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MEDIA RELEASE

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Andrew Inglis Clark deserves recognition

The initial report of the Australian Electoral Commission's Redistribution Committee has rejected calls to honour the great Tasmanian Andrew Inglis Clark by renaming the seat of Denison after him.

The committee agreed that Inglis Clark deserved to have a seat named after him but said the case was not compelling enough to warrant changing the name of Denison (which has been known by that name since Federation).

In reaching its decision the Redistribution Committee relied heavily on guidelines arising from the Parliament's 1995 Inquiry of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, which says *"every effort should be made to retain the names of original Federation Divisions"*.

However, other guidelines state: *"Divisions should be named after deceased Australians who have rendered outstanding service to their country"*.

Sir William Thomas Denison was a British Lieutenant-Governor on record as opposing fundamental elements of universal suffrage (democracy).

By contrast, Andrew Inglis Clark, born and bred in Hobart, is without a doubt one of the most significant figures Tasmania ever produced. He was an outstanding Tasmanian Attorney General, devised the Hare-Clark electoral system and is recognised by constitutional scholars as being a primary architect of the Australian Constitution.

There are precedents in Tasmania for changing the name of Federation-era seats; Braddon was previously Darwin and Wilmot was changed to Lyons (in recognition of Tasmania's only occupant—so far—of The Lodge).

It is highly unlikely that Tasmania's population will grow to the extent that a sixth seat will be required in the foreseeable future so if Andrew Inglis Clark is to receive the recognition he deserves one of the state's existing seats will have to be renamed.

The committee's decision is not final and is subject to further representations. I hope the AEC's final decision will grasp the nettle and make a change that more truly reflects the worth of a great Tasmanian.

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Please note: All the above can be attributed to Duncan Kerr SC as direct quotes.