

New boundaries could set up absorbing tussles

27/5/90

THE proposed re-distribution of Territory electoral boundaries poses the likelihood of a series of fascinating individual tussles before and during the next election.

If the proposed changes go ahead it could also mean a number of politicians will be left looking for a new line of work within the next year.

One of the politicians most seriously affected will be Nationals leader Ian Tuxworth.

His electorate of Barkly will gain an extra 250 Aboriginal votes and lose at least 50 white votes under the draft proposal.

Given that Tuxworth won by only 290 votes in the 1987 by-election, his hold on Barkly could be extremely tenuous.

It would not surprise to see the wily Tuxworth look at the possibility of standing in an-

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other seat, perhaps in Darwin. There is a possibility of the Greens and Nationals cooking up preference swaps in Port Darwin.

Tuxworth, who lives in Fannie Bay, could then attempt the move to the inner-city electorate and take on Education Minister Tom Harris.

But there is also the newly-created seat of Brennan.

The high number of services and police personnel give Brennan a solid conservative base.

Tuxworth could also look to Brennan if he decided Barkly had become unwinnable. But

there could well be another high-profile candidate looking to Brennan.

Deputy Chief Minister Barry Coulter is unlikely to recontest Palmerston, which now looks solid Labor.

The new electorates of Brennan, Nelson and Goyder all appear more attractive propositions for him.

He would be taking an unnecessary risk if he decided to go head-to-head against colorful independent Noel Padgham-Purich, who looks set to contest Nelson following Koolpinyah's disappearance.

Goyder, which takes in the mining town of Jabiru, has a natural appeal to Coulter.

Although, it has long been suggested that popular Litchfield Shire president John Maley, now working with the Mines Department, is considering lining up for CLP.

Should he decide to run for Goyder, which takes in part of Litchfield, he looks ideal.

By running Coulter in Brennan, the CLP would be hoping to pick up two of the new seats, leaving Padgham-Purich a good bet to win the third.

This would leave CLP Member for Ludmilla Col Firmin with nowhere to turn following the removal of his seat.

Labor and Administrative Services Minister Terry McCarthy is another facing a critical test.

His seat of Victoria River has picked up 770 largely conservative voters west of the Katherine River.

While this makes him look safe, there are other factors.

Under the proposed redistribution, Victoria River will lose the CLP strongholds of Batchelor — McCarthy's home town — Adelaide River and Pine Creek, a total of 560 voters.

The Labor-voting Aboriginal community of Lajamanu, with 370 electors, looks certain to be included in Victoria River.

McCarthy would also be conscious that the major Aboriginal centre of Wadeye, which voted his way in the past two elections, cannot be counted on to necessarily follow trends.

Labor is planning to run two candidates — an Aboriginal and a European.

This is a seat to watch.

Perhaps McCarthy might be tempted to look to Goyder, which includes Batchelor, Adelaide River and Pine Creek.

Two of the most interesting seats will be Katherine and Araluen, which look like being decided between conservative candidates.

In Katherine, Primary Production Minister Mike Reed faces a tough opponent, National candidate and town mayor Jim Forscutt.

In Araluen, the CLP's Eric Poole looks set for a fierce tussle with the National Enzo Floreani, whose seat of Flynn has vanished.