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Seymour, Scott - Redistribution TAS - Submission on the proposed Tasmanian redistribution (feedback)

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Submission on the proposed Tasmanian redistribution details

Category: Names

Details: The proposed renaming of the Franklin Electorate to that of Tasmanian Aboriginal man Tongerlongeter requires accepting the fact that both he and his allies were involved in the murder of innocent men, women and children. In the book, 'Tongerlongeter - First Nations Leader and War Hero' written by Dr. Nicholas Clements and Prof. Henry Reynolds, there is a link provided to those reading the eBook edition, to a fully referenced compendium that lists recorded attacks that likely involved Tongerlogeter and or his allies. It is within this list that we find numerous recorded attacks such as one upon the family of Patrick Gough in 1828.

The report begins - On approaching his family hut Gough was met by his eldest daughter Mary, covered with blood, calling upon her father to hasten home as the natives had killed her mother and sisters. Gough saw his wife about half a mile from the hut sitting on the ground, resting her back against the fence, with her infant child in her lap. She was covered with wounds and fainted. Gough then ran with all speed to the hut, where the first thing which presented itself to his view was his infant daughter Alicia lying breathless in front of the door. On entering the hut he found Anne Geary, a neighbour, lying stretched on the floor, and on being removed to a sofa she vomited quantities of blood, she died about two hours after, and about midnight Alicia Gough, not more than four years of age, breathed her last. Gough's youngest child, an infant 13 months old, had received several contusions.

Mrs. Gough, who still remains in a very perilous

condition communicate to her husband that she fell on her knees before the savages, begging them to spare the lives of her Picanninies, and that one of them told her, in good English, that they should be all killed, they then repeated their blows to her head.

Anne Geary came by her death principally from a deep gash into the brain, inflicted by an axe which was lying at the door with marks of blood on it. She had also other fractures of the skull with several spear wounds on the breast, which were considered mortal. The child Alicia Gough died from a contusion on the head, apparent from a waddy.

Mary, the eldest of Gough's daughters, an interesting child, seven years old, and although she cannot read, evincing considerable acuteness of understanding, said that the natives inflicted several wounds and bruises on her when they were attacking the other victims. She states that she made an attempt to carry her sister Alicia away from the blacks, when those barbarous savages struck them down with their waddies, and she fell down "as dead as a gum stick", and when she came to herself they had disappeared. Report Ends.

These murders are not the acts of 'war heroes' and if we are to judge Tongerlongeter as such, as Clements and Reynolds have, he and his allies have committed 'war crimes'. Where are the planned attacks of soldiers in this 'war'? Why would we designate the honour of having an electorate named after a sadistic killer? The Gough report is one of many where women and children are killed, farmers huts attacked, stockmen speared, convicts beaten to death, what of this constitutes a 'military action' and indeed, how do you name the perpetrators of such crimes, 'war heroes'?

I do not object to the renaming of the electorate of Franklin but to rename it Tongerlongeter no matter how desperately a handful of historians with political agendas want it, is offensive. In 2026 we are battling against violence against women, not naming electorates after someone who committed such violence.
