

OBJECTION

The Federal Redistribution 2009
NSW



Objection Number 51

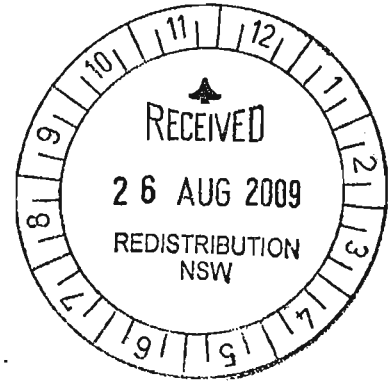
by

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2 Pages

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Dear Commission Members

Objection to the Proposed Redistribution of NSW 2009.

I would like to record my objection to the Redistribution Committee's decision to dispense with *Reid* as the name of a Federal Electorate in New South Wales.

The aim of several public contributors to the last three NSW Redistribution Committees in suggesting that a Division be re-named *McMahon* and that the naming of the Division of *Cook* be refocused came from a desire to see all deceased ex-Prime Ministers similarly honoured in Australia's electoral landscape regardless of political persuasion or historic reputation.

It disappoints me that the members of the current Redistribution Committee were apparently unable to recognise this.

In order to ensure that all deceased ex-Prime Ministers are similarly honoured, I would suggest in the first instance that the proposed Division of *Parramatta* instead be named *Reid*. After all, nearly as many electors from *Reid* as from current *Parramatta* are included in this proposed division. This change would also allow future Redistribution Committees greater freedom *vis-à-vis* the placement of the *Parramatta* CBD. [Remember 2006!]

However, I am aware of the guidelines for the naming of Federal Electorates and I readily acknowledge that *Parramatta* is a Federation division name of obvious aboriginal origin. Given that the House of Representatives has lost two similar division names in the last three years (in *Gwydir* and *Kalgoorlie*), I would understand if the members of the Augmented Electoral Commission were reluctant to adopt this approach at this time.

If that is indeed the case, I would suggest that the name *Reid* instead be applied to the proposed Division of *Blaxland*. Should this proposed division not be substantially altered during the objection process, nearly 24,000 electors (or more than 25% of the proposed division's current enrolled population) will still have been transferred in from Reid.

Other factors supporting this suggested change include: -

- *Blaxland* not being a Federation division;
- Gregory Blaxland not having been born in Australia (as was his expeditionary partner across the Blue Mountains, the original WC Wentworth); and
- The abolition of a division named *Lawson* (which I'm sure was not named after William Lawson in any event) in 1969.

In researching this letter, I also note that Jill Conway concludes her entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* by stating that "[a]lways a man of moody and mercurial character, Blaxland devoted his colonial activities almost entirely to the pursuit of his economic interests, and his diaries do not suggest great attachment to the colonial environment beyond what was suggested by the hope of personal gain."

If neither of the above examples are considered suitable, I would suggest that either of the proposed divisions of *Prospect* or *Greenway* be renamed *Reid* and point out that there is a precedent in Australia's Commonwealth electoral history for this.

In 1969, the Victorian Division of *Scullin* (inner-metropolitan; based on the suburbs of Brunswick and Fitzroy) was abolished. However, as the Redistribution Commissioners of the day did not wish to eliminate the electoral name of an ex-Prime Minister, it was proposed that the totally unrelated Division of *Darebin* (outer-metropolitan; based on Preston and Reservoir) be renamed in James Scullin's honour instead. As was its prerogative at the time, Parliament readily agreed to this proposal.

With the extent and variety of the above suggestions, I respectfully urge the members of the Augmented Electoral Commission to listen to the prevailing sentiment of the Australian electorate and continue the perpetuation of the name of one of the Commonwealth's Founding Fathers on our electoral map.

Yours sincerely



Aaron Barrett