The President and the Vice President: Different Types of Partnerships for a Unique Power Couple

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Abstract

As the vice presidency evolves over time, the way we assess vice presidents' activities and influence must also change. We must consider the type of partnership that the president and the vice president developed, which determines not only the latter's involvement in the decision-making process but also the scope of his/her influence. Since partnerships are not static – they can change from one term to another, but also according to the issues – they can help explain the fluctuations in the influence of vice presidents, whether within the same administration or between them. We have therefore developed a typology of weak and strong partnerships, depending on what level of influence they allowed the vice presidents to exert, based on criteria related to the selection of the running mate, the role and tasks of the vice president within the administration, and the quality of his/her personal and professional relationship with the president.

The controversial Dick Cheney's vice presidency has given rise to many epithets, with some scholars and journalists not hesitating to speak of an "imperial vice-presidency" (Montgomery 2009), a "shadow presidency" (Hirsh 2012), or even a "co-presidency" (Warshaw 2009). Although the Constitution makes it impossible to share executive power, some vice presidents – Cheney, of course, but also Al Gore before him and Joe Biden more recently – have wielded real influence over the president and the policies of their respective administration.

The evolution and expansion of vice-presidential influence – that is, their "ability to change outcomes from what they would have been" (Light 1983-1984, 620), and specifically "to influence a president's decision" (Lechelt 2009, 19) – is due to three factors that developed especially after World War II (Mannes 2014). First, the increase in executive powers due to growing demands on the White House prompted presidents to give more responsibility to their vice presidents (Davis 1967, 721; Goldstein 1982, 13). Second, the institutionalization of the vice presidency gave unprecedented resources to the officeholders (Light 1984, 2; Relyea 2001, 24; Lechelt 2009). Finally, the preponderance of outsider presidents – who know little about Washington and its ways – ensures that presidential candidates choose their running mate based on experience and competence rather than on electoral assets (Witcover 2014, ix).

Measuring this influence, however, is complex. The relationship between the president and the vice president is both unique and largely private (Bonafede 1989, 57) since the vice president's advice is most often given in the absence of the other advisors. Scholars have attempted to assess this influence by studying the tasks assigned to vice presidents (Light 1984), or by measuring their involvement in decision making (Kengor 2000b). Instead, others have argued that it is the vice presidents' loyalty and dedication that allows them to exert influence (Baumgartner and Crumblin 2015, 203–207). More recently, Richard Yon has analyzed the interpersonal, situational, institutional, and electoral dynamics that account for variations in vice presidents' influence, whether between them or at different moment in a single term (Yon 2017). But while most scholars acknowledge the importance of the relationship between presidents and their vice president, few focus on how work is organized and shared between them. Thus, because of

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the uniqueness of this relationship, we believe that vice president's influence must be analyzed within the larger framework of the partnership they form with their president.

To this end, we have developed a typology of partnerships within which vice presidents operate and which determines the influence they can exert. This typology is based on three categories of criteria, at the basis of the binomial formed by the president and his vice president: the selection of the running mate (model, prior agreement, running mate's ambitions), the vice president's tasks and involvement (tasks and responsibilities, experience and expertise, role as advisor), and the personal and professional relationship between the president and his or her vice president (integration of the staff, position in the inner circle, personal and professional proximity). This typology consists of seven types of partnerships, four of which apply to the contemporary vice presidency since Mondale, placed on a continuum as they may change over time and according to the issues, and divided into two categories: strong and weak partnerships.

Strong partnerships provide the most favorable framework for the vice president's influence because they involve some delegation of presidential authority and a high degree of trust between the president and the vice president. Weak partnerships, while tending to become rarer with the expansion of White House responsibilities and the evolving criteria for selecting running mates, have not completely disappeared, as the partnership between Donald Trump and Mike Pence demonstrates, but these partnerships offer less opportunity for vice presidents to exert meaningful influence on the president and his policies.

Our typology thus bridges studies on vice presidential tasks, on vice presidential involvement in the decision-making process, and more recent works on the importance of the personal and professional relationship between the president and the vice president. In addition, our typology provides a new tool to assess vice presidential influence and its fluctuations and, more broadly, to better understand the normative evolution of the vice-presidential institution since Mondale by highlighting the different partnerships that bind presidents and vice presidents.

To illustrate the contributions of this new typology, we will first discuss the studies on the influence of vice presidents, from which we constructed our framework. Next, we will present the criteria we used to build our typology, and then we will describe the partnerships identified in it, focusing on the four types that have prevailed since Mondale. Finally, we will analyze the implications of weak and strong partnerships for the role of the vice president.

The Study of Vice Presidents' Influence

Few scholars have focused on the vice presidency before the arrival of Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale in the White House in 1977, which was a truly transformational moment for the vice presidency, bringing it into the modern era. Believing that the vice presidency had been underutilized up to that point, Carter and Mondale shared a vision of what the vice presidency could offer – a senior advisor, a "second in command" who could be given substantive tasks (Milkis and Nelson 2008, 452). While the selection of Mondale was also a matter of balancing the ticket – he was progressive while Carter was more conservative; came from a northern state to counterbalance Georgia, where Carter came from; had extensive experience in Washington since he had been in the Senate since 1964, while

Carter was the ultimate outsider – Mondale was primarily chosen to help the president govern (Carter 1982, 39; Moe 2008, 392).

Starting with Mondale, the influence of vice presidents has been the subject of several analyses. Among the precursors – Marie Natoli, Joel Goldstein, Roy Brownell, Jody Baumgartner – Paul C. Light was perhaps the first to reflect on the growing influence of the officeholders. Indeed, the vice president's constitutional, statutory, and institutional assets make him or her a privileged advisor, and because of the resources now available to him or her – an office in the West Wing, regular and private meetings with the president, access to presidential documents, participation in meetings, quality staff embedded in the presidential team – he or she can exert some influence on the president and on policy formulation (Light 1983-1984). However, because the vice presidency is always subject to presidential will, the vice president's influence is, according to Light, dependent on the tasks he or she is given.

Thus, in *Vice-Presidential Power*, Light establishes a classification of vice presidents based on the main functions they perform, grouped into three categories (Light 1984, 28–51): the ceremonial vice presidency, which consists of substituting the president at ceremonies and official events and receiving dignitaries; the political vice presidency, which includes mainly the tasks of spokesperson, activist, and lobbyist with Congress; the policy vice presidency, which allows the vice president to act as an administrative assistant or as a participant in the decision-making process. According to this typology, policy vice presidents have more opportunities to influence the president since they often have responsibility for a policy issue (Al Gore with the environment), can control a policy process (George H. W. Bush as head of the White House crisis management team), or have the authority to act on certain agencies (Nelson Rockefeller as head of the Domestic Council).

Light's typology, which is necessary to understand the breadth of the role and diversity of vice presidents' functions, has been enhanced by Jody C. Baumgartner and Thomas F. Crumblin (Table 1). The two authors add a fourth vice presidential function, the advisory vice presidency, which emphasizes the new role that vice presidents now play (Baumgartner and Crumblin 2015, 125-129). Indeed, the most recent vice presidents have all expressed the need to be consulted and to be able to freely give their opinions on central administration issues and decision – Biden wanted to be "the last guy in the room" (quoted in Brinkley 2013).

Table 1. Types of Vice Presidents According to their Tasks

Ceremonial Vice Presidents*	Political Vice Presidents*	Policy Vice Presidents* or Diplomatic Vice Presidents**	Advisory Vice Presidents**
Lyndon B. Johnson (1961-1963) Hubert Humphrey (1965-1969)	Richard Nixon (1953-1961) Spiro T. Agnew (1969-1973) Gerald Ford (1973-1974) Dan Quayle (1989-1993)	Nelson Rockefeller (1974-1977) Walter Mondale (1977-1981) George H. Bush (1981-1989)	Al Gore (1993-2001) Richard Cheney (2001-2009) Joe Biden (2009-2017)

* Paul C. Light. 1984. *Vice Presidential Power: Advice and Influence in the White House*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 53–60.

** Joey C. Baumgartner and Thomas F. Crumblin. 2015. *The American Vice Presidency: From the Shadow to the Spotlight*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 119–125.

While authors agree that access to the president and information is the key to the vice president's influence (Light 1984; Walch 1997; Goldstein 2016; Andersen Brower 2018), that influence can be limited, or even blocked, by that of the president's other advisors. In foreign policy, for example, Paul Kengor has shown how the role of the secretary of State can structure the one played by the vice president (Kengor 2000a) – though in recent years, even the secretary of State has seen his or her role fades in favor of the secretary of Defense and the National Security advisor (Glain 2012; Brooks 2016). Perhaps the best example is James Baker, Secretary of State under George H. W. Bush, who systematically prevented Vice President Dan Quayle from becoming involved in the administration's foreign policy issues, except in a superficial way (Baker and Glasser 2020). In Quayle's case, the president's extensive experience also prevented him from fully playing his advisory role. The influence of vice presidents can also be limited by the presidents' leadership style, as Joel Goldstein (2016) points out. Some styles provide more opportunities for vice presidents: the open, unstructured style of Clinton, as well as the managerial style of George W. Bush, allowed Gore and Cheney, respectively, to be more involved in decision making (Goldstein 2016, 158 and 162). Conversely, Reagan's style led him to delegate a great deal of authority to his advisors and to decentralize decision making, further reducing Bush's influence (Goldstein 2016, 151).

Despite these obstacles, it is now difficult to isolate vice presidents completely as they have become increasingly involved in decision-making since Mondale. This is especially true in foreign policy, where Vice Presidents Mondale, Bush, Quayle, Gore, Cheney, and Biden had their own foreign policy advisors, negotiated with foreign heads of state, chaired committees of Principals or led National Security Council (NSC) meetings in the absence of the president – something their predecessors never did. Paul Kengor developed a scale of 1 to 6 to measure the foreign policy involvement of vice presidents according to the tasks they were assigned (Table 2).

Table 2. Vice Presidents' Involvement in Foreign Policy*

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Receives documents and is a sitting member of the NSC	Serves as a spokesperson on foreign policy matters	Travels abroad as an emissary on foreign policy issues	Has his or her own foreign policy advisors	Negotiates with foreign leaders	Leads key foreign policy committees
Humphrey Ford Rockefeller	Johnson Agnew	n/a	n/a	Nixon Mondale Quayle	Bush Gore

* Paul Kengor. 2000. *Wreath Layer or Policy Player? The Vice President's Role in Foreign Policy*. Lanham: Lexington, 28–31.

This involvement was clearly accentuated with Gore, whose selection by Bill Clinton in 1992 represents a second transformational moment for the vice presidency. It was the first time a presidential candidate selected his or her running mate by ignoring traditional geographic, ideological, and demographic considerations – in other words, by considering not the balance of the ticket but rather the possibility of a partnership (Kamarck 2016, 7). Clinton and Gore were the same age, both came from the South, and were considered New Democrats. Gore's extensive experience allowed him to play a prominent role in his administration, to be seen as Clinton's equal – indeed, especially during the first term, as

more presidential than the president (The Economist 1994, 30) – and to clearly and directly influence many of the administration's policies, ranging from the environment to nuclear proliferation, from relations with the USSR to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (Hyland 1997; Clinton 2004).

Several problems emanate from Light's and Kengor's classifications, however. First, they are decades old and, as such, are no longer adequate to account for the evolution of the vice presidency and the increase in the influence of the officeholders, especially since they do not explain what determines the vice president's level of involvement beyond the tasks he or she must perform. Moreover, involvement does not automatically transform into influence: as Light mentions, there is a difference between "giving advice and taking advice" (Light 1984, 2). It is therefore not enough to have access to the President's Daily Brief (PDB) or to participate in NSC meetings to influence a decision – just as weekly private meetings with the president do not guarantee influence or even attentive listening: other factors, including the nature of the personal and professional relationship between the president and his vice president, seem to be more decisive in understanding the influence of the latter. Furthermore, these two typologies do not explain why vice presidents, while having the same tools and benefiting from the precedents set by their predecessors, do not exert the same influence and are not equally involved in decision making. Also, these approaches do not consider the vice president's ambitions and the nature of his or her relationship with the president. Vice presidents are no longer the subservient assistants of yesteryear: they are experienced and, often, ambitious advisors – whether in terms of presidential aspirations or policies to be implemented. Finally, those classifications do not bring the president into the equation, even though he determines and structures the parameters within which the vice president will operate and, by extension, the opportunities and limits of influence he or she will be able to wield within the administration.

Richard Yon's work attempts to remedy these shortcomings by focusing on the factors that cause vice presidential influence to fluctuate, both within and between terms. While there are four dynamics at work – interpersonal, situational, institutional, electoral – Yon explains that "the personal and professional relationship serves as a precondition and foundation for all other factors that may impact vice presidential influence" (Yon 2017, 78). Thus, the nature of this relationship is made up not only of the ties between the president and vice president, but also of their shared vision of what the vice presidency should be, their personalities, their abilities and skills, but also the president's leadership style. Our typology is directly linked to this conclusion by adding the idea of the binomial formed by the president and his vice president. It is the components of this pairing, both individual and institutional, that determine the partnership in which they will collaborate. These partnerships offer a different perspective and a new key to explain the evolution of the vice presidency and the influence of the officeholder.

A More Dynamic Typology Focused on Partnerships

Although insufficient to understand the changes that have affected the vice presidency since Gore and Cheney, Light's and Kengor's classifications nevertheless identify criteria important to the development of our typology of partnerships, to which we added other explanatory factors, many of which stem from the dynamics presented by Yon. Thus, we

identified three categories of criteria: the selection of running mates, the tasks and involvement of vice presidents, and finally, the personal and professional relationship between the president and vice president.

The Selection of a Running Mate

To identify and define the different types of partnerships between a president and his vice president, we first chose to examine the criteria for selecting a running mate, since they are the very basis of their working relationship. While the choice of a running mate has long been guided by a concern for balancing the ticket (Natoli 2009, 28–29) – John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin demonstrating the limits of that model (Brox and Cassells 2009; Knuckey 2012) –, the process is now more complex and involves a vast set of criteria (Baumgartner and Park 2022). While balancing the ticket is still important today, presidential candidates are now looking for a partner, a top advisor who will be able to contribute to the administration (Kamarck 2016; Kamarck 2020) and to help them govern (Devine and Kopko 2020, 31).

The strongest partnerships are often the most organized, which means that the existence of a prior agreement between the presidential candidate and his running mate demonstrates the importance placed on both the role of the future vice president and the nature of his or her relationship with the future president. Mondale was the first to produce a document listing his demands and requirements, both in terms of the relationship he wanted with Carter and the responsibilities he wanted to assume (Mondale 1976). This was also the case with Gore and Cheney, who had formal agreements with the presidential candidate detailing what would be expected of them and the conditions under which they wished to assist the president. Indeed, when Quayle met with Cheney a few days after the 2001 inauguration, he warned the new vice president to expect to do a lot of traveling and fundraising. To which Cheney responds, "I have a different understanding with the president" (quoted in Baker 2013, 88). Conversely, when vice presidents do not have a prior understanding with the president, they are often left to navigate by sight. For example, although Trump promised Pence that he would be "the most consequential vice president ever" (quoted in Coppins 2018), no agreement concretely spelled out how this would be the case and in what areas Pence could exert his influence.

A final indicator related to the selection of the vice president is the latter's ambitions. Most of the running mates have been opponents of the presidential candidate, presidential candidates in previous elections, or were perceived as future presidential candidates. In fact, the only vice president since Mondale who did not have presidential ambitions was Cheney. However, he did have personal ambitions that guided his vice presidency, namely the expansion of executive powers. It is therefore important to understand how these ambitions, whatever their nature, influence not only how the vice president serves the president but also how the president perceives these ambitions. Indeed, a president might be suspicious of, and even feel threatened by, a vice president who works primarily for his or her own campaign. Similarly, a vice president who has no presidential ambitions, as was the case with Cheney, has more time to devote to serving the president, but his or her own political agenda could also shape the advice he or she gives the president.

Vice Presidents' Tasks and Involvement

As Light's and Kengor's classifications demonstrate, vice presidents' tasks and responsibilities can be numerous and range from minimal involvement to an active role in the administration's major issues, making it clear that vice presidents also benefit from the expansion of presidential powers (Goldstein 2010: 121). In addition to these elements, we added two other indicators related to vice presidents' tasks to develop our typology of partnerships. First, the experience and expertise of vice presidents is a key determinant of the role they will play with the president, but also – and perhaps more importantly – of their credibility with the president's entourage. This experience is especially important today when presidents are often considered as outsiders.

Second, we looked at the advisory role that vice presidents have played, since this is how they can more easily influence the president, especially because most of the advice they give is in private meetings, away from the ears and pride of other advisors. Indeed, it is this advisory role that is the most significant change in the vice presidency since Mondale (Baumgartner 2006, 127). As mentioned earlier, the confidentiality of the exchanges between the vice president and the president precludes a comprehensive assessment, but it is nonetheless possible, by cross-referencing testimonies with official documents, to get a general picture of how the vice president played his or her role as advisor and how, as such, he or she was able to influence the president. The nature of that influence – or rather, the limits imposed on that influence – will help define the type of partnership that existed between the president and the vice president.

The Personal and Professional Relationship Between the President and the Vice President

The final category of criteria for developing our typology of partnerships concerns the relationship between the president and the vice president since their proximity is a critical component of the latter's ability to influence the former.

First, as other analyses have well demonstrated (Toner 2004; Moe 2008; Lechelt 2009; Goldstein 2016), the integration of the vice president's team and close associates into the president's entourage is very important. On the one hand, it allows the vice president to have eyes and ears at all levels and in all the White House working groups; on the other hand, it facilitates the coordination of work between the president and the vice president. This integration is not always easy, especially when the vice president was an opponent of the president during the primaries, as was the case with Bush and Reagan, or Biden and Obama. But the examples of Mondale and Gore show that vice presidents are much better equipped to advise and influence the president when they have access to information and decisions of the administration, which is made possible by the integration of teams and staff. Some vice presidents even see their senior advisors appointed as aides to the president or given senior positions in the White House – for example, Gore's Chief of Staff, Ron Klain, was also an aide to the president, while James Baker, a close Bush friend, became Reagan's Chief of Staff. Vice presidents whose senior staff is not integrated into the president's inner circle, such as Quayle, have their influence reduced due to a lack of information or are sidelined by the president's close advisors.

Second, the vice president's position in the president's inner circle is also an indicator of the influence he or she will have. His or her presence on the foreign and domestic policy decision-making teams is critical but does not by itself guarantee that he or she will play a significant role in the decision-making process or influence the president. The two individuals must also spend time together for the vice president to adequately advise the president and convince him to choose one option over another. Again, this element alone is not enough for the vice president to be influential: Pence and Trump spent a lot of time together, but it was mostly the president who spoke during their meetings (Andersen Brower 2018, 269). A vice president who listens is also an advantage: he or she then stores vital information about the president's preferences, hesitations, and priorities, which he or she can then use to give more adequate advice.

Finally, the relationship between the president and the vice president is itself an indicator of how much influence the second-in-command will have. Most relationships deteriorate over time: Gore and Clinton saw their friendship severely tested by the president's relationship with Monica Lewinsky, while Cheney fell out of favor with President George W. Bush early in the administration's second term. Other relationships, on the other hand, have blossomed over the years – although this is a rare phenomenon, if only because of the vice president's presidential ambitions, which become more apparent after re-election. Biden and Obama have undoubtedly built an exceptional relationship based on friendship, respect, and trust, even though they knew little about each other at the outset and their differences were more glaring than their similarities (Rogers and Shear 2021). For most vice presidents, however, the relationship they develop with their president is, for the most part, strictly professional, a far cry from the Biden-Obama "bromance": this was the case with Bush and Reagan, who got to know and like each other but were never friends. In fact, the quality of the relationship between the president and the vice president is most often dependent on the reasons underlying the selection of the running mate: if he or she was primarily chosen to fill in the presidential candidate's shortcomings, there is a good chance that their personalities will be incompatible (Kamarck 2016, 3). Thus, vice presidents who have failed to develop a positive or friendly personal relationship with the president will have difficulty exerting significant influence on him.

Together, these indicators define a typology of partnerships between the president and the vice president. Like any typology, the seven categories we identified based on these indicators are archetypes whose contours are not always watertight. They do, however, provide a broader, more contemporary picture of the influence of vice presidents, as well as illustrating the normative, political, and institutional transformations that have led to the expansion of the role of vice presidents, at least since Mondale.

The Different Types of Partnerships

The existing literature on executive power in the United States does not offer a typology to identify, categorize, or define the nature of the unique relationship between the president and his vice president as a key determinant of the vice president's influence. Yet this unique relationship is at the heart of governance and touches on fundamental issues of how decisions are made in the White House – and thus, how presidential power is delegated or shared –, how the president succeeds, and how the democratic and constitutional rules that govern the political system are protected.

Our typology of partnerships has emerged from the convergence and fusion of several sources. First, Arthur Himmelman has developed four strategies that government organizations adopt when forming coalitions with other government entities: networking, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration. The author places these strategies on a continuum, meaning that each "evolves from or builds upon another" (Himmelman 2001, 277). These strategies have subsequently been transformed into types of partnerships by other authors (Riggs *et al*. 2013; VicHealth 2016) in the context of private-public collaborations. The distinction between these four partnerships is based on "the purposes and nature of partnerships" (VicHealth 2016, 4). Other authors have refined this typology of partnerships by adding categories: coexistence – which is considered the "lower level of cooperation" and requires minimal commitment from the partners (Craig and Courtney 2004, 38) – and competition, which involves each partner attempting to capture resources and public attention at the expense of their common interests (Inspiring Communities 2019).

Adapted from this body of work, our typology proposes seven types of partnerships divided into two categories (Table 3). On the one hand, we have identified four weak partnerships in which vice presidents have little opportunity to influence the president or the policies of their administration: coexistence, competition, communication, and coordination. On the other hand, our typology includes three strong partnerships in which vice presidents are more likely to be a factor of influence: cooperation, collaboration, and co-presidency. The arrow represents the idea of a "partnership continuum" (Craig and Courtney 2004, 38), that is, the fluidity that can exist between types of partnerships, as well as the fluctuations in the vice president's influence.

For the purposes of this article, we have chosen not to discuss in detail the first two weak partnerships – coexistence and competition – and the strongest partnership, co-presidency. First, because the first two are unlikely to be replicated in the current political context, although the competitive partnership can be a dysfunction of the other types of partnerships. They are, however, useful to understand most partnerships in the pre-Mondale era. For example, the *coexistence* partnership aptly describes the relationship between President Lyndon B. Johnson and his Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey. Johnson, who suffered greatly from his time as vice president in the Kennedy administration – "I detested every minute of it" (quoted in Kearns Goodwin 1991, 164) – was no more gracious to his own vice president: stuck in a relationship of dominance and subordination (Andersen Brower 2018, 269), Humphrey was "consistently demeaned and marginalized" by Johnson (Solberg 1984, 265). For example, Johnson said that whenever he thought of his vice president, he imagined him with tears in his eyes since he seemed unable "to put feelings and strength together" (Johnson quoted in Kearns Goodwin 1991, 133). Thus, the two men did not work together, reducing the vice president's opportunities to influence Johnson. This was clearly the case regarding the Vietnam War (Johns 2020).

The *competition* partnership is also difficult to imagine. The characteristics of this type of partnership are above all the lack of trust between the partners, rivalry – even hostility – between them or between their respective entourages. This was the case with Johnson when he was John F. Kennedy's Vice President: those close to the president, especially his brother and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, were regularly disrespectful towards the vice president, considering him "an affront to Camelot, someone they tried to ignore as much as possible" (Kamarck 2016, 4), especially since he had been a fierce

Kennedy's opponent during the 1960 Democratic primary. The same was true of Spiro Agnew, Richard Nixon's first vice president. Nixon saw his running mate as a rival because

Table 3. President/Vice President's Types of Partnerships

Weak Partnerships				Strong Partnerships		
Coexistence	**Competition**	**Communication**	**Coordination**	**Cooperation**	**Collaboration**	**Co-presidency**
- no direct relationship - no joint activity or work - little or no sharing of information or resources - the vice president may be present at meetings and receive documentation, but his/her opinion is not sought - the vice president is not considered an active member of the White House - the vice president carries out ceremonial and political tasks	- no trusting relationship - the president and the vice president are in strong rivalry or competition - hostility between the president and the vice president or between their entourage - the vice president may be present at meetings and receive documentation, but his/her opinion is not sought - the vice president is not considered an important member of the administration - the vice president carries out mainly ceremonial and political tasks	- exchange of information - requires little trust - the vice president attends the meetings and receives the documentation but his/her opinion is not regularly solicited - the vice president is considered a spokesperson or implementer of White House policies - the vice president carries out ceremonial and political tasks	- exchange of information and sharing of resources to achieve the objectives of the administration - integration of the vice president's staff into the president's team - the opinion of the vice president is sought in the context of meetings and exchanges - requires regular meetings with the president - the vice president is considered to have an important role to play - the vice president acts as a troubleshooter - the vice president carries out political and policy tasks	- exchange of information and sharing of resources to achieve the objectives of the administration - requires a high level of trust and the sharing of areas of expertise - there is a prior agreement between the president and the vice president on the role of the latter - integration of the vice president's staff into the president's team - the opinion of the vice president is sought in important matters - the vice president has privileged and regular access to the president - the vice president participates in the administration's important appointments - the vice president acts as a troubleshooter - the vice president carries out policy tasks and advisory tasks	- exchange of information and sharing of resources to achieve the objectives of the administration - requires the highest level of trust and extensive sharing of areas of expertise - there is a prior agreement between the president and the vice president on the role of the latter - integration of the vice president's staff into the president's team - vice president's close advisors hold important positions within the administration - the vice president is a senior advisor to the president and is consulted for all important decisions - the vice president spends a lot of time with the president - the president delegates part of his authority to the vice-president - the vice-president carries out policy and advisory tasks	- sharing of power and responsibilities - sharing of risk and reward - formal agreement to create a co-presidency - almost complete disappearance of the hierarchical relationship - merger of the vice president's team and the president's - the president and the vice president share decision-making - the vice president carries out mainly decision-making tasks
Pre-Mondale Partnerships		**Post-Mondale Partnerships**				**Future Partnership?**

Adapted from Himmelman (2001), Craig and Courtney (2004), Riggs *et al*. (2014), VicHealth (2016), Inspiring Communities (2021).

of his growing popularity with the Republican establishment and voters (Lucas 1970, 105; Buchanan 2019, 129) and constantly mocked or criticized him in private (Nixon 1971; Holden *et al*. 2019, 128), complaining about Agnew's constant demands for a more active role (Haldeman 1994, 65; Witcover 2007, 61). Despite assurances that Agnew would be "the most active and utilized vice president in history" (Witcover 2007, 54), he was quickly isolated by Nixon and his inner circle.

The *co-presidency* will also be excluded from our analysis. This type of relationship between the president and the vice president would involve the sharing of power and responsibility in a partnership where the hierarchical relationship would be almost completely absent and where decision making would be shared. In other words, the vice president would effectively be a "co-president" with significant decision-making responsibilities. Although this term has been used to describe the relationship between Bush and Cheney, their partnership was not a co-presidency – it did not emanate from a formal agreement between Bush and Cheney to do so, but rather from the president's leadership style and the vice president's manipulation of the bureaucratic and decision-making process.

However, there have been real attempts at co-presidency in recent history. This was the case during the 1980 Republican convention, when rumors of a "dream ticket" were circulating among the delegates: candidate Ronald Reagan was effectively courting former President Gerald Ford by promising, if he agreed to be his running mate, to give him control of the Office of Management and Budget and the NSC via the creation of a White House Executive Office headed by the vice president (Perlstein 2020, 805; Kilgore 2020). Reagan seemed to offer Ford "a true 'co-presidency'" (Alan Greenspan quoted in Perlstein 2020, 805) that would have undoubtedly transformed the vice presidency – and the presidency (Witcover 2015). A second attempt was made by Democratic candidate John Kerry in 2004, who wanted to recruit Republican John McCain as his running mate. To do so, he dangled the idea of including the role of secretary of State and control of foreign policy with the usual vice-presidential duties (Thomas 2004, 80). Although Ford was eventually dropped from the list of running mates in favor of George H. W. Bush and McCain refused Kerry's generous offer (Baumgartner 2006, 69), these two examples nevertheless illustrate the potential of such a partnership based on a genuine desire to share power.

While co-presidency may not be constitutionally or politically feasible at this time, the increase in presidential responsibilities and duties continues and may in the future call for a more co-presidential partnership, whether through the expansion of vice-presidential powers or even through the election of two co-presidents (Orentlicher 2013).

In this article, our goal is to describe more specifically the four types of contemporary partnerships that have been applied since Mondale's arrival in the White House[2]: communication and coordination (weak partnerships); cooperation and collaboration (strong partnerships). What distinguishes strong partnerships from weak partnerships relates to the three categories of criteria we have identified. First, with respect

[2] While scholars have long thought that the relationship between Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon was primarily one of coexistence (Dallek 2013; Frank 2013; Malberger, 2014), recent work by Irwin F. Gellman instead demonstrates the active role that the vice president played within the Eisenhower administration and the cordial relationship between the two men (Gellman 2015; Gellman 2022). However, since it would take twenty years before the emergence of a modern vice presidency – it was Mondale who set precedents adopted by his successors –, Nixon's vice presidency will not be analyzed in this article.

to the criteria for selecting running mates, strong partnerships are derived from the partnership model rather than the balancing model: by selecting someone who can help govern rather than win, a presidential candidate demonstrates his or her willingness to make the vice president an important player in the administration. In this regard, the existence of a prior agreement between the presidential candidate and the running mate is also a central feature of strong partnerships. Second, it is the vice president's prior experience and role as a troubleshooter that appears to be a mark of trust and is central to a strong partnership. Insider vice presidents are more likely to be given tasks that have political or governmental significance. Finally, strong partnerships emanate, not surprisingly, from a close relationship between the president and the vice president. The integration of their teams, the vice president's presence in the inner circle and his or her privileged access to the occupant of the Oval Office make it easier for him or her to exert influence at the administrative, political, and personal levels.

Weak Partnerships: Communication and Coordination

Weak partnerships fall into two categories: communication and coordination. The relationship between George H. W. Bush and Dan Quayle was structured by a *communication* partnership in which there was a minimal understanding of what was expected of the vice president but which was not based on Bush's willingness to find a person with whom to share responsibilities, nor on a formal agreement defining Quayle's role and tasks (Bonafede 1989, 65). Quayle's selection, which had taken even those close to Bush by surprise (Meacham 2015, 337), had been made based on sociodemographic criteria. Quayle himself explains that he was chosen for three reasons: he was younger, came from the Midwest, and was more conservative than Bush (Quayle 1997, 191).

While the two men shared information, the president did not always seek the advice of his vice president. This was especially the case because the vice president's duties were largely ceremonial and political, and he was seen as the spokesperson for the White House rather than as an advisor. This was particularly true during the invasion of Panama in December 1989 and during the 1991 Gulf War. Quayle's primary role during these times of crisis was to reassure allies and members of Congress (Quayle 1994, 157). During the 1991 Gulf War, the vice president acted as an advocate for the administration by attacking Bush's critics (Kengor 1994) and by being the White House spokesperson (Natoli 2009, 187). These tasks, while important – he was able to get Israel not to intervene in the conflict, Venezuela to increase its oil production during the war, and some allies to increase their financial contributions (Kengor 2000b, 202) – are not marks of influence, however. Moreover, while Quayle was one of the first to try to convince the president of the need to ask for a Congressional vote to attack Iraq (Kengor 2000b, 202), he was not the only one, and there is no reason to believe that his position was decisive in Bush's decision.

In a communication partnership, the vice president's influence – whether on administrative processes, policies or the president himself – is fairly minimal and does not interfere with the skills or expertise of other advisors deemed more important. Thus, Quayle's most significant impact is his work as head of the Council on Competitiveness, which was charged with reducing federal regulation. This responsibility had the advantage, for both Bush and Quayle, of satisfying the conservative fringe of the Republican Party but also of keeping the vice president out of the areas of interest of the president and his close

advisors, such as James Baker and John Sununu. Thus, while Bush often said that Quayle was an important member of the decisional team (Bush and Scowcroft 1998, 24), he never gave concrete examples of the influence he would have had there (Lechelt 2009, 162).

Moreover, the extensive experience of the president and his advisors represented one of the obstacles to Quayle's influence (Goldstein 2016, 154-155). Bush did not really need the vice president's advice since he himself had served in that capacity for eight years under Reagan, in addition to having been Director of the CIA, Ambassador to the United Nations, and U.S. Representative to China. Being a less experienced vice president than the president – a rare combination seen more recently with Joe Biden and Kamala Harris – is not conducive to the vice president's influence.

In terms of the relationship between the president and vice president, communication partnerships offer regular but mostly formal meetings, which provide little opportunity for the vice president to influence the president. For example, while Quayle had more than 550 meetings with President Bush (Lechelt 2009, 163) – only National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft and Chief of Staff John Sununu had more – the two men never developed a friendly or personal relationship (Bonafede 1989, 65), which was a limit to the influence Quayle might have had.

In fact, Quayle was not part of the president's inner circle: while he was in the loop because of his presence in the Big Eight[3], "he was never a top-tier" (Lechelt 2009, 144). This was due to several factors, including the president's lack of trust or indifference toward him, his inexperience, and the fact that his staff was not integrated into Bush's staff – nor had he been involved in major cabinet appointments (Lechelt 2009, 381). Quayle's many blunders also undermined his potential influence (Mitchell 1991), as did the lack of allies in the president's inner circle but also among the White House staff (Goldstein 2008, 294). Quayle, however, managed to assemble a competent team around him, consisting mostly of Reaganites (Goldstein 2016, 155), which allowed him to consolidate his ties with conservatives – and thus, to nurture his presidential ambitions – but also to carry out the tasks the president assigned to him.

Communication partnerships, more common in the pre-Mondale era, are now difficult to envision. Quayle's successors have demonstrated the full potential of the position and have all been more influential than he was, albeit to varying degrees. This is true of vice presidents who have worked in the second type of weak partnership, *coordination*, as did George H. W. Bush under Ronald Reagan (on domestic policy matters), Dick Cheney under George W. Bush (during the second term), and Mike Pence under Donald Trump. This type of partnership is characterized by a more convivial relationship than in the communication partnership – the running mates were most often chosen according to the partnership model or a combination of the balancing and partnership models. Thus, Bush, Cheney, and Pence were chosen primarily because they were "ready and able" to become president (Kamarck 2016, 7), in addition, in the cases of Bush and Pence, to the demographic and ideological complementarity of their candidacy.

Bush and Pence also have in common that they have not adopted a formal agreement with their respective presidents to clarify their roles in the administration. Reagan and Bush adopted the Mondale's model – the precedents set could hardly be taken

[3] The Big Eight consisted of the President, the Vice President, James Baker, John Sununu, Brent Scowcroft, Colin Powell (Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff), Robert Gates (Director of Central Intelligence), and Dick Cheney (Secretary of Defense).

away from his successors – but without specifying the details. Pence, for his part, hoped to play an active role as vice president – à la Cheney – (De La Cuetara 2016) but his role has mostly resembled that established by Bush. As for Cheney, while he created his own vice-presidential model and had a clear agreement with the president about his role in the administration – no foreign travel or specific duties that would prevent him from being the president's main advisor (Kamarck 2016, 11) – this agreement eroded during the second term, when his role was less crucial.

Coordination also involves sharing not only information but also administration resources, especially since vice presidents are more experienced than their president and can therefore use them effectively. Indeed, Pence has done just that, allowing lobbyists privileged access to the White House (Scherer *et al*. 2018). Access to these resources allows vice presidents who are part of a coordination partnership to perform more political and policy functions and thus, drop the ceremonial functions that have so often frustrated vice presidents stuck in the communication partnership.

Bush, Cheney, and Pence were more experienced than their respective presidents. Bush, who had held important positions in the Nixon and Ford Administrations and had been a member of Congress, was seen as a future president and therefore had a greater credibility and authority than his predecessors – and many of his successors – had (Menges 1988, 272). This did not prevent those close to Reagan from being suspicious of him: it must be said that he had been a fierce opponent of Reagan during the 1980 primaries. Reagan's strong domestic and foreign policy convictions also limited the influence that Bush could or should have had because of his extensive experience. As for Cheney, his experience as a congressman, Ford's Chief of Staff, and George H. W. Bush's Secretary of Defense, while useful in the first term, proved insufficient in the second to maintain his position and influence. Starting in 2004, he became "another pleader with an agenda to advance" (Goldstein 2016, 166) who failed to obtain a presidential pardon for his former Chief of Staff Lewis "Scooter" Libby. Moreover, Bush's new, more confident leadership style meant that he delegated less authority and did not have to consult Cheney as often as he did during the first term (Baker 2013), especially as he understood that some of Cheney's decisions had contributed to undermine his administration – whether about torture techniques or the surveillance programs put in place in the wake of 9/11 (Gellman 2008b, 139–145). As for Pence, his propensity to never contradict Trump and to serve as a megaphone for the president's messages meant that his experience was of little use in helping the president make decisions.

When one looks at Bush's foreign policy tasks, they are substantial and make him a central player in the Reagan administration – which is why his vice presidency has been classified as a cooperation partnership in this regard. In domestic policy, however, his role and influence are much less significant, which places him in a coordination partnership. For example, Bush led the Task Force on Regulatory Relief, which was responsible for federal regulation. While this activity was important (Natoli 2009, 168), it did not place the vice president at the center of decision making or make him a senior advisor to Reagan. Rather, it helped to keep him away from the president's inner circle – as he would do himself by putting his own vice president in charge of the Council on Competitiveness. Cheney's duties during the second term of the George W. Bush Administration were not very significant, even on security and policy issues. Indeed, he refused to lead the Hurricane Katrina Task Force in 2005 (Cheney 2011, 430), which greatly antagonized the

president. Pence, too, has played an important role in federal deregulation, as have his Republican predecessors (Scherer *et al*. 2018), in addition to participating in several of his administration's major initiatives – the Munich Security Conference (2017), tax reform (2018), and the Coronavirus Task Force (2020). However, until more data are available to provide a more complete picture of Pence's actual influence within the Trump Administration, it must be noted that he has mainly played an executing role on these occasions.

Coordination partnerships also allow the integration of the vice president's staff with that of the president. Vice Presidents Bush and Cheney have benefited from this integration: for example, Cheney's long-time friends have been given Cabinet positions, including Donald Rumsfeld (Secretary of State) and Paul O'Neill (Secretary of Treasure). Like his predecessors, Pence has been involved in the appointment of key people in his administration, including several of his close friends (D'Antonio and Eisner 2018, 221; LoBianco 2019, 328). It must be said that, like Cheney before him, he was very involved in the transition process –he oversaw it after Chris Christie's departure – which gave him a great deal of influence over appointments, whether to the Cabinet or to head federal agencies (LoBianco and Bradner 2016; Masters 2021). Pence was responsible for the selection of Dan Coats (Director of National Intelligence), Mike Pompeo (Director of the Central Intelligence Agency), Tom Price (Secretary of Health and Human Services), and Seema Verma (Administrator of the Medicare and Medicaid programs). Cheney, for his part, lost his main allies during the second term – Rumsfeld, but also John Ashcroft (Attorney General), whom he had recommended to Bush –, replaced by new advisors who will exert more influence on the president but also, control the vice president's access to him (Goldstein 2016, 165), be it Condoleezza Rice (Secretary of State), Josh Bolten (Chief of Staff), Robert Gates (Secretary of Defense), or Henry Paulson (Secretary of Treasury).

Staff integration or participation in Cabinet appointments does not give the vice president automatic access to the president's inner circle. Bush, for example, spent little time with Reagan and, because of Reagan's leadership style – highly decentralized and important delegation of presidential authority to several advisors – had few opportunities to influence him directly (Untermeyer 1997, 157; Goldstein 2016, 151), especially in domestic policy, which was not his area of expertise and in which he was much less involved than in foreign policy. Bush's strong loyalty to Reagan also gave the impression that he had no ideas or opinions of his own to influence the president – the press often described him as Reagan's "lap dog" (George Will quoted in Witcover 1992, 328) or "lackey" (Kincade 2000, 63; Toner 2004, 53). Pence, on the other hand, had frequent access to Trump but was never alone with him because of the president's open-door policy. While his schedule consisted mostly of foreign trips to translate Trump's messages and decisions, and fundraising events for various Republican candidates (Andersen Brower 2018, 283), he had less time to spend in meetings held, often impromptu, by the president and his top advisors. Pence was often absent from important meetings, including the famous May 10, 2017, meeting between Trump and two top Russian officials – Sergey Kislyak and Sergey Lavrov – during which the president revealed classified information and discussed the firing of FBI Director James Comey (Blum 2017): if Pence had really been "a top presidential adviser, he should have attended the meeting," according to a former high-ranking Republican official (quoted in Andersen Brower 2018, 283). It should be added that Pence, like Bush, had a deferential attitude towards the president that also hindered his

influence (D'Antonio and Eisner 2018, 200) – a vice president who does not dare to contradict the president or present his point of view has little chance of helping him make a decision or change his mind. As for Cheney, he was still part of Bush's inner circle after the 2004 election but spoke more rarely and made "no effort to reinforce the president's point" (Christopher Hill quoted in Andersen Brower 2018, 219).

While they are more consulted than those in a communication partnership, vice presidents in a coordination partnership are not necessarily more listened to. Cheney's case is unique in that the coordination partnership that he found himself in during the second term of the Bush Administration was a far cry from the collaboration partnership he had developed with the president during the first term. While Bush did indeed want a vice president to help him govern when he chose Cheney in 2000, this was much less the case from 2004 onward: the vice president was marginalized and isolated during the second term of his administration. Pence, on the other hand, was regularly invited to give advice but was not Trump's most important advisor. In doing so, he struggled to define his role in an administration whose often ill-defined directions and numerous power centers made it difficult for Pence to channel his influence, or even to exert it on the right person.

Finally, what characterizes the relationship between the president and the vice president in a coordination partnership is its strictly professional aspect. While Bush and Reagan quickly overcame their initial antipathy and developed a cordial relationship, they never see each other outside of work and never visited each other in their private apartments (Witcover 1992, 310). Cheney and George W. Bush, while they knew each other well prior to the election – he was Bush Sr.'s Secretary of Defense and Bush Jr.'s consultant in the 2000 Republican primary –, his relationship with the president "was all business" (Andersen Brower 2018, 204) : Bush and Cheney, like Reagan and Bush Sr. and like Trump and Pence, were not friends and never developed a warm personal relationship. If Pence, for his part, had made it a condition of agreeing to be Trump's running mate that their families "get to know each other" (Andersen Brower 2018, 6), that never happened.

We find that the coordination partnership is more attractive to vice presidents than the communication partnership: it allows for some integration of both staff and resources, as well as opportunities for influence, if only because vice presidents spend more time with their president. However, the professional nature of their relationship and the distrust that is engendered by their extensive experience, while their president has very little, reduces the potential for influence that they might have in other types of partnerships. In this sense, the coordination partnership allows vice presidents to be informed, to play an active role in their administration, but not to be central actors with direct influence over the president or White House policies.

Strong Partnerships: Cooperation and Collaboration

In contrast to communication and coordination partnerships, cooperation and collaboration partnerships give vice presidents a leading role in their administration, whether as senior advisors to the president, as policy or program implementers, or even as holders of a portion of presidential authority. These strong partnerships are also the ones in which vice presidents are most influential: they are the models to which running mates now aspire to ensure that their time in the White House is not a career-ender.

Cooperation partnerships, such as the one enjoyed by George H. W. Bush on foreign policy and Joe Biden under Barack Obama, make the vice president a key player in his or her administration. In Bush and Biden cases, vice presidents participated in decision-making, advised the president, and were able to influence him, albeit indirectly – that is, they sometimes served as devil's advocates, as Biden did on Afghanistan (Traub 2009; Osnos 2014; Prémont 2018, 124), or led the president to consider new options, as Bush did in convincing Reagan that Mikhail Gorbachev was someone the United States could talk to (Leffler 2021, 33).

In a cooperation partnership, the vice president also has a strong personal relationship with his president or, alternatively, with members of his entourage, which is facilitated by the integration of members of his or her staff into the president's team. While Bush and Reagan were never friends, Bush's expertise in foreign policy enabled him to gain the trust of both Reagan and his inner circle (Witcover 1992, 315). This trust was expressed, on Reagan's side, when he requested that Bush chair NSC meetings in his absence and invited him to participate in meetings of the National Security Planning Group (NSPG), a working group restricted to the most senior foreign policy advisors (Untermeyer 1997, 160; Kengor 2000b, 129) – and Bush, for his part, was able to show respect when Reagan was in the hospital following the assassination attempt against him on March 31, 1981, by refusing to occupy the president's seat at Cabinet or NSC meetings (Lechelt 2009, 108).

Biden and Obama, on the other hand, had a difficult start: they were as different as Kennedy and Johnson were (Goldstein 2016, 167). But unlike Johnson, Biden had strengths that Obama quickly recognized and took advantage of, not only solidifying their professional relationship but also giving rise to a real friendship. First, Biden had undeniable personal qualities: transparency, loyalty, experience, dedication. Second, he had cordial relationships with many administration advisors, such as Hillary Clinton and John Kerry (Secretaries of State), and Chuck Hagel (Secretary of Defense) but also with those close to Obama, such as Rahm Emanuel (Chief of Staff) and David Axelrod (Senior Advisor) (Goldstein 2016, 169). The relationship between Obama and Biden has thus transformed and strengthened over the years, to the point where Obama describes his vice president as a "brother" when he presents him with the Medal of Freedom on January 12, 2017 (Chan 2017). According to Douglas Brinkley, "never before have a president and a vice president been as close personally and professionally as Obama and Biden" (Brinkley 2013). The Obama and Biden families were also very close, as seen during the illness and death of the vice president's oldest son, Beau Biden, in May 2015 (Alter 2017).

This cooperation partnership requires the president and the vice president to spend a lot of time together, trust each other, and share their areas of expertise. For example, Biden spent between 4 and 7 hours a day with Obama (Andersen Brower 2018, 238), which is helpful in better understanding the president's position and better advising him, or even trying to convince him to take one position over another. Moreover, both men "have achieved something of a mind meld across a wide range of issues" (Hirsh 2012), making it all the easier for Biden to get involved in his administration's major decisions. If Biden did not reach Cheney's level of influence during George W. Bush's first term, it is essentially due to two factors. On the one hand, Cheney's abuses forced a return to the more traditional role of the vice president, though this did not mean a return to its pre-Mondale insignificance (Yon 2012, 376). On the other hand, Biden was never, unlike Cheney, a

parallel entity to the president that attempted to manipulate or circumvent him, but he rather worked in concert with Obama to strengthen his presidency (Osnos 2014).

This was also the model adopted by George H. W. Bush, albeit with different resources than Biden. For example, while he had "walk-in privilege" in the Oval Office (Andersen Brower 2018, 173; Kengor 2000b, 128), this does not mean that his meetings with Reagan served to advise or influence him. In fact, Reagan's leadership style had the effect of leaving the policy details in the hands of his close advisors after giving them some broad directions, and in doing so, Bush spent a lot of time talking with them. In fact, he was part of Reagan's foreign policy directorate from the first term – along with Alexander Haig (Secretary of State), Caspar Weinberger (Secretary of Defense), William Casey (Director of National Intelligence), Richard Allen (National Security Advisor), Jeane Kirkpatrick (Ambassador to the United Nations), James Baker (Chief of Staff), Michael Deaver (Deputy Chief of Staff), and Ed Meese (Senior Advisor). Reagan indeed said that no vice president had ever been so involved in the foreign policy decision-making process (quoted in Witcover 1992, 327).

Cooperation requires a prior agreement between the partners to define and frame the role of the vice president and to ensure that he or she will be an asset to his or her administration, which is possible precisely because he or she has been chosen to complement but also to help the president govern. These elements are present and evident in Biden's case, who wrote a document in which he presented Obama with the five sine qua non conditions of his vice presidency (Andersen Brower 2018, 55): weekly meetings alone with him; his presence at all meetings Obama would attend; access to all documents sent to the president; members of his entourage present at meetings their presidential counterpart attended; being involved in all major decisions and, therefore, not having a portfolio. Indeed, Biden said, "My deal with Barack was that I don't need to prevail but I have to be in the room when important decisions are being made" (quoted in Andersen Brower 2018, 255) – which he would. In fact, Biden has rarely won a decisive argument – whether in domestic or foreign policy – which is why, despite his special and unique relationship with Obama, their partnership is not a collaboration one. He has nonetheless been a key advisor, helped by the artistic blur about his presidential intentions in 2016. While he initially assured Obama that he would not have to worry about his vice president's ambitions (Osnos 2014; Kamarck 2016, 14), his intentions were less clear at the beginning of the second term. However, the death of his son and Hillary Clinton's near-insurmountable lead in 2016 led him to abandon the idea of entering the race. However, Biden's fluctuating interest in the presidency served him well as it allowed him to remain a significant player in his administration: an announced candidacy being a distraction while a declined candidacy would have made him a "lame duck" (Osnos 2014). Moreover, Biden's dissension with the president was mostly private, although his stance on gay marriage did force the president's hand a bit, in May 2012 (Brownell 2013, 357-358), and his opposition to increasing U.S. forces in Afghanistan was well known (Colvin 2009).

The choice of George H. W. Bush was mainly to balance the ticket, but Reagan also sought a running mate with whom he would be compatible in terms of personality and character (Kengor 2000b, 127). They adopted the agreement created by Carter and Mondale, but not in a formal way or in a written document (Untermeyer 1997, 159), which explains in part the reduced influence of Bush when his experience and qualities should have been used more. It must be said that the vice president had more assertive presidential

ambitions than Biden – after all, he had run in the 1980 Republican primaries against Reagan – and as early as 1985, he was busy preparing his candidacy and quietly distancing himself from the president. He did so publicly on two occasions: in April 1986, when Reagan asked Saudi Arabia to control the flow of oil to undermine the Soviet economy (Alm 1986, 24; Boyd 1986, A1), and then in May 1988, Bush opposed the policy of appeasement with Manuel Noriega, the leader of Panama accused by the United States of drug trafficking, arguing that as president he would not negotiate with drug traffickers, comparing them to "domestic terrorists" (Balzar 1988; Brownell 2013, 352).

Finally, in a cooperation partnership, the vice president is often the troubleshooter for his or her administration because of his or her experience, knowledge of bureaucratic and political mechanisms, and ability to mediate, whether with Congress or with foreign powers. The vice president is also assigned specific tasks by the president that demonstrate the confidence he places in his vice president and his or her expertise. For example, George H. W. Bush was given the leadership of the Special Situations Group (SSG), created in March 1981 by Reagan "to coordinate government responses to foreign and domestic emergencies" (Silberdick Feinberg 1996, 158). The SSG leadership ensured that Bush was central to the planning of the military intervention in Grenada in October 1983 (Hooker 1991, 65; Parmet 2001, 285), while Reagan, George Shultz (Secretary of State), and Robert McFarlane (National Security Advisor) were playing golf (Clines 1983). Bush was also instrumental in convincing Reagan to pull U.S. troops out of Lebanon in 1982 (Shultz 1993, 229–231) and led successful international negotiations with European countries during the deployment of the Euromissiles (Kengor 2000b, 149-155; Colbourn 2022). His advice was not always followed by Reagan – such as his recommendations for combating terrorism (Meacham 2015, 299) – but made him, according to McFarlane, "the decisive influence on Reagan" on several occasions (quoted in Masters 2021).

Nor has Biden's advice always been followed by Obama: he took several years to adopt his vice president's views on Afghanistan and went against his advice on the killing of Osama bin Laden in 2011. However, it appears that the Office of the Vice President under Biden became "almost a conjoined twin to the presidency, organically and indivisible from the Oval Office" (Hirsh 2012), not so much because of the influence Biden allegedly wielded but rather because of his active role as a senior advisor, trusted friend, confidant, and troubleshooter to whom the president could delegate important tasks. Biden's role as a congressional liaison was particularly noteworthy: as a senator from 1973 to 2009, he had friends in both the Democratic and Republican parties. Growing congressional hostility to the Obama administration, unabashedly displayed after the 2010 midterm elections, allowed Biden to use his connections and legislative skills to facilitate the passage of White House policies (Yon 2012; Obama 2020). This role, probably the most important one Biden has played for his administration, has given him a prominent place in the president's inner circle and made him indispensable (Bowden 2010). President Obama has also given his vice president a wide range of responsibilities, from withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq to tax reform, from implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to developing more restrictive measures on guns (Woodward 2010; Hirsh 2012; Rothkopf 2013; Kamarck 2020, 30–32; Obama 2020). On these issues, Biden acted mostly as a savvy implementer: he would give the president his opinion but, once the decision was made, make sure it was implemented. During his administration's second term, Biden often found himself at odds with the military, which pushed him into less central foreign policy issues:

more discreetly, he continued to participate in decision making (Osnos 2014) but his influence gradually diminished within the administration (Yon *et al*. 2021, 50).

Thus, vice presidents' influence in cooperation partnerships is more indirect: as senior advisors and implementers, they have both the experience and credibility to convince the president's inner circle, members of Congress, or foreign leaders to embrace the White House vision. They are, however, much more active and effective than vice presidents who are stuck in a communication or coordination partnership.

Collaboration is the framework most likely to enable a vice president to exert significant influence on the president and policy because it involves, unlike all other types of partnerships, the delegation of some portion of the presidential authority. In fact, collaboration is distinguished by the clearly expressed willingness of the partners to pool their resources to achieve the goals of the administration. This partnership requires that the president and the vice president spend a great deal of time together and trust each other, but also that they both consider themselves part of a team. Only three vice presidents have enjoyed such a relationship: Walter Mondale, Al Gore, and Dick Cheney (during George W. Bush's first term).

What all three vice presidents have in common is that they were chosen to be full partners, although balancing the ticket was also a consideration in the selection of Mondale and Cheney. Carter was looking for a member of Congress who could compensate for his own inexperience in Washington but also "a partner on whom he could confer real authority" (Moe 2008, 392). Bush Jr. also wanted someone to help him govern, as did Clinton, who saw in Gore a partner with whom he could develop a meaningful working relationship. While Mondale was the first running mate to negotiate his role and duties, Gore and Cheney also laid the groundwork for their association on the presidential ticket at the outset, enshrined in a formal, confidential document. This sort of contract both clarified what was expected of the vice president and sent a strong message to other members of the administration about the importance of the vice president within the White House.

Another factor that helped solidify the collaboration partnership was undoubtedly the fact that Carter, Clinton, and Bush did not feel threatened by their vice president, despite the presidential ambitions of some of them. While it was clear that Mondale wanted to become president, this did not affect their relationship because of Carter's great confidence in his own abilities (Eizenstat 2018, 57) and deep conviction that he needed his vice president to achieve his goals – despite inevitable dissension, including over Carter's chronic indecisiveness, the infamous "malaise speech" of July 15, 1979, and the president's economic conservatism. Clinton, too, was very confident and did not feel threatened by smart, ambitious people (Lechelt 2009, 198). Like Carter, he saw Gore as a critical resource for the success of his administration (Cronin and Genovese 2004, 307). It was Gore who gradually detached himself from Clinton from the second term onwards, as the presidency became his priority and his ambitions placed him at odds with some of the president's decisions or actions – his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, but also the handling of the Elian Gonzalez affair, which Gore deemed disastrous (Brownell 2013, 354–355). The breakup between Clinton and Gore will be abrupt: Gore, convinced that the president's immoral behavior would harm his own presidential campaign, would not mention his name once during the three debates against Bush in 2000 (Milkis and Nelson 2008, 468).

As for Cheney, he had no presidential ambitions, which many saw as a great advantage: he would have more time to focus on achieving President Bush's goals, and Bush would not have to be suspicious of his vice president's intentions. However, it was Cheney's ideational ambitions that ultimately posed a problem for Bush: determined to restore presidential authority that had been undermined since the Ford years, Cheney had his own political agenda (Silverstein 2009, 875). Because he did not have to appeal to the electorate or satisfy a potential base, Cheney instead disengaged from both the media and the public, which made the Bush administration less "democratically accountable" (Goldstein 2010, 128). Perhaps the most striking example is his March 19, 2008, interview with ABC's Martha Raddatz on the fifth anniversary of the start of the Iraq war. When the reporter told Cheney that two-thirds of Americans did not believe the war was worth it, Cheney responded with a hearty, "So?" He added that he was not interested in what Americans thought about the war because he did not want to be "blown off course" by public opinion (ABC 2019).

Because they were chosen to help the president govern, Mondale, Gore, and Cheney had a great deal of authority from the outset with those close to the president and others in the administration. Carter, for example, did not want competition between the two teams but rather "a united staff for both" (Eizenstat 2018, 99). In fact, officials, those close to the president, and other Cabinet members did not hesitate to seek advice from Mondale, by far the most experienced person in the administration (Moe 2008, 397). The vice president's authority also benefited from the presence of his allies in the president's office or in policy-making agencies – Bert Carp, appointed deputy to Stuart Eizenstat (Domestic Policy Advisor), and David Aaron, who was placed on the staff of National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski. Gore was also able to place those close to him in the president's entourage, notably Ron Klain and Roy Neel, appointed advisors to the president, but especially Leon Fuerth (Gore's National Security Advisor), responsible for the implementation of economic sanctions (Holbrooke 1999, 88), positioning him – as well as Gore – clearly "in the decisionmaking loop" (Turque 2000, 267). Since Gore was seen as a future commander-in-chief, his authority and credibility were such that Secretary of State Warren Christopher, unable to have regular meetings with Clinton during the disorganized early years of the administration, opted instead to meet with Gore every Friday to discuss foreign policy issues (Cohn 1994). Cheney, on the other hand, was already very influential when he arrived in the White House because of his experience, which only grew as the the first term progressed. It should be noted that these three particularly experienced vice presidents served presidents who were particularly inexperienced in federal politics. Mondale had been a senator from Minnesota before becoming vice president, as had Gore, a senator from Tennessee after eight years in the House of Representatives, and Cheney, who, in addition to his ten years in the House of Representatives for Wyoming, had served in major positions in the Ford and Bush Sr. administrations. Carter, Clinton, and George W. Bush, on the other hand, had all served as governors (of Georgia, Arkansas, and Texas, respectively) but had no direct experience in federal politics – one of the reasons for choosing their running mate.

Mondale, Gore, and Cheney acted as senior advisors, troubleshooters and mediators, as did vice presidents from cooperation partnerships. For example, their years in Congress made them ideal emissaries to persuade legislators – Mondale during the 1977 Panama Canal handover negotiations (Gillon 1997, 147), Gore on environmental issues

(Natoli 2009, 187), Cheney on tax cuts and the Iraq war (Hayes 2007, 399–405; Cheney 2011, 308–313). Their experience and connections also prevented friction or crises that inexperienced presidents failed to prevent or anticipate. This was the case with Mondale, who helped the administration soften, if not its stance but at least its rhetoric toward Israel (Carter 1982, 493). Mondale, Gore, and Cheney also conducted successful negotiations with foreign leaders. For example, Mondale lobbied the government of John Vorster to force an end to apartheid in South Africa, as well as contributing substantially to the negotiations leading to the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt in 1978 (Masters 2021). Gore, for his part, negotiated with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk to obtain the surrender of nuclear weapons on his territory upon the demise of the USSR in 1991 (Boyer 1994, 105) and was also a key player in the negotiations leading to the adoption of NAFTA in 1994 (Kengor 2000b, 238) and the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 (Nie 1997). Cheney, for his part, was a central player in the negotiations with Middle Eastern leaders during the war on terror (Slavin and Page 2002, 2A). All three vice presidents also acted as senior advisors: Mondale spent most of his time on budgetary issues (Gillon 1997, 147), while Gore immersed himself in almost all foreign policy issues, as did Cheney.

What sets Mondale, Gore, and Cheney apart is the fact that beyond these tasks traditionally granted, to varying degrees, to vice presidents, they were also recipients of presidential authority, at least in part, and were able to act, on different occasions, as "quasi-presidents." President Carter made Mondale the first vice president listed in the chain of command in the event of a nuclear emergency should the president become incapacitated (Eizenstat 2018, 101) and left him in charge of day-to-day White House affairs during the Camp David negotiations (Carter 1982, 370; Glad 2009, 158). During Clinton's presidency, Gore oversaw making decisions on many issues, which the president merely approved (Berke 1998, 47; Pika 1998, 547–559) – in eight years, he never overturned a decision made by his vice president (Kamarck 2016, 10) – whether it was on the environment, on science and technology, nuclear development with Russia, telecommunications, or media violence (Maraniss and Nakashima 2000, 283). In fact, many advisors witnessed Clinton's dependence on Gore, which often suggested that the vice president was making the decisions (George Stephanopoulos quoted in Kengor 2000b, 221; Woodward 1994, 280–281).

Examples of Cheney's exercise of presidential authority are numerous, but were most evident after the attacks of September 11, 2001, when the vice president became the "authority figure" of the Presidential Emergency Center (Goldstein 2010, 106). Cheney is probably the only vice president in history to have exercised not only influence but real decision-making power. He was able to do so primarily because of Bush's willingness: holding an MBA, the president had a leadership style close to that of CEOs of large companies and therefore delegated much of his authority and did not intervene in all issues, leaving the operational management of the White House to his vice president (Goldstein 2008, 384; Goldstein 2016, 163; Kamarck 2016, 12). Cheney was free to do pretty much as he pleased, a freedom facilitated by the fact that he had been one of the major architects of the transition (Johnson 2001). As such, he helped appoint his allies to key positions, provided the president with "short lists for high-profile positions," and was one of the few people present when the president made his decisions – along with Andrew Card and Clay Johnson (Mann 2014, 261). Many people were thus beholden to him, which undoubtedly enhanced his influence within the administration (Goldstein 2010, 110). This advantage

also allowed Cheney to go beyond the president's intentions: his great mastery of bureaucratic tools and processes was very useful in manipulating the options that ended up in the Oval Office to his liking, and in doing so, the decisions made by the president (Kamarck 2016, 10). For example, Cheney used his status on the Energy Task Force to get Bush to change his mind about human responsibility for climate change and that there was therefore no need for tighter regulations (Warshaw 2009, 150), and initiated a range of counterterrorism measures – including detention and interrogation techniques and surveillance programs – developed directly within the Office of the Vice President (Masters 2021). He also forced the modification of several PDBs by telling officials what they should put forward when presenting them to Bush (Andersen Brower 2018, 207).

Moreover, Cheney made important decisions without even consulting Bush, as was the case during the 9/11 attacks, when he ignored the chain of command and ordered military fighters to shoot down any civilian aircraft that did not respond to orders (Gellman 2008b, 118–128). In fact, Cheney came very close to "transforming the job of vice president into something very close to deputy president" (Gellman 2008a). This vice presidency thus illustrates the limits and dysfunctions of the collaboration partnership when the president exercises little or no leadership, when the vice president acts as an entrepreneur, and when oversight mechanisms are not enforced.

Mondale, Gore, and Cheney were not only part of the inner circle but were at the heart of it. They were highly trusted by the president and his most important advisors because of their expertise and the time they spent with the president. Not only did Carter claim that Mondale "has always been the deputy president" (quoted in Smith 1977, 39), but the two men spent time together outside of work and their families visited each other. The ties between Carter and Mondale were strong and stemmed from a genuine friendship (Carter 1982; Mondale 2010). As for Al Gore, he will go so far as to say this about his relationship with Clinton: "For almost all those eight years the relationship was one between brothers" (quoted in Andersen Brower 2018, 183). This closeness was forged particularly during the 1992 presidential campaign, when the two candidates often traveled together (Maraniss and Nikashima 2000, 277; Clinton 2003, 113). After the 1994 midterm elections, which were disastrous for the Democrats – with the Republicans regaining control of both houses for the first time since 1952 – Clinton and Gore worked closely to "rescue their administration," which strengthened their friendship (Goldstein 2016, 160). In Cheney's case, the president's trust in him was not due to personal ties – they were not friends – but rather because of the events of 9/11. The fact that Cheney was a former secretary of Defense certainly strengthened his role and influence with Bush, but also with the president's other advisors.

These factors contributed to the direct influence these three vice presidents had on their president and the policies of their administration. Mondale, who spent more than a quarter of his time with Carter (Light 1984b, 49) – unprecedented at the time – was able to influence the president and his policies on several occasions even though he admits that Carter did not always listen to him (Yon 2017, 75). According to Jack Lechelt, Mondale's foreign policy influence is particularly clear in three issues (2009, 67–86; Brzezinski 1983): during the SALT II negotiations with the USSR, during the Middle East peace process, and in the case of the Indochina refugees. Gore also influenced the president on several foreign policy issues, including the conflict in the Balkans – he convinced the administration to take a more aggressive stance towards Serbian president Slobodan

Milosevic (Turque 2000, 275; Halberstam 2001, 196, 224) – but also pushed Clinton to change his policy towards Haiti and to implement a military intervention in 1994 (Boyer 1994, 105). In terms of domestic policy, Gore was the architect of environmental legislation (Zelnick 1999; Turque 2000; Clinton 2000): the publication of his book *Earth in the Balance* in 1992 having given him legitimacy and credibility in this area, Clinton mostly gave him a free hand in managing this issue, although Gore had to submit, like Clinton, to the economic diktats imposed by the Department of Treasury and to the blockage of Congress. Cheney's influence has also been felt in domestic policy – notably on energy policy and deregulation – but even more obviously in foreign policy. As the main mastermind of the war in Iraq, Cheney had a major influence on the justification for the war, its preparation and its implementation. While he spent a great deal of time alone with Bush (McClellan 2008, 137), he had ample opportunity to coax the president into adopting his views and to keep out of the Oval Office dissenting voices that might have thwarted his influence – Colin Powell (Secretary of State) or Rice (National Security Advisor), for example. More broadly, Cheney has exerted an undeniable influence on U.S. foreign and security policy after 9/11, fueled by an almost total absence of bureaucratic or political constraints (Goldstein 2010, 103).

While Mondale and Cheney's influence stemmed from the president's high level of trust in their loyalty, the bond of trust seemed to be one-way in Cheney's case. While he embodied presidential authority in public while playing the role of his administration's spokesperson, Cheney did not hesitate in private to contradict or even ignore the president (Kamarck 2016, 13; Andersen Brower 2018, 212). But if Karl Rove "used to call Cheney 'the Management' – as in, 'Better check with the Management'" (Andersen Brower 2018, 216), this was no longer the case during his second term. Cheney was now just a "grouchy uncle yelling at everyone to get off the grass" (Christopher Hill quoted in Andersen Brower 2018, 203).

The strong partnerships of cooperation and collaboration offer many opportunities for vice presidents to be leading advisors to their administrations, to influence policy, and to persuade the president to adopt a particular point of view. This, however, requires presidents who are confident in their own abilities and do not feel intimidated or threatened by an experienced vice president capable of strong leadership, but also a presidential team that adequately incorporates the vice president's advisors. However, there are pitfalls that can impede a successful partnership, including decentralized leadership by the president, a vice president with his or her own agenda, and friction over the vice president's ambitions.

Implications of Partnerships for the Role of the Vice President

The two types of *weak partnerships* – communication and coordination – allow the vice presidents who emerge from them (Table 4) to participate actively, albeit modestly, in their administration and in the decisions that are made by the president, as was the case for Dan Quayle. They do so most often as spokespersons or implementers but may also, at least for coordination partnerships, serve as troubleshooters and mediators, such as George H. W. Bush on domestic policy issues, Dick Cheney during his administration's second term, and Mike Pence. Vice presidents who serve in these partnerships have been chosen primarily for their socio-demographic characteristics and ideological complementarity. In Cheney's case, however, his place in a coordination partnership is more the result of his declining

influence after 2004. Weak partnerships are also a consequence of the superficial relationship that presidents have with their vice presidents: while they may develop a working relationship based on trust and respect, they are not friends. Both types of partnerships, while less conducive to the vice president's direct influence, do provide a real opportunity to contribute to the decisions of their administration. It is primarily the experience of the president and the criteria for selecting a running mate that seem to determine the choice between the communication or coordination partnership: a more experienced president will have less need for an active vice president – as was the case with Bush and Quayle – and will base his choice on someone who can provide additional votes rather than advice that he does not think is needed. Less experienced presidents generally understand the value of running mates who have been in Washington for a long time. They will be more likely to seek their advice and give them meaningful responsibilities – this was the case with Reagan, George W. Bush, and Trump, who gave their vice presidents leadership of several task forces, for example.

Table 4. President/Vice President Partnerships Since Mondale

Weak Partnerships: Active but Limited Role		**Strong Partnerships: Advice and Influence**	
Communication	**Coordination**	**Cooperation**	**Collaboration**
Bush-Quayle	Reagan-Bush (domestic policy) Bush-Cheney 2 Trump-Pence	Reagan-Bush (foreign policy) Obama-Biden	Carter-Mondale Clinton-Gore Bush-Cheney 1

The *strong partnerships* of cooperation and collaboration provide structures and resources that allow vice presidents to influence the president and his decisions. These vice presidents – Bush on foreign policy, Joe Biden, Walter Mondale, Al Gore, and Cheney – were chosen because of their experience, expertise, compatibility of character, and a clear desire on the part of the presidential candidates to find a partner who could effectively help them govern – Reagan, however, was primarily looking for someone he could get along with, which remains a criterion that has not been used much in the past in selecting a running mate. Vice presidents who come from such partnerships are Washington insiders and have good relationships with members of both political parties as well as with various interest groups. In addition, trust, loyalty, and respect are necessary qualities for strong partnerships to emerge: they allow for a sincere personal and friendly relationship between the president and vice president, which enables them to work more effectively. This is further enhanced by the integration of their team and staff, but also by the involvement of the running mate in the transition process and in presidential appointments. In sum, these strong partnerships are possible because presidents understand the utility and importance of the vice presidency in an increasingly complex, polarized and mediatized political system. The criteria for determining which of the two strong partnerships will be preferred are twofold. First, the choice seems to stem from the president's leadership style: while decentralized in both types of partnerships, collaboration most often requires the delegation of presidential authority to a trusted individual. The role of the other advisors and their perceptions of the vice president is a second key criterion. Overlapping areas of expertise, such as in foreign policy under Reagan, prevent the vice president from exerting direct influence on the president, although the vice president's credibility allows him to influence the president from time to time. Advisors who distrust the vice president can also be an obstacle to direct influence by the vice president.

While weak partnerships have the disadvantage of wasting the fundamental and unique resource of the vice presidency, there are also risks in strong partnerships – the Cheney example speaks for itself. In a collaboration partnership, there is a danger of the president losing control, especially if there is no other advisor to act as a counterweight to the vice president: Cheney was indeed able to frame U.S. foreign policy rather freely at a pivotal moment in history. Presidents who foster a collaboration partnership must therefore avoid the pitfalls that George W. Bush encountered: giving too much leeway to his vice president. Cheney himself recognized the extraordinary role he had played when, a few weeks before Barack Obama's inauguration, he was invited to offer some advice to Rahm Emanuel, the new president's Chief of Staff: "Whatever you do, make sure you've got the vice president under control" (Cheney 2011, 517).

The presidential ambitions of some vice presidents are also significant pitfalls to a successful collaboration partnership. Gore was unable to reconcile his ambitions with Clinton's choices during the final years of their administration, which not only destroyed their friendship but had consequences for Gore's 2000 presidential campaign. Mondale managed to avoid head-on clashes with Carter, but already sensed that he would have difficulty distancing himself from the administration's failures, which partly explains his bitter defeat in the 1984 presidential election.

Of course, the boundaries of these categories and types of partnerships are not perfectly watertight: in Biden's case, for example, the selection criteria that put him on the presidential ticket and the exceptional relationship he developed with Obama bring him closer to the collaboration partnership. However, it is difficult to identify a single issue where Biden's influence has been decisive: there is Afghanistan, but that influence took months, if not years, to work. This further justifies the idea of the continuum we present.

The fact that the strong partnerships of the pre-Mondale period have become the weak partnerships of the current period demonstrates how much the vice presidency has changed over the past 50 years. It also illustrates the central importance of presidential candidates' willingness to create these partnerships with a running mate they have carefully selected for the purpose. Cooperation and collaboration partnerships allow vice presidents greater flexibility in organizing their time, choosing their tasks, and getting involved in decision making, and they also foster their influence and entrepreneurship: this was the case with Cheney, who wanted to restore and expand the powers of the executive branch and took, even created, every opportunity to do so. Strong partnerships could also be critical to the vice president's chances of securing his or her party's nomination for the presidential nomination.

The weak partnerships of communication and coordination are the most constraining and least satisfying for vice presidents, who have little opportunity to influence the president and the administration's decisions. These partnerships are most likely when the running mate is chosen according to the balancing ticket model, when he or she is less experienced than the president, or when he or she does not develop a positive personal or professional relationship with the president. Pence's case is unique in that it is the dysfunctional nature of Trump's presidency that has relegated him to a rather symbolic role. Although he was given tasks that appeared to be important, they had little substance and the vice president had no decision-making authority or even real influence on decisions since President Trump reserved the right to reverse decisions at any time or to change their parameters without notice. Thus, the president's idiosyncrasies play a role in determining

the partnership he will create with his vice president. In this regard, there are interesting studies to be made of how vice presidents who became presidents treated their own vice presidents – as this was the case with Johnson, Nixon, Bush, and Biden.

Conclusion: Is It Possible To Go Back?

While it has been clear since Mondale that new vice presidents enjoy the privileges of their predecessors from the outset, the vice presidencies of Pence and Kamala Harris tend to remind us that this institution is still at the mercy of the president's wishes. In Pence's case, it was the multiple power centers that stood in the way of a more active role (Rogin 2017). This made it difficult for him to have a detailed view of the various issues being handled by the administration, let alone to influence the president's decisions. However, there is still little documentation on Pence's role in the Trump Administration, so it will take some time before we can definitively determine the type of partnership he had with the president.

As for Harris, her selection by Joe Biden was a combination of balancing the ticket and the need for a partnership. Moreover, because of the president's age, the training function of the vice presidency is perhaps more important than ever. The Biden-Harris tandem is nonetheless anachronistic: one has to go back to Bush and Quayle to find a president more experienced than the vice president, and the first months of Harris's vice presidency suggest the same kind of pitfalls or traps: although she is responsible for many complex issues – including immigration and voting rights – and is seen as an equal partner (Rogers and Shear 2021), Biden does not need her advice or help in the same way that Obama did when he was vice president himself. Thus, some observers are already talking about a "disappearing vice presidency" (Barabak 2021) in Harris' case. While it is still too early to tell, it is likely that Biden's personality, Harris' ambitions, the context of American hyperpolarization, and the complexity of the world will sooner or later force the partners to share responsibility for power and strive for a more effective relationship.

This case highlights the obvious: while norms are often invoked to explain the transformation, complexification, and pitfalls of the presidency (Azari 2022), the vice presidency has so far been excluded from such analysis. Yet, the way in which the officeholders are changing the institution is fundamental to understanding their role and influence over the course of administrations, especially as these changes have an impact on their successors but, more broadly, on the exercise of executive power. This is the central interest of the typology of partnerships: they constitute a possible avenue to explain the normative and institutional evolution of the vice presidency – but also of the presidency.

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