



The Federal Redistribution 2008
Tasmania



Public Comment Number 6

Hon Michael Hodgman QC MP

3 Page(s)

HON MICHAEL HODGMAN QC MP

Her Majesty's Shadow Attorney-General
for the State of Tasmania
Shadow Minister for Justice
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Liberal Member for Denison



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**The Federal Distribution 2008
Redistribution Committee for Tasmania
2nd Floor
AMP Building
86 Collins Street
HOBART TAS 7000**

Attention: Mr David Molnar

Dear Sir,

As foreshadowed in my letter to you of 28 April, I now wish to formally object to the Submissions contained in Public Suggestion No. 2 and Public Suggestion No. 16 that the name of the Electorate of Denison should be changed to Inglis Clark. I have had the honour to represent the Electorate of Denison for over 25 years in both the Federal Parliament and the State Parliament and I have not, in that entire time, had one single elector ever suggest to me that the name of the Electorate should be changed from Denison to Inglis Clark. The plain fact is that the two southern Tasmanian Electorates of Denison and Franklin have been known as a team, a pair and duo for nearly a century; they have always been spoken of together; and, the great advantage to the Australian Electoral system of the two Electorates being recognised as a team, a pair and a duo, would be utterly destroyed if one of them were to suffer an unwarranted name change.

Whilst I recognise the legal and constitutional contributions of Andrew Inglis Clark the plain fact is that his name was never put forward by his contemporaries to be honoured by having a Federal Electorate named after him. Other legal and constitutional contributors like Barton, Parkes, Griffith and Deakin were honoured by having Federal Electorates named after them – but Inglis Clark was not.

The contribution of Sir William Denison to Tasmania was very great indeed. He was Governor of Van Diemen's Land from 1846; he was Governor at the time the Tasmanian Parliament was formed (as Public Suggestion No. 16 from the Australian Labor Party concedes); he was Governor of Tasmania when Tasmania ceased to be Van Diemen's Land and became Tasmania; he supervised the construction of many major

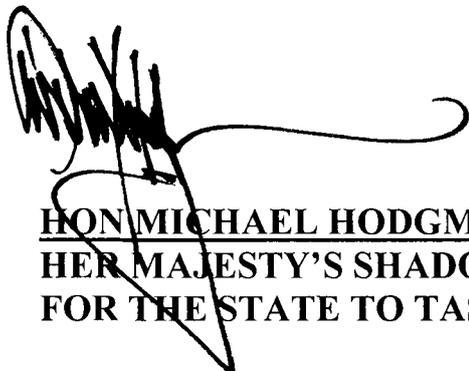
highways and bridges (including the famous Richmond Bridge); he oversaw numerous social reforms; and, he was regarded universally as a highly principled and dedicated servant of Tasmania and its people.

In short, I respectfully submit that no case has been put forward to remove the name of Denison from the list of Federal Electorates which have honoured those who have rendered great service to our Nation. Whilst it is correct that he was not born in Tasmania, after serving as Governor of Tasmania for eight years he then went on and served as Governor of New South Wales for a period of six years. His service as Governor of both Tasmania and New South Wales exceeded fourteen years – a remarkable achievement. His name has been honoured in other ways throughout Tasmania and I and many others are outraged that latter-day Australian Labor Party supporters of Andrew Inglis Clark are now trying to remove the name of Denison from this famous Electorate. I repeat, I have never had one single representation from any elector of Denison in over 25 years that the name of this Electorate should be changed to Inglis Clark or anything else. I greatly respect Hon Justice Peter Heerey and class him as a close personal friend, but he has not lived in Tasmania for over 40 years and whilst he frequently visits our State and he and I meet frequently and happily I respectfully suggest that his Honour has not had very much contact with the rank and file electors of Denison as I do, on a daily basis in the course of my Parliamentary duties. I totally reject the unkind comments made by the Australian Labor Party against Sir William Denison and I again contend that if Andrew Inglis Clark were worthy to have a Federal Electorate named after him it would have been done by his contemporaries – and it was not.

I am not opposed to change if change is warranted, but this latter-day attempt to eulogise Inglis Clark does not have public support. Whilst the Hon Duncan Kerr and his Labor House of Assembly colleagues in the Tasmanian Parliament have put the proposal forward I note that no Labor Senators have supported the move nor have any of the Labor Members of the Legislative Council. I can assure the Committee that I know of no Member of the Parliamentary Liberal Party or the Liberal Party of Australia (Tasmania Division) who wants to see the name changed and further, that any change would be divisive, disruptive and very electorally unpopular and it should not, for those reasons, be entertained, let alone implemented. The Australian Electoral Commission is traditionally seen as completely impartial and unbiased, and I have always believed it to be so. I firmly believe that a change of name from Denison to Inglis Clark would be seen as political and pro-ALP and would be highly divisive and

**very damaging to the good name of the Australian Electoral Commission.
It should not be done.**

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Hodgman', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**HON MICHAEL HODGMAN QC MP
HER MAJESTY'S SHADOW ATTORNEY-GENERAL
FOR THE STATE OF TASMANIA**

5 May 2008