



The Federal Redistribution 2002
VICTORIA



Comment Number Eight on Public Suggestions

Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division)

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(Victorian Division)

COMMENTS
REGARDING PUBLIC
SUBMISSIONS

ON BEHALF OF THE
LIBERAL PARTY
OF AUSTRALIA
TO THE
REDISTRIBUTION
COMMITTEE FOR
VICTORIA



May 3 2002

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1. Maps were produced from CDATE96© (Australian Bureau of Statistics) and MapInfo *Professional* V6.5© software.
2. Map Data supplied by PSMA *Australia* © 2002.

Introduction

The Liberal Party was pleased to see a range of submissions from organisations and members of the public raising a number of issues for consideration by the Redistribution Committee. It was interesting to note that all submissions supported a position of comparatively minimal change to boundaries rather than a radical reworking.

In assessing some of the suggestions which relate to particular boundaries the provisions of the Act must be remembered:

In making the proposed redistribution, the Redistribution Committee:

- (a) Shall, as far as practicable, endeavour to ensure that, if the State or Territory were redistributed in accordance with the proposed redistribution, the number of electors enrolled in each Electoral Division in the State or Territory would not, 3 years and 6 months after the State or Territory had been redistributed, be less than 96.5% or more than 103.5% of the average divisional enrolment of that State or Territory at that time; and*
- (b) **SUBJECT** to paragraph (a), shall give due consideration, in relation to each proposed Electoral Division, to:*
 - (i) community of interests within the proposed Electoral Division, including economic, social and regional interests;*
 - (ii) means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division;*
 - (iii) the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division; and*
 - (iv) the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State or Territory,*

and subject thereto the quota of electors for the State or Territory shall be the basis for the proposed redistribution, and the Redistribution Committee may adopt a margin of allowance, to be used whenever necessary, but in no case shall the quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-tenth more or one-tenth less.

Further evidence of what is essential in defining new boundaries during Redistribution was established by the immediate past Redistribution Committee for Victoria when it stated:

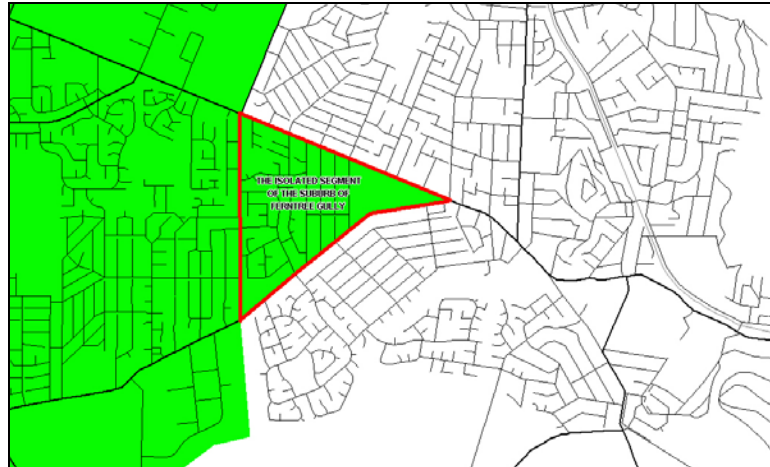
*'The criteria set out in sub-section 66(3)(b) of the Act – community of interests, means of communication and travel, physical features and area, and boundaries of existing Divisions – are **subordinate** to the objective of enrolments in proposed divisions...'* – 1994 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, page 134, section 18.

What follows is a detailed analysis regarding objections and/or points of conjecture the Liberal Party has with other submissions received by the Redistribution Committee for Victoria.

Charles Richardson – Submission 9

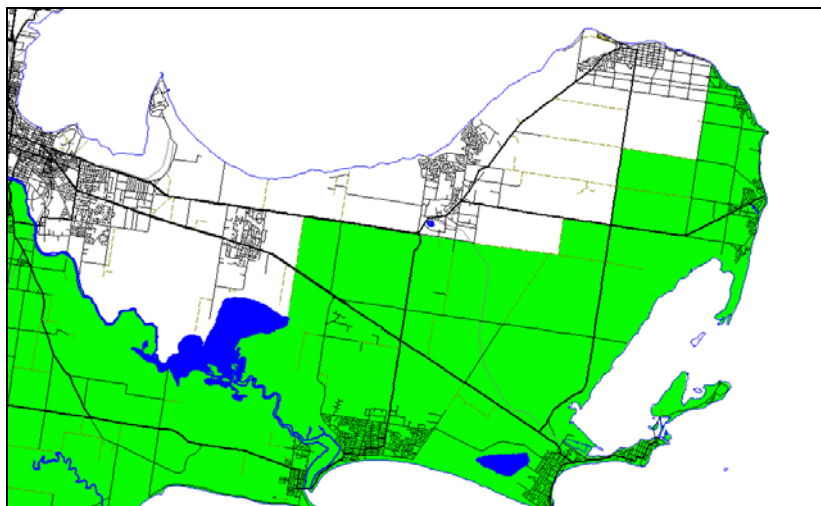
Aston:

- The inclusion of Ringwood at the expense of Rowville diminishes rather than improves the community of interest in Aston. The Division of Aston is a seat largely based on the City of Knox and the Knox City shopping centre's catchment area whereas Ringwood is located in the City of Maroondah and its residents shop at Eastland.
- Charles Richardson has continually made reference to enhancing community of interest yet this proposed Division of Aston further isolates approximately 1,800 residents of Ferntree Gully from the remainder of their suburb by the newly proposed eastern boundary.



Corangamite:

- In his submission, Charles Richardson states that: *'...the Committee will naturally also be alert to the possibility of improving existing boundaries in cases where a change would improve the community of interest within a division or be otherwise desirable in terms of the criteria set out in section 66 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act'*. By changing the boundary between Corangamite and Corio, this submission unnecessarily further splits the communities on the Bellarine Peninsula. Drysdale, Clifton Springs and Pt Arlington should be reunited with the remainder of the coastal towns on the peninsula.



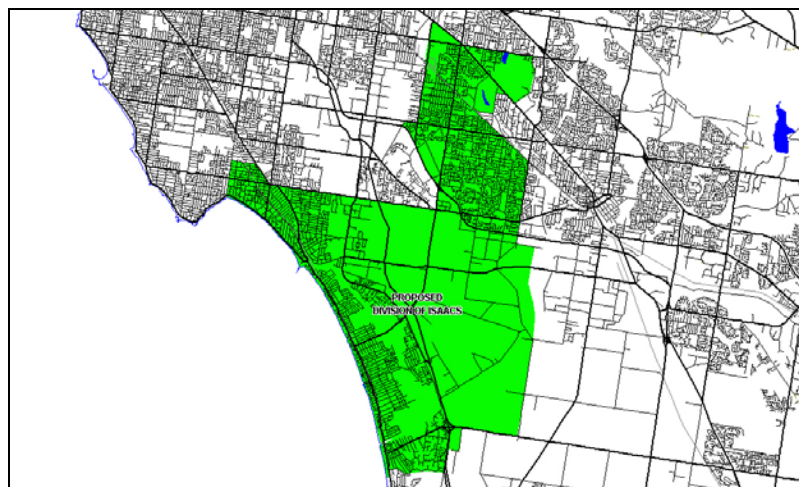
Hotham:

- Charles Richardson states in his submission that: *‘...the Committee will naturally also be alert to the possibility of improving existing boundaries in cases where a change would improve the community of interest within a division or be otherwise desirable in terms of the criteria set out in section 66 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act’*. The change to the south western boundary has further caused approximately 1,990 voters from the suburb of Mentone to be isolated from the remainder of their suburb. The day to day community of interest surrounding this area of Mentone is directed to the shopping precinct and educational facilities contiguous with Como Parade.



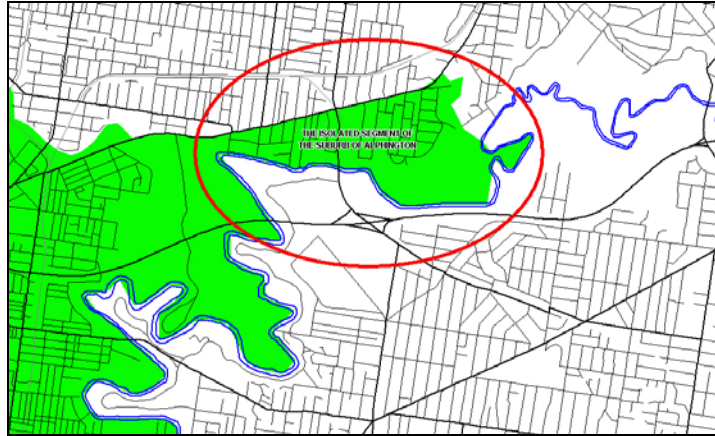
Isaacs:

- Although the Liberal Party agrees with the transfer of the Cranbourne district from the Division of Isaacs, it does not find an argument supporting the inclusion of the Noble Park/Springvale/Keysborough suburbs. Charles Richardson has failed to give due regard to communication corridors as well as previous attempts of past Redistribution Committees to enhance the communities of interest through this region.



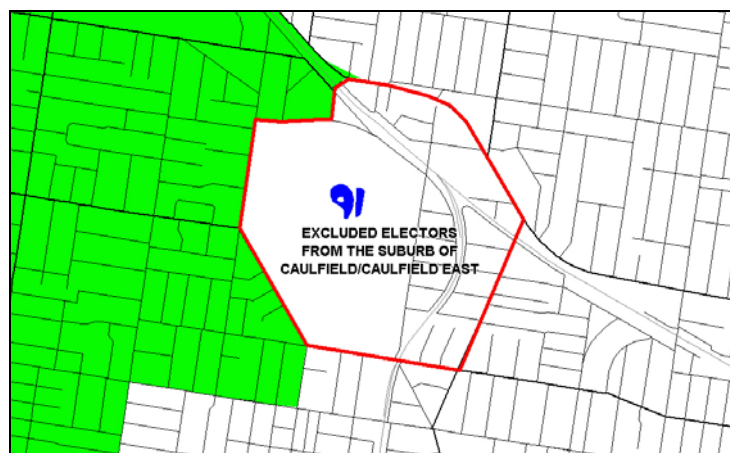
Melbourne:

- In the proposed Division of Melbourne Charles Richardson's proposal would isolate approximately 1,350 electors from the suburb of Alphington. Whilst the Liberal Party generally supports the principle of following Local Government boundaries, in this case we believe a stronger argument can be made for maintaining the existing Federal boundary to the north east.



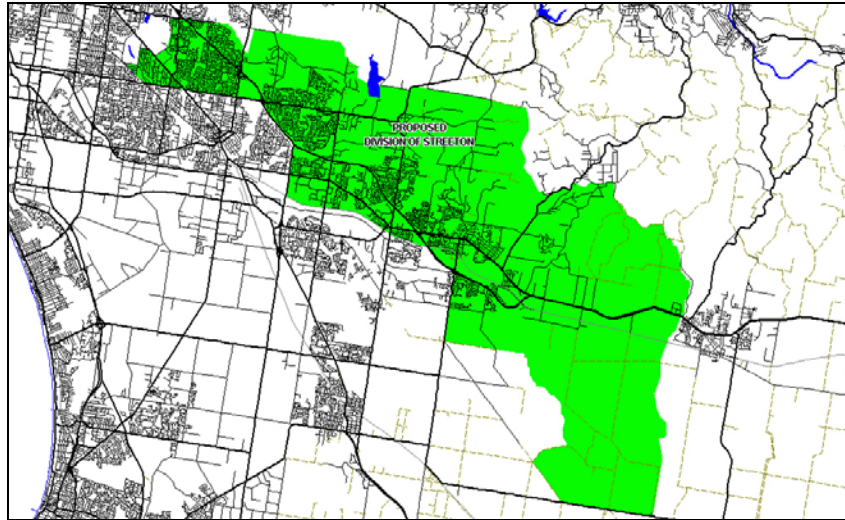
Melbourne Ports/Higgins:

- Charles Richardson states in his submission that: *'...gratuitous changes is always to be avoided'* and *'...the Committee will naturally also be alert to the possibility of improving existing boundaries in cases where a change would improve the community of interest within a division or be otherwise desirable in terms of the criteria set out in section 66 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act'*. The decision to alter Melbourne Ports eastern boundary is nothing but gratuitous and does nothing to improve the community of interest within Melbourne Ports and Higgins. These Divisions are well placed on current and future population levels to maintain their existing boundaries and yet this change has isolated a small number of electors from the suburb of Caulfield East by completely ignoring the Caulfield suburb boundary which is Grange Rd (currently the suburb boundary separating Caulfield East and Carnegie). Charles Richardson refers to a 'major shopping centre' being split by Glenhuntly Rd. In fact, this shopping area constitutes a supermarket and a row of shops present on either side of the road. There are many other instances of similar sized shopping strips being split by electoral boundaries across the Melbourne metropolitan area.



Streeton:

- Although the design of this Division along the communication corridor of the Monash/Princess Fwy would seem to create a sense of ‘communication of interest’, one must question what the COI of the established suburbs of Mulgrave, Dandenong North and Noble Park would have with the growing, ‘young family’ oriented areas around Berwick in the south. Added to this is the fact that these established areas in the north-west are completely isolated from the remainder of this Division by the Dandenong Creek.



National Party – Submission 12

Mallee:

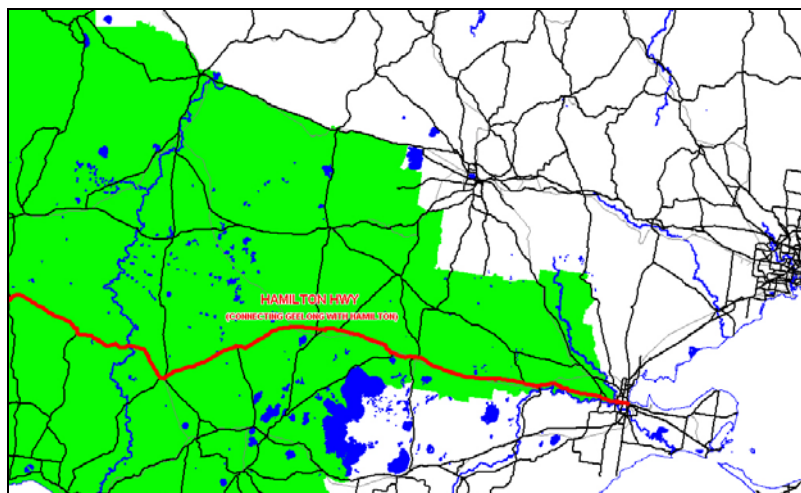
- The National Party has proposed altering the north eastern boundary between Murray and Mallee in their submission, a boundary that has existed between these Federal electorates for 25 years. This boundary was determined at the 1977 Redistribution for Victoria and has remained as a clear and definite community of interest barrier. It was also re-established (with a very minor alteration) as a clear local government boundary at the LGA restructure of 1995 and previously to this event, it had remained a boundary between the communities of Swan Hill and Kerang for nearly 132 years.
- As the underpopulated Division of Mallee is bounded by two state borders it would be a better option to gather population and enhance the community of interest surrounding Horsham in the south adhering to the criteria of S66(3)(a). This option would also alleviate voter confusion surrounding the boundary in the north east, a boundary which many local residents have only known in their voting life. Further evidence the Kerang district should remain in the Division of Murray is that:
 - ‘... the Commission also accepts the merits of the Redistribution Committee’s grouping together of the Kerang district and other irrigation areas already in the Division of Murray’ - Report of the Augmented Electoral Commission, 1994 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, page 4 section 24.

McEwen:

- The National Party has argued that: *'...the Party desires to ensure that country regions are fairly represented in the House of Representatives and, to that end, repeats comments made in submissions to earlier redivisions that community of interest and the **maintenance of genuine nonmetropolitan divisions should be paramount in the Commissions deliberations.***' The National Party submission by its changes to boundaries in northern Victoria actually reduces the nonmetropolitan component of McEwen. Removing the areas suggested by the National Party, would cause McEwen to become underpopulated and in turn require changes to the southern boundary to gather further population from the metropolitan area making McEwen an outer metropolitan electorate rather than a predominantly rural Division. With this in mind, the following precedent established by the 1989 Redistribution has been disregarded by the National Party submission:
 - *'The existing Division of McEwen.....should become predominantly rural in character by shedding it's southern subdivisions – Greensborough East, Greensborough West, Mill Park and Montmorency – which are effectively part of the metropolitan area'* – Final Report, 1989 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, page 117 section 16.

Wannon:

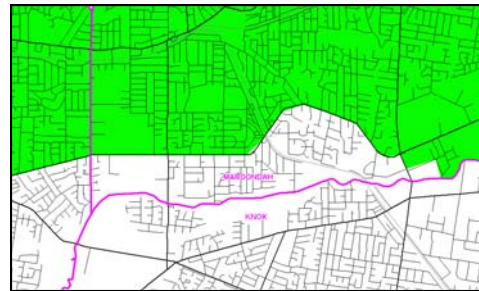
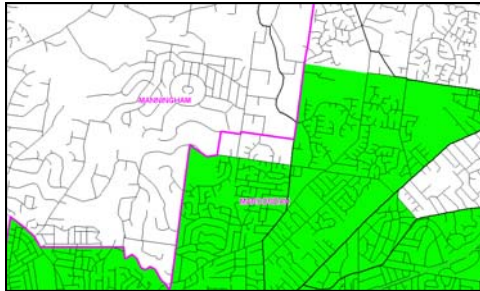
- We note that the National Party has suggested moving Wannon's north and eastern boundaries to gather the appropriate population. Although we believe there is a stronger community of interest along the western highway towards Horsham (ie Stawell and Avoca relocating into an electorate with Horsham), there is some merit in the National Party's suggestion relating to moving the eastern boundary.
 - Taking into account sub-section 66(3)(b)(ii) which states: *'...subject to paragraph (a), shall give due consideration, in relation to each proposed Electoral Division, to: means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division'*, it would be appropriate to include the area of Corangamite north of the Local Government Boundary around the Hamilton Highway. This highway has a direct link with Hamilton, one of three major regional centres uniting the Division of Wannon.



Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch – Submission 13

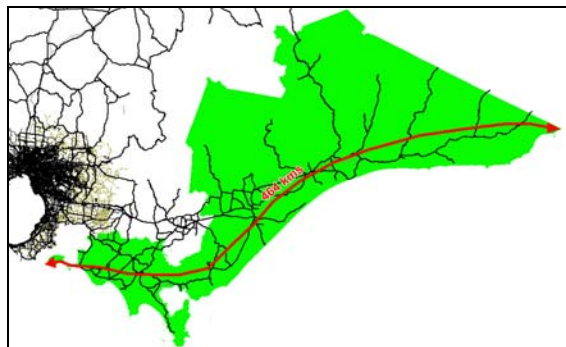
Deakin:

- The ALP submission has missed the opportunity to reunite residents of the City of Maroondah. There are 526 electors split by the northern boundary and 5,011 electors by the southern boundary. The ALP has argued the importance of municipal boundaries in their opening arguments yet has ignored them here. On the southern boundary, the Dandenong Creek is also a significant physical feature.



Gippsland:

- The ALP's submission suggests that the Division of Gippsland should run from the tip of Phillip Island in the west to Mallacoota and the NSW border in the east, a total distance of over 460km's. A single electorate covering this much territory would be both impractical and undesirable; its sheer size and the competing interests it would contain could not enhance any sense of community among its residents, and would make effective representation virtually impossible.



- We believe that the most workable solution to gather the required population is to include the regional centres of Morwell and Traralgon in the electorate of Gippsland. This achieves the dual aims of boosting Gippsland's population whilst not isolating the communities of Morwell and Traralgon. Both these towns are linked with other regional centres in Gippsland by the Princes Highway, and serve as major commercial centres for those living in outlying rural areas.
- For 35 years between its creation in 1949 and the Redistribution of 1984, McMillan ran from its existing northern boundary to the coast to include Wonthaggi and its immediate surrounds, and excluded Traralgon to the Division of Gippsland.
- It is also worth noting that the submissions of Charles Richardson and the National Party do not support the lengthy coastal version of Gippsland proposed by the ALP.

Goldstein:

- In their submission, the ALP have failed to reunite 163 electors from the City of Kingston by the Eastern boundary. The ALP has argued the importance of Shire and Council boundaries in their opening arguments yet have ignored them here.

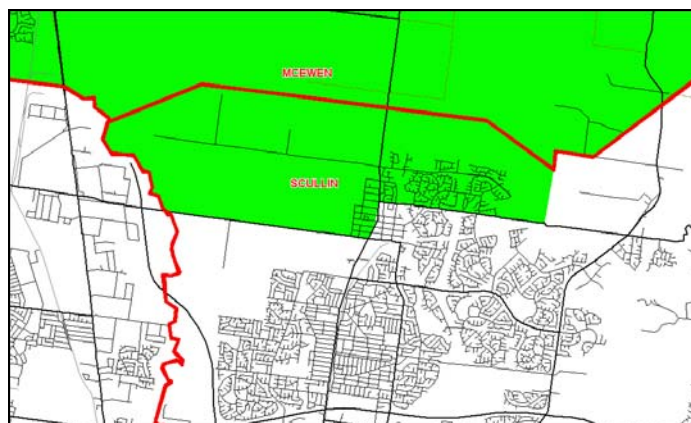


McEwen:

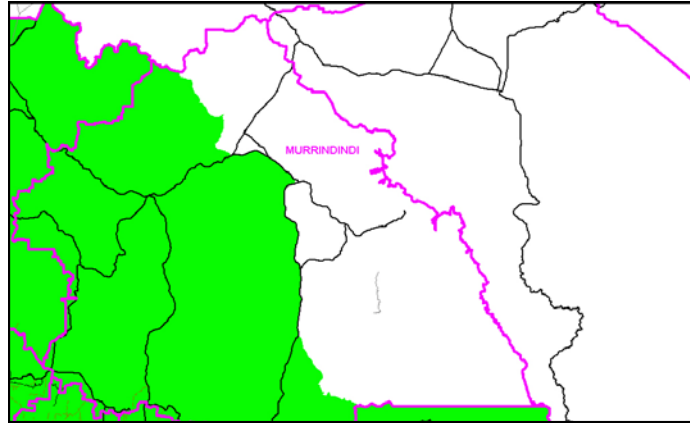
- Past Redistribution Committees and all submissions received here agree in principle that McEwen should be a rural Division. While it requires some urban fringe, it should take that which is least urbanised in character. The ALP has ignored this idea by placing more densely populated metropolitan areas into the electorate. This has been caused by the extensive changes made to the Northern boundary of McEwen by the ALP. The Southern boundary has been dragged further South to gather replacement population and splits the suburb of Epping completely in half along Coopers St and McDonalds Rd. This change further diversifies the community of interest across McEwen.

In their submission (page 4), the ALP have paid heed and established a precedent regarding determinations made by previous Redistribution Committees and therefore in turn, the Augmented Electoral Commission. With this in mind, the following is completely disregarded by the ALP submission:

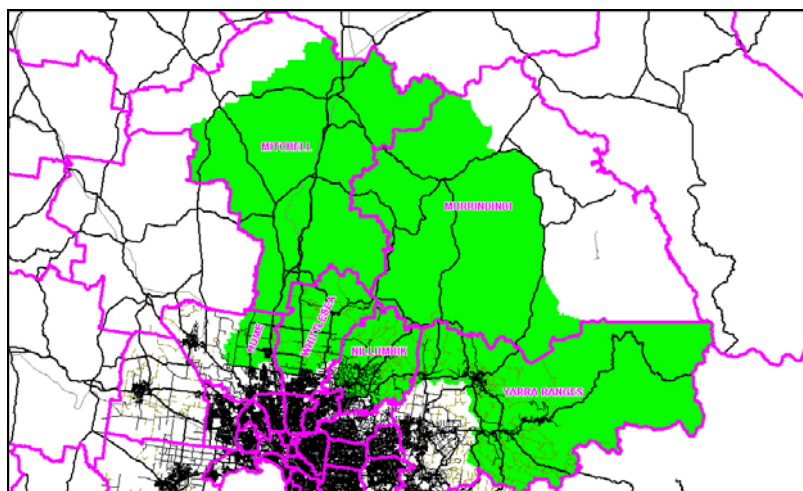
- *'The existing Division of McEwen.....should become predominantly rural in character by shedding it's southern subdivisions – Greensborough East, Greensborough West, Mill Park and Montmorency – which are effectively part of the metropolitan area' – Final Report, 1989 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, page 117 section 16.*



- The ALP submission states: *“The ALP submission seeks to unify municipalities in country areas, where possible, while minimising unnecessary change”*. The ALP has retracted the north eastern boundary to unnecessarily split the Murrindindi Shire between Indi and McEwen. This change has caused approximately 3,500 voters from the Murrindindi Shire to be excluded to Indi when their community of interest is directed in a south-westerly direction towards the local government areas of Nillumbik and Yarra Ranges and are connected by the Maroondah and Melba Highways.



- The proposal by the ALP to reunite Mansfield and the surrounding district in the southern section of Delatite Shire with Benalla in Indi is in direct contrast to the local resident's wishes. The Committee should be made aware that within the last few months, public meetings have been held with around 900 local residents who have fought a long battle with the Labor State Government to separate themselves from Benalla and the other areas of Delatite within the Federal Division of Indi. These local residents have made their position clear that they see no affinity of community of interest with Benalla and do not want to be part of a shire that includes Benalla. They have only just recently won the right to separate from the northern section of Delatite by the State Government. Any decision to move Mansfield and the surrounding high country region into a Federal Division with Benalla would not be welcomed or accepted by these local communities.
- The ALP submission states: *“The ALP submission seeks to unify municipalities in country areas, where possible, while minimising unnecessary change”*. Ignoring this principle, the ALP submission seeks to redraw an electorate of McEwen that splits six Local Government boundaries (Yarra Ranges, Murrindindi, Mitchell, Whittlesea, Hume and Nillumbik) and does not have a single Council boundary in its entirety.



Mallee:

➤ The ALP states in their submission that:

- *‘...the existing Divisional boundaries represent the best attempt by the previous Redistribution Committee to **recognise and take account of community of interest criteria subject to S66(3)(a)**’ and ‘...the ALP submits to the Redistribution Committee that it is in the best interests of effective representation of enrolled voters by their Members of Parliament to **avoid changing their Electoral Division unless compelled by the criteria of S66(3)(a) or changes to adjoining electorates**’.*
- The ALP has proposed altering the north eastern boundary between Murray and Mallee in their submission, a boundary that has existed between these Federal electorates for 25 years. This boundary was determined at the 1977 Redistribution for Victoria and has remained as a clear and definite community of interest barrier. It was also re-established (with a very minor alteration) as a clear local government boundary at the LGA restructure of 1995 and previously to this event, it had remained a boundary between the communities of Swan Hill and Kerang for nearly 132 years.

As the underpopulated Division of Mallee is bounded by two state borders and taking into account the ALP’s own submission argument regarding community of interest, it would be a better option to gather population and enhance the community of interest surrounding Horsham in the south adhering to the criteria of S66(3)(a). This option would also alleviate voter confusion surrounding the boundary in the north east, a boundary which many local residents have only known in their voting life. Further evidence the Kerang district should remain in the Division of Murray is that:

- *‘... the Commission also accepts the merits of the Redistribution Committee’s grouping together of the Kerang district and other irrigation areas already in the Division of Murray’ - Report of the Augmented Electoral Commission, 1994 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, page 4 section 24.*

Submissions relating solely to the naming of Divisions

Three submissions received by the Committee related solely to the naming of electorates. The Liberal Party maintains its position from its original submission that the current names are well accepted by the community and that changing them may lead to unnecessary confusion.

Other submissions

There are seven other submissions dealing with local, rather than statewide, issues.

Six of the submissions relate to the boundaries of McEwen. All six accept the principle that McEwen should be an essentially rural seat. Cr Dalmau in Murrindindi and the Bennetts in Craigieburn strongly argue this case and share the view that densely populated urban fringe should not be included in McEwen. Two submissions (Cr Lex de Man and Alan Field) indicate that portions of Nillumbik Shire, while urban fringe, do share a significant community of interest with the Yarra Valley and that this link makes their inclusion in McEwen appropriate.

The other two submissions relating to McEwen are both from wine industry members and these also endorse the essentially rural nature of the seat. However, the Liberal Party does not support their

position that the Yarra Valley should not be split. The Liberal Party maintains its view that the communities along the Warburton Highway should be included in the electorate of Casey. These residents generally travel to Lilydale to work and to access retail, health and recreational facilities.

The other submission is from Macedon Ranges Council and expresses the view which would be held by many councils that they would not wish to be split between electorates. Unfortunately other factors often make this unavoidable.