



The Federal Redistribution 2006
NEW SOUTH WALES

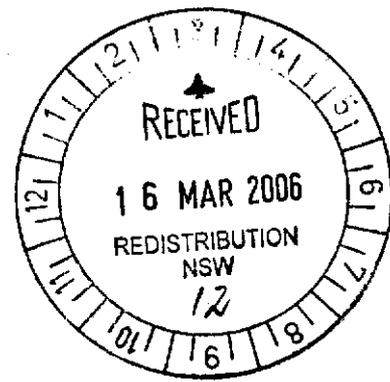


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Redistribution Committee for New South Wales
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15 March 2006

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am a passionate election follower and political observer, and I would like to offer my suggestions regarding the forthcoming Federal electoral redistribution in NSW. I suggest the abolition of either Lindsay or Prospect; I also suggest renaming several divisions, and having two divisions renamed as Donaldson and McMahon, plus the return of old divisions called Phillip and Illawarra. I will set out the reasons for my suggestions below.

LINDSAY OR PROSPECT

I've heard that the electoral redistribution will see NSW lose a division, with its numbers to drop from 50 to 49. As such, I suggest the abolition of either LINDSAY or PROSPECT, both urban divisions in western Sydney, for two reasons.

Firstly, in terms of public reaction, I believe that abolishing an urban division is preferable over a rural one. Rural voters apparently are more concerned about electoral boundary alterations than their urban counterparts – it seems that they don't react favourably to losing their representation through merging of or abolishing their divisions, for whatever reason. They may be more likely to know their local MP than urban voters. To most urban voters, electoral boundaries are probably nothing more than lines on a map, and as such they probably wouldn't complain over losing their division or being put in another division. For argument's sake, would I be concerned if the redistribution results in the abolition of the division of Sydney, where I live? No, I would not. I suspect that most urban voters would say so too.

Secondly, I suggest abolishing either Lindsay or Prospect because I don't really see the significance of what those divisions are named after. I haven't understood the significance of the person after whom Lindsay is named, so I see no reason for having that division. As well, I see no reason for there to be a division named after a local reservoir, as Prospect is.

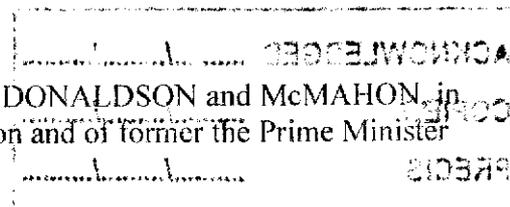
Therefore, I consider it preferable to all existing rural divisions to stay and be 'pushed' inwards in the direction of the urban divisions, and abolish one urban division. As I don't really regard Lindsay and Prospect as divisions named after people or places of significance, either one should be abolished.

RENAMING SEVERAL DIVISIONS

I suggest renaming several divisions, for reasons like those for my suggestion to abolish either Lindsay or Prospect. The divisions that I suggest be renamed, or abolished instead of Lindsay or Prospect, are Charlton, Dobell, Grayndler, and Throsby. I certainly don't see why there should be a division named after a mere Opposition Leader, as Charlton is. Nor do I see the significance of the people after whom those other divisions are named. They should go or be renamed.

DONALDSON AND McMAHON

Regarding electoral divisions, I call for two divisions to be named DONALDSON and McMAHON in honour of the first ever New South Wales Premier Stuart Donaldson and of former the Prime Minister



Billy McMahon. I know that at least one other State has a division named after its first Premier – it's time that Donaldson, as the first Premier of the largest State, got this sort of recognition, regardless of the fact that his Government lasted only a few months. After all, the division of Forde in Queensland is named after a Prime Minister whose Government lasted barely one week. Besides, the divisions of Cowper and Robertson are named after former Premiers, so I see no reason for ignoring Donaldson. Moreover, Donaldson achieved his distinction exactly 150 years ago, in 1856, when the Australian colonies first got responsible government. As for McMahon, he's been dead for almost twenty years, and as our former Prime Ministers have had electoral divisions named after them in the wake of their deaths, surely it's time for McMahon to get this recognition. I note that our most recently deceased former Prime Minister, John Gorton, who died in 2002, had an electoral division named after him within a year or two.

PHILLIP

I also call for the return of the old division of PHILLIP, which existed 1949-93. While some people might object to this description nowadays, the subject of my suggestion established the British colony here on 26 January 1788 – notwithstanding Federation in 1901, this is an event regarded as signifying the birth of the nation as we know it today, and the reason why we celebrate Australia Day. As such, there should be a division called Phillip, irrespective of how much the nation has changed ethnically over time and the unfavourable way in which many people interpret that event of 1788.

ILLAWARRA

Finally, I call for the return of the old division of ILLAWARRA, which existed from 1901, and was thus a Federation seat, to 1922. I know that the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is determined to preserve divisions that have existed since Federation – from that point, while abolishing Illawarra in hindsight a mistake, albeit perhaps not back around 1922, returning the division of Illawarra would correct that mistake. Moreover, 'Illawarra' is an Aboriginal name, and I also know that the AEC is determined to preserve divisions with Aboriginal names. As a solution, I suggest that the existing division of Throsby be renamed Illawarra.

SUMMARY

In summary, with NSW to lose a division in the forthcoming electoral redistribution and the fall in the number of divisions from 50 to 49, I call for the abolition of either Lindsay or Prospect, because I see neither division as being named after anybody or anything of any major significance, and I believe that there'd be much less of a public reaction if an urban division were abolished rather than a rural one. I also call for several divisions to be renamed, with new divisions named Donaldson and McMahon, and the return of old divisions of Phillip and Illawarra.

I hope that the Committee will see my suggestions as worthy of being implemented.

Yours faithfully



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