



Objection 31

Riley Boughton

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From: Riley Boughton
To: [FedRedistribution - ACT](#)
Subject: Objection to Name of Proposed Southern Division
Date: Friday, 13 April 2018 3:08:44 PM

To the Chair of the Committee and the ACT Electoral Commissioner,

I write to object to the proposed name for the proposed new division in the southern half of the Territory.

The current proposed name for this division is 'Bean', in honour of Charles Bean. There is no doubt that Bean played an important role not just in Australia's wartime history, but also recording Australia's wartime history. Furthermore, I do not cast aspersions on the importance of that work to Australia and to the Australian Capital Territory.

However, there is also little doubt that Bean held strong, anti-semitic views. Bean's place in history must be recognised with the benefit of hindsight and in context. During the war years at least, he was snidely anti-semitic and his prejudices clouded his judgment of General John Monash. These views were no doubt a factor in his campaign to have the great general replaced by a lesser man. Bean could not conceive of the son of a German-born Jewish store-holder succeeding in a military career through aptitude alone. "We do not want Australia represented by men mainly because of their ability, natural and in-born among Jews, to push themselves", wrote Bean of General Monash. If the Committee wishes to read further on these anti-semitic views, I refer them to the book 'Charles Bean: If People Really Knew' by Ross Coulthart.

Importantly, I concede that there are already many federal electoral divisions that bear the names of those who held views that would be considered repugnant in our modern day and age. But if we don't use this chance to ensure that good, decent role models for the future are selected, then we may as well consign ourselves to wrongs and views of the past. We must use every opportunity we have to show everyone in society that we celebrate those who contribute to our society. We must use every opportunity to show everyone in society that they are welcome, regardless of their religious views.

However, by selecting an anti-semite as the new namesake for our federal division would do quite the opposite. I implore the Committee to ensure that you do not endorse someone who is an anti-semitic. It would be a slap in the face to any efforts of anti-discrimination and the liberalism for which our country prides itself. It would be particularly repugnant given the stature of the place for which you are giving the name, one of names in the very heart of our liberalism -- the federal parliament. Would you be okay telling your children and neighbours that you endorsed an anti-semite? Would you be proud to be the Committee that declared anti-semitism has a role in our federal parliament? I would hope not and I hope that the Committee strongly reconsiders the actions that it proposes to take.

As a young person, the fact that this person was even considered makes me hang my head in shame. I hope that the Committee can amend this error and ensure all Canberrans can be proud of the name for our third electoral division.

If the Committee wishes to contact me further, please contact me on this email address or on my mobile . I am also contactable by post at

Kind Regards,

Riley Boughton