



The Federal Redistribution 2006
QUEENSLAND



Objection Number 157

Mr Owen Stockwell et al

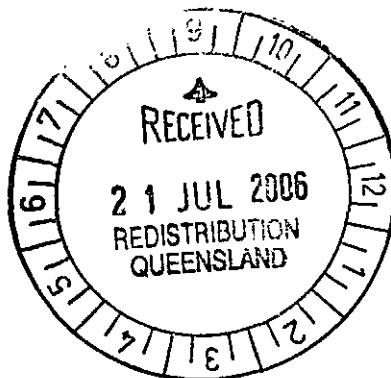
4 pages

"INVERNESS"

Blackall Qld 4472

10 July 2006

Redistribution Committee for Queensland
GPO Box 2590
BRISBANE Qld 4001



Dear Commissioners

COMMENTS REGARDING THE FEDERAL DIVISIONS OF MARANOA AND WRIGHT

Introduction

We, the undersigned, are residents of the Shires of Tambo and Blackall.

We have joined together to strongly object to the inclusion of our two shires', along with the other central western shires of Barcaldine, Isisford, Ilfracombe, Longreach, Winton and Aramac, in the proposed new Federal Division of Wright.

The proposed Division of Wright is centred on the coastal, industrial city of Gladstone. The shires of the central west of Queensland have no community, social, or business links to the city of Gladstone. All of our affiliations are with the "outback" communities that are to remain in the Federal Division of Maranoa. To isolate our communities from their traditional, business, social and geographic associations and affiliations, is to effectively reduce our parliamentary representation.

We urge you to return the shires of the central west to the Federal Division of Maranoa and to balance the numbers from areas that do not have traditional and longstanding associations with the communities of the Federal Division of Maranoa. The South Burnett shires of Wondai and Kingaroy would provide sufficient enrolment.

We note that in the Commission's Report of the proposed boundaries, many justifications are given for linking the rural shires to a seat based on Gladstone. We refer specifically to paragraph 46, 49, 50 and 51. Each of these paragraphs attempts describe the common interests claimed to exist between the various parts of the proposed Division of Wright.

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None of these arguments holds any validity for the central western shires.

- In particular, it is not accurate to say that” all of which are dependent on the infrastructure and transport links radiating from the Port of Gladstone through Central Queensland to the west”. Paragraph 49
- Nor is it accurate to claim that ...”these primary industry areas are united by their geographic proximity and their dependence on Gladstone as a major industrial city and export centre for primary produce and minerals. They share history and heritage, with tourism being of economic importance”. Paragraph 50.
- And Paragraph 51 refers to “further cementing the homogeneity of the division”. No homogeneity exists between the shires of the central west and Gladstone.

Specifically, we wish to draw the Commissions’ attention to:

1. Transport links. There are no public transport facilities between Gladstone and the central west.
 - 1.1 The air services to the central west are provided by Qantas Link and exist between Brisbane and the towns of Blackall, Barcaldine and Longreach. Air travel between Gladstone and the central west requires either a transit through Brisbane or a charter service.
 - 1.2 There is no direct bus service available between the central west and Gladstone and the train service is restricted to a twice a week service from Barcaldine or Longreach via Rockhampton.
 - 1.3 Road linkages are indirect. For the residents of Tambo, the shortest trip to Gladstone would commence with a 250 km section from Tambo to Springsure. Much of this road is unsealed and only opened to four wheel drive vehicles most of the year.
 - 1.4 Road freight and cattle transport is centred on the inland highway from Brisbane and Toowoomba. The weekly freight trucks do not come from Gladstone – they originate in Brisbane or Toowoomba. Roma, Dalby and Toowoomba are the “non local” cattle selling centres used by cattle producers in the region.
2. Industry.
 - 2.1 The cattle grazing areas of the central west are “tick free” areas. The “cattle tick” area is east of Alpha dip. This means that the movement of stock is restricted by the requirement for “ticky” cattle to be cleared to travel west, and for western cattle to be vaccinated to travel east (except direct to slaughter). The practical affect, is to restrict the movement of stock between the regions. The cattle produced in the central west are sold in the selling centres in the west – Longreach, Roma, Dalby or Toowoomba. Some direct to slaughter cattle are trucked to Mackay or Rockhampton, where there are export

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meatworks. Gladstone has no significance for the cattle industry of the central west.

- 2.2 The central west is also a wool producing area. There are no other wool producing areas in the proposed division.
 - 2.3 There is no large scale commercial farming in the central west. It is a grazing region. Farming is an important part of primary industry in the other parts of the proposed electorate. Intensive farming is a characteristic of Emerald and many of the other rural centres in the new division.
 - 2.3 Tourism in the central west is not linked to the coast. The Matilda Highway is a well known and marketed tourist route for travellers. Most of these travellers are committed to an "outback" experience.
 - 2.4 The mining industry is the major driver of growth in the eastern part of the proposed new division. The shires of the central west have no mining.
3. History and heritage
 - 3.1 Gladstone and the central west do not share a close history or heritage.
 - 3.2 The history of the early European exploration and early settlement of the central west was not driven from the coast but rather from the inland. Leichhardt and Mitchell were both explorers of the inland. The early settlers were wool producers moving north from the inland of southern Australia to find new grazing lands. The settlement of inland was a push north, not a move west from the coast.

Conclusion.

The inclusion of our shires in the proposed Federal Division of Wright removes us from all our communities of interest; it removes us from our historical, cultural and social associations and links us to a city with which we have no transport links, no business links, no service provision links - simply, a city with which we have no community of interest.

Name of Wright

We understand that the Commission may have sort to honour a well known Australian poet. Unfortunately, the name Wright is recognised as the name of the former disgraced Member for Capricornia. We urge the Commission to alter the name of the new Division to an appropriate historical or geographic name that does not have such a negative connotation.

We request that you give our submission consideration.

Yours faithfully

Owen Stokwell

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