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unity behind PM Border calls for

BY BRAD WORRALL

DER Labor Party bers have penned a c of support to Julia

lership showdown on nday, rank and file mbers agreed to write letter to the embat-lPrime Minister.

avington t Darren

nger be tolerated by arty or the Austral-ublic," he said. nis week the branch

l a motion in sup-f Julia Gillard and a letter of support

r Cameron said Mon-sleadership challenge uld be the chance to e Labor.

onally I'm not con-

cerned about who leads the party out of either Julia Gillard or Kevin Rudd," he said.

"But clearly this matter has to be resolved.

"At the moment it appears Gillardhas the numbers. But whoever wins, the party has to unite behind them, anything less would be disloyal."

Labor candidate for Indi

not 100 per cent will even chal-he has a history sing down when

In some ways this is e lancing a boil — there a lot of nasty stuff that nes out but in the long n we are all better off." Mr Cameron does not cept the suggestion that Rudd will challenge ain even if defeated on

"I think people are making that call on what happened between Paul Keating and Bob Hawke but they were different circumstances, a different time," he said.

big issues chalice of the Poisoned BEN HABIB

THE Gillard-Rudd confrontation high-lights the problems that Australia's 20th century political parties face in dealing with 21st century policy problems. The rivalry is a story of ambition, bit-terness and betrayal. Gillard should have the numbers to see

Gillard should have the numbers to see Gillard should have the numbers to see off former prime minister Kevin Rudd. That she has waited so long to bring the issue to a head may have been an error. The Prime Minister is a master of negotiation and compromise, but until now, she has not demonstrated the ruthless streak necessary to kill Rudd's white-anting. Yet there is a broader, more complicated dimension, to the Labor leadership crisis. Since World War II, both the Labor and Liberal parties have become catch-all parties chasing universal support.

Because of their broad base, both have significant factional divisions, which become catch to con-

2010 leadership change was a ce of Mr Rudd's failure to deal of these immense policy issues also claimed two Liberal in Brendan Nelson and

of political and economic al leaders are now con-

fronting enormous international policy problems like the global debt crisis and climate change, challenges for which there are no easy solutions.

Regardless of where you stand on these issues, they are policy time bombs for broad-based parties.

The Coalition should beware.

The same pressures driving Labor's self-destruction are also likely to expose the deepening division between conservatives and small-L liberals in the Liberal Party.

As leaders across the world are discovering, winning government in these times can be a poisoned chalice.

Ben Habib is a lecturer in politics and international relations at La Trobe University, Albury-Wodonga



Rudd's plea to voters 3 bid 6 Me! back the dop job

Ms Gillard and her ministerial supporters continued the "shock and awe" campaign to discredit Mr Rudd, portraying his previous running of the government as dysfunctional.

Ms Gillard opened up on the faults of the Rudd administration — about which she has previously

been publicly circumspect
— saying he had "very difficult and very chaotic work
patterns" and contrasting
this with his "excellent"
campaigning skills.
Several Gillard backers
in the ministry — Wayne
Swan, Stephen Conroy,
Jenny Macklin, Mark
Arbib, Simon Crean, Craig
Emerson and Brendan
O'Connor — appeared

publicly to campagu wher.

Mr Rudd said he had been "shocked and disappointed by the tone and content of the intensely personal attacks" mounted on him overnight.

These included Mr Swan accusing him of "dysfunctional decision-making" and a demeaning attitude to caucus colleagues.

"Whatever our differences in politics, I do not believe that these sorts of vicious personal attacks have a place in our national political life," Mr Rudd

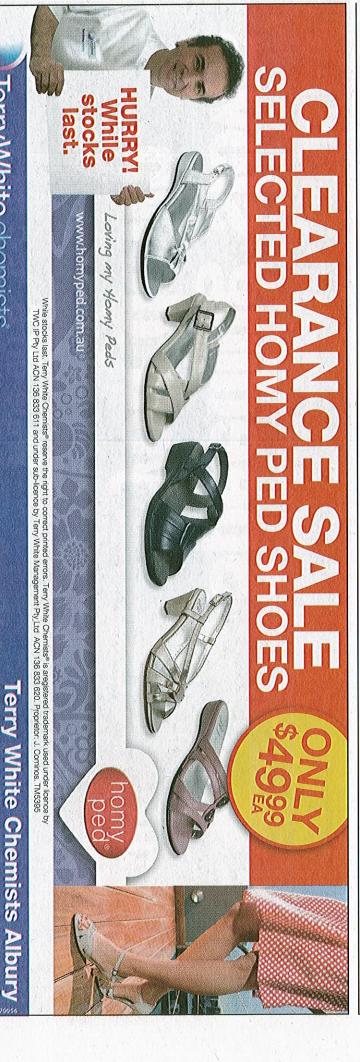
Countering Mr Rudd's claim that he was the only one who could beat Tony Abbott, Ms Roxon said: "We need to get out of this idea that Kevin is a messiah

who will deliver an election back to us."

The Rudd camp yester-day claimed to have about 40 votes in the 103-member Labor Lador adducts, with 15-20

undecided.
The Gillard camp said
Mr Rudd had about 30, and
the PM more than 60.

Michelle Grattan's column
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