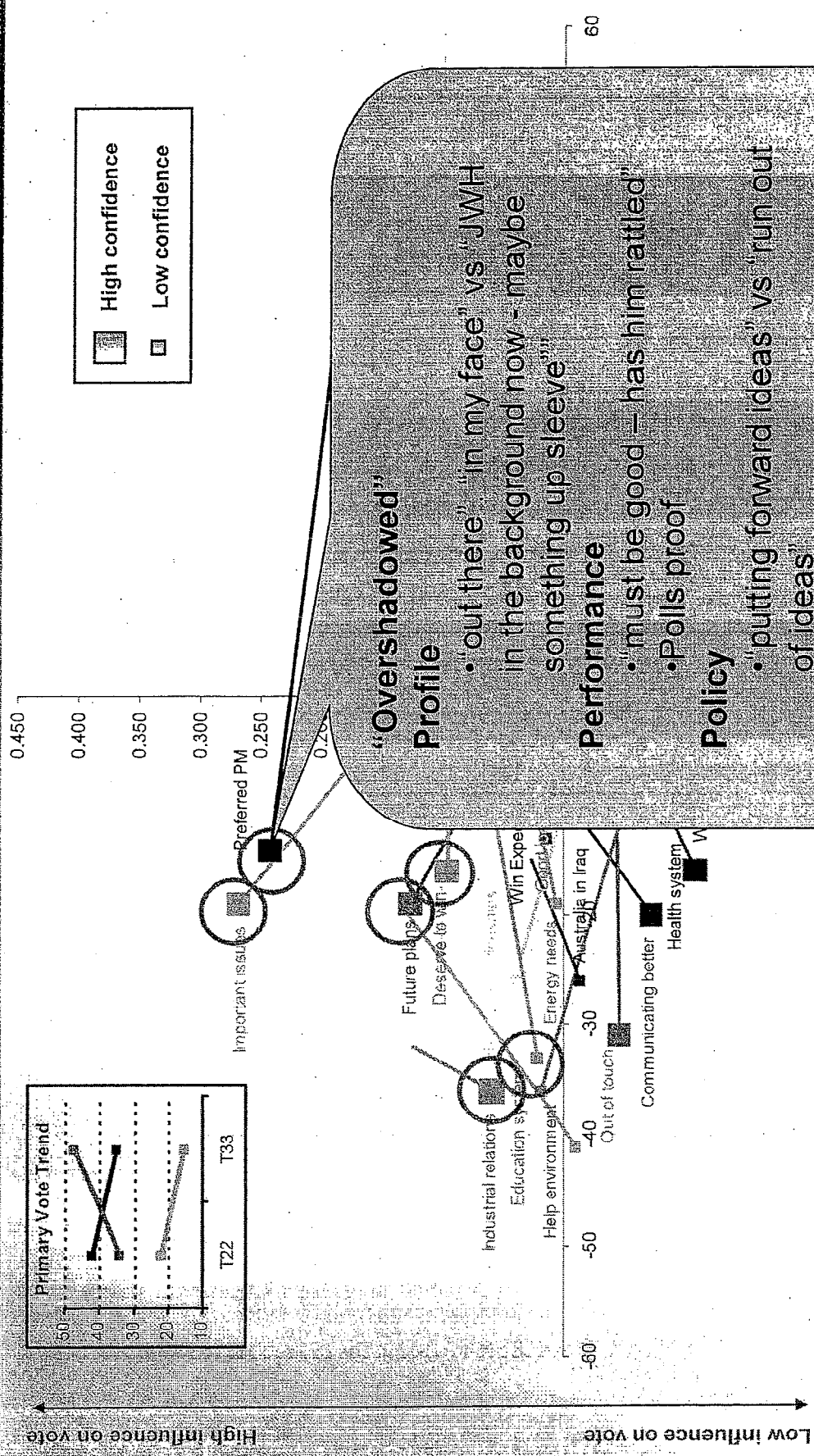
Large positioning losses post Rudd, notably on leaders, focus & performance



Overall Model Constant = T22 -0.422; T33 -0.220 (Good & Good Accuracy Respectively)



Large positioning losses post Rudd, notably on leaders, focus & performance



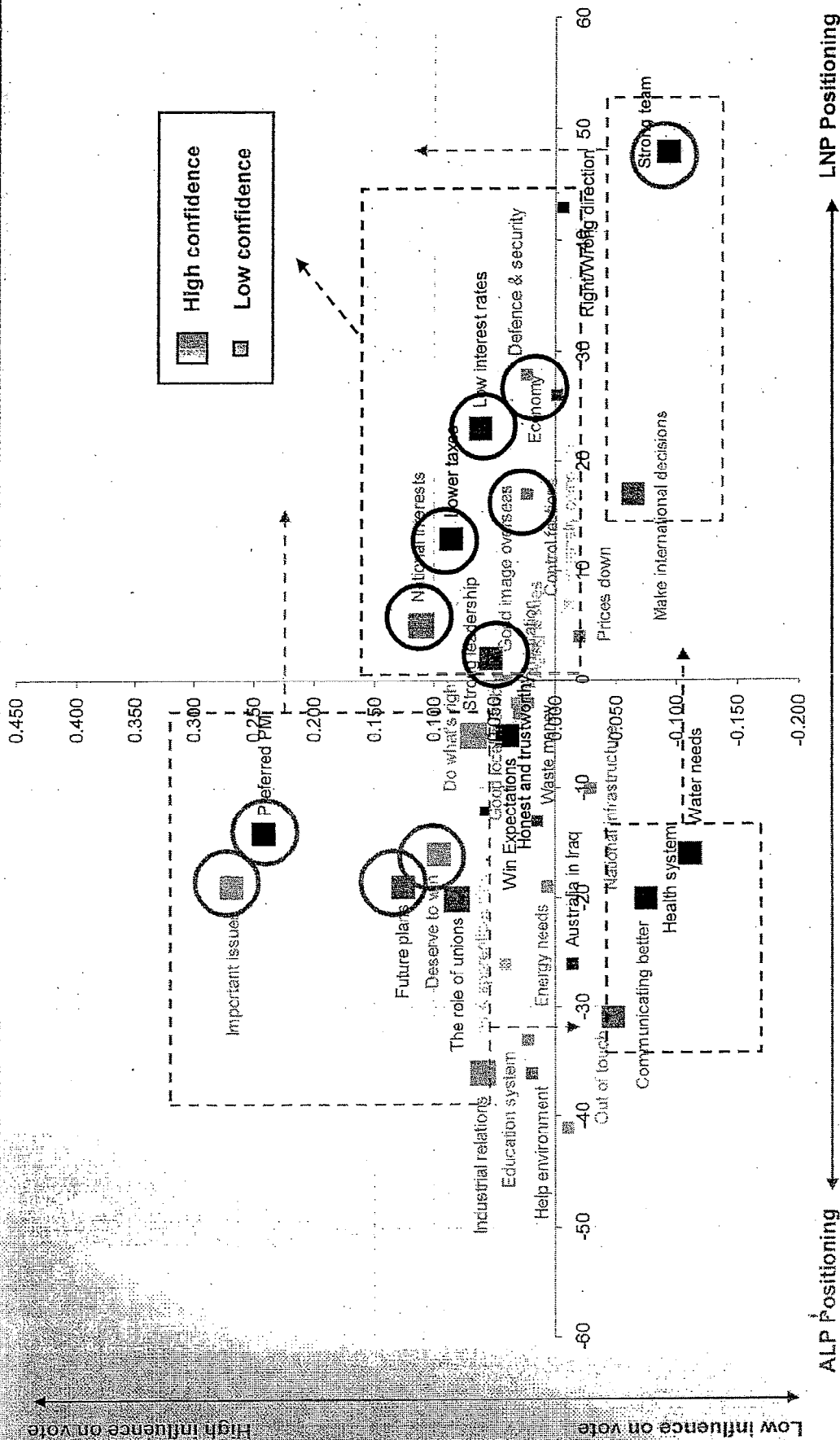
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Overall Model Constant = T22 -0.422, T33 -0.220 / Good & Good



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Need to reclaim ground on preferred PM & issue focus using Coalition strengths



Overall Model Constant = T33 -0.220 (Good Accuracy)

Nationwide Strategy Overview

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Rudd is now preferred PM, this being the most important influence on vote for many = need to refocus on **COMPARING team strengths**, and on highlighting Rudd's inexperience and influences (unions, left factions and State Premiers):

Labor has set the issues agenda on its own and new* strengths (IR, the environment, education and broadband*), and the Coalition has been seen as reacting to these challenges = need to stress absolute and issue-linked importance of **economic management**, international relations and defence (Coalition strengths), and **risks** posed by Labor.

Coalition has 'bought' water, health and roads failings = emphasise that Commonwealth is 'bailing out' ineffective and inefficient States.

Increasingly positive outlook for the country = need to 'cash in' on optimism by linking with past Government performance.

Plummeting win expectations have impinged on vote = need to rebuild win expectations and optimism.



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Setting the Issue Agenda: Demonstrating Leadership & Focus



Labor has set agenda on their strengths, with Coalition seen as 'firefighting'

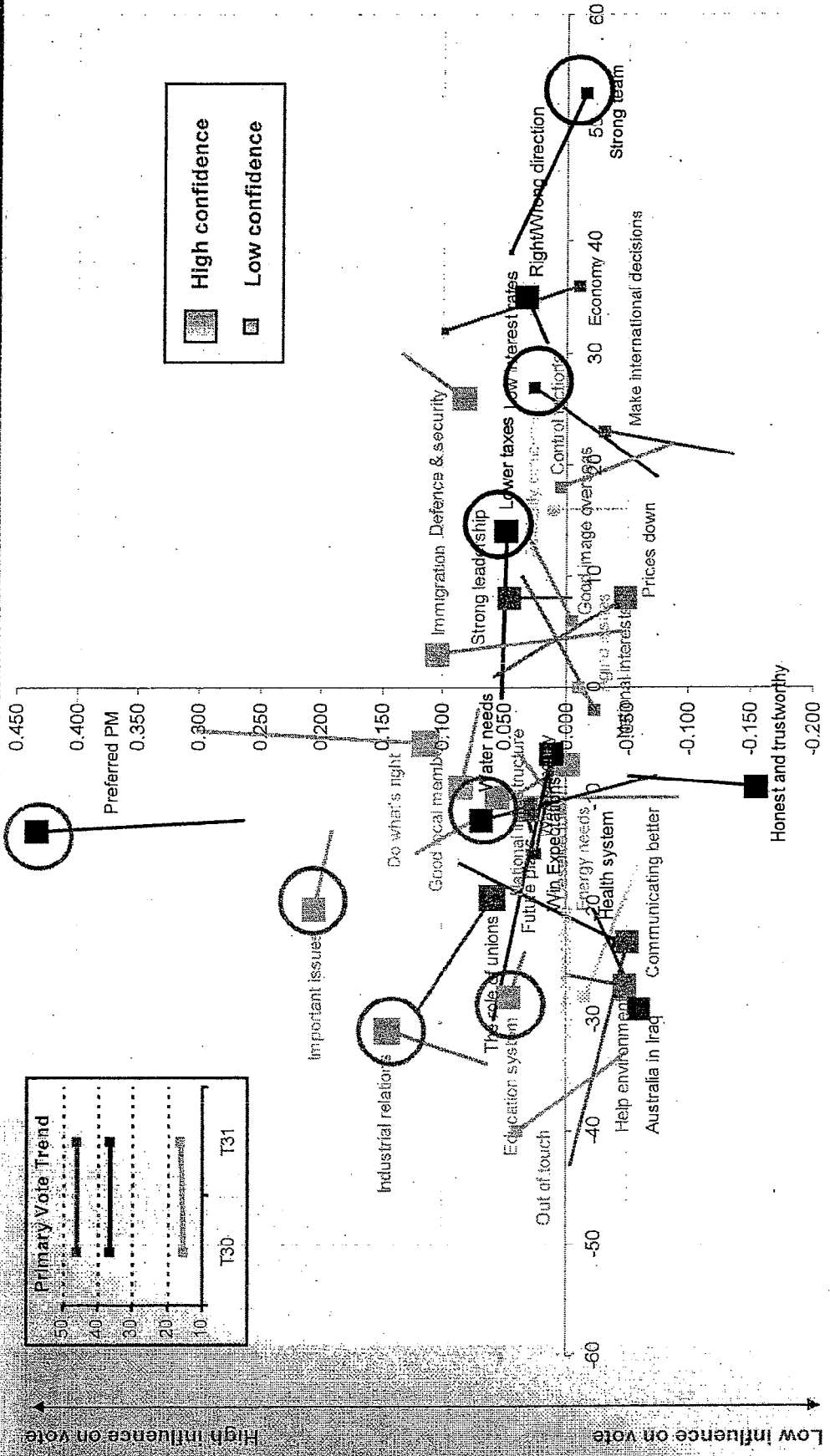
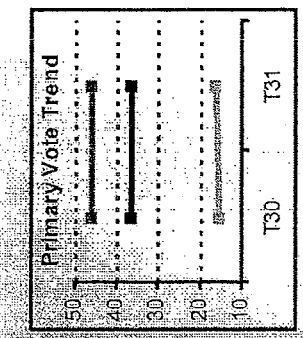
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Budget (T30-T31) gains on taxes, rates & team, but played to education and infrast.

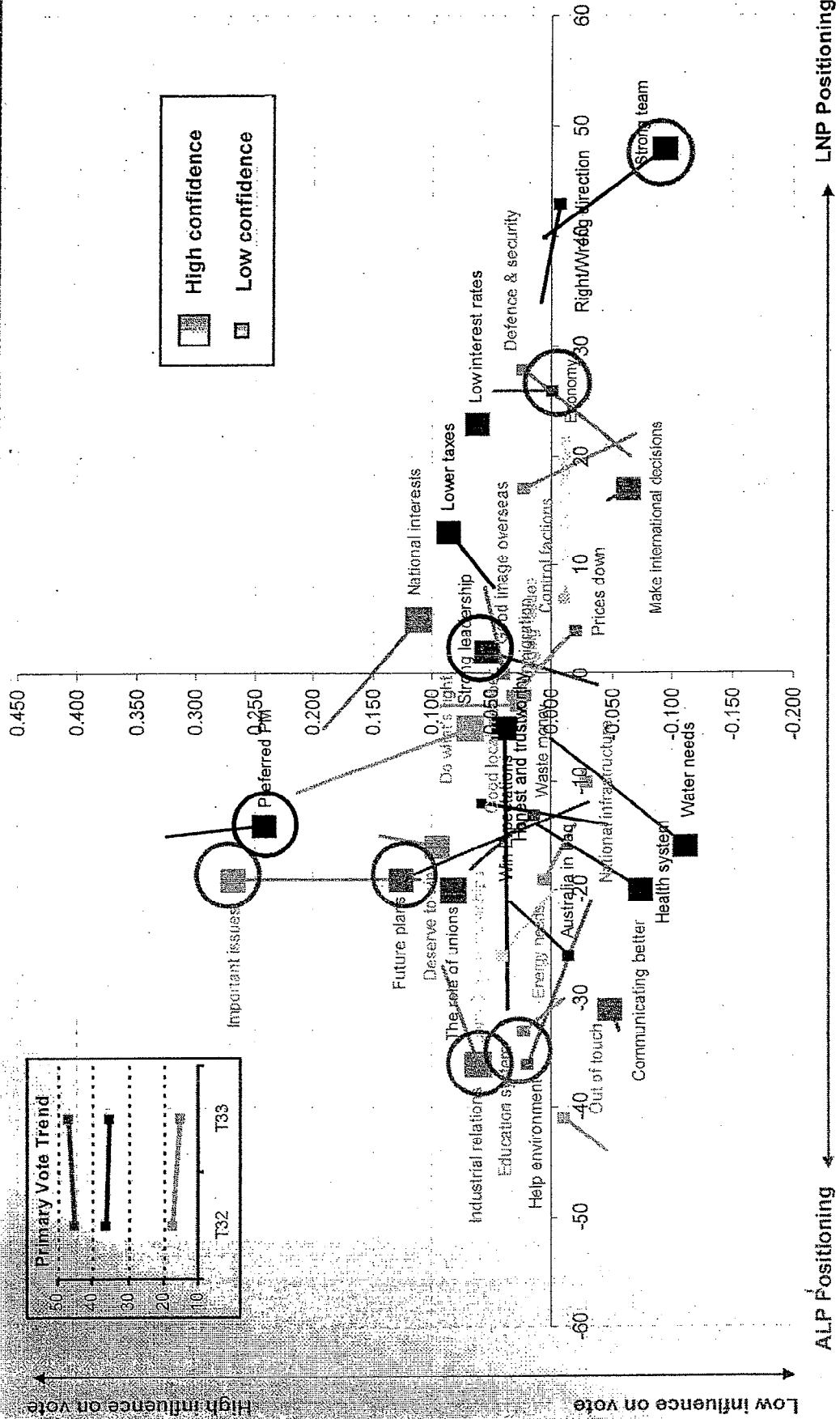


Overall Model Constant = T30 -0.142, T31 -0.279 (Good & Good Accuracy Respectively)



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Federal Council (T32-T33) raised Labor issues & plans, especially environment



Overall Model Constant = T32 -0.265, T33 -0.220 (Good & Good Accuracy Respectively)



Setting the Issue Agenda

Although the Budget demonstrated sound economic management and a better team (Costello versus Swan) – and increased Coalition win expectations – it failed to bring about change in vote. Instead, it had the effect of increasing the salience of education, environmental and infrastructure as issues. Labor is seen as more capable in these areas, so that they gained positioning on them and general focus.

The Federal Council helped to demonstrate leadership, but failed to highlight the Coalition's team strengths. Vote was actually lost over this period because announcements on the environment played to Labor's strengths – they gained positioning on this area. Issue focus and planning became as important as the leaders, and consequently Labor were rewarded for their lead on both measures.

■ **It is imperative that the Coalition be proactive and innovative in setting the 'future' issue agenda to their own and new strengths.**