

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

REPORT
of a
PUBLIC INQUIRY
by the
PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SCOTLAND

held on

Tuesday, 23rd September 2008

at

Sir John Wilson Town Hall, Airdrie

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: B A Lockhart,
Esquire, Q C, Sheriff Principal.

Transcription services by William Hodge and
Pollock Ltd, Fifth Floor, Central Chambers, 93
Hope Street, Glasgow G2 6LD .

1 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Good morning,
2 ladies and gentlemen. As you're aware, this is
3 a public inquiry in respect of the provisional
4 proposals of the Boundary Commission for
5 constituencies for the Council areas of East
6 Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, North
7 Lanarkshire, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire
8 and of West Lothian. As you're aware, the
9 proposals of the Boundary Commission are
10 that there be 16 constituencies for the area
11 which is designated South West and Central.
12 These are North Ayr and Troon which is
13 proposed at 53,610 electors; South Ayr,
14 Carrick and Doon Valley, 52,260 electors;
15 Coatbridge and Central Airdrie, 59,940;
16 Cumbernauld and East Airdrie, 56,910;
17 Cumnock and Clydesdale, 51,630; East
18 Kilbride, 58,000 ... I'll read short - North
19 Hamilton and Bellshill, 56,000; South Hamilton
20 and Larkhall, 58,000; Kilmarnock, 51,000;
21 Kirkintilloch, Chryston and Kilsyth, 52,000;
22 Lanark, Shotts and Whitburn, 54,000;
23 Linlithgow and Bathgate, 54,000; Livingstone,
24 54,000; Milngavie and Bishopbriggs, 51,000;
25 Motherwell and Wishaw, 54,000 and

1 Rutherglen at 57,000. As I say, I read to the
2 nearest thousand. In respect of all of these
3 proposed constituencies – apart from
4 Milngavie and Bishopbriggs where there was an
5 objection only to the proposed name –
6 representations have been received in respect
7 of these proposals and the Boundary
8 Commission accordingly agreed that a public
9 inquiry should take place in terms of the
10 Scottish Parliament Constituencies Act of
11 2002.

12 Ladies and gentlemen, although I am termed
13 an Assistant Commissioner, I am Sheriff
14 Principal and a person independent of the
15 Boundary Commission, appointed by the
16 Secretary of State for Scotland to conduct this
17 public inquiry which will take place here in
18 Airdrie, in Ayr and in Lanark and after I've
19 heard the evidence and considered the written
20 representations, my task is to make
21 recommendations in respect of the provisional
22 proposals based on my view of these proposals
23 which as I say will be on the basis of the
24 written representations which have already
25 been received, any further written

1 representations that are received and oral
2 evidence which is given.

3 Now, I'm not going to go over the whole of the
4 Commission's statement but I think it's
5 important, ladies and gentlemen, that I give
6 you certain sections.

7 In formulating its provisions or proposals for
8 the constituency, the Commission requires to
9 take into account Schedule 1 of the Scotland
10 Act 1998 as amended. This sets out the rules
11 which are to be applied when designing
12 constituencies. Very important – and you'll all
13 I'm sure be aware of this – the Commission's
14 approach can be summarised thus: there are
15 73 constituencies and constituencies will be
16 the Orkney Islands, the Shetland Islands and
17 71 other constituencies covering the
18 remainder of Scotland. In applying the rules
19 which I'll shortly outline, the Commission must
20 seek to achieve a balance between conflicting
21 requirements and must do in a way in which,
22 so far as is practicable, is consistent
23 throughout the whole of Scotland.

24 Rule 1 – as far as is practicable, regard must
25 be had to the boundaries of local authority

1 areas. Secondly, the electorate of each
2 constituency should be as near the electoral
3 quota as is practicable, having regard to Rule
4 1. The electoral quota is determined by
5 dividing the total number of local government
6 electors on the July 2007 electoral registers
7 for the whole of Scotland – except Orkney and
8 Shetland – dividing that number by 71.
9 Electoral quota remains fixed throughout the
10 period of review and you should note, ladies
11 and gentlemen, is 54,728. The Commission
12 may depart from Rule 1 if it thinks that it is
13 desirable to do so to avoid an excessive
14 disparity between the electorate of a
15 constituency and the electoral quota or
16 between the electorate of a constituency and
17 that of neighbouring constituencies. Rule 3 –
18 the Commission may depart from the strict
19 application of the preceding rules if it
20 considers that special geographical
21 considerations – including the size, shape and
22 accessibility of a constituency – make a
23 departure desirable. Rule 4 – the Commission
24 must take into account – as far as it
25 reasonably can – of inconveniences attendant

1 on altering constituencies and of any local ties
2 which would be broken by so doing.

3 Now as I've said, ladies and gentlemen, the
4 Boundary Commission have set out in detail in
5 the Commission's statement the reasons for
6 making their proposals. This is a public
7 document which has been for some time
8 available in the public domain. It is referred to
9 in the public notice calling this inquiry and in
10 that notice there are a list of places where it
11 can be inspected. I don't think it proper that I
12 read the whole of the Commission's statement
13 but I think to give the proceedings today a
14 certain texture - a context - it is appropriate
15 that I read certain sections which show the
16 basic thinking of the Boundary Commission's
17 existing proposals which are the subject of
18 this inquiry.

19 The Boundary Commission write: when
20 examining the existing Scottish Parliament
21 constituencies for West and Central Scotland,
22 including this group of Council areas and
23 others to the north and west, the Commission
24 noted that the distribution of electorate within
25 the wider area, as well as significant changes

1 in the electorates of existing constituencies,
2 provided for particular problems which could
3 not easily be resolved within the terms of the
4 statutory rules. Further, the natural and built
5 geographies, the distribution of areas of
6 contiguous urban electorates at the
7 boundaries between Council areas and the
8 rural nature of some areas presented added
9 difficulties for the development of provisional
10 proposals within the statutory rules. It was,
11 however, clear to the Commission that it was
12 not possible to leave the existing
13 arrangements unchanged or to make minor
14 alterations to them because of large
15 imbalances of electorate between the existing
16 constituencies. It was concluded that
17 substantial change would be required.

18 Now this is important: considering the wider
19 area, the Commission noted that the position
20 in the City of Glasgow, in Dumfries and
21 Galloway, in Falkirk, in the City of Edinburgh,
22 Highland and North Ayrshire Council areas ...
23 respectively - 6, 2, 2, 8, 3 and 2
24 constituencies respectively, wholly contained
25 within their local authority areas. They

1 concluded that satisfactory constituencies
2 each contained within a Council area could be
3 devised for these local authority areas and it
4 was therefore disadvantageous to include them
5 within Council areas which are the subject of
6 the present inquiry for the purpose of
7 developing new constituencies. In other words,
8 there were exact numbers of constituencies in
9 these areas so the Boundary Commission felt
10 that that should be left well alone. Taking
11 these factors into consideration, two
12 underlying options were developed within the
13 11 Council areas – that's 23 constituencies –
14 in West and Central Scotland. In producing two
15 options, it became evident to the Commission
16 that there was no added benefit from involving
17 any of the surrounding Council areas that fully
18 justified constituencies wholly contained
19 within their local authority areas.

20 It became evident to the Commission – they
21 say – that there was a pivotal point in the West
22 Dunbartonshire/East Dunbartonshire Council
23 areas which would significantly determine the
24 configuration of the remainder of the
25 constituencies for the overall area. It was

1 possible either to combine part of West
2 Dunbartonshire Council area with East
3 Dunbartonshire Council area or to create a
4 constituency spanning the River Clyde at
5 Erskine. The Commission was aware that the
6 latter alternative was a considerable departure
7 from previous arrangements. Further, the
8 Commission noted that it was not possible or
9 practicable to combine preferred elements
10 from the two options as both were self-
11 contained.

12 In view of these difficulties, the Commission
13 closely reviewed the former alternative but
14 considered it was demonstrably less attractive
15 over the wider area. It would be harder to
16 design constituencies which came close to
17 electoral parity and it would be necessary to
18 divide communities such as Bearsden,
19 Milngavie, Bishopbriggs and Kirkintilloch at
20 the interface between West Dunbartonshire
21 and East Dunbartonshire Council areas. The
22 Commission agreed that the latter alternative
23 – which saw a single constituency cross the
24 River Clyde to bring together Clydebank on the
25 north with Renfrew, Erskine and Bishopton on

1 the south – better met the electoral quota and
2 produced well-defined boundaries.

3 Having considered that background – and it is
4 important to this inquiry – the Commission on
5 balance preferred the option of crossing the
6 Clyde. The proposed constituencies could then
7 be grouped into two blocks of Council areas.
8 Block 1 was Argyll & Bute, West
9 Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire and
10 East Renfrewshire providing 7 constituencies
11 and the further block with which we are
12 concerned which proposes to be brought
13 together East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire,
14 North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, South
15 Ayrshire and West Lothian.

16 Now for these areas, ladies and gentlemen –
17 and this indicates the difficulties with ... as far
18 as this inquiry is concerned – the theoretical
19 entitlement to seats were respectively 1.69,
20 1.47, 4.57, 1.63, 4.46 and 2.25. So you see
21 the difficulties with which the Commission
22 were faced – that in fact virtually every one
23 was 1 and a half or 4 and a half or 2 and a
24 half, 2 and a quarter. That was the difficulty
25 and the background to which they faced. Now

1 I've emphasised that because it is against that
2 background that the current situation has to
3 be considered.

4 Now, ladies and gentlemen, the earlier part
5 deals with Ayrshire and ... the statement and
6 detail deals with Ayrshire and Lanarkshire
7 which I think are properly left to the inquiries
8 which I'm subsequently having relating to this
9 whole area in Lanark and Ayr. So I think I will
10 concentrate on reading to you the section with
11 which you will be involved which is the local
12 area here. I will read as follows: the existing
13 constituency of East Kilbride has too large an
14 electorate to remain unchanged and the
15 existing cross-council constituency of Glasgow
16 Rutherglen required amendment as a result of
17 Glasgow City Council area fully justifying 8
18 constituencies wholly contained within the
19 Council area. Examination of these areas by
20 the Commission determined that combining
21 South Lanarkshire Council wards 6 to 10 -
22 which represent the contiguous urban
23 settlement of East Kilbride - produced an
24 acceptable constituency namely East Kilbride
25 which went some way to addressing the issue

1 of under representation and prevented the
2 division of the town. Furthermore, the
3 proposal for East Kilbride fully respected local
4 government ward areas.

5 The Commission considered that combining
6 South Lanarkshire wards 11 to 15 – with the
7 exception of the south eastern part of ward 15
8 – enabled a large part of the existing Glasgow
9 Rutherglen constituency to be retained,
10 combining similar urban communities of
11 Rutherglen, Cambuslang and Blantyre in the
12 single constituency – Rutherglen – and
13 although slightly over the electoral quota,
14 prevented the division of these communities.
15 Again, this proposal for the most part
16 respected local authority ward boundaries.

17 With regard to the existing constituencies of
18 Hamilton North and Bellshill: Hamilton South
19 and Motherwell and Wishaw, the Commission
20 concluded that the distribution of electorate
21 and the nature of contiguous urban electorates
22 in these areas – which are located near the
23 local authority administrative boundary –
24 necessitated configurations close to the
25 existing arrangements. However, the

1 Commission agreed that the existing Hamilton
2 South constituency had too small an electorate
3 to remain unchanged. It was therefore
4 accepted that the continued division of
5 Hamilton remained necessary and that the
6 north part of the town should form a cross-
7 council constituency with parts of North
8 Lanarkshire Council area. The Commission
9 agreed to revise constituencies that were
10 closely based on existing arrangements but
11 where possible, amended these to better fit
12 with local authority ward geography. The
13 resulting constituencies were named Hamilton
14 North and Bellshill, Hamilton South and
15 Larkhall and Motherwell and Wishaw.

16 Taking account of the conclusions regarding
17 the wider area and that East Dunbartonshire
18 has a theoretical entitlement to 1.47 seats, it
19 was evident to the Commission that it would
20 be necessary to divide East Dunbartonshire
21 Council area between two constituencies. The
22 Commission also recognised that one of these
23 two constituencies would have to include parts
24 of North Lanarkshire Council because of East
25 Dunbartonshire's position within this group of

1 Council areas. After further examination, the
2 Commission concluded that to combine East
3 Dunbartonshire wards 1 to 3, 5 and 6
4 produced an acceptable proposed constituency
5 in the community terms and with regard to the
6 electoral quota. A second cross-council
7 constituency was developed by combining East
8 Dunbartonshire wards 4, 7 and 8 with North
9 Lanarkshire wards 1 and 5. The proposed
10 constituency fully respected local government
11 ward boundaries. The two proposed
12 constituencies were named Milngavie and
13 Bishopbriggs and Kirkintilloch, Chryston and
14 Kilsyth.

15 The Commission noted the existing
16 constituencies of Airdrie and Shotts and
17 Coatbridge and Chryston were only marginally
18 changed in respect of electorate. However, the
19 Commission found that it was not possible to
20 leave these constituencies unaltered in pursuit
21 of acceptable arrangements to cover the wider
22 area. Although several alternatives we looked
23 at, the Commission concluded that the town of
24 Airdrie would require to be divided between
25 two constituencies and agreed that one of the

1 constituencies - Coatbridge and Central
2 Airdrie - should combine at the contiguous
3 urban settlements of Coatbridge and Airdrie
4 that lay to the north of the M8 and west of the
5 A73. The Commission decided that the other
6 constituency - Cumbernauld and East Airdrie -
7 should combine the eastern parts of Airdrie
8 and other smaller settlements to the north and
9 east of Airdrie with Cumbernauld. It was noted
10 that the A73 and the A89 provided links
11 between the disparate parts of the proposed
12 constituency. Both proposed constituencies
13 complied with the statutory rules and followed
14 - for the most part - well-defined boundaries.
15 Early on in its consideration, the Commission
16 noted that only one of the initial underlying
17 options for the wider area allowed for a
18 redesign of constituencies in West Lothian
19 which if unchallenged, would result in the
20 electorate of West Lothian being significantly
21 under represented. It also determined at an
22 early stage that it would not be possible - for
23 reasons outlined earlier in the paper - to
24 combine West Lothian with Edinburgh, Falkirk
25 or Midlothian - I've already referred to that.

1 Examination of both initial underlying options
2 led the Commission to conclude, taking into
3 account the wider area, that the first option
4 which amended ... involved amendment to the
5 existing West Lothian constituencies should be
6 adopted and developed further.

7 In determining more detailed revised
8 constituencies for West Lothian, the
9 Commission concluded that two revised
10 constituencies could be developed which for
11 the main part respected local government ward
12 boundaries and divided the constituencies
13 along the M8. In addressing the imbalances of
14 electorate between the existing West Lothian
15 constituencies and considering the
16 constituency design over the wider area, it was
17 deemed necessary to develop a cross-council
18 constituency. It became evident that this
19 would require to combine part of West Lothian,
20 North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire
21 Council areas. The Commission investigated
22 the possibility of an alternative which would
23 not involve the inclusion of three local
24 authority areas within a single constituency
25 but did not find a satisfactory solution. The

1 Commission therefore agreed that overall it's
2 published proposals ... provisional proposals
3 produced arrangements which were more
4 satisfactory under the terms of the statutory
5 rules than other possible alternatives. In
6 developing the proposed Lanark, Shotts and
7 Whitburn cross-council constituency, the
8 Commission noted that it was possible to
9 create a compact constituency which was well
10 connected by transport routes across the three
11 Council areas involved.

12 Now they conclude, ladies and gentlemen: the
13 Commission recognise that it faced
14 considerable difficulties in developing
15 arrangements for the West and Central
16 Scotland area which complied with the
17 statutory rules. I've indicated to you what the
18 basic problem ... underlying problem was at
19 the outset and the difficulties with which they
20 were faced. The Commission say that they
21 believe that its provisional proposals reflect
22 community considerations where possible,
23 meet the demands set by the electoral quota,
24 provide for well-balanced electorates across
25 the wider area and for the most part, offer

1 strong and easily identifiable boundaries.

2 Well the fact that you're all here today, ladies
3 and gentlemen, obviously indicates that there
4 are issues and the purpose of this inquiry is
5 obviously to air these issues. I have before me
6 a very substantial amount of written material
7 which I have already have the opportunity of
8 reading. The purpose of this inquiry ... this
9 public inquiry is for anyone who wishes to
10 make oral representations to be given the
11 opportunity so to do. There clearly is a lot of
12 material and could I say this to you, not as any
13 director but it's really with a view to letting
14 everybody say what they wish to say: it's not
15 really a time for large speeches. I know all the
16 issues involved. It's an opportunity for people
17 to make bullet points which I can note and
18 which can be recorded and when I come to
19 make my provisional recommendations ... my
20 response to the provisional recommendations,
21 I can have regard to them. We try to keep
22 emotion out of it, long impassioned speeches
23 are not the name of the game - to use a
24 colloquial expression. What I want to know is
25 the bullet points, the essentials of what you

1 have to say so that I can note them, they can
2 be recorded and then they will be part of the
3 deliberations and I hope you agree that's an
4 appropriate way of hearing what people have
5 to say.

6 Now Dr Buchanan has prepared a list – we will
7 go now to the ... I hope I made clear ... I have
8 to taken some time to explain it but I hope I
9 made clear what the thinking of the
10 Commission is. I emphasise I am not part of
11 the Commission. I've just told you what the
12 Commission's thinking is. It is now your
13 opportunity to have your say. The provisional
14 order of business requires people who wish to
15 speak to record it with Dr Buchanan as you
16 come in and MPs and MSPs are entitled to be
17 heard first, then councils and councillors, then
18 political parties, community groups and
19 members of the public. Now, I felt in
20 discussion with Dr Buchanan that the only fair
21 way was to let people in each group address
22 the inquiry as they came in and unless there
23 were substantial submissions to the contrary,
24 Dr Buchanan has drawn up this list. Tomorrow
25 ... sorry, today MPs and MSPs – we should start

1 with Rosemary McKenna, then Catherine
2 Craigie - both MSPs - and then Karen
3 Whitefield and tomorrow, Alex Neill and Elaine
4 Smith. That would be followed today ... well,
5 Rosemary McKenna of course is an MP, the
6 other two are MSPs. After these three have
7 been heard, the councils and councillors would
8 be John Fleming from North Lanarkshire
9 Council, Councillor Michael Ross, Councillor
10 Michael Coyle, Councillor Tommy Morgan.
11 Then from the political parties, James Grundy
12 and Murray Tosh of the Conservative Party,
13 Tony Beakman of the Labour Party and then
14 others - Ray Cullen, Bob Smith, Ron Ackland,
15 Patrick Rowling and Airdrie Action Group.

16 Now, it is difficult - you will appreciate - to
17 try and accommodate everybody. We felt that
18 this is the only fair way to do it. Does anyone
19 have any substantial objection to the proposed
20 running order?

21 MR FAGAN - Sorry, Councillor David Fagan. I
22 thought I'd indicated that I wanted to speak
23 but apologises for that and I would like to
24 speak as well .

25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Very well. So you

1 would speak after Councillor Tommy Morgan .

2 MR FLEMING: - Sir, if I could possibly request
3 that Councillor Tommy Morgan could speak
4 after Councillor Michael Ross. Both are
5 authorised to speak on behalf of North
6 Lanarkshire Council .

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - I see. Would
8 Councillor Michael Coyle have any objection to
9 that course? Thank you .

10 MISS COYLE: - Councillor Sophia Coyle as well,
11 my name's not been mentioned .

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Yes, you were
13 here earlier. You were sitting there before.
14 Well I think in fact you would be entitled to go
15 to the front of the queue because you in fact
16 were here first. How's that? So that's
17 Councillor Sophia Coyle?

18 MISS COYLE: - Yes .

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Right. Well
20 without further ado, could I ask Rosemary
21 McKenna to come forward? Now the idea is
22 that witnesses will sit at the ... there's no
23 oaths involved, it's just a question of making
24 your submissions. Are these notes or is that
25 written material you wish to submit?

1 MRS MCKENNA: - It's just notes .

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well thank you
3 very much for coming and could I invite you to
4 address the inquiry?

5 MRS MCKENNA: - Thank you very much and I
6 will keep in mind your comments about
7 brevity. I think it's important just to make the
8 point. My name is Rosemary McKenna and I
9 have in various ways represented the
10 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth area since 1984, first
11 as a councillor, then as a Member of
12 Parliament for Cumbernauld and Kilsyth and
13 currently - since 2005 - Member of Parliament
14 for Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch
15 East.

16 Now prior to 1974, Kilsyth was linked to the
17 Stirlingshire area of Scotland and since 1974,
18 tremendously strong links have been built up
19 between the towns of Kilsyth and
20 Cumbernauld. A great deal of work by the local
21 people and there are now very strong links in
22 terms of employment, education and transport
23 - the three issues that I think are absolutely
24 crucial to bringing together communities - and
25 those links are there. Children from the local

1 area across Cumbernauld and Kilsyth go to
2 schools in all areas, they work in all areas and
3 the transport links are now well-established.
4 There are absolutely no ties or links between
5 the area of Cumbernauld and the proposed
6 link to Airdrie. If there were any established
7 links at all that would be obvious but there are
8 absolutely no links between Cumbernauld and
9 Airdrie – the area that's recommended. In fact
10 transport is particularly difficult.

11 The proposals that are put forward by the
12 Scottish Labour Party recognise the links
13 between Cumbernauld and Kilsyth and Milton
14 of Campsie and Lennoxton which became
15 part of the Westminster constituency in 2005
16 but in actual fact, the links go back quite a
17 distance. Children from Milton of Campsie and
18 Lennoxton have for years come into Kilsyth
19 for education. There are good transport links
20 along the way and the communities are very
21 close. They're very similar and very close.

22 In terms of the boundaries ... the local
23 authority boundaries, East Dunbartonshire and
24 North Lanarkshire in the Westminster seat
25 work particularly well. There are absolutely no

1 difficulties between the East Dunbartonshire
2 Council area and the North Lanarkshire
3 Council area that I represent but I think that's
4 because there are very strong historical ties in
5 those areas and I think that's really important.
6 Cross-council boundaries are suggested by the
7 Commission in other areas so I don't see that
8 as an argument against the Cumbernauld and
9 Kilsyth and Milton of Campsie and Lennoxton
10 seat. I think the Labour Party ... Scottish
11 Labour Party's submission recognised all the
12 county area that are set down by the Boundary
13 Commission ... that the Boundary Commission
14 set down and that the Boundary Commission
15 have to adhere to and I have looked at it very
16 very carefully and I find they really reflect all
17 the criteria but the important thing ... the
18 important difference is that local knowledge
19 informs these proposals and I think it's
20 absolutely crucial that local knowledge is
21 taken into account when you look at the
22 proposals that have been put forward by the
23 Scottish Labour Party and that's all I have to
24 say .

25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Thank you again.

1 I've got it and I've read it - it's a detailed
2 document, the Labour Party proposals which I
3 have and you obviously endorse that?

4 MRS MCKENNA: - Absolutely, yes .

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Thank you very
6 much indeed .

7 MR TOSH: - Is it possible to ask questions sir?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Yes, if anyone
9 wishes to - indeed .

10 MR TOSH: - Thank you .

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - If you could
12 identify yourself please .

13 MR TOSH: - I'm Murray Tosh. I'm representing
14 the Scottish Conservative Party. Mrs McKenna
15 will be happy to note that we are proposing
16 virtually an identical constituency for
17 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth. However she spoke
18 also to the documents submitted by the
19 Labour Party which I note in order to achieve
20 the boundaries around about Cumbernauld and
21 Kilsyth, you're suggesting that East
22 Dunbartonshire wards 2 and 3 should be
23 excluded from this grouping of constituencies.
24 Could I ask - first of all - on what basis you
25 make that proposal?

1 MRS MCKENNA: - Purely on terms of numbers.
2 I mean absolutely ... the criterias laid down
3 make sure that ... really you ought to question
4 the Labour Party representative as to why that
5 was done but it seems to me that in terms of
6 the numbers that have to be contained within
7 the constituencies make that possible - make
8 that necessary .

9 MR TOSH: - Thank you, that's a very fair
10 answer. Can I ask you what proposals the
11 Labour party has put forward to address the
12 knock-on effect of placing wards 2 and 3 in
13 the Dunbartonshire and Renfrewshire
14 grouping?

15 MRS MCKENNA: - Yes, uh-huh but it's quite
16 obvious in the document. I mean I didn't write
17 the Labour Party document. That will be
18 covered by the Labour Party. I am here to
19 support the Labour Party document but
20 specifically in terms of the
21 Cumbernauld/Kilsyth and the East
22 Dunbartonshire proposals .

23 MR TOSH: - I understand that but with respect
24 sir, the Labour Party document did not have
25 counter-proposals for that part of West

1 Dunbartonshire which is grouped with
2 Renfrewshire .

3 MRS MCKENNA: - But what they have spelled
4 out is where they see that it should change .

5 MR TOSH: - Yes but they are unable to show
6 what the consequential change would be ...

7 MRS MCKENNA: - So they're accepting the rest
8 - they've accepted the other proposals. I think
9 that's quite clear in the document .

10 MR TOSH: - So you can't add to the Labour
11 Party's national submission in that respect?

12 MRS MCKENNA: - No, no. That's all I know .

13 MR TOSH: - Understood, thank you .

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Thank you very
15 much. Yes, could you identify yourself please?

16 MR CULLEN: - My name is Ross Cullen, I'm an
17 active community worker in the area of
18 Craigneuk in Airdrie. I've been sitting here
19 listening to both your introduction and the
20 gentleman and the lady speaking. I would like
21 to know from an unbiased opinion if this is a
22 political thing to do with voting rather than a
23 regional change and what good it would do to
24 communities?

25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - No, it's nothing

1 to do with voting at all .

2 MR CULLEN: - That's the way it's sounding.
3 You keep talking about electorate and
4 everything .

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Yes, well it's
6 numbers. I think ... we're actually ... we can't
7 take matters out of context. You're entitled to
8 make comments in due course. We're dealing
9 at the moment with specific questions to Mrs
10 McKenna on the basis of the evidence which
11 she's given. Your point is a perfectly valid
12 point but at the moment we're dealing with
13 Mrs McKenna's evidence. Is there anything you
14 actually want to ask her?

15 MR CULLEN: - Not just now, thank you .

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - You will get your
17 opportunity to speak. I think that's all, thank
18 you very much Mrs McKenna. Cathy Craigie?

19 MRS CRAIGIE: - Thank you, Sheriff Principal to
20 the Assistant Commissioner. I'm grateful for
21 your explanation and for your summary of the
22 Boundary Commission's proposals and for the
23 opportunity to raise my concerns and the
24 concerns of my constituents on the provisional
25 Boundary Commission proposals for the

1 redrawing of the boundary for the
2 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Scottish
3 parliamentary constituency.

4 I feel it's important to briefly outline the
5 history of the existing constituency and
6 community. As you will most likely know,
7 Cumbernauld is a new town which celebrated
8 its 50th anniversary last year. The
9 communities of Cumbernauld and Kilsyth were
10 first brought together in 1974 to form the
11 District Council of Cumbernauld and Kilsyth
12 and in the subsequent parliamentary boundary
13 review, the two towns joined to form the
14 parliamentary constituency of Cumbernauld
15 and Kilsyth. Over the years these towns have
16 come together and close social and business
17 links have developed. Voluntary organisations
18 as well as local and national governments work
19 to provide services across the constituency
20 and have established a public transport
21 network which provides connections between
22 the towns. Through schooling, through
23 recreational links and family ties, the
24 constituency is now well-established as a
25 strong community.

1 The proposals suggested by the Boundary
2 Commission link Cumbernauld with Airdrie
3 East and parts of Airdrie and a group of
4 villages with no historic or social links to
5 Cumbernauld. People in Cumbernauld see no
6 valid reason for this suggestion and I'm sure
7 people living in the villages and parts of
8 Airdrie will agree with this conclusion. I accept
9 that the reasons for the review is to more
10 evenly distribute the electorate between
11 constituencies. However the proposals put
12 forward by the Boundary Commission appear
13 to place more importance on numbers than on
14 community connections and the ties which
15 hold communities together.

16 Sheriff Principal, you're right to point out that
17 the Boundary Commission had problems from
18 the outset in reaching parity of numbers. I
19 think that the Boundary Commission made that
20 problem more difficult by way of early linkages
21 with local authority boundaries across Central
22 Scotland. I object to the Commission's
23 provisional proposals and submit that the
24 Commission could achieve parity when
25 considering constituencies for this area by

1 linking West and East Dunbartonshire Council
2 areas and North and South Lanarkshire Council
3 areas. By doing this, it is possible to have
4 small cross-council boundary movement which
5 recognise local connection and ties while also
6 achieving parity of numbers.

7 I have submitted a proposal which I believe
8 achieves a balanced alternative, meeting the
9 criteria laid down in legislation. By bringing
10 together North Lanarkshire Council wards 1 to
11 4 – which is Cumbernauld and Kilsyth – and
12 part of East Dunbartonshire ward 4 –
13 Lennoxton, Milton of Campsie and Burston –
14 a constituency with just over 55,600 electors
15 can be formed. This proposal would establish
16 a constituency with defined boundaries, an
17 acceptable number of electors but more
18 importantly, a constituency where there
19 already exists community ties and
20 connections. When my colleague Rosemary
21 McKenna stated children from Milton of
22 Campsie and Lennoxton already attend
23 schools in Kilsyth, indeed they have done so
24 since the 1950s. This connection in itself has
25 brought our communities closer together and

1 friendships that have been built over the years
2 to produce marriages and social and business
3 links as well of course as our links with Kilsyth
4 and Campsie Hills.

5 In summarising my proposal, Sheriff Principal,
6 is this has regard to the principles agreed by
7 the Boundary Commission based on the rules
8 defined for electoral quota, local authority
9 boundaries and it reflects existing community
10 ties, links communities where there are
11 existing ties, does not split towns and has
12 regard to transport, work and family,
13 recreational provision, public services and
14 population and areas with connections. I
15 submit that this proposal better reflects the
16 principles set by the Boundary Commission
17 and combined with other suggestions – which I
18 know will be raised during the hearing – will
19 provide for required number of constituencies
20 reflecting the principles set by the
21 Commission and as I have said, maintaining
22 and strengthening the community links and
23 ties. I thank you for this opportunity to put my
24 views on the record and I'm happy to answer
25 any questions .

1 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – And we have your
2 written submission as well. I'm very much
3 obliged to you for the setting out of your
4 position which confirms that what you have
5 said before. Questions? Yes, Mr Tosh .

6 MR TOSH: – Essentially I'd like to ask the same
7 question of Mrs Craigie as I did Mrs McKenna.
8 As I understand it from your written
9 submission, you're proposing that two wards
10 in East Dunbartonshire be placed in effectively
11 West Dunbartonshire constituency and in
12 effect, what you're saying then is – if I'm right
13 – you're asking that the grouping for creating
14 constituencies should be extended to include
15 West Dunbartonshire Council and therefore by
16 necessity, Argyll & Bute Council, Renfrewshire
17 Council, Inverclyde Council, East Renfrewshire
18 Council and as I understand it from the
19 position made by the Labour Party
20 representatives at the inquiries in Clydebank
21 and Paisley, that would also include at least
22 North Ayrshire Council. Do you feel that that's
23 an acceptable grouping which would include
24 the whole of Lanarkshire and all of those
25 councils to the north and to the west of

1 Glasgow running up to the borders between
2 Argyll & Bute and Highlands?

3 MRS CRAIGIE: – You have an advantage on me,
4 Mr Tosh, since I was not at the previous
5 inquiry but my understanding is that the
6 proposals submitted by the Labour Party
7 include the boundaries of West
8 Dunbartonshire, East Dunbartonshire, North
9 Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire and that
10 would contain the constituencies within those
11 existing boundaries. I would submit to the
12 Sheriff Principal and to yourself that it's a far
13 more reasonable grouping of local authorities
14 to consider the boundaries than the original
15 grouping of the Boundary Commission which
16 did straddle the River Clyde and move down
17 into the Dunbartonshire area. I would also
18 submit that the proposals I'm suggesting and
19 the Labour Party have suggested would avoid
20 the necessity of moving from the West
21 Dunbartonshire Council area over the
22 boundary into the Argyll & Bute area, with
23 Dumbarton being able to provide the electoral
24 quota for the Dumbarton seat and the Argyll &
25 Bute seat having a slightly smaller quota of

1 electorate. However principles have been set in
2 the past which would allow that .

3 MR TOSH: – I wonder if you're familiar with the
4 letters submitted on behalf of the Scottish
5 Labour Party by Colin Smith setting out the
6 comprehensive counter-proposal for the whole
7 of Scotland?

8 MRS CRAIGIE: – Yes I am and if it would be
9 possible, I would be able to look through my
10 papers and locate it if you have something
11 specific but I see this particular inquiry as an
12 inquiry looking at in particular the North and
13 South Lanarkshire areas and the East and West
14 Dunbartonshire areas and I've focused myself
15 on that and perhaps ... I'm sure with the
16 Sheriff Principal's acceptance that there will be
17 an opportunity to question the Labour Party's
18 submission in more detail. I in fact was
19 speaking to the submission ... while I support
20 the Labour Party's submission, I was speaking
21 to the submission that I myself had put into
22 the Boundary Commission and indeed the
23 Sheriff Principal .

24 MR TOSH: – I was simply going to ask if you
25 could shed any light on the Labour Party's

1 proposals for Renfrewshire since they were not
2 addressed in that document and nor in the
3 inquiry. I'm sorry, Commissioner. I'm merely
4 seeking information whether the knock-on
5 effects of the changes which have been
6 suggested are to be found anywhere .

7 MRS CRAIGIE: - Sheriff Principal, I am
8 confident ... however, I would want to check
9 and perhaps get back to you but I am
10 confident that the Labour Party's submission
11 does not cross the Clyde - the River Clyde -
12 into the Renfrewshire area but retains ... the
13 proposals are within the boundaries of West
14 Dunbartonshire. However, I would ask for your
15 indulgence in allowing me to check that and
16 come back to you on it .

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - I think it's on the
18 second last page of Mr Smith's letter. Have you
19 got Mr Smith's letter there?

20 MRS CRAIGIE: - Well I'm trying to find it here
21 just now. I'm sorry, I don't have it but that's
22 something that we could confirm. That's my
23 understanding ...

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Have you got Mr
25 Smith's letter?

1 MR TOSH: - I have sir, yes but the knock-on
2 consequences for the Renfrewshire and
3 Ayrshire constituencies are not addressed in
4 Mr Smith's letter and I wondered if the Labour
5 Party representatives were able to shed any
6 light on what is proposed as a consequence of
7 what is proposed in Lanarkshire but I'm quite
8 happy with the answer that has been given. I
9 have one final question if I may sir?

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - OK .

11 MR TOSH: - I heard what Rosemary McKenna
12 said about the East Dunbartonshire wards 2
13 and 3. I wonder if Mrs Craigie has any
14 evidence of support from those wards for the
15 suggestion which has been made?

16 MRS CRAIGIE: - I think the support for the
17 suggestion would be linked on containing the
18 areas within a recognised boundary, clearly
19 defined boundaries and also community
20 connections and ties which are not just today
21 but going back over time. I think it's been well
22 thought-out and does maintain strong
23 community links .

24 MR TOSH: - Yes but I wondered if you had any
25 evidence of support from people who live in

1 Bearsden in support of the proposal?

2 MRS CRAIGIE: – Not personally, I don't live in
3 Bearsden .

4 MR TOSH: – Thank you .

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Your name is?

6 MISS WATSON: – Catherine Watson, I'm here on
7 behalf of the Labour Party. I'm here in the
8 absence of Greg Cook who will be speaking to
9 the Labour Party's submission and will be
10 available for questions and it's really him that
11 Mr Tosh should be directing his questions to
12 in regards to the official Labour Party's
13 submission .

14 MR TOSH: – I'm grateful for that piece of
15 information .

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – All that Mr Tosh
17 was saying was can the witness help on this
18 point .

19 MISS WATSON: – No, that's fine, I just wanted
20 to highlight ...

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Her answer was
22 no and you're pointing out quite properly that
23 the Labour Party representative will clarify the
24 position and no doubt Mr Tosh will ask him
25 questions .

1 MISS WATSON: – Unfortunately, Mr Cook can't
2 be here today but he will be at Lanark and he
3 will be at Ayr next week and he will be
4 available for questions then and obviously to
5 speak to the Party's submission. Thank you
6 very much .

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – I'm very much
8 obliged. Any other questions for the lady?
9 Thank you very much. Now, Karen Whitefield?

10 MISS WHITEFIELD: – Good morning, Sheriff
11 Principal and thank you for giving me the
12 opportunity to speak at the inquiry. I believe
13 this inquiry deals with a very important matter
14 for the people in my constituency and my
15 comments today are going to be informed by
16 the representations that they have made to
17 me. Over the next few minutes I will put
18 forward a number of arguments against the
19 proposals that have been made by the
20 Boundary Commission. It is important to
21 stress, however, that these are not just my
22 opinions. I am confident that these are the
23 opinions of the majority of people living within
24 the boundaries of the Airdrie and Shotts
25 constituency and the surrounding associating

1 villages.

2 To back up this claim I have brought along
3 with me a copy of a petition against these
4 proposals - which I'm happy to leave with you
5 - which has over 600 signatories. These
6 people - and many more in both Airdrie and
7 Shotts - do not believe that it is a good thing
8 to break-up the current constituency and I'm
9 confident that today we are also going to hear
10 from a range of community activists who are
11 going to make some similar points. In
12 particular, there is very strong feeling here in
13 Airdrie that the town should not be split within
14 two Scottish parliamentary constituencies. We
15 don't have to look very far back to see some of
16 the difficulties which can be caused when
17 Airdrie has no more than one political
18 representative at a parliamentary level.

19 The main points I would like to point out in
20 relation to the Boundary Commission are as
21 follows: there is no local appetite for splitting
22 the town of Airdrie into two parts. People in
23 Airdrie feel very strongly that it is a historic
24 borough town and that the town is kept
25 together. The proposal for Airdrie will split the

1 current ward 11 into two parts meaning more
2 complex lines of accountability for
3 constituents within this ward. The main part of
4 the town of Airdrie would become a smaller
5 part of the two new proposed constituencies of
6 Coatbridge and Central Airdrie and
7 Cumbernauld and East Airdrie. There would be
8 great fears that this would lead to Airdrie
9 always playing second fiddle to either
10 Coatbridge or Cumbernauld and this is not just
11 a technical political point, rather it could have
12 very real implications when arguing for
13 resources and I want to use an example of
14 where this would be important.

15 When I was first elected in 1999 I began a
16 campaign to have the Airdrie to Bathgate line
17 reinstated. Now, everybody in Airdrie knows
18 that railway line will be operational in 2010 –
19 that's something that I am very proud of, it is
20 something which will make a very real
21 difference to the people of this constituency.
22 In 1999 when I began to argue for that, most
23 people said it was never going to happen and
24 it was just pie-in-the-sky. I was able to argue
25 for that because Airdrie was a major part of

1 this constituency – it was one of my political
2 priorities as the elected representative for
3 Airdrie. I believe if Airdrie had been split
4 between a number of parliamentary
5 constituencies that the campaign to reopen the
6 Airdrie to Bathgate railway line probably would
7 never have reached the top of the political
8 agenda and that's only one example which I
9 think illustrates very effectively the
10 importance of keeping Airdrie together within
11 one parliamentary constituency.

12 I also believe that such a split would lead to
13 confusion for constituents which is something
14 that should be avoided at all costs. The
15 Boundary Commission proposals place the
16 communities of Craigneuk, Petersburn, Moffat
17 Mills, Clarkston, Plains, Caldercruix,
18 Greengairs, Glenmavis and Longriggend all in
19 a new constituency with Cumbernauld. All of
20 these communities whether they be village
21 communities or parts of Airdrie itself have
22 always been connected to the town of Airdrie.
23 There are simply no historical, social,
24 economic or transport links between these
25 communities and Cumbernauld. So to place

1 them in a parliamentary constituency with
2 Cumbernauld would leave them isolated and
3 forgotten.

4 If I can move on to the proposals for
5 Salsburgh, Harthill, Shotts and the associated
6 villages – the Boundary Commission proposal
7 of a Lanark, Shotts and Whitburn seat is if
8 anything even more confusing and artificial
9 than what is being proposed for Airdrie. This
10 new constituency would be represented by
11 three local authorities, two transport
12 authorities, two police forces, two health
13 board areas and three Members of Parliament.
14 People living in those communities would be
15 on the peripheries of all of the decision-
16 making. They would find it very difficult to
17 argue for resources in terms of investment in
18 health, resources in terms of policing,
19 resources in relation to transport and I did
20 note, Sheriff Principal, your comments about
21 the transport links between Lanark and these
22 communities – Whitburn and Shotts – and I
23 have to say to you that as somebody who has
24 grown up in this constituency and lived here
25 all my life, I am not aware of any bus service

1 between Shotts and West Lothian, I'm not
2 aware of any bus service between Shotts and
3 Lanark and I'm also very aware that in
4 Salsburgh our bus services all run towards
5 Airdrie and that's an important point in
6 relation to Salsburgh because at present, most
7 of their social, economic, health links are all
8 with Airdrie and the only bus services that
9 serve the community are to Airdrie. Children in
10 Salsburgh are zoned to attend schools in
11 Airdrie and Salsburgh people attend
12 Monklands Hospital. Local authority tenants
13 are even served by the Airdrie Housing Office
14 and at present, the community is policed by
15 Airdrie Police Station. So clearly this is not
16 conducive to nurturing clear lines of
17 accountability for public services. This
18 proposed constituency really does look like
19 the leftovers of a number-crunching exercise .
20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well I think that's
21 what it is - that's the trouble .
22 MISS WHITEFIELD: - And hopefully today we
23 can ... if we look at the wider proposals
24 beyond Airdrie and Shotts, Sheriff Principal,
25 we'll be able to see that we can find a North

1 Lanarkshire/South Lanarkshire solution which
2 keeps our parliamentary constituencies within
3 those boundaries with a little accommodation
4 from the neighbouring West Dunbartonshire.
5 In relation to Salsburgh, as I've said there are
6 no bus links and the bus links that they do
7 have mean that of most of the social retail and
8 employment connections are in the town of
9 Airdrie. I know from these areas and
10 particularly from those constituents who have
11 signed the petition that there are serious
12 concerns about this proposal. Villagers are
13 very concerned that they will become partly
14 peripheral to the larger communities and
15 forgotten altogether at worst. In relation to
16 Newmains, I would like to point out that that
17 is one community that whenever there is a
18 Boundary Commission they get shifted and
19 sometimes rather unfairly and I think it's time
20 for the people of Newmains to have some
21 stability - that's what the people of Newmains
22 tell me that they want. They want to know that
23 they are staying in one constituency. They do
24 have links with Shotts and they have settled
25 into the Airdrie and Shotts constituency which

1 is where they have been since the last
2 boundary review and I firmly believe that there
3 is no appetite in Newmains for another
4 change. They wish to see some stability and
5 continuity in terms of their political
6 representation both at the Scottish Parliament
7 and in a Council ward and we have to
8 remember that in relation to the Boundary
9 Commission's proposals, the Council ward in
10 which Newmains sits would be broken asunder
11 by these proposals if they were to be adopted.
12 In conclusion, I firmly believe that the
13 proposals for the break-up of the Airdrie and
14 Shotts constituency do not fit the criteria set
15 out by the Boundary Commission itself. It
16 would create completely artificial
17 constituencies which not only would not
18 reflect the existing community bonds and
19 family ties but would also completely be at
20 odds with most of the boundaries relating to
21 our public services. It seems to me that these
22 proposals have been driven far too much by
23 the arithmetical problems faced by the
24 Boundary Commission in creating
25 constituencies of a similar size and I have to

1 say that that's particularly ironic given how
2 close the current boundaries of Airdrie and
3 Shotts is to being the ideal size and indeed the
4 Boundary Commission itself have proposed a
5 number of constituencies which are much
6 larger than the current Airdrie and Shotts
7 constituency and given that the constituency
8 sits within one local authority, its wards are all
9 coterminous with the constituency and its in
10 the size. I would have thought that keeping it
11 just as it is perhaps would have been a slightly
12 better option. I believe that if the Boundary
13 Commission wants to distinguish between the
14 Scottish Parliament seat and the Westminster
15 seat, there's an easy solution to that without
16 changing the boundary. We can simply do that
17 by changing the name. The name should be
18 Airdrie, Shotts and Newmains. This would
19 differentiate it from the Westminster
20 constituency and it would also have the benefit
21 of recognising the largest towns within the
22 constituency. That concludes my comments
23 and I'm happy to answer questions .

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Thank you very
25 much indeed. As I say, every word you said –

1 as you understand - will be recorded. You
2 have a question?

3 MR CULLEN: - Yes, I'm Ross Cullen, an active
4 worker for Craigneuk. I would like to ask Miss
5 Whitefield, in your opinion ... I know when you
6 come ... just going back to voting just now,
7 there's a certain percentage of people in each
8 area vote, a certain percentage don't. Do you
9 think as a person coming from Shotts that if
10 the government take away the identity it would
11 encourage less people to vote because they
12 would have lost interest in the area?

13 MISS WHITEFIELD: - I think that's a valid
14 question. It's hard for us to be able to prove
15 that but I do think that what's being proposed
16 by the Boundary Commission seems to be
17 nonsensical and people in the constituency -
18 whether it's in Airdrie, whether it's in Plains or
19 Caldercruix or some of the villages or whether
20 it's in Shotts - just don't understand what's
21 being proposed here. They don't ... and so
22 they will lose a sense of connection. People in
23 Craigneuk - Mr Cullen, I'm sure I don't have to
24 tell you since you've lived there all your life -
25 feel that they are passionately Airdrionians. To

1 stick them into a constituency where the main
2 town is Cumbernauld just seems to make no
3 sense and I do think they will feel alienated,
4 they will feel forgotten and hopefully those are
5 some points that you can expand on when you
6 speak on behalf of the community .

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Yes, Mr Tosh?

8 MR TOSH: - I'd like if I may, Miss Whitefield, to
9 refer to the report done by the local
10 government Boundary Commission for Scotland
11 on the electoral arrangements for North
12 Lanarkshire Council. I think this is a document
13 sir you have probably already read as part of
14 your preparation for this and the section I
15 wish to refer to is paragraph 55 where the
16 Council refers to ward 11 - which is in fact
17 ward 12 in the numbering system now used -
18 which is the Shotts area and the Council's view
19 is stated in their submissions to the Boundary
20 Commission - the local government Boundary
21 Commission - as follows: that Shotts links
22 naturally with the areas to the south and west,
23 principally Wishaw. Salsburgh had no links
24 with Wishaw but had both traditional and
25 transport links with the remainder of the

1 former Monklands District. Is that a fair
2 assessment of what's now I believe the
3 Fortissat ward – that Salsburgh links to Airdrie
4 but the rest of it is orientated more towards
5 Motherwell, particularly Wishaw?

6 MISS WHITEFIELD: – Well I suppose that there
7 are some people who could argue that, Mr
8 Tosh, but you're going back into history here.
9 Those proposals and those arguments were
10 not considered as relevant by the local
11 government Boundary Commission and the
12 reality is that they were rejected. So let's talk
13 about what proposals are on the table today.
14 The reality is that Airdrie and Shotts aren't
15 related, that we've spent a lot of time
16 developing connections between those
17 communities and developing our public
18 services so that people can access them and
19 those are the proposals that are on the table
20 and the proposals that are being suggested by
21 the Boundary Commission would do nothing
22 other than to alienate people in Shotts and the
23 surrounding villages much worse than they are
24 just now because they feel part of North
25 Lanarkshire, not going to sit on the periphery

1 of a constituency whose largest parts are
2 either South Lanarkshire – where they have no
3 historical links – or West Lothian – where they
4 have no connections whatsoever .

5 MR TOSH: – Can I make it clear sir that I am
6 not supporting what the Boundary Commission
7 has proposed for Shotts. I'm simply pursuing
8 the point that in the proposals, as I
9 understand it, which Miss Whitefield is putting
10 forward, wards 12 – Fortissat – and the bulk of
11 ward 19 – Murdostoun – would be placed with
12 Airdrie in her proposed constituency. The
13 question I'm asking is whether wards 12 and
14 19 orientate principally towards Motherwell
15 and Wishaw and curiously, North Lanarkshire
16 Council in the last year has drawn up a
17 structure of Area Committees and has placed
18 wards 12 and 19 in the Wishaw area. Are they
19 wrong?

20 MISS WHITEFIELD: – I think what the Council
21 are trying to do is to make sure that people
22 are able to access services as they can given
23 the ward boundaries as they are drawn. I'm
24 here to say that as the elected representative
25 for the area of Shotts, I see no problem with

1 Airdrie and Shotts being in one parliamentary
2 constituency. It's worked well for the last 9
3 years and I see no reason to alter it .

4 MR TOSH: – Indeed and I know how hard you
5 have worked to represent both areas. What I'm
6 simply trying to establish is that the case
7 which you build up very effectively about
8 Salsburgh receiving its public services from
9 Airdrie – and I'm not disputing that at all –
10 that's not actually the case for Shotts and
11 Newmains or the ward Murdostoun because
12 they receive their services from other places
13 within North Lanarkshire Council – is that not
14 true?

15 MISS WHITEFIELD: – It is the case but just
16 because Shotts may well access some of its
17 services or historically we have had
18 connections to the Wishaw area, it doesn't
19 mean that equally it doesn't have connections
20 with the Airdrie area. When I was a little girl
21 growing up in Shotts, you came to John Orr's
22 to get your Sunday outfit for church, you
23 didn't go down to Wishaw – you came to John
24 Orr's. So the reality is that yes, there are
25 historic and traditional links with Wishaw but

1 those links equally extend towards Airdrie and
2 me coming to John Orr's to get my Sunday
3 outfit was like lots of other children that grew
4 up in Shotts .

5 MR TOSH: - But the Council recognises that
6 Shotts and Murdostoun are part of the Wishaw
7 area?

8 MISS WHITEFIELD: - The Council's boundaries
9 are based on locality teams, Mr Tosh and it's
10 about the delivery of services .

11 MR TOSH: - And they follow the settlement
12 patterns within North Lanarkshire .

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Thanks very
14 much. Yes Mr Fagan, your question?

15 MR FAGAN: - A question by way of elimination
16 - can I ask Karen, is it not the case that Shotts
17 had its own Housing Office and had its own
18 one-stop-shop anyway and in that respect,
19 had an identity of its own within the Council?

20 MISS WHITEFIELD: - That is indeed the case .

21 MR TOSH: - So those are services which are
22 not provided from Airdrie?

23 MISS WHITEFIELD: - No, they're not provided
24 from Airdrie .

25 MR TOSH: - Thank you .

1 MISS WHITEFIELD: - But it's a tier of
2 management - I would point out - just like
3 there are various tiers of management
4 throughout the Council .

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Yes, the
6 gentleman at the back? Could you identify
7 yourself please?

8 MR MORGAN: - Councillor Tommy Morgan, I'm
9 hoping to speak shortly. Can I just take this
10 point that is being addressed here about the
11 service coming from Shotts? It's going nowhere
12 because actually these are decentralised zones
13 ...

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - It's only
15 questions to Miss Whitefield we're dealing with
16 at the moment, Mr Morgan. Anyone else?

17 MR TALBOT: - My name is Duncan Talbot, I
18 stay in Chapel Street in Airdrie. I'm extremely
19 angry about this. Our area is once again going
20 to disappear off the map. In the 70s when the
21 boroughs finished we ended up with
22 Monklands District ...

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Just a minute,
24 you will be entitled to ... are you on the list to
25 speak?

1 MR TALBOT: - No, no.

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well you're just
3 about to make a speech and that's not ... what
4 we're doing at the moment are questions to
5 Miss Whitefield. Are there questions to Miss
6 Whitefield? Is there a question coming or are
7 you just endorsing what she's saying?

8 MR TALBOT: - I'm endorsing and saying I'm
9 extremely angry that Airdrie is going to
10 disappear .

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well I think ...
12 let's put you on the list for ...

13 MR TALBOT: - I'm 61 years old and see when I
14 die? I want to die in Airdrie, not Coatbridge
15 and Airdrie Central or Airdrie East and
16 Cumbernauld .

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well I'm 65 and I
18 don't want to die in the near future .

19 MISS WHITEFIELD: - Can I say to you, Sheriff
20 Principal, not that I want to extend this but
21 the strength of feeling in Airdrie is very strong
22 and I hope we're going to hear from some of
23 the community activists who have no ties to
24 political parties ...

25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - There are a lot of

1 documents, as you know .

2 MISS WHITEFIELD: - ... who established their
3 own campaign immediately upon hearing of
4 the Boundary Commission's proposals. People
5 feel very proud of their town and there is a lot
6 of development going on - the Heritage
7 Lottery Fund - and it was only last week that
8 we were to get half a million pounds to
9 refurbish our town hall that we're sitting in
10 here just now to make it a cultural centre for
11 the town of Airdrie. These proposals will
12 undermine some of that work which is being
13 carried out in partnership with the community.

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - The gentleman at
15 the back?

16 MR ROWLING: - Patrick Rowling. As an
17 Airdrionian, I'm not aware of any civic or
18 voluntary groups that have come out in
19 support of the Boundary Commission. I'd like
20 to ask the member if she's had any
21 representations that were positive?

22 MISS WHITEFIELD: - None at all .

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well there's none
24 in the documents that I've had. Thank you very
25 much. It is a fair point that from time to time

1 one gets letters endorsing what the Boundary
2 Commission are proposing. The lady at the
3 front?

4 MRS CULLEN: - Karen, could I ask you ...?

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Again, for the
6 record, could you identify yourself?

7 MRS CULLEN: - My name is Ray Cullen, I'm an
8 Airdrionian for 70 years. My feet are well
9 planted on the ground and I ain't from
10 Coatbridge. I would like to know how far Miss
11 Whitefields petition went because I could get a
12 few thousand ... quite a few thousand
13 signatures against this, not only the 3000 that
14 you have, I could get the whole of Airdrie to
15 sign that petition against ... we have nothing
16 in common with Coatbridge - as you know -
17 and as I say, we'll stick firmly as we did with
18 our hospital to keep Airdrie as Airdrie, not
19 Coatbridge. It never will be Coatbridge as far
20 as I'm concerned .

21 MISS WHITEFIELD: - I think you will see from ...

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - I think the point
23 is, is it 600 names you have?

24 MISS WHITEFIELD: - Uh-huh .

25 MRS CULLEN: - Well I could get thousands .

1 MISS WHITEFIELD: - I think we need to ... uh-
2 huh, we also need to remember that some of
3 the community activists - like Mrs Cullen,
4 who's going to speak today - they were also
5 organising. So people signed either/or so
6 there were lots of letters went back to the
7 Boundary Commission as well. So there were
8 lots of options. So those 600 signatures are
9 only a sample of the people who responded .

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - You will see this
11 bundle - a lot of these are letters from people
12 in Airdrie who signed this in a pro forma .

13 MRS CULLEN: - I don't think anyone in Airdrie
14 would refuse to sign a petition - nobody in
15 Airdrie would have refused to sign it .

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Any other
17 questions for Miss Whitefield? Thank you very
18 much, Miss Whitefield. Good, now we're onto
19 councils and councillors. Sophia Coyle I think
20 has been here before a number of you. Please
21 start. You are Sophia Coyle?

22 MISS COYLE: - I'm Councillor Sophia Coyle, I
23 represent some of the communities that's
24 getting split up.

25 The Boundary Commission's proposals for

1 change would result in the destruction of local
2 ties, particularly in Airdrie. The Boundary
3 Commission's proposals would divide the town
4 of Airdrie as well as lead the division of the
5 town from many of its surrounding
6 communities which originate from ... orientate
7 themselves from Airdrie. The town of Airdrie
8 in satellite communications would particularly
9 divide Airdrie in three by these proposals and
10 it's totally unacceptable to the local electorate
11 and would be totally affected by these
12 changes. As said before, there is no transport
13 links. Given that the Boundary Commission's
14 proposals utterly fail to meet its own criteria
15 and that the status quo more or less does, we
16 strongly believe that the existing five Scottish
17 Parliament constituencies covering North
18 Lanarkshire should remain as they are. The
19 Boundary Commission should scrap its
20 proposals for change as they would damage
21 the communities as well as make the
22 representation of the people of North
23 Lanarkshire in the Scottish Parliament much
24 less effective and unfocused. And basically I'm
25 here to represent these communities that's

1 affected today and would hope that they would
2 scrap their proposals and remain with the
3 status quo .

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - What is your
5 particular ward?

6 MISS COYLE: - Mines is Glenmavis, Greengairs,
7 Clarkston. I'm sure ... it's mostly the villages.
8 Thank you .

9 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Any questions?
10 Thank you very much indeed. John Fleming?

11 MR FLEMING: - Thank you sir .

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Now you are
13 Michael Ross?

14 MR ROSS: - Councillor Michael Ross, yes .

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - And you are ...?

16 MR MORGAN: - Councillor Tommy Morgan .

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - That's fine .

18 MR FLEMING: - I appear for North Lanarkshire
19 council together with two senior members of
20 the Council, Councillor Michael Ross - who is
21 the Council's business manager and councillor
22 for ward 16 which is Motherwell West - and
23 Councillor Tommy Morgan who is the convener
24 of the Council's Audits and Governance panel,
25 he is also the convenor of Airdrie and Local

1 Area Partnership and the convenor of the
2 Council's Airdrie Local Committee. I would
3 seek to speak generally in support of the
4 Council's submission. The Council's
5 submission in short is that the Commission's
6 proposals for the North Lanarkshire area are
7 fundamentally wrong and that they represent
8 an operation amounting to destruction of
9 existing constituencies which is both
10 unnecessary and unacceptable and I would ask
11 following that that Councillors Ross and
12 Morgan be afforded the opportunity to address
13 the inquiry to give further detail on this.

14 It is possible to go through the submission
15 very briefly sir. It is accepted by the Council
16 that the focus of this inquiry is particularly in
17 the areas of South Ayrshire, East Ayrshire,
18 North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, East
19 Dunbartonshire and West Lothian and the aim
20 of the North Lanarkshire Council is to
21 demonstrate to the inquiry that their proposals
22 in as much as they cover North Lanarkshire are
23 so fundamentally at variance with the
24 constituency rules that there requires to be
25 fundamental reconsideration of those

1 proposals to make constituency boundaries in
2 North Lanarkshire comply with those rules.
3 The Boundary Commission have however very
4 helpfully provided in their submission an
5 account of how they came to formulate these
6 proposals for North Lanarkshire and you
7 yourself in your introductory statement
8 referred to this sir. Essentially the
9 Commission, in embarking on its review,
10 imposed on itself two constraints. Firstly as
11 you yourself quoted from paragraph 11, the
12 Boundary Commission have been noted that
13 the City of Edinburgh justified 6
14 constituencies and Falkirk 2 constituencies,
15 determined to devise for each of those local
16 authority areas constituencies wholly within
17 local authority area. Secondly, set forth in
18 paragraphs 12 to 14, the Boundary
19 Commission determined that there should be a
20 constituency - North Renfrewshire and
21 Clydebank - which straddled the River Clyde as
22 it approaches its estuary and included two
23 electoral wards from West Dunbartonshire, the
24 electoral wards of Clydebank Central and
25 Clydebank Waterfront.

1 From those two decisions - which impact
2 particularly on the north of the area with
3 which this inquiry ... on which this inquiry is
4 focused - the Boundary Commission
5 incrementally worked inwards from the east
6 through West Lothian and from the west
7 through West Dunbartonshire and East
8 Dunbartonshire and given the constraints of
9 the quota, the Boundary Commission found
10 itself with no option but to propose for North
11 Lanarkshire constituencies which
12 comprehensively fail to meet the constituency
13 rules.

14 Now having regard to the focus of this inquiry
15 sir, it is not the intention of North Lanarkshire
16 Council to make any detailed submissions as
17 to the merits of either the proposals for the
18 constituency of North Renfrewshire and
19 Clydebank or detailed proposals for either
20 Falkirk or the Edinburgh constituencies. Of
21 necessity, any submissions North Lanarkshire
22 made would be inadequately informed by any
23 local knowledge in that regard. The Council
24 has however noted that the local authorities
25 for the respective areas - Renfrewshire

1 Council, West Dunbartonshire Council and
2 West Lothian Council - who all have the benefit
3 local knowledge, have comprehensively
4 rejected the Boundary Commission's proposals
5 and North Lanarkshire Council would support
6 the submissions of these councils.

7 North Lanarkshire Council does however feel
8 qualified and entitled to submit that the
9 consequences for the North Lanarkshire area
10 of the Boundary Commission's proposals to
11 regard as sacrosanct the local government
12 boundaries of Falkirk and Edinburgh and the
13 Boundary Commission's proposals to create a
14 North Renfrewshire and Clydebank
15 constituency, the consequences of these
16 proposals for North Lanarkshire are so severe
17 that these consequences alone would justify
18 you sir in recommending that these proposals
19 - those for Renfrewshire, Clydebank,
20 Edinburgh and Falkirk - be fundamentally
21 reviewed.

22 It is further the submission of North
23 Lanarkshire Council that the Boundary
24 Commission in imposing on itself those
25 constraints has erred in law. In paragraph 11

1 of the Boundary Commission's submissions,
2 there is set out very succinctly the justification
3 for the proposals for Edinburgh and Falkirk.
4 That justification is limited to one sentence:
5 satisfactory constituencies, each contained
6 wholly within a Council area, could be devised
7 for those local authority areas and it is
8 therefore disadvantageous to include them
9 within Council areas which are the subject of
10 the present inquiry for developing new
11 constituencies. From that it can be taken that
12 reference was made to Rule 1 of the
13 constituency rules. It has to be assumed that
14 some account has been taken of Rule 2,
15 although the electorate in all of the
16 constituencies for Falkirk and Edinburgh
17 exceeds the quota. There are no grounds,
18 however, for deducing from either the
19 proposals or from the Boundary Commission's
20 submissions that the Boundary Commission
21 took account of Rule 4.

22 North Lanarkshire Council's submission is that
23 Rule 1 cannot take precedence to the extent of
24 relieving the Boundary Commission of its
25 obligation to take into account the remaining

1 rules. Indeed it's the Council's submission that
2 if any rule takes precedence it is Rule 4. Rule
3 4 specifies the Boundary Commission need not
4 aim at giving full effect to any of the
5 preceding rules. It goes on to say that the
6 Boundary Commission must take account both
7 of the inconveniences attendant on the
8 alteration of constituencies other – that is –
9 than alterations made for the purpose of
10 keeping within local authority boundaries and I
11 would stress possibly a distinction here sir.
12 The rules refer to local authority areas, not
13 local authority ward boundaries. Ward
14 boundaries are internal and can be crossed.
15 It's local authority boundaries themselves that
16 the rule refers to. And matters which Rule 4
17 instruct the Boundary Commission to take
18 account include any local ties which would be
19 broken by such alterations.

20 It's the submission of North Lanarkshire
21 Council that the effect of removing these
22 constraints – which having regard to the
23 submissions by West Lothian Council ...

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Of imposing the
25 constraints? I think you said removing .

1 MR FLEMING: - Sorry, I did and I was quite
2 wrong. The effect of imposing those
3 constraints - which having regard to the
4 submissions by West Lothian Council are
5 entirely unnecessary and inappropriate to that
6 area when account is taken of all the
7 constituency rules and which, having regard to
8 the submissions by Renfrewshire, West
9 Dunbartonshire councils - have proposed a
10 constituency which in no way complies with
11 the constituency rules. The effect of imposing
12 those constraints has required the Boundary
13 Commission to produce for North Lanarkshire
14 Council area: firstly, constituencies which
15 when compared with those currently existing
16 deviate to greater extent from the electoral
17 quota; secondly, the constituencies which
18 accord with the boundaries of the local
19 authority area to the significant, materially
20 lesser extent than do the current
21 constituencies; constituencies which radically
22 alter the existing constituencies with very
23 great attendant inconvenience and without any
24 justification in terms of Rule 1; and
25 constituencies which comprehensively break

1 local ties. In that connection sir, the benefit of
2 the information previously provided – both by
3 Mrs McKenna and Mrs Craigie and by Miss
4 Whitfield – is of particular significance.

5 It is accordingly the submission of North
6 Lanarkshire Council that the self-imposed,
7 unnecessary and inappropriate constraints
8 which have led the Boundary Commission to
9 these proposals should be removed so that
10 there may be constituencies in North
11 Lanarkshire which meet the constituency rules.
12 Looking at the existing constituencies sir, at
13 present there are five – these are listed. It will
14 be seen that of those constituencies, three are
15 already very close to the electoral quota. One
16 is in excess of the electoral quota – Airdrie
17 and Shotts – but it's in excess of the electoral
18 quota to an extent lesser than that of six of
19 the new constituencies proposed by the
20 Boundary Commission within Scotland. In
21 particular, it exceeds the electoral quota by a
22 margin less than ... sorry, a margin of less
23 than 2000. Sorry, if I can repeat – particular to
24 a lesser extent by over 2000 than the
25 proposed Coatbridge and Central Airdrie

1 constituency. So in short, the one constituency
2 which exceeds the electoral quota is smaller
3 than one of the new constituencies proposed.
4 One constituency – Cumbernauld and Kilsyth –
5 does certainly fall short of electoral quota but
6 it will be noted that that's the only county or
7 rural based constituency in the area. It will be
8 noted also that of the three existing ... of the
9 existing constituencies, three – Airdrie and
10 Shotts, Cumbernauld and Kilsyth and
11 Motherwell and Wishaw – lie totally within the
12 boundaries of North Lanarkshire and of the
13 two constituencies which straddle these
14 boundaries, each include areas in which there
15 are long-standing local ties with the
16 remainder of the constituency. Thus in the
17 south, the Hamilton North and Bellshill
18 constituency contains Bothwell and
19 Uddingston. Bothwell and Uddingston were
20 both and are both parts of the Parish of
21 Bothwell – both formed parts of the old
22 Bothwell United Kingdom parliamentary
23 constituency which equates largely with the
24 constituency of Hamilton North and Bellshill
25 and in the north west, the Lenzie area has very

1 strong traditional ties to Lanarkshire.

2 Conversely sir, of the existing ... of the 6

3 constituencies proposed by the Boundary

4 Commission, none is as close to the electoral

5 quota as three of the existing constituencies.

6 One exceeds the electoral quota by almost as

7 much as Cumbernauld and Kilsyth fall short. It

8 can be seen also that three of the proposed

9 constituencies cross local authority

10 boundaries, particularly noteworthy is in the

11 north west the Kirkintilloch, Chryston and

12 Kilsyth constituency and in the south east the

13 Lanark, Shotts and Whitburn constituency.

14 It's the submission of North Lanarkshire

15 Council sir that Rule 4 of the constituency

16 rules can be interpreted only as an injunction

17 to the Boundary Commission to interfere with

18 existing constituency boundaries only if in

19 doing so it can make things better, otherwise

20 the inconveniences necessarily attendant on

21 wholesale review of constituency boundaries

22 create a clear and strong presumption against

23 change. It is further the submission of the

24 Council that the changes here proposed make

25 things comprehensibly worse and should

1 accordingly be rejected.

2 With regard to local ties, the Boundary
3 Commission proposals have the effect of
4 breaking long-standing local ties. In
5 particular, the town of Airdrie. Airdrie is one
6 of the oldest burghs in North Lanarkshire. As
7 you have heard already, it is a town with a
8 strong identity, a town with a very strong
9 community spirit. The proposal to dismember
10 the Airdrie and Shotts constituency involves
11 the town of Airdrie itself being split, with the
12 eastern part of the town and the villages along
13 the A89 – which look to the town of Airdrie –
14 being linked in an entirely artificial marriage
15 with the new town of Cumbernauld and the
16 western part of the town being subsumed in an
17 over-large Coatbridge and Central Airdrie
18 constituency. The village of Glenmavis – which
19 lies to the north west of Airdrie and in fact
20 contains New Monkland Parish Church which
21 was the traditional parish church of Airdrie –
22 similarly finds its local ties with Airdrie split
23 and finds itself conjoined with Cumbernauld.
24 The village of Glenboig is split in two with a
25 part remaining linked – as naturally it should

1 be – to Coatbridge but the other part divorced
2 both from Coatbridge and from its other
3 natural ties to the communities of Muirhead,
4 Moodiesburn and Stepps and again, linked to a
5 Cumbernauld constituency with which it has no
6 natural ties. The communities of Moodiesburn,
7 Chryston, Muirhead and Stepps find
8 themselves split from the Coatbridge and
9 Chryston constituency to which they are
10 currently naturally attached and linked in an
11 entirely artificial constituency comprising
12 Kirkintilloch – to which, as Mrs McKenna has
13 pointed out, they have no natural ties – and
14 Kilsyth. And reflecting also on what both Mrs
15 McKenna and Mrs Craigie have said, in the
16 north, Kilsyth – which since 1975 has been
17 closely linked with Cumbernauld in one local
18 authority and parliamentary constituency –
19 these links have become with the
20 developments in the north of the A80
21 progressively stronger. It finds these links
22 severed and like Chryston, Moodiesburn,
23 Muirhead and Stepps, finds itself grouped in
24 an entirely artificial constituency. And finally,
25 the council ward of Fortissat – which is

1 centred on the North Lanarkshire town of
2 Shotts - finds itself severed from its
3 Lanarkshire ties and roped into a suggested
4 constituency which has no natural coherence,
5 a constituency which is unwanted by any of its
6 component parts, a constituency which is
7 rejected by each of the local authorities which
8 serves the area, a constituency which straddles
9 the boundaries of three local authorities,
10 served by two different health boards. This has
11 been pointed out - it's served by two different
12 transport authorities, two separate police
13 forces, within one of them two separate police
14 divisions and two separate fire authorities.

15 The North Lanarkshire Council
16 recommendations are set out in section 4 sir.
17 It is the submission of North Lanarkshire
18 Council that as the proposals advanced by the
19 Boundary Commission deviate in every respect
20 from the constituency rules to an extent which
21 is materially greater than the existing
22 constituencies, the existing constituency
23 boundaries require to be the starting point for
24 consideration of the Scottish parliamentary
25 constituency boundaries in this area. The

1 Boundary Commission in its submissions
2 identified clearly the difficulties and
3 constraints which have led it to advance such
4 unnatural proposals. It is however the
5 submission of North Lanarkshire Council that
6 these constraints are self-imposed and are
7 entirely inappropriate in as much as: in the
8 east, by elevating the observance of local
9 authority boundaries above all other
10 considerations, the Boundary Commission has
11 misdirected itself and has failed to apply the
12 constituency rules and therefore, has
13 inappropriately fettered its discretion; and in
14 the west, by proposing a constituency which
15 straddles what must be the most long-
16 standing and comprehensive natural boundary
17 – the estuary of the Clyde itself – the Boundary
18 Commission has again imposed on itself a
19 constraint which is unnecessary and
20 inappropriate. Again, in this regard, North
21 Lanarkshire Council commends to the inquiry
22 the submissions of Renfrewshire, West
23 Dunbartonshire and West Lothian councils .

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Now, these
25 obviously were submissions which were made

1 to the other inquiry?

2 MR FLEMING: - That is correct sir. I was
3 conscious that the submissions were contained
4 in the CDs very helpfully produced by the
5 Boundary Commission and ...

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - I'm not a great
7 CD man, I thought everything was in here. So
8 that's ... thank you for raising that. I can't
9 work CD machines. Seriously, I'd understood
10 that the CD was merely recording everything
11 that was here and that there were hard copies.
12 Is Dr Buchanan here? Is that in fact the case?

13 MR FLEMING: - Well can I say sir, if it would
14 be of assistance I do have hard copies of these
15 submissions and could produce them .

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - You obviously
17 have them sir?

18 MR FLEMING: - Yes, I have them sir. If you
19 notice ...

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well I think if it
21 is part of your submission that you want me to
22 look at it, I think it's easier if it just comes
23 from the front .

24 MR FLEMING: - Yes, very happy to submit that.

25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Anyway, the

1 point is that as it's part of your submission –
2 you're perfectly entitled to say what you're
3 saying in advance of your report – it not being
4 part of this inquiry, the secretariat wouldn't
5 necessarily give me these submissions. If you
6 want to rely on them for your submission, it's
7 open to you to give them to me and I would ...

8 MR FLEMING: – I think that would be very
9 helpful sir. The Renfrewshire submissions in
10 particular go into detail and explain precisely
11 why they are entirely wrong to link
12 Renfrewshire with Clydebank. The West Lothian
13 submissions are particularly useful in
14 highlighting the links the people of West
15 Lothian have both with Falkirk and with the
16 rest of the Lothians and particularly helpful in
17 showing how satisfactory constituencies could
18 be devised to serve the West Lothian area were
19 the boundaries of West Lothian, Falkirk and
20 Edinburgh not seen as sacrosanct. It is ...

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – You will get
22 these to me?

23 MR FLEMING: – Yes I will sir. It is accordingly
24 the submission of North Lanarkshire Council
25 that these self-imposed constraints should be

1 removed and with these constraints removed,
2 they need to construct a constituency in the
3 south east taking in part three local authority
4 areas, particularly - as far as North
5 Lanarkshire is concerned - the ward of
6 Fortissat and the town of Shotts. That
7 necessity is entirely removed. You yourself
8 have very clearly identified that constituency
9 as the part which was left over. There's no
10 other justification for that constituency - it
11 should be completely wiped out.

12 Similarly in the west, the Boundary
13 Commission would now be able to devise
14 constituencies which incorporate also the local
15 government wards of Clydebank Central which
16 has an electorate of 11,826 and Clydebank
17 Waterside (sic) which has an electorate of
18 11,571. It is not the intention - it is not the
19 submission of North Lanarkshire Council,
20 without local knowledge, to suggest
21 constituency boundaries in the area of Argyll &
22 Bute, West Dunbartonshire and East
23 Dunbartonshire. If however the existing
24 western boundaries of Coatbridge and
25 Chryston constituency and Cumbernauld and

1 Kilsyth constituency were to remain, it would
2 be possible for the Boundary Commission
3 having regard to the electoral quota to
4 accommodate appropriate constituencies in
5 the Argyll & Bute, West Dunbartonshire and
6 East Dunbartonshire areas, incorporating both
7 Clydebank wards and indeed, it may be
8 appropriate to have regard to the boundaries
9 of the United Kingdom parliamentary
10 constituency of Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and
11 Kirkintilloch East which would have the effect
12 of bringing the electorate of the Cumbernauld
13 and Kilsyth county constituency closer to the
14 electoral quota.

15 Against that background sir, it is the
16 submission of North Lanarkshire Council that
17 the boundaries of the existing Scottish
18 parliamentary constituencies serving the North
19 Lanarkshire area should remain substantially
20 unchanged with possibly the extension of the
21 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth constituency to
22 accord - in the north west - with the boundary
23 of the United Kingdom parliamentary
24 constituency of Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and
25 Kirkintilloch East.

1 As I'd indicated sir, Councillor Michael Ross
2 and Councillor Tommy Morgan - both with
3 very extreme and long experience of the area -
4 will be seeking to address the inquiry to
5 explain exactly the effect on local ties in the
6 Boundary Commission proposals. I don't know
7 if you would wish at this stage to take
8 questions or merely wait until Councillors Ross
9 and Morgan ...

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - I think we'll take
11 it step by step. I think stage one ... have you
12 got these three ...?

13 MR TOSH: - Could we clarify sir what the
14 additional evidence is which has just been
15 given to you?

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Yes, I've just
17 been given and relied on the written reports
18 which had been provided to the Boundary
19 Commission by West Dunbartonshire Council,
20 West Lothian Council and Renfrewshire
21 Council. That is submitted as part of the
22 submission made by North Lanarkshire
23 Council. Questions for Mr Fleming?

24 MR TOSH: - I have a great many questions sir
25 and that may try the patience of other people

1 who have questions to ask and I am happy to
2 defer to anyone who wished to go before me .

3 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Again, your name
4 please?

5 MR ACKLAND: – Ron Ackland ...

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Sorry, you speak
7 very quickly and ... there's a microphone .

8 MR ACKLAND: – Ron Ackland, East
9 Dunbartonshire Liberal Democrats and I'm a
10 resident in Lenzie where the people there
11 surprisingly have much more in common with
12 Kirkintilloch than they do with anywhere in
13 North Lanarkshire – I've lived there for 30
14 years – but more generally, you're basing your
15 argument on a strong suggestion that the
16 Boundary Commission should take more
17 account of the local council boundaries but
18 when you come to specific examples at the
19 end, you're proposing that the existing
20 constituency of Coatbridge and Chryston –
21 which already crosses the boundary and opens
22 up a portion of East Dunbartonshire to such an
23 extent that the boundary lies along the middle
24 of one of the busiest commuter stations in
25 Scotland so that the Glasgow platform is in

1 one constituency and the Edinburgh platform
2 is in another constituency – should remain in
3 being and you’re then going on to bring the
4 even more outrageous suggestion that the new
5 boundaries for the Scottish constituencies
6 should follow the model of the Cumbernauld,
7 Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East constituency
8 which gobbled up a very substantial portion.
9 As a candidate in the local government
10 elections last year for East Kirkintilloch, again
11 I'm sure that that area feels very much in
12 common with the other part of Kirkintilloch
13 and the boundary that goes in the middle of a
14 public park is regarded as very unnatural. You
15 do seem to be suggesting that North
16 Lanarkshire would object vigorously to any
17 boundary that comes across from East
18 Dunbartonshire but it is perfectly all right for
19 those outer boundaries to come into East
20 Dunbartonshire and I get the feeling you don't
21 frankly know what you’re talking about. Would
22 you care to comment?

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Well the answer
24 to you don't know what you’re talking about is
25 ... well do you have any comment after that

1 somewhat lengthy question – do you have ...
2 do you wish to make any comment?

3 MR FLEMING: – Obviously unlike the questioner
4 I do not live in the Lenzie area. I am conscious
5 that from the old Lanark County, Lenzie did
6 have strong links with Lanarkshire though it's
7 absolutely indisputable that Lenzie was rather
8 closer to Kirkintilloch than it is to many
9 Lanarkshire towns. The evidence North
10 Lanarkshire Council would put forward is that
11 the Coatbridge and Chryston constituency was
12 operated very effectively and has served the
13 people of Lenzie as well as the people of
14 Coatbridge extremely well and the evidence of
15 the operation of the United Kingdom
16 parliamentary constituency in the north of
17 Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East is
18 similar .

19 MR ACKLAND: – But they do cross a boundary
20 which I thought was something you objected
21 to?

22 MR FLEMING: – I think that's possibly a
23 misinterpretation sir of what North Lanarkshire
24 Council's submission is. North Lanarkshire
25 Council's submission is that the Boundary

1 Commission has misdirected itself and erred in
2 law in considering that crossing boundaries
3 should never happen. That's the error the
4 Boundary Commission have made in the east
5 by regarding as sacrosanct boundaries of
6 Edinburgh, Falkirk and West Lothian. What is
7 the primary rule in the submission of North
8 Lanarkshire is Rule 4 and Rule 4 is the one of
9 local ties .

10 MR ACKLAND: - I'll just make one final
11 comment and then pass the mike on - I think
12 you were overruled when the Westminster
13 constituency came in when they took a look at
14 the area and decided that the new
15 constituency for Coatbridge, Chryston and
16 Bellshill would not contain South Lenzie - they
17 knew what they were talking about .

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - No comment?
19 Okay. Yes, the gentleman?

20 MR BURCHELL: - Yes, my name is Errol
21 Burchell, I'm a resident of Lenzie and I have
22 been for the last 40 years. It is my belief that
23 the Boundary Commission is not aware of
24 really where to draw a boundary line. I think
25 the idea is that they're making up numbers by

1 drawing boundary lines. I submit that Lenzie
2 or East Dunbartonshire really has no
3 connection with Chryston, Kilsyth,
4 Moodiesburn or Stepps. The nearest probably
5 these places are are separated from South
6 Lenzie by approximately 3 miles of road up to
7 Stepps, 3 miles away from fields (sic), to
8 Kilsyth it's probably 10 miles away. There's no
9 connection in our area and there's no reason
10 why the Boundary Commission should be
11 bringing us into your North Lanarkshire
12 constituency .

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Do you have any
14 comment you wish to make on that?

15 MR BURCHELL: - We have no connection
16 whatsoever with you .

17 MR FLEMING: - I think sir that your comment is
18 helpful in confirming North Lanarkshire
19 Council's submission that the communities of
20 Stepps, Moodiesburn etc have really no natural
21 links with Kirkintilloch and this is part of
22 North Lanarkshire Council's submission .

23 MR BURCHELL: - I think if you sir look at the
24 map you will see the distance of fields
25 between Lenzie and Stepps which is the

1 nearest public place we could be to sort of
2 grab hands - if you like - and then you go
3 away out to Kilsyth which I suggest is about 10
4 miles away .

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Yes, the
6 gentleman over there?

7 MR ROWLING: - Patrick Rowling. If I can just
8 make a general point at this time and just say
9 it would seem to me that the whole proposals
10 by the Boundary Commission ... in talking local
11 ties, they've now got communities turning up
12 here, turning against each other because the
13 proposals they've made have been nothing but
14 a dog's dinner and it's not the job of people
15 like myself or elected representatives to come
16 up with Boundary Commission proposals that
17 fit the mark, it's the Boundary Commission
18 that should do that and it seems from what
19 we've heard already they've failed to do that,
20 they're turning communities against
21 communities, people travelling from Lenzie to
22 come here to attack people from this
23 constituency for defending our rights - it
24 seems to have caused nothing but hassle,
25 inconvenience and a lot of heartache for a lot

1 of people and I think that must be noted .

2 MR BURCHELL: - Excuse me, I'm not attacking
3 you, I'm attacking the Boundary Commission
4 and their decisions .

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - No, the
6 gentleman is making a very fair comment
7 although gentlemen, I must say at the moment
8 we're dealing with questions for Mr Fleming.
9 Anyway, I've got your point and I've noted it.
10 Thank you very much. Could you introduce
11 yourself please? This again is questions of Mr
12 Fleming on his presentation .

13 MR ASHWOOD: - I beg your pardon, I was told I
14 had to ask to have my name included on the
15 list for speaking if that was possible .

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Yes, we'll add it
17 to the list. You wish obviously to address the
18 inquiry?

19 MR ASHWOOD: - My name is Joe Ashwood .

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well you'll
21 appreciate that will be - as you've arrived late
22 - at the end. You will be given the opportunity
23 but at the moment we're canvassing questions
24 to Mr Fleming on the basis of his presentation.
25 Does anyone else wish to ask any ... Mr Tosh

1 does .

2 MR TOSH: - Can I just start by saying sir that

3 there are some things in the proposals that I

4 do agree in, particularly the destruction of

5 some of the community ties and I hope to

6 speak to that later on so I shouldn't be

7 understood to be holding a candle for the

8 Boundary Commission itself - I think they got

9 quite a few things wrong. It might be helpful if

10 I simply ask the questions in relation to the

11 issues as they came up in Mr Fleming's

12 presentation and if I began at paragraph 1.3

13 on the second page and my apologies to those

14 people who don't actually have a copy.

15 Paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4 allege that there was a

16 constraint imposed by the Boundary

17 Commission. That appears to me to be the

18 case in relation to Edinburgh and Falkirk but I

19 want to ask about Falkirk. I don't know if Mr

20 Fleming is aware that an inquiry has taken

21 place in Edinburgh and that no evidence was

22 led by West Lothian Council or indeed by

23 anyone else in favour of a link between West

24 Lothian and Edinburgh and that the suggestion

25 of a link was opposed by all of the political

1 parties who participated and the Council and I
2 rather think that that's a bit of a dead issue
3 but would I understand Mr Fleming to be
4 correct in saying that the West Lothian
5 question – if we could call it that, it's a
6 different West Lothian question to the
7 traditional one – could be resolved without
8 Shotts if the Assistant Commissioner were to
9 be persuaded that there was a good case for
10 West Lothian to be grouped with Falkirk?

11 MR FLEMING: – The simple answer to the first
12 part of the question sir is no, I have no
13 particular knowledge of the inquiry in
14 Edinburgh, nor do I know who was represented
15 or what outcome – if indeed there could be an
16 outcome of such an inquiry – has been. I am
17 aware that the submissions of West Lothian
18 Council in this regard highlighted that the
19 Edinburgh constituencies are all in excess of
20 quota and have submitted that if the boundary
21 with Edinburgh and the boundary with Falkirk
22 were to be regarded as in play, it would be
23 possible to devise constituencies serving those
24 areas and the West Lothian areas which meet
25 the quota and have regard to local ties. North

1 Lanarkshire obviously has little knowledge of
2 the local ties in that area. West Lothian have
3 however emphasised them .

4 MR TOSH: - I wonder if you accept that
5 Edinburgh's entitlement is - I think in the
6 Commission's terms - 6.16 members and
7 therefore to allocate six members to
8 Edinburgh falls well within the standard
9 variance which the Commission has suggested
10 which is 9 per cent of quota and that
11 therefore, Edinburgh is really pretty well
12 getting what it's entitled to?

13 MR FLEMING: - I don't have the benefit of
14 knowing the precise entitlement of the
15 Edinburgh area. I have been able to identify
16 that each of Edinburgh's constituencies is in
17 excess of the quota and see no reason to
18 dispute the suggestion by West Lothian
19 Council that satisfactory constituencies well
20 within the parameters could be devised while
21 allowing for some electorate in Edinburgh to
22 be represented by a West Lothian Edinburgh
23 constituency .

24 MR TOSH: - And I understand perfectly
25 therefore that you're not responsible for the

1 fact that they didn't attend the Edinburgh
2 inquiry to press that point – it was nothing to
3 do with North Lanarkshire Council. Can I put it
4 to you that we have actually put forward from
5 the Conservative Party a proposed grouping of
6 Stirling, Clackmannan, Falkirk and West
7 Lothian and without wishing to get into the
8 nuts and bolts of that – because there will be
9 a Stirling inquiry later on in this process – in
10 fact we think that there is an argument that
11 you could get the numbers for an appropriate
12 number of constituencies based on that. Now
13 I'm not asking you to go beyond ...

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Just a minute –
15 Stirling ...?

16 MR TOSH: – Stirling, Clackmannan, Falkirk and
17 West Lothian. I'm not trying to get you to talk
18 about Stirling and Clackmannan because that's
19 not fair but can I just be clear that you think
20 it's a reasonable approach to resolve the
21 difficulty which has been created in North
22 Lanarkshire if the Commission and the
23 Assistant Commissioners were to consider a
24 link between West Lothian and Falkirk, if
25 necessary looking at other Council areas if

1 that had to be done to achieve quota?

2 MR FLEMING: - It is certainly the case for
3 North Lanarkshire Council that the border with
4 Falkirk should not be regarded as sacrosanct .

5 MR TOSH: - Right, I think that's a fair answer .

6 MR FLEMING: - It's also the case for North
7 Lanarkshire Council that it's quite
8 inappropriate of the Commission not to have
9 regard to be very unacceptable consequences
10 for the North Lanarkshire Council area in
11 considering wider matters. It is not acceptable
12 to site wider considerations in one regard and
13 not in other areas to have regard to
14 unacceptable conclusions for the North
15 Lanarkshire area .

16 MR TOSH: - Understood. Can I then go on to
17 the second constraint because I agree that the
18 first constraint is a decision that the decision
19 made which affected the other proposals but
20 as I read the paper produced by the
21 Commission for this inquiry and the paper
22 produced by the Commission for the Paisley
23 and Clydebank inquiry, they didn't start with
24 the preconception about a cross-Clyde
25 constituency - rather they looked at options

1 from Dunbartonshire, going round the north of
2 Glasgow and going down through Lanarkshire
3 and they looked at options beginning in
4 Renfrewshire and Ayrshire and were unable to
5 find a satisfactory arrangement of
6 constituencies which didn't cause grievous
7 splits in other communities and it was as a
8 consequence of that analysis that they
9 proposed the cross-Clyde constituency. Now
10 I'm not asking you to get into a debate about
11 the cross-Clyde constituency because we did
12 that at Clydebank. I am suggesting to you, is it
13 not a fair point to say that this isn't a
14 constraint imposed by the Commission but a
15 conclusion that they came to from their own
16 consideration and one which another Sheriff in
17 another inquiry will decide on?

18 MR FLEMING: - I'm not sure that I see any
19 great distinction between the constraint from
20 a conclusion and the constraint from a
21 preconception. As regards the merits of the
22 wider area, obviously North Lanarkshire cannot
23 comment beyond having adopted the
24 submissions of Renfrewshire Council and
25 Renfrewshire Council's submissions did go into

1 some detail as to what they consider would be
2 appropriate for a grouping which would
3 exclude both of the Clydebank wards .

4 MR TOSH: - Understood but the difference
5 between a constraint is that you make that
6 decision at the outset which they did about
7 Edinburgh. The decided without any other
8 consideration Edinburgh would have six. In the
9 case of Clydebank/Renfrew and therefore all
10 the knock-on consequences for the whole of
11 Ayrshire, Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire, they
12 did actually model two alternatives and on the
13 basis of their analysis of that came up with the
14 proposal. That's slightly different from having
15 made your mind up in advance .

16 MR FLEMING: - Can I say that I'm unashamedly
17 parochial .

18 MR TOSH: - You're quite right too, it makes
19 life easier .

20 MR FLEMING: - This was at the outset and
21 prior to the Boundary Commission's
22 considerations for North Lanarkshire. It's
23 perfectly clear that the Boundary Commission
24 before embarking on its considerations for
25 North Lanarkshire regarded itself as

1 constrained by the two Clydebank wards being
2 linked to Renfrewshire .

3 MR TOSH: - I think we'll disagree on that but
4 it's a statement of your opinion and we'll move
5 on. Can I put ...?

6 MR FLEMING: - Well sorry, possibly if I could
7 say it is not really a statement of opinion. It is
8 a very clear interpretation of what the
9 Boundary Commission itself had set forth in its
10 submission .

11 MR TOSH: - It's not what the Commission says
12 in its statements but that's a matter for the
13 Sheriff to decide I think. Could I ask a
14 question about the Westminster reviews
15 because I'm aware that 6 years ago, Mr
16 Fleming, you and Councillor Ross - not I think
17 Councillor Morgan, he's a new member of the
18 team - presented evidence on similar issues in
19 relation to the groupings of constituencies and
20 that on that occasion you accepted the
21 grouping of East Renfrewshire ... sorry, of East
22 Dunbartonshire Council and North Lanarkshire
23 Council but argued then that South
24 Lanarkshire Council should be included in the
25 grouping?

1 MR FLEMING: - I have a very clear memory of
2 being present at the inquiry. I would not
3 pretend to a memory of the detail .

4 MR TOSH: - But you did on that occasion - I
5 mean I have read it so I know what you said
6 and you did not accept ... you did not maintain
7 at that stage that there should be any linkage
8 between East Dunbartonshire and West
9 Dunbartonshire and you accepted entirely the
10 inclusion of the whole of East Dunbartonshire
11 in the grouping of constituencies which would
12 be created from East Dunbartonshire and from
13 North Lanarkshire Council .

14 MR FLEMING: - My memory is absolutely
15 inadequate to comment on that .

16 MR TOSH: - But the Sheriff will remember -
17 I've no doubt - finding in favour of the
18 constituency which began at the western
19 boundary of East Dunbartonshire and at that
20 stage, there was no proposal from anyone to
21 remove Bearsden or Milngavie from this
22 grouping .

23 MR FLEMING: - Again, I have no memory of
24 this.

25 MR TOSH: - Does North Lanarkshire Council

1 have any basis for suggesting the removal of
2 two Bearsden wards to be linked with
3 Clydebank other than on the basis which both
4 Cathy Craigie and Rosemary McKenna very
5 honestly this morning acknowledged were
6 based entirely on numbers?

7 MR FLEMING: - North Lanarkshire Council has
8 made no detailed recommendations regarding
9 boundaries in any of the East
10 Dunbartonshire/West Dunbartonshire or Argyll
11 areas. Without the basis of local knowledge,
12 we would be the wrong Council to do so .

13 MR TOSH: - Right but you acknowledge that
14 the consequence of the proposals you have
15 proposed for the Kirkintilloch based
16 constituency and the Coatbridge constituency
17 would necessarily either create a very large
18 East Dunbartonshire constituency containing
19 Kirkintilloch which would exceed the quota by
20 a very considerable margin or that there would
21 have to be changes at the far end of the East
22 Dunbartonshire boundary?

23 MR FLEMING: - Certainly it is accepted by the
24 Council that there would require to be changes
25 in the patterns suggested by the Boundary

1 Commission. I'm not sure that the Council
2 would consider links between West and East
3 Dunbartonshire as totally new or totally
4 unnatural but the Boundary ... but the Council
5 makes no recommendations in that regard .

6 MR TOSH: - Could I ask, just for the
7 information, that when you gave the Assistant
8 Commissioner the reports from Renfrewshire
9 Council and from West Dunbartonshire Council
10 and West Lothian Council, you made no
11 reference to East Dunbartonshire Council? You
12 didn't give the Sheriff a copy of the East
13 Dunbartonshire Council proposals. That will be
14 because he has one already and you will have
15 read that?

16 MR FLEMING: - Yes, yes. My recollection of the
17 East Dunbartonshire proposals were that there
18 were no strong views against the Boundary
19 Commission's proposals .

20 MR TOSH: - Isn't it a bit stronger than that? In
21 that all five groupings on East Dunbartonshire
22 Council have separately recorded their support
23 for the proposed Milngavie and Bishopbriggs
24 constituency with the exception that each of
25 those groupings wanted the name changed to

1 mention Bearsden? And would it be reasonable
2 to infer from that that all five political groups
3 on East Dunbartonshire Council support the
4 inclusion of Bearsden within that constituency?
5 MR FLEMING: - I wouldn't presume to have that
6 amount of detailed knowledge. Certainly my
7 memory of reading the submission was that
8 there was no dissent in East Dunbartonshire
9 Council to the proposals advanced by the
10 Boundary Commission .

11 MR TOSH: - If we may now, can I move on to
12 paragraph 2.2? You have referred here to
13 Bothwell and Uddingston as members of the
14 constituent parts of the Parish of Bothwell and
15 I'm sure that your memory is good enough to
16 recall that there was a Bothwell parliamentary
17 constituency. Is it the case, however, that the
18 Bothwell parliamentary constituency was
19 abolished as a result of local government
20 reorganisation in 1974 because part of the
21 Bothwell constituency - the part containing the
22 name Bothwell - was linked with Hamilton
23 District whereas the remainder of Bothwell
24 Parish was linked with Motherwell District?

25 MR FLEMING: - I would not wish to be

1 dogmatic about that but no, that was not my
2 memory. I would hesitate to give precise
3 information but I was Depute Returning Officer
4 in that area at that time and that was not my
5 memory .

6 MR TOSH: – Well my recollection ... it may help
7 you, my recollection is that the 3rd Review of
8 Parliamentary Constituencies – which came
9 into effect in the 1983 election – was the one
10 which was based on the 1974 changes in local
11 government and that as a consequence of that
12 review, two constituencies were created based
13 in Motherwell – I think they were Motherwell
14 South and Motherwell North – and the
15 Motherwell North area included Bellshill and
16 all the territory going up towards New
17 Stevenson and Holytown – in other words, the
18 bulk of the Bothwell Parish?

19 MR FLEMING: – No, on reflection I believe you
20 to be correct .

21 MR TOSH: – Thank you. So that is in fact a
22 connection which was broken as a
23 consequence of local government changes in
24 1974 and parliamentary boundary changes in
25 1983?

1 MR FLEMING: - It was a connection which was
2 interrupted .

3 MR TOSH: - Interrupted, right - fair enough.
4 You have referred in paragraph 2.5 to the
5 inconvenience necessarily attendant on a
6 wholesale review of constituency boundaries.
7 Can I put it to you that since this review is in
8 fact the successor to the 4th Review of
9 Westminster Constituencies which was
10 conducted in the early to middle 1990s and
11 that since that time we've had a complete
12 change in the structure of local government,
13 we've had the devolution of Scotland's
14 Westminster representation from 72 members
15 to 59 and we've also had the introduction of
16 multi-member wards all across Scotland - 3
17 very radical departures which the Commission
18 has used ... and here is where I do agree with
19 the Commission - which the Commission has
20 used to justify radical departures from
21 existing constituencies. Isn't it the case that in
22 most of Scotland, radical changes are
23 necessary if the local government changes are
24 to ... I appreciate that's not true in North
25 Lanarkshire - but if the local government

1 boundaries are to be respected and if there's
2 to be any synchronicity between the new wards
3 and the new or relatively new Westminster
4 constituencies?

5 MR FLEMING: – I think in the submissions, the
6 emphasis was very clearly on the terms of the
7 statutory Rule 4. I think that Parliament in
8 enacting that rule had accepted that change in
9 electoral areas carried very great
10 inconveniences. Because of that – in my
11 submission – Parliament have said that there
12 should be changes to existing constituency
13 boundaries only if those changes can be
14 clearly justified by a number of other factors.
15 So the submission of North Lanarkshire
16 Council is that that justification isn't here. I
17 think that other speakers would wish to speak
18 particularly about the difficulties – the
19 inconveniences – to voters and indeed the
20 growth in voter confusion of unnecessary or
21 frequent changes in constituency boundaries
22 and indeed, of any great desirability of
23 constituencies reflecting known communities.
24 It is I think accepted that the level of voter
25 turnout will always be higher if electors

1 consider they're electing a representative for a
2 community to which they can identify rather
3 than for a community to which they can't.
4 Beyond that, I don't think we'd go beyond
5 identifying that Parliament has itself
6 recognised that there are such inconveniences.

7 MR TOSH: - Can I put it to you ... you're
8 obviously familiar with the four rules by which
9 the Boundary Commission operates. It appears
10 to me that Rules 1 and 2 are in fact the
11 paramount rules because they require - in Rule
12 1 - the Commission to have regard to local-
13 authority boundaries and the Commission
14 considers that to be the grouping of Councils
15 to achieve workable constituencies. That
16 appears to me to be an obligation on the
17 Commission, would you agree with that?

18 MR FLEMING: - No, no, that isn't the
19 interpretation of North Lanarkshire Council.
20 It's the interpretation of North Lanarkshire
21 Council that if any rule is paramount it is Rule
22 4 .

23 MR TOSH: - Do you agree that Rule 1 is
24 mandatory?

25 MR FLEMING: - No. Only Rule 4 contains the

1 word *must* and Rule 4 starts by saying it will
2 not be necessary to comply with the previous
3 rules. There is certainly reference in Rule 4 to
4 Rule 1 but if any rule is mandatory, it is Rule
5 4.

6 MR TOSH: - I think in fact sir it's Rule 2 which
7 contains the word *must* because Rule 2 it
8 appears to me says that the electorate of a
9 constituency must be as near to the electoral
10 quota as practicable, having regard to Rule 1
11 and I would suggest sir that that means that
12 Rule 2 is in fact paramount and that Rule 1 is
13 a qualifying rule which guides the Commission
14 as to how they achieve Rule 2?

15 MR FLEMING: - I think we must be content to
16 leave to the Assistant Commissioner the
17 interpretation but it is the submission of North
18 Lanarkshire Council that the words; the
19 electoral Commission need not aim at giving
20 full effect and all circumstances to Rules 1 and
21 3 but they must take into account so far as
22 they reasonably can of the inconveniences
23 attendant on alterations and particularly of
24 local ties which would be broken by such
25 alterations. This appears to me ... to North

1 Lanarkshire Council to be a principal
2 injunction .

3 MR TOSH: - But you did read out an additional
4 section then which is actually very important
5 because you read the section in brackets - so
6 far as they reasonably can?

7 MR FLEMING: - Yes .

8 MR TOSH: - Well I appreciate it's up to the
9 Sheriff but what we're trying to establish here
10 is whether Rule 4 is paramount as argued by
11 the Council and I think it's clear in fact Rules 1
12 and 2 are mandatory whereas Rules 3 and 4
13 involve areas of discretion but that's again a
14 matter for the Sheriff. Can we come to
15 paragraph 4.1? You've argued there that ...
16 your submission is that as the proposals
17 advanced by the Commission deviate in every
18 respect from the constituency rules to a
19 materially greater extent than to the existing
20 constituencies, the existing constituency
21 boundaries require to be the starting point of
22 consideration of Scottish parliamentary
23 constituency boundaries in this area. Which
24 Rule do you found that connection on?

25 MR FLEMING: - Founded on all of the rules.

1 The existing constituencies are – in terms of
2 electoral quota – closer to the electoral quota
3 than the proposed constituencies, the existing
4 constituencies – in as far as they lie within one
5 local authority boundary – comply more fully
6 with the rules than the proposed
7 constituencies and certainly in terms of local
8 ties, the existing constituencies observe local
9 ties in a way the proposed constituencies
10 comprehensively fail to .

11 MR TOSH: – But there is no rule anywhere that
12 says the Boundary Commission must start by
13 preparing revised constituencies on the
14 existing constituencies?

15 MR FLEMING: – No. The submission of North
16 Lanarkshire Council is based on all of the rules
17 but particularly on Rule 4 which sets out the
18 circumstances in which there should be
19 interference with existing constituency
20 boundaries .

21 MR TOSH: – But the Boundary Commission is
22 not obliged to treat North Lanarkshire in
23 isolation and has explained in its supporting
24 documentation why it cannot treat North
25 Lanarkshire in isolation and indeed, that is the

1 pattern of recent boundary reviews for
2 Westminster as well – is it not?

3 MR FLEMING: – I think the complaint of North
4 Lanarkshire Council is not that North
5 Lanarkshire has not been treated in isolation
6 but rather that regard has not been taken of
7 North Lanarkshire in reaching unnecessary
8 decisions elsewhere .

9 MR TOSH: – I'll come to that later, if I may.
10 Can I suggest to you sir that the difficulty that
11 the Commission has – if it adopts your
12 approach – is that the only detailed and
13 definitive proposal which was put forward for
14 the Renfrewshire area – which as your
15 presentation made clear would inevitably be
16 affected by what you have proposed – was the
17 proposal for Renfrew Council and without
18 wishing to reopen that inquiry again, the
19 difficulty of Renfrew Council's proposals was
20 that it contained two constituencies
21 significantly below 50,000 electors and
22 therefore beyond the 9 per cent margin which
23 the Commission has recommended in the map
24 it has on its website where it maps the
25 variation around quota and that in fact, the

1 Renfrewshire Council proposals could not be
2 supported and were not supported by East
3 Renfrewshire Council on whose territory it
4 impinged or by the Labour Party or by the
5 Conservative Party and in fact there was no
6 support other than from Renfrewshire Council
7 itself for those proposals?

8 MR FLEMING: - I'm not aware of the
9 proceedings at the inquiry. North Lanarkshire
10 Council ...

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - We can't really
12 have any rehearsal of other inquiries .

13 MR TOSH: - I accept that entirely sir. I'm
14 simply making ... seeking to make you aware
15 that there are difficulties at either end of
16 Lanarkshire if North Lanarkshire Council's
17 representations are to be upheld. Now, there
18 was some discussion previously about West
19 Dunbartonshire ... sorry, about the
20 Strathkelvin ward within this Council's area.
21 Could you clarify from your knowledge of the
22 review of boundaries - the local government
23 ward boundaries - whose suggestion it was
24 that that ward should be called Strathkelvin
25 and what reason was given by the Council to

1 the local government Boundary Commission
2 for calling that ward Strathkelvin? I can remind
3 you if it helps?

4 MR FLEMING: - No, my memory is that all ward
5 boundaries ... all ward names in North
6 Lanarkshire were the suggestion of North
7 Lanarkshire Council and in reaching its
8 conclusions, North Lanarkshire Council did in
9 each case have regard to the views of the then
10 local members .

11 MR TOSH: - And the rationale for choosing
12 Strathkelvin might have been then that those
13 wards were formerly in the Strathkelvin district
14 where they were linked with Kirkintilloch?

15 MR FLEMING: - I think it may be because of the
16 familiarity of the name. I'm certainly not
17 conscious of any suggestion of close links with
18 Kirkintilloch .

19 MR TOSH: - But they were within the
20 Strathkelvin District Council - both
21 Kirkintilloch and the Chryston wards - the
22 Strathkelvin ward?

23 MR FLEMING: - I'm trying to remember if the
24 border of the Strathkelvin ward did tie-in
25 exactly with the border of the then

1 Strathkelvin District. It is certainly certain that
2 the Strathkelvin ward was traditionally part of
3 the county of Lanark, which Kirkintilloch was
4 not .

5 MR TOSH: - Other than South Lenzie, yes .

6 MR FLEMING: - I speak of the Strathkelvin
7 ward.

8 MR TOSH: - Yes and since 1983, the
9 Strathkelvin ward has been included within the
10 Coatbridge and Chryston constituency?

11 MR FLEMING: - Yes .

12 MR TOSH: - So there are in fact links from
13 Strathkelvin north and south? The only place it
14 hasn't been linked with is Cumbernauld -
15 that's fair?

16 MR FLEMING: - Certainly, the Strathkelvin ward
17 has not been linked with Cumbernauld .

18 MR TOSH: - Can I ask you now something
19 which is based on the evidence which you and
20 Councillor Ross gave to the 2002 Review
21 because you appear to attach very great
22 significance to it. You argued on that occasion
23 - and do correct me if I misinterpret your
24 position in any way because it bears on the
25 question I'm going to ask - you argued then

1 that the Boundary Commission review of
2 Westminster constituencies had not paid
3 sufficient attention to the Council structure of
4 Area Committees and that the Area
5 Committees followed the settlement patterns
6 in North Lanarkshire more closely than the
7 constituencies proposed by the Commission?

8 MR FLEMING: - As I've said, I would have
9 difficulty in remembering precisely the events
10 of 6 years ago. It would however be fully
11 accepted by North Lanarkshire Council that
12 Area Committee boundaries do reflect local
13 patterns .

14 MR TOSH: - So if we take the north Area
15 Committee in North Lanarkshire, it's based
16 entirely in Kilsyth and Cumbernauld and the
17 Chryston Valley?

18 MR FLEMING: - Yes, yes. The Strathkelvin ward
19 is included in the north area .

20 MR TOSH: - Right. The next two Area
21 Committees are Coatbridge and Airdrie?

22 MR FLEMING: - That is the case .

23 MR TOSH: - And the Boundary Commission has
24 proposed constituencies which would entirely
25 contain the relevant wards of the East

1 Dunbartonshire Council and all of the wards
2 which are contained within the North,
3 Coatbridge and Airdrie committees – all of
4 those are to be included in four
5 constituencies?

6 MR FLEMING: – Yes. I think it the case that all
7 of the wards in these areas would be contained
8 one way or another within four constituencies .

9 MR TOSH: – And no other wards are included
10 within those four proposed constituencies?
11 They are all either from North, Coatbridge,
12 Airdrie or East Dunbartonshire?

13 MR FLEMING: – I think that's the case .

14 MR TOSH: – But under the Council's counter-
15 proposals, the groupings have changed
16 because the Council has proposed to include
17 within an Airdrie based constituency two wards
18 – 12, Fortissat and 19, Murdostoun – which
19 the Council itself has grouped for area
20 purposes with Wishaw?

21 MR FLEMING: – That's certainly the case that
22 the whole of the Murdostoun ward and the
23 whole of the Fortissat ward are contained
24 within the Wishaw area constituency ... the
25 Wishaw Area Committee. The whole of the

1 Murdostoun ward is however not contained
2 within the Airdrie and Shotts constituency. As I
3 think Miss Whitefield indicated in her
4 evidence, parts of the Murdostoun ward are
5 contained within Airdrie and Shotts .

6 MR TOSH: – Sorry, which parts?

7 MR FLEMING: – Principally I would say the
8 Newmains and the Cleland parts of the
9 Murdostoun ward are contained within Airdrie
10 and Shotts and the remainder of the
11 Murdostoun ward is contained within
12 Motherwell and Wishaw and I think anybody
13 knowing the area would identify that these are
14 not merely suburban developments. Each of
15 these communities is a community in its own
16 right. Miss Whitefield herself indicated the
17 extent to which Newmains has a unique
18 identity and I think the people of Cleland
19 would find that too. I think you asked in a
20 previous question regarding the links between
21 the town of Shotts and both Wishaw and
22 Airdrie and it's certainly the case that in the
23 boundary review of local government
24 boundaries, North Lanarkshire took the view
25 that the community of Salsburgh was more

1 closely linked to Airdrie than it was to Shotts.
2 That however does not mean that the town of
3 Shotts is in any way inappropriately linked in a
4 constituency with Airdrie .

5 MR TOSH: - Nonetheless, the wards which you
6 have grouped within the Coatbridge and
7 Airdrie Area Committees - with the exception
8 of the settlement of Salsburgh - do coincide
9 with the former Monklands District. They
10 include all of the former Monklands District
11 other than Salsburgh?

12 MR FLEMING: - Yes, yes, that is the case .

13 MR TOSH: - And therefore the existing Area
14 Committee ... the two committees jointly
15 shadow the former Monklands District?

16 MR FLEMING: - Yes, yes, that is the case .

17 MR TOSH: - And the three further Area
18 Committees for Bellshill and District,
19 Motherwell and District and Wishaw - again
20 with the solitary exception of Salsburgh -
21 contain exactly the same territory which was
22 contained within the Motherwell District?

23 MR FLEMING: - Yes, yes, that is the case .

24 MR TOSH: - And it would be perfectly possible
25 to create two constituencies entirely from

1 those three areas - Bellshill and district,
2 Motherwell and district and Wishaw - and if
3 those two constituencies were created, they
4 would contain identically, Salsburgh apart, the
5 territory which was included within Motherwell
6 North and Motherwell South by the 3rd Review?

7 MR FLEMING: - I think there were two
8 propositions, one of which I would decline to
9 comment on because I haven't investigated it,
10 nor would I wish to give any submission as to
11 whether it would be appropriate or possible to
12 construct two satisfactory constituencies in
13 that area .

14 MR TOSH: - I wasn't suggesting you should try,
15 no. I was simply trying to establish that the
16 Council's Area Committees are not plucked out
17 of thin air but they are in fact highly and
18 carefully considered and that other than the
19 difficulty created by Salsburgh - which I
20 recognise is in the wrong ward, that was done
21 for arithmetical reasons - those Area
22 Committees follow the pattern of existing
23 settlements and follow the Motherwell and
24 Monklands districts and that it would be
25 reasonable therefore in framing constituencies

1 now to have regard to that pattern of
2 settlements and to seek to group those
3 distinct areas – the Motherwell communities
4 and the Monklands communities? I'm not
5 saying that they should, I'm just saying it
6 would be reasonable .

7 MR FLEMING: – I think it has to be accepted
8 that the Council – looking at this Area
9 Committee pattern – seeks to do exactly as
10 has been stated, to group together related
11 communities. The Council is to some extent
12 constrained, however, by the local government
13 ward boundary pattern. I don't think the
14 Council would itself be an unqualified admirer
15 of the pattern of wards which have come into
16 North Lanarkshire .

17 MR TOSH: – But would I be right ... and I have
18 ... I don't know the area as well as you do –
19 clearly – but I have read the report that was
20 produced by the local government Boundary
21 Commission and I did read about the disputes
22 between the Council and the Commission
23 about where lines should be drawn. It
24 appeared to me – and please tell me if I'm
25 wrong – that all of the disputes between the

1 Commission and the Council were either self-
2 contained entirely within Bellshill, Motherwell
3 and Wishaw – the Motherwell communities, if I
4 can call them that – or within the Coatbridge
5 and Airdrie – the Monklands communities –
6 and that the only cross issue was this question
7 of Salsburgh?

8 MR FLEMING: – Yes, yes, I think that was
9 correct .

10 MR TOSH: – So if the numbers stand and if
11 suitable boundaries could be found internally,
12 it wouldn't be unreasonable to base
13 constituencies on Bellshill, Motherwell and
14 Wishaw – which I assume you do have the
15 numbers – and on Kilsyth and Cumbernauld
16 and Coatbridge and Airdrie with East
17 Dunbartonshire. That would work and would
18 respect the structure of Area Committees
19 determined by the Council without prejudice to
20 how those areas might be divided internally –
21 the aggregate approach is reasonable?

22 MR FLEMING: – I would hesitate to go with
23 that. I think I would accept and would accept
24 the principle point which you've made which
25 was that the Council has seen no particular

1 difficulty ... cross-boundary difficulty between
2 the southern border of the previous Monklands
3 and the northern border of the previous
4 Motherwell. It's not however the case that the
5 Council considers that the linkage of Shotts
6 and Airdrie in one constituency is in any way
7 unnatural or inappropriate .

8 MR TOSH: - But at the Westminster inquiry in
9 2002, Frank Roy MP argued strongly for Shotts
10 to be included within Motherwell and Wishaw?

11 MR FLEMING: - I'm sorry, I have no memory or
12 knowledge .

13 MR TOSH: - And although I realise you're not
14 responsible for them, in fact the Labour Party
15 also argued that Shotts should be included
16 with Motherwell and Wishaw?

17 MR FLEMING: - Similarly, I have no knowledge
18 at all .

19 MR TOSH: - And you have obviously seen the
20 representations which were made to this
21 inquiry and you're aware that a very
22 substantial number of people from Shotts
23 objected to the Commission's proposals for
24 Shotts. I wonder if you also noticed that there
25 was a letter from a resident of Shotts - I think

1 the only independent letter. I'm not in any
2 sense discounting the pro forma letters but
3 the one letter which didn't follow the pro
4 forma argument was from a Shotts resident
5 who argued that Shotts should be included
6 with Motherwell and Wishaw .

7 MR FLEMING: - I'm not aware of the letter to
8 which you referred but I don't think I could
9 accept the proposition. I'm conscious also of
10 having read the submission of one of the
11 councillors for the Fortissat area who is a non-
12 aligned councillor - an Independent councillor
13 - this submission ...

14 MR TOSH: - I do beg your pardon, I was talking
15 about members of the public rather than
16 people who have a political line .

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - I'm interested in
18 what an Independent councillor might say on
19 any view. Just ... on you go .

20 MR FLEMING: - His submission was very very
21 clear that Shotts and the Airdrie and Shotts
22 constituency worked well and should remain .

23 MR TOSH: - And that I'm not disputing. All I'm
24 seeking to establish is that in its planning of
25 its area structure, the Council and a number of

1 political personalities in the area in recent
2 times – including Frank Roy – have argued that
3 Motherwell and Wishaw ... sorry, that the
4 Shotts area should be linked with Motherwell
5 and Wishaw – that that is ... there would be
6 nothing ... no injustice would be done to
7 Shotts if Shotts were linked with Motherwell
8 and Wishaw .

9 MR FLEMING: – I think that North Lanarkshire
10 would be of the view that Shotts has close
11 links with Wishaw as indeed it also has with
12 Airdrie .

13 MR TOSH: – That's fair. I think we can
14 conclude there .

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Thank you very
16 much indeed. Now the gentleman over there –
17 was it a statement or a question? I appreciate
18 you may not have agreed with a lot that you've
19 heard but you'll understand that you will be
20 entitled to make your statement in due course.
21 This is not the time for that, it's really to take
22 questions for Mr Fleming at this stage .

23 MR ROWLING: – It's a question for yourself sir.
24 As a member of the public not used to
25 proceedings like this, I was unaware that ... I

1 thought today we were coming along to
2 discuss the Boundary Commission relevant to
3 the constituency. I wasn't aware that we were
4 coming along to listen to a forensic
5 examination of the case put forward by North
6 Lanarkshire Council .

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well its relevance
8 may come out in due course. That's a matter
9 ... I am entitled ... I am obliged to consider all
10 evidence but the point you make may help me
11 at the end of the day. Thank you for your
12 comment. Any questions?

13 MR FAGAN: - A couple of questions for John.
14 Mr Fleming, would you agree with me that the
15 rules being followed by the Boundary
16 Commission are there to facilitate greater
17 equity of representation and in themselves
18 have no intrinsic value other than to do that
19 and it's a bit of a perversion of these rules to
20 use them in a semantic manner to argue
21 against the fundamental aim? Secondly, would
22 you agree with me ...

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - I think ... let's
24 have an answer to that first .

25 MR FLEMING: - No difficulty at all in agreeing

1 with that .

2 MR FAGAN: – Thank you. Also, more on a basic
3 level, could you tell me ... given the question
4 made by the previous speaker, could you tell
5 me whether the current Westminster, Scottish
6 parliamentary and local authority boundaries
7 provide greater or lesser co-terminosity with
8 each other and with the other public bodies
9 within the area than the proposals put forward
10 by the Boundary Commission?

11 MR FLEMING: – No difficulty at all in agreeing
12 with that one also sir. There is voter confusion
13 in as much as Westminster – the United
14 Kingdom constituency boundaries – do not tie
15 in with Scottish parliamentary boundaries.
16 That is unfortunate. It is however the case that
17 the boundaries of both the United Kingdom
18 parliamentary constituencies and the current
19 Scottish parliamentary constituencies are
20 infinitely preferable in every regard on the
21 Boundary Commission criteria to those
22 proposed by the Boundary Commission .

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Thank you very
24 much. Well that concludes your evidence .

25 MR FLEMING: – Yes it does sir. Now I'm very

1 very pleased - if I may - to pass over to
2 Councillor Michael Ross. Councillor Ross as
3 the Council's business manager has very full
4 knowledge of the whole of North Lanarkshire
5 Council. He also has the benefit of being in
6 addition a member for the Motherwell West
7 ward, previously being Councillor of the
8 Ladywell ward, person who was brought up in
9 Shotts and therefore can talk about Shotts and
10 its links in a way that I was unable to do .

11 MR ROSS: - Thank you very much. By way of
12 beginning sir, I would like to make reference
13 to the conclusions of what is commonly
14 referred to as the Guild Report into the 2007
15 Scottish parliamentary and local government
16 elections. Page 109 of that report lists - at the
17 beginning of the conclusions - the view taken
18 by the committee that looked into those
19 elections and it says: in considering the
20 circumstances surrounding the planning,
21 organising and implementation of the 3rd May
22 2007 elections in Scotland we have observed
23 an unfortunate pattern. Almost without
24 exception the voter was treated as an
25 afterthought by literally all the other

1 stakeholders. Numerous factors – which have
2 then been enumerated at length – all indicate
3 to us that voters were overlooked as the most
4 important stakeholder to be considered at
5 every stage of the election. We obviously
6 recommend that all those who have a role in
7 organising future elections consider the
8 voters' interests above all other
9 considerations.

10 Now while that doesn't directly reflect on
11 today's proceedings, I think it carries
12 considerable weight. Having looked at the
13 suggestions put forward by the Boundary
14 Commission, it would appear as if
15 unfortunately the North Lanarkshire area has
16 been the last in a line of dominoes to fall.
17 What may have begun as a fairly pretty
18 cartographic exercise has had fairly deep and
19 difficult ramifications within the communities
20 of North Lanarkshire. You've already heard
21 from the parliamentarians – the Scottish
22 parliamentarians – on the likely impact in
23 Cumbernauld and in Airdrie and in Shotts and
24 you will later – I have no doubt – hear from
25 the other elected members and from members

1 of the public about their own concerns
2 regarding Airdrie, Shotts and Cumbernauld but
3 as I see, it's very very clear the impact is
4 extremely detrimental.

5 The submissions as already outlined at length
6 by Mr Fleming have the assistance of brevity
7 and also because I am equally conscious that
8 the heating isn't particularly working very well
9 today and I can see a number of members of
10 the audience in here are slowly starting to turn
11 blue, I will attempt to be brief. On reflection it
12 seems quite clear that the Scottish
13 parliamentary seats that we have in North
14 Lanarkshire already fit well within the scheme
15 that the Boundary Commission would seek to
16 adhere to in relation to numbers. We have
17 heard that the Airdrie and Shotts Scottish
18 parliamentary seat is slightly over the
19 prescribed quota but remains below the quota
20 ... below the level of electorate that is
21 proposed by the Boundary Commission for
22 some of the new seats that they would seek to
23 create. We heard Mr Fleming speak at length in
24 relation to Cumbernauld and Kilsyth which we
25 would concede is below the level of quota that

1 the Boundary Commission would seek to lead
2 you to but in the first instance, I would like to
3 remind the Commissioner himself that it is a
4 county seat rather than a burgh seat. There's
5 considerable rurality within that seat but I
6 think the fall-back position, as we quite
7 clearly indicate, would be to perhaps look to
8 adopting the Westminster boundaries along
9 Milton of Campsie area. I think Mrs McKenna
10 and also Mrs Craigie both outlined that to you.
11 The two areas where the largest problems
12 arise within Airdrie and within Shotts itself,
13 Councillor Morgan will speak about in relation
14 to Airdrie. I have no intention of glossing over
15 the problems that the Boundary Commission
16 has created for itself there, as I'm sure you
17 will hear from members of the public but I see
18 very little point in rehearsing that, it will be
19 teased out later. But in relation to Shotts – as
20 has already been indicated – the boundaries
21 itself baffle me (sic). There are no coherent
22 transport linkages that run north/south and
23 east/west throughout that constituency. There
24 are limited transport links east/west if one
25 looks to the M8 but throughout the rest of the

1 area, Shotts always looks towards Airdrie and
2 to Wishaw in terms of shopping, in terms of
3 recreation, in terms of schooling. That's where
4 that constituency looks. It is a westward facing
5 community, not an eastward facing
6 community.

7 In terms of links between Pittburn and Lanark,
8 I would be at a loss to try and find my way
9 from one town to the other by use of public
10 transport that do not involve a journey of
11 perhaps 3 or 4 hours. It is not a closely
12 connected community at all. We've also heard
13 about the administrative and organisational
14 difficulties that would be associated with that
15 seat. As well as the one member of the
16 Scottish parliament who would be elected
17 within that constituency, there would also be
18 21 other MSPs elected from various bits of
19 regional lists also covering that constituency.
20 It crosses over into the South of Scotland area
21 and to the Lothians area and also into the West
22 of Scotland ... West Central Scotland part of
23 the Scottish parliamentary lists sir.

24 In terms of economic development and
25 strategic planning, the area itself would be

1 governed by two separate structure plans,
2 three local plans and a slew of different, and I
3 have to say competing, economic development
4 mechanisms. We've heard already about two
5 separate Chief Constables, three Divisional
6 Commanders, two Fire Masters, two health
7 boards. It is nonsense. The Boundary
8 Commission for many years now has taken the
9 old – as far as I'm led to believe, as far as I'm
10 aware – the old Scottish regional boundaries
11 and has things to be very tightly adhered to
12 (sic). I am not aware of anywhere else where
13 the old Strathclyde/Lothian boundary is
14 crossed. I am not familiar with seats where the
15 Lothian Central or Strathclyde Central
16 boundaries are crossed because it does create
17 considerable confusion and opportunity for
18 considerable division when that takes place. I
19 think I'll rest there ...

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – I have the
21 message and if I don't appear to be taking any
22 notes it's because I have a record of what's
23 being said. Any questions? It's maybe that it's
24 in fact more of the same so I take it there's no
25 questions. Yes?

1 MR FLEMING: – Could I ask now for Councillor
2 Morgan? Councillor Morgan is in addition to
3 being the chair of the Council's Audit and
4 Governance Panel, is the chair of the Airdrie
5 Local Area Partnership which is a partnership
6 of a number of bodies including the Council,
7 chair of the Council's Area Committee.
8 Councillor Morgan also has the benefit of
9 having been a Monklands councillor for the
10 Plains area, previously a North Lanarkshire
11 councillor for the Plains area and now a
12 councillor for North Airdrie. He also was
13 educated in Coatbridge and therefore has a
14 fairly comprehensive knowledge of the
15 essential area of North Lanarkshire .

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Thank you very
17 much. Yes, Mr Morgan?

18 MR MORGAN: – Thank you, Sheriff. I'm glad Mr
19 Fleming took the opportunity to clarify that
20 because I've already been described as a new
21 member of the team. In case anybody thought
22 that I was an overnight success with all these
23 remits of convenerships, I have been a
24 councillor for 20 years in this area, under the
25 previous Monklands area, at Monklands

1 District Council and now North Lanarkshire but
2 presently just to use the name Airdrie North
3 because of the new multi-member ward areas,
4 Councillor Coyle's one of my fellow Council
5 colleagues in Airdrie North but I've historically
6 been connected with the villages of Plains,
7 Caldercruix and Longriggend.

8 What I would say at the outset is that much of
9 the documentation that Mr Fleming has put
10 forward and highlighted by Councillor Ross
11 there about the Cumbernauld and the Wishaw
12 area, I'll stick specifically to the middle around
13 the town of Airdrie and obviously how I see
14 that negatively impacting on those
15 communities. I would also say I did appreciate
16 some of the forensic analysis of previous
17 reviews but I'm also a teacher of politics - I
18 teach modern studies - and I teach kids that
19 demographic change itself necessitates
20 reviews every so often. So with all due respect
21 to those that were doing retrospective
22 analysis, what I'm teaching children is that
23 demographic change is a necessity, I think that
24 covers past analysis of previous reviews and
25 here ... where we go in the future from the

1 proposals as submitted. What I would say to
2 you, Sheriff, is the impact on ... let me take
3 the east of the A73 first of all which you would
4 literally take out of the area in the Airdrie and
5 Shotts constituency – the village of Plains,
6 Caldercruix, Longriggend, Glenmavis,
7 Greengairs – all addressed, incidentally, if you
8 send a letter to them with Plains by Airdrie,
9 Caldercruix by Airdrie, so and so – there's a
10 culture here. Those communities identify with
11 Airdrie. I was born in Longriggend and brought
12 up in Plains and now stay there. You can take
13 the man out of Plains – as is the old cliché –
14 but you can't take Plains out the man. I'll give
15 you the anecdotal evidence here today of how
16 those communities associate with the town of
17 Airdrie, from that eastern part and certainly
18 with the villages I've represented and I would
19 hope to do that by taking a couple of Council
20 services. Services that as councillors we deal
21 with – education, housing and transport.
22 Sheriff, transport is a joke. If I had to leave
23 Longriggend to get to Cumbernauld, I kid you
24 not ... I'm not a driver, I'm talking from
25 experience and I always clarify the point it's

1 not as though I had my licence and lost it, I've
2 just ... I'm not a driver. I knew of carbon
3 footprints years before it was even the
4 fashion. I've never driven a car, presumably
5 never will so I depend on public transport. I
6 can assure you, it would take about 4 hours to
7 get from Longriggend to Cumbernauld and
8 that is the reality. Don't take that as an
9 opinion, check the timetables. And that's just
10 Longriggend. It's the same for Plains,
11 Greengairs. Let's not forget parts of Airdrie
12 that were originally villages - like Craigneuk,
13 Glasson. These were villages but a part of the
14 town of Airdrie now. These are all identifiable
15 culturally and I should say, did share in
16 common their mining background.

17 Now, nothing against Cumbernauld but it is a
18 new town and in this case I have to say the
19 mountain seems to be coming to Mohammed
20 to force Airdrie in with Cumbernauld rather
21 than ... I'm not saying the other way round but
22 it's just culturally and - as MSPs and others
23 have mentioned - socially and economically
24 very little contact between the Airdrie area and
25 the Cumbernauld area. So transport - which

1 incidentally I did note that you used, as is
2 highlighted by my own MSP, as a criteria for
3 the justification of the Lanark, Shotts and
4 Whitburn area. It just doesn't stand as a factor
5 for the Airdrie, Cumbernauld proposal.

6 Education - thankfully we have excellent
7 schools in the villages and communities
8 around Airdrie but when kids go to high
9 school, they go to Airdrie. Kids from my area
10 go to Caldervale High in Clarkston, they go to
11 St Margaret's in Airdrie, they go to Airdrie
12 Academy. Should they go any further and go to
13 college, I can't think of any more than a
14 handful of people in these communities that
15 would go to Cumbernauld College. It's so
16 inaccessible and students by financial
17 definition can't afford transport costs or the
18 time to go to Coatbridge College. That is the
19 reality or more likely possibly Bell College in
20 Hamilton, depending on the course that they
21 are doing.

22 And I can assure you of this, Sheriff, in 20
23 years as a councillor dealing with the issues
24 that wear us all down possibly ages before our
25 time is housing and housing allocation with a

1 decline in business but I'm struggling to think
2 of anybody ever coming to see me in a surgery
3 that wanted to leave Plains or Caldercruix -
4 there being no social housing in Longriggend
5 so I will accept that - wanting to leave Plains
6 or Caldercruix to go and stay in Cumbernauld
7 or vice versa. So really the track record of
8 services if you look at it from the Council's
9 perspective is there is no ... the word appetite
10 was mentioned. There is no appetite there for
11 people from those cultures ... cultural areas -
12 geographical areas - to be subsumed under
13 the umbrella of Cumbernauld. Mr Fleming
14 makes use of the phrase 'it would be an
15 artificial marriage'. At the danger of maybe
16 sounding curt or a wee bit more crude, I don't
17 think it would be an artificial marriage to force
18 that side of Airdrie into Cumbernauld - I think
19 it would be more of a shotgun marriage, and
20 we certainly would be the unwilling partners
21 here at this side of the constituency.

22 And it would be remiss of me not to turn and
23 make reference to the fact of the proposals
24 that would impact on the urbanised side of the
25 town here. It would split the town of Airdrie

1 into two where, as the Council's submission
2 using the phrase euphemistically, parts of
3 Airdrie ... a major part of Airdrie – about two-
4 thirds – of the urban side would be subsumed
5 under a larger constituency which I believe
6 creates a quota for the Coatbridge and Airdrie,
7 would go through the barrier. The word
8 subsume I think would be more appropriate –
9 once again using more colloquial language –
10 Airdrie would be swamped by Coatbridge and
11 there's a traditional reticence in the area here
12 of Airdrie always having been seen as being
13 maybe the limited junior partner in the
14 marriage between Airdrie and Coatbridge in
15 previous times such as Monklands although I
16 did take political stances to try and rectify
17 that myself along with some of my colleagues
18 in years gone by. That would be a danger that
19 Airdrie would seem to lose its identity.

20 So Sheriff, with the examples of those Council
21 services, I would say personal hands-on
22 experience, a number of years as a councillor,
23 coming from the area – I'm Plains through and
24 through, I consider myself as an Airdrionian,
25 people wouldn't mind if I classify myself as

1 that – I don't see any appetite. I think all the
2 merits are there for the retention as much as
3 possible of the constituencies as they stand
4 and hopefully the anecdotal evidence that I've
5 given in today will be something to reinforce
6 your mind – it's your mind I'm trying to win
7 over, not anyone else's – and of the positives
8 of why we should continue to be ... have our
9 own individual distinct identity and one final
10 point is, as a teacher I teach my kids about
11 voter apathy – it really worries me about the
12 apathy towards politics in general and
13 certainly, at the last elections we had certainly
14 contributed to further confusion among the
15 electorate. I do believe that voter anticipation
16 and voter involvement can be identified in
17 recognition of your candidates. I don't think
18 people in Plains, Caldercruix, Longriggend and
19 those other communities would even identify
20 with the candidate who was standing for
21 another area and certainly I think that would
22 contribute further to a reduction in political
23 anticipation and voter apathy. It is I think a
24 criteria that the boundary redrawing should
25 take into consideration and bring on

1 practicalities as well as its own geographical
2 limits that it has to address. Thank you .

3 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Thank you very
4 much. Any questions for the councillor? Yes,
5 Miss Whitefield?

6 MISS WHITEFIELD: – Thank you, Sheriff
7 Principal. I have just one question ... just one
8 question for Councillor Morgan as someone
9 who grew up in Plains. Mr Tosh has suggested
10 this morning that all of Shotts' connections
11 are in fact with Motherwell and Wishaw and not
12 with Plains and Caldercruix for example. As
13 somebody who grew up in Plains I wonder if Mr
14 Morgan could confirm that the villages of
15 Plains and Caldercruix, Greengairs,
16 Longriggend were all in the old North Lanark
17 constituency from 1945 until 1980s and the
18 that shared mining community heritage was
19 there and in fact we've only had a brief period
20 when that was broken down by the Monklands
21 East and West seats and that was ... those
22 connections were re-established when the
23 Airdrie and Shotts constituency was created
24 once again back in 1992?

25 MR MORGAN: – It's absolutely the case, Sheriff,

1 that ... obviously the common factor there is
2 the mining communities of all of the villages
3 that the MSP - Karen - has mentioned there.
4 There's quite an interesting anecdotal story
5 there . When John Smith - the late John Smith
6 - actually was chosen as the Labour candidate
7 for the old North Lanark constituency, they
8 actually had to delay the meeting to wait for
9 the Shotts bus - it was snowing that night. So
10 the Shotts bus came in late but they convened
11 the meeting and they arrived - the bus from
12 Shotts - and they came here in Plains
13 incidentally .

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Thank you very
15 much for that. Record that for the record. I
16 think that's probably a suitable time. In court
17 we adjourn for an hour but I think when
18 everybody's here, we could maybe come back
19 in three-quarters of an hour - quarter to 2.
20 Would that be convenient for people?

21 MR COYLE: - Sheriff, I can't make it. I have a
22 surgery at 2 o'clock so can I delegate
23 somebody to give my evidence?

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - You can't come
25 back this afternoon?

1 MR COYLE: - Yes, I'll be back about half past 3
2 or something .

3 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - I think we'll still
4 be sitting then so we'll take your evidence
5 then. Is that OK? Is anyone in a similar
6 position who's to give evidence who might
7 want to say a specific time?

8 MR ASHWOOD: - No, I'm working so I would
9 rather leave my statement until the end of the
10 day if that was possible .

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - When do you
12 finish work?

13 MR ASHWOOD: - Well I can come away from
14 work round about 4 o'clock. I don't know what
15 time this is planning to finish .

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Well, I would
17 hope that we would aim to be finishing round
18 about 4 .

19 MR ASHWOOD: - If I come back at half-past 3
20 then?

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - That would be
22 fine. Could you do that?

23 MR ASHWOOD: - Fine .

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Just a second,
25 how long do you gentlemen think you would

1 be speaking for – just a relatively short time?

2 MR ASHWOOD: – 5 minutes .

3 MR COYLE: – 10 minutes .

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Well I'm not
5 anxious to ... would we maybe just take their
6 evidence now and then can sit until 1? We can
7 have lunch from quarter past 1 until 2 o'clock.
8 I think that's appropriate, I'm obliged to
9 everyone – thank you. So who was first in the
10 queue? You're Mr ...?

11 MR COYLE: – Councillor Michael Coyle, ward
12 11, Airdrie South.

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Right, off you go.

14 MR COYLE: – Having studied the Boundary
15 Commission's proposal for North Lanarkshire,
16 I've undertaken the following analysis which I
17 want to be the basis for this submission to the
18 Commission subject to your agreement.

19 Firstly, the relevant criteria for proposed
20 Boundary Commission changes are that all
21 constituencies have to come as close as
22 possible to the quota of 54,728 electors which
23 is calculated by dividing the whole electorate
24 in Scotland by the number of constituencies.
25 The Commission must minimise proposals for

1 constituencies which compromise parts of
2 local ... in one local authority area. There
3 should be minimal disruption to local ties
4 resulting from any proposals for change. This
5 paper shows that the current proposals put
6 forward for North Lanarkshire fail to meet any
7 of the above three criteria and that the status
8 quo comes significantly closer to meeting the
9 Boundary commissions own criteria than their
10 own proposals for change do.

11 The following sections looks at each issue in
12 turn. The electoral quota - the existing
13 Scottish Parliament constituencies in North
14 Lanarkshire are; Airdrie and Shotts, 57,904
15 electors which is 6 per cent above the new
16 quota; Coatbridge and Chryston, 54,756
17 electors which equates almost exactly to the
18 new quota; Cumbernauld and Kilsyth, 49,411
19 electors which equates to 10 per cent below
20 the new quota; Hamilton North and Bellshill,
21 34,125 electors which equates almost exactly
22 to the new quota; and Motherwell and Wishaw,
23 54,149 electors which equates almost exactly
24 to the new quota. There's 3 per cent ... 60 per
25 cent of the existing five constituencies equate

1 almost exactly to the new quota. The only
2 exceptions are Airdrie and Shotts and
3 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth constituencies. The
4 number of electors who are again again over-
5 represented – Cumbernauld and Kilsyth – are
6 under-represented, Airdrie and Shotts is 8,493
7 equivalent to 3 per cent of the total electorate
8 covered by these five constituencies.

9 The Boundary Commission proposals for new
10 constituencies are: Coatbridge and Central
11 Airdrie, 59,940 electors which is 10 per cent
12 above the new quota; Cumbernauld and East
13 Airdrie, 56,910 electors which is 4 per cent
14 above the new quota; Kirkintilloch, Chryston
15 and Kilsyth, 52,990 electors which is 3 per
16 cent below the new quota; and Motherwell and
17 Wishaw, 54,730 electors which equates almost
18 exactly to the new quota; North Hamilton and
19 Bellshill, 56,360 electors which is 3 per cent
20 above the new quota. In addition, Shotts would
21 come within the new Lanark, Shotts and
22 Whitburn constituency, an issue which is
23 addressed there. Thus of the five
24 constituencies as proposed by the Boundary
25 Commission, only one – 20 per cent – equates

1 almost exactly to the new quota. The other
2 four constituencies deviate significantly from
3 the quota. The number of electors who are
4 either over-represented - Kirkintilloch,
5 Chryston and Kilsyth - or under-represented -
6 Coatbridge and Central Airdrie, Cumbernauld
7 and East Airdrie, North Hamilton and Bellshill
8 - is 10,764, equivalent to 4 per cent of the
9 total electorate covered by these five
10 constituencies. Therefore, basically the quota
11 measurement in the Boundary Commission's
12 proposals fall short of this criteria to a greater
13 extent than the status quo .

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: - Thank you very
15 much indeed. I understand exactly what you
16 said. Does anyone have any questions for
17 Councillor Coyle?

18 MR CULLEN: - Ross Cullen again. Councillor
19 Coyle, you've quoted figures which I know
20 were probably exact. Now taking into account
21 Chapelhall which to quote is the fastest
22 growing ... I'll use the term small town, the
23 new building sites which are building houses
24 in central Airdrie, the new housing schemes
25 which are forming in North Airdrie and the new

1 Central ... the new housing schemes that are
2 being formed in East Airdrie – that's a lot of
3 houses?

4 MR COYLE: – It's true. Well these haven't been
5 taken into consideration in these numbers
6 here. These numbers were produced on ...

7 MRS CULLEN: – Are you sure that isn't
8 justifying joining Coatbridge and Airdrie and
9 as you say, going 16 per cent above the new
10 proposals?

11 MR COYLE: – But that's what I'm saying. There
12 are no local ties at all between Airdrie and
13 Coatbridge because they tried it before with
14 Monklands East and as the rest of my
15 colleagues here will admit, that never worked
16 in their day so there are no local ties between
17 Airdrie and Coatbridge .

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Thank you very
19 much, that's excellent. I'm very much obliged.
20 Are you Mr Ashwood?

21 MR ASHWOOD: – Yes .

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – If you would take
23 the chair, as they say in television. Right, off
24 you go .

25 MR ASHWOOD: – I am here to represent the

1 Airdrie Activists Group which is basically just a
2 small group set up to take account of local
3 issues, we try and consult in the local
4 population and try and find out the attitude
5 towards it. When these proposals were issued
6 by the Boundary Commission we were given
7 very little time but we certainly, after
8 organising two public meetings - one in
9 Airdrie, one in Shotts just to try and sound out
10 people's thought of this - and it would be fair
11 to say that the reaction to it was fairly
12 shocked and I think that's true in both areas to
13 be honest, Airdrie and Shotts. Airdrie itself ...
14 the proposal to split Airdrie in two is complete
15 lunacy given the fact that for years we were
16 associated with Coatbridge and it caused
17 nothing but despair in Airdrie to be perfectly
18 honest. The fact that the other part of Airdrie
19 would be grouped with Cumbernauld where we
20 have absolutely no social connection
21 whatsoever was absolutely unbelievable as far
22 as we were concerned. Most of the public
23 meetings that we held reflected this view.
24 We moved on to Shotts to actually find out
25 what the attitude was to it. I think it would

1 also be fair to say that the people of Shotts
2 considered that they were being scattered to
3 the four winds with this. The history between
4 Airdrie and Shotts ... Airdrie and Shotts has
5 worked very well. This is not just at the time
6 since Airdrie and Shotts were grouped under
7 the parliamentary boundary, for a long time a
8 lot of the people who lived in Shotts - even
9 when I was at school - attended schools in
10 Airdrie. So that attendance in Airdrie went as
11 far as Harthill - Harthill, Salsburgh, Airdrie,
12 Longriggend, Glenmavis, Caldercruix - they all
13 came to Airdrie. So these people have a long
14 history of association with the town of Airdrie
15 itself and most of them still feel that identity.
16 I'm very fortunate in this area, I spend a lot of
17 time in both Airdrie and Shotts so I think I've
18 got a fairly good idea of both communities and
19 what their aspirations are, where their
20 allegiances lie and undoubtedly, Airdrie and
21 Shotts together is a good marriage.

22 The people in Shotts, when we approached
23 them with a petition ... to be honest with the
24 limited time that we had we submitted a
25 petition with 100 signatures on it and believe

1 me, we could easily have got thousands of
2 signatures between the two burghs. Airdrie
3 itself is a very historic town. Airdrie is one of
4 the oldest known burghs in Scotland and
5 unfortunately, over the last changes in
6 boundaries, Airdrie has been treated pretty
7 dismally by the Boundary Commission and only
8 the last time when it was grouped with Shotts
9 did we feel that we actually had a sense of
10 identity restored to us and certainly, the
11 soundings that we've taken at public meetings
12 justifies our opinion that Airdrie and Shotts
13 should certainly remain linked. Thank you .

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: – Thank you very
15 much indeed. I think what he's been saying is
16 reflected in what a number of other people
17 have said so I take it there's no questions?
18 Thank you very much indeed Mr Ashwood for
19 your help. Well I think we'll adjourn. It's 10
20 past 1, so 5 minutes to 2. We'll have three-
21 quarters of an hour. Thank you very much.

22
23 After an adjournment for lunch.

24
25 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: ladies and

1 gentlemen, I think we will just start now. The
2 running order will be Mr Fagan will be first
3 and then Mr Beekman will be second and in
4 view of the fact that Mr Tosh and Mr Grundy
5 have both detailed submissions I would be
6 proposing to leave them until the end. So,
7 after that the order will be Mrs Cullen, Bob
8 Smith, Rod Ackland, Patrick Rolink, and we
9 have already had Mr Ashwood. So, that is the
10 running order and I don't think that there is
11 anything else.

12 MR FAGAN: a my name is David Fagan and I am
13 one of the councillor for Airdrie South Ward
14 which is Ward No. 11 in North Lanarkshire. I
15 am a Labour councillor. I mention that not for
16 party political gain but actually for the
17 opposit. I think it is quite important that you
18 know today that there is absolute cross-party
19 support within the councils of Airdrie for the
20 position which is to maintain Airdrie as a
21 single parliamentary constituency. The only
22 exception to that is the Conservative Party,
23 going on some of the comments today, and
24 perhaps that is why they are not represented
25 within the constituency. I'll make a few general

1 points about the proposals for the
2 constituency and then I will concentrate on
3 the impact that I believe that it would have.
4 Just to be clear about my opposition to the
5 Boundary Commission proposals to split the
6 constituency of Airdrie and Shotts into four
7 parts, I believe that this creates
8 constituencies, many of which have no obvious
9 community ties. But in the most obvious
10 example of this is the Salsburgh, Harthill,
11 Shotts, Whitburn and Lanark constituency and
12 you could almost say that you could have
13 picked three random points on the map of
14 Scotland, drawn some circles round them and
15 you could argue that they would have as much
16 linkage between those communities as
17 between the communities of Shotts, Whitburn
18 and Lanark. There are also similar arguments
19 in relation to Airdrie and in particular the
20 tying-in of the villages of Plains and
21 Caldercruix and Greengairs, Glenmavis and the
22 communities of Craigneuk, Petersburn and
23 Moffatt Mills to Cumbernauld really makes no
24 sense in any obvious way. So, to conclude on
25 that from a general position of Airdrie and

1 Shotts, the proposed Airdrie and Shotts, I
2 would agree with almost all of this because
3 previously on the detailed points that they
4 have made. In relation to the impact that the
5 proposals will have for Ward 11 as you will be
6 aware the Boundary Commission's proposal
7 splits my ward, Ward 11, between two Scottish
8 parliamentary seats. I believe that this has a
9 number of the effects. I think that it will
10 create a great deal of confusion for the
11 constituents and will make less transparent
12 the lines of accountability and I think that
13 that is particularly apposite, given the
14 problems that we have to try to bed in the
15 multi-member wards system. Some of the
16 more practical effects that it will have from a
17 grassroots point of view is that it will have the
18 effect of splitting feeders zones for primary
19 schools – for St Dominic's and St Edward's
20 primary – between two Scottish parliamentary
21 constituencies and again that has issues in
22 terms of representation for parents. It will
23 split feeder zones for Caldervale High School
24 and St Margarets High School between two
25 Scottish parliamentary constituencies. It would

1 also split a number of bus routes which are
2 effectively going through one ward just now,
3 and the issues of tying those routes up and
4 making sure that they cover as many people
5 as possible in that Ward can be more clearly
6 done in a ward with co-terminosity with the
7 Scottish parliamentary constituencies. It is the
8 recent bus route from Petersburn to
9 Chapelhall. In addition the Boundary
10 Commission splits some of the parishes within
11 my Ward. Parishioners attend both St Edward's
12 and St Margarets. We come from both sides of
13 the proposed constituencies and I am sure
14 everyone is aware of the strong effects that
15 church membership can have in terms of
16 identity for both communities and I don't think
17 that that would be a positive thing. As
18 previously stated at in the timing of this would
19 be particularly bad given the bedding-in of
20 the multi-member wards. Finally on the detail
21 I would say that the proposal would split the
22 area covered by the Community Learning
23 Development team of North Lanarkshire
24 Council for Airdrie between two Scottish
25 parliamentary wards. The Community Learning

1 Development team have a key role in building
2 community capacity and it is important for
3 groups such as we have got here today and I
4 don't think it would be a good thing for
5 representation between two Scottish
6 parliamentary constituencies in that team. In
7 conclusion from your comments earlier on,
8 Sheriff Principal, it seems that there is a
9 consensus here that Lanarkshire and in
10 particular the constituency of Airdrie and
11 Shotts has suffered in the current proposals
12 from the effects and consequences of a
13 boundary decisions elsewhere and I would ask
14 you, Sheriff Principal, to consider in making
15 your recommendations to the Boundary
16 Commission what rationale allows one
17 constituency and one set of constituents to
18 have primacy over any other constituency in
19 terms of the way the rules are applied. This is
20 a fundamental point. The whole point of this
21 exercise is to give parity of representation to
22 all Scottish citizens and it is a little bit more
23 than ironic if in attempting to do this the
24 Boundary Commission did not give parity to all
25 constituents in applying their own rules.

1 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: thank you very
2 much indeed. Ladies and gentlemen, any
3 questions for this person? Thank you for your
4 contribution .

5 MR BEEKMAN: Sheriff Principal, my name is
6 Tony Beekman and I am a humble delegate for
7 the Airdrie and Shotts constituency Labour
8 Party, although I am sure members of other
9 political parties will probably agree with much
10 of what I'm about to say. Bearing in mind your
11 request for brevity I will confine myself to four
12 main points, all in relation to rule No. 4 for
13 the Boundary Commission about local ties and
14 connections; one point about Airdrie, one
15 point about the events surrounding villages
16 and very briefly a point about Cumbernauld
17 and Coatbridge.

18 First of all on my Airdrie point I crave your
19 indulgence to introduce a small illustration
20 which brings out the point about the
21 community identity of Airdrie. Just down the
22 road from this very hall is the West End Park,
23 and there is a very old monumental fountain
24 that takes pride of place in the park to Provost
25 Robert Hamilton who became Provost of

1 Airdrie in 1868, and this Provost oversaw the
2 introduction of secret ballots in Airdrie and
3 who also founded the the Working-men's
4 Reading and Recreational Club. Now, this old
5 monument was found rusting somewhere and a
6 group of Airdrie volunteers lovingly restored it
7 so that it now stands in the middle of the West
8 End Park in pride of place. No, this is a nice
9 illustration of the fact that we have a historic
10 and continuing community and people take it
11 as an absolute insult to have that community
12 broken in 2. A very serious point that relates
13 to Provost Hamilton's wish to be involved in
14 public education of the citizens of Airdrie, and
15 this is very relevant to today. At the last
16 election I do remember senior citizens, many
17 infirm, who none the less struggled to the
18 polling stations to record their votes and some
19 of the senior citizens were terrified in case
20 they made a mistake because of the confusion
21 of the new voting system, but they made the
22 effort and duly went to the polling stations. I
23 would feel very sorry for those same senior
24 citizens facing more confusion and not
25 knowing what constituency they are in or even

1 feeling that they had been robbed of their
2 constituency, and some of the senior citizens
3 are the most dedicated of voters and I think it
4 is a shame to democracy to do this to them.

5 Now for the point about Airdrie and
6 surrounding villages. Another illustration is a
7 few years back a retired councillor and his pal
8 published a book – I think the proceeds were
9 going to the Airdrie Hospice – about the
10 villages of Airdrie, and this book has sold like
11 hot cakes in Airdrie, and that is an illustration
12 once again that the Airdrie and its surrounding
13 villages together form a community, and there
14 are strong ties of affection and family
15 connection between the villages of Airdrie and
16 Airdrie itself.

17 Now I move on to the Cumbernauld point
18 which connects with the villages point. The
19 idea of places like Plains and Caldercruix
20 being thrown into a Cumbernauld constituency
21 in no way meets the criterion about local ties.
22 To take an example someone on the road there
23 in Aitchison Street, a resident of Aitchison
24 Street, has probably never met a resident of
25 Abronhill in Cumbernauld. So, that connection

1 just is not there.

2 Finally, my last point is in relation to
3 Coatbridge. Someone earlier on today referred
4 to the fact that it is a shame that the Boundary
5 Commission proposals put one community at
6 odds with another community. So, I have every
7 respect for the people of Cumbernauld and
8 wish them well. I just don't want to see it
9 rejoined with Cumbernauld, and I have every
10 respect for the people of Coatbridge which is a
11 proud town with the first further education
12 college in Scotland. So there again Coatbridge
13 similar to Airdrie has a concern for public
14 education of the citizens. So, to have
15 Coatbridge as well disrupted and to have a bit
16 of Airdrie in with Coatbridge, once again that
17 is not good for democracy for people in
18 Airdrie and Coatbridge, to have that confusion
19 of what seat people are in. So, I would appeal
20 to you to rule as far as possible to preserve
21 local connections and retain the community of
22 Airdrie and help the surrounding communities
23 also.

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: ladies and
25 gentlemen, any questions? Thank you very

1 much.

2 MRS CULLEN: first of all can I congratulate Mr
3 Fleming for his very literate explanation of all
4 the different things that would be happening
5 and all the different divisions that were being
6 made or proposed to be made. It was very
7 interesting listening to him.

8 I am an Airdrieonian and I have been born and
9 bred. I was born here 70 years past. I have
10 worked in Airdrie for keeping our own
11 personality, our hospital and what-have-you.
12 We have won that battle and hopefully we will
13 win this one. I feel that this land commission
14 fiasco is depriving us of our identity. We're
15 very proud people who are really proud of the
16 fact that we are our Royal Burgh and we were
17 given the motto "vigilantibus" of which we will
18 be deprived if we join Coatbridge. Coatbridge
19 and Airdrie have absolutely no affinity with
20 each other, absolutely none whatsoever. A few
21 years ago we joined with the Monklands -
22 Airdrie joined with the Monklands, and since
23 that day Airdrie has deteriorated to such an
24 extent that Coatbridge has been built up and
25 built up with millions of pounds spent on it,

1 and it is obvious that a lot of the money and a
2 lot of the favour has been passed on to
3 Coatbridge and therefore Airdrie has been
4 virtually neglected in that respect. Our
5 councillors and our MPs and MSPs have all
6 done a good job. It doesn't matter what their
7 politics are. I can admire them regardless of
8 their politics and I can admire them for their
9 efforts, and I do admire Miss Whitefield for
10 what she said. Everything I have in my paper
11 here she has said. The fact that .. Airdrie
12 people would like to know when this proposed
13 change is on the cards and if it will be before
14 the next general election. This is things that
15 we would like to know. The people of Airdrie
16 would also like to say, whether we are giving
17 up our town called Airdrie and we will no
18 longer have a name. It will be Coatbridge, and
19 as I say Cumbernauld - is the Commissioner
20 going to run a bus service between Airdrie and
21 Cumbernauld for the people who wish to go
22 there because as such there is nothing for
23 people that can't get transport.

24 Another reason for this is if I visit my friends
25 on my side of the street, which is Craigneuk,

1 we are Airdrieonians football team. My friends
2 live across the road from me. So, I am working
3 five minutes across the road and that is my
4 friends who are in Coatbridge and when they
5 come to visit me they are crossing the same
6 road and they are going to be in Cumbernauld.
7 Now, to my mind the Commissioner has
8 defaulted in his geography at school, and I
9 would like him to come here until he knows
10 what he is talking about, to view the splits
11 that he is going to make and see the illogical
12 reasons for doing so, because it is an absolute
13 diabolical disgrace what he is trying to do.

14 That issue that all I have to say because as I
15 say other people have stolen my thunder.

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: well, as you can
17 appreciate there is a common theme, but you
18 put your position very well

19 MRS CULLEN: but we feel very strongly about
20 it. Thank you very much.

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I take it no one has
22 got any questions. Thank you very much
23 indeed.

24 MR SMITH: I am Bob Smith. I represent Airdrie
25 Activists Group. I am the Chair of the Airdrie

1 (sic) Ladies Forum. Obviously the theme that
2 has gone through this meeting today in actual
3 fact is echoed throughout all non-party-
4 political people on our activists side of which
5 Karen and David certainly expressed it very
6 well indeed. It is the oldest story in the book,
7 you know. We are not broke. So, don't try and
8 fix anything.

9 I would just read you a little bit about the
10 periodical review, the first periodical review.
11 This is from the Airdrie Activists Group. We
12 wish to lodge our strongest objection to the
13 reorganisation you propose for the Airdrie
14 and Shotts constituency. The proposals by
15 your Commission is to split Airdrie and Shotts.
16 In addition to this you also proposed to split
17 the ancient Burgh of Airdrie itself. Actually,
18 Ray, your comment about a Royal Burgh -
19 Airdrie was never a Royal Burgh. It was
20 actually the Burgh of Barony in 1821. That was
21 just an aside.

22 The constituency of part of Airdrie, Coatbridge
23 and a further part of Cumbernauld, gives no
24 cognisance of the community of the town. In
25 addition the proposal places Airdrie at a great

1 disadvantage that placing each half as a minor
2 player alongside other towns as Coatbridge
3 and Airdrie – in other words, the A73 is the
4 split. In David Fagan's ward in actual fact, the
5 Petersburn and Craigneuk area, basically the
6 major township or village-ship was first
7 brought in after the War and in fact I think it
8 was recognised as one of the largest buildings
9 taking place in the post-war period to house
10 the people of Airdrie from the tenement
11 buildings and this was started as I say post-
12 war and it is going to split that. Right up to
13 the top obviously will be going into
14 Cumbernauld whereas the pre-war scheme of
15 Gartlea in actual fact is going to Coatbridge.
16 For many years we have partnered Coatbridge,
17 but there is no doubt that we suffered badly
18 through the interests, as Ray was saying. In
19 actual fact we were treated as a second-class
20 township. It was proven in the early days of
21 the Monklands council that there was more
22 money spent per head of population in
23 Coatbridge than in Airdrie and that still I
24 believe is in existence today. Under the
25 guidelines you operate it clearly states the you

1 should recognise the existing community ties.
2 I don't see it that you in actual fact are
3 conducting that, looking at existing ties. It is
4 also stating that the constituency should be
5 wholly contained within a single council area
6 where practicable, and as has been previously
7 voiced this is not the case if this split went
8 ahead. Furthermore you have spread Shotts
9 over an area encompassing three local
10 authorities ..

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: not me. That is the
12 Boundary Commission. Let us be clear about
13 who is making the proposal.

14 MR SMITH: the split would encompass three
15 local authority areas. We consider also that
16 you have failed to understand that Airdrie and
17 Shotts have formed a very good working area
18 based over the years in co-operation with
19 historic associations and relationships like this
20 take a long time to develop and your proposal
21 is just looking to wreck it. By pairing the
22 largest part of Airdrie with Coatbridge you
23 would only succeed in reopening a period of
24 our past which none of us wants to visit again,
25 namely, the Monklandsgate. We understand

1 that the numbers and facts remain, that the
2 Airdrie and Shotts figure still meets the
3 requirements of the quota. So, why do we need
4 to be involved with going to Cumbernauld? We
5 have not any historical connection with
6 Cumbernauld – maybe more hysterical, but
7 certainly not historical. The bus situation of
8 recent years has been hysterical. The historical
9 side of it ended when Burroughs Machines
10 moved out of Cumbernauld, although at one
11 time it was an actual fact part of the East
12 Dunbartonshire side. We never had a
13 relationship with Cumbernauld and so we don't
14 have any relationship with it at all in the
15 future. The Shotts tie-up as with the village of
16 Salsburgh – historically they have always been
17 linked, and I am probably going back further
18 than probably most of you in actual fact,
19 showing my age. Shotts played in the local
20 football schools cup games – and I think that
21 they won it one year, but seriously they have
22 always had their education links described by
23 David and obviously Karen. The shopping links
24 such as we have got any of them still exist,
25 but the bus services are indiscriminate. This is

1 through no fault of the S P T, but certainly the
2 historic links with these towns and with the
3 villages of Salsburgh and Shotts has been
4 hysterical, especially when they couldn't get
5 the bus through because of the snow, and I
6 remember that well and many many days or
7 years before that in actual fact but now we
8 have global warming so we don't have the
9 same problem getting out of Shotts. This is
10 one of the things that as I say we have come
11 through our Monklandsgate and we don't want
12 to go further into another gate with the apathy
13 of the people of Airdrie in actual fact will once
14 again set in and from an electoral point of
15 view this is not a good thing. North
16 Lanarkshire Council recommendations in
17 actual fact quite clearly states that there will
18 be an overburden on the Coatbridge side and
19 there is just no way that it seems to tie in with
20 the actual moves to put in actual fact another
21 boundary change into us.

22 On transportation Airdrie is again a market
23 town and everything comes in to Airdrie as the
24 hub and hopefully it will still be the same.
25 Relative to transportation again Karen

1 mentioned the Bathgate line. Well, thankfully
2 Karen has taken up the cudgels up again as we
3 all did to get this line reopened to prove once
4 again that we needed out to get employment
5 which is important because we need to get out
6 to get employment to get the money back into
7 her down to spend our monies in our town and
8 so that it can flourish once again – let Airdrie
9 flourish. As I said before really if it ain't
10 broke, don't try and fix anything. It is there.
11 Just one word about the Coatbridge
12 amalgamation, shall we say, or possible
13 boundary. I in actual fact have Talk-Talk
14 telephone service with internet service as well
15 and the bill that I get through my door or in
16 the Airdrie lists Coatbridge as the number.
17 Check your bills when you go back. So, they
18 have already started it. Thank you.

19 A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC : I would just like to
20 put a point to you and this really goes to all
21 speakers who have spoken previous to you. A
22 number of years ago I was in a poetry group
23 called Men with Pens and we took part in a
24 project if you like Abbey at Airdrie Academy
25 School, and this involved a number of young

1 schoolchildren. The project was to do with
2 writing a book called "my ain toun". Now, you
3 would need to read some of the stories from
4 the children to know how much children,
5 actually what they thought of their town. Now,
6 surely as well as in the past and the present
7 we also need to take into account the future of
8 these children that love their town so much.
9 The copy is in the Airdrie Library .

10 MR SMITH: I appreciate that and in my work in
11 the volunteer section we do recognise the
12 youngsters and their efforts and David in
13 actual fact broached on that was not only adult
14 learning but Learning for our youngsters in a
15 particular ward, Ward 11, where we have been
16 very successful in focusing on many facilities
17 in the form of pens. We also produced a
18 facility for them to learn computer skills at the
19 local church. So, we have a lot of things there
20 that quite rightly so impact on education.

21 THE MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: just to interrupt,
22 my point was not actually on education. My
23 point was regarding the attitude that young
24 children have towards their own town, not as
25 much as learning, but to let you know that

1 they are actually concerned as well.

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: it is their future?

3 THE MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: yes.

4 MR SMITH: you learn from history. You don't
5 stay with history but you bring her back for
6 what.

7 MRS CULLEN: and can I say something there?
8 You mention something about the snow. I was
9 the church organist up in Shotts at the time
10 and see the camaraderie between the Shotts
11 people on the Airdrie people trying to get me
12 off! I can remember it well.

13 MR ACKLAND: Rod Ackland. I am the Vice
14 Convener of East Dunbartonshire Liberal
15 Democrats and the Convenor went to
16 Clydebank and I think that I got the better of
17 the bargain. Having seen the map over there I
18 think that I want to make it clear that I am not
19 briefed to speak on behalf of this submission
20 the Scottish Liberal Democrats have put in. I
21 was on the executive of the Scottish Liberal
22 Democrats for 12 years but I am not currently
23 a member. So, having seen Mr Tosh in action
24 this morning, if anybody wants questions on
25 that they're probably going to get faced with a

1 blank stare. All I am really to speak about is
2 the East Dunbartonshire Liberal-Democrats on
3 behalf of the two constituencies of Milngavie
4 and Bishopbriggs and Kirkintilloch Chryston
5 and Kilsyth. I think I would like to add to our
6 original submission in support of those two
7 seats explicit support for the decision to make
8 the cut point between West Dunbartonshire
9 and East Dunbartonshire. As the Sheriff
10 Principal, I suspect, is probably aware there
11 has been quite a flow of e-mails between us
12 and the clerks to the Commission assuring us
13 that Milngavie and Bearsden seat had been
14 deliberately omitted from those discussions
15 because it had been more or less accepted.
16 Well, having heard some of the submissions
17 this morning I hope that is correct, but if you
18 could pass on a warning on her behalf, Chair,
19 that should anything else prove to be the case
20 then there will be riots in the streets of
21 Bearsden and the Airdrie citizens will seem
22 mild-mannered by comparison. I think it is
23 important that we put that point in. Firstly up
24 by way of explanation of that I have been on
25 several occasions a candidate for the existing

1 constituency of Clydebank and Milngavie and it
2 is very clear to anyone that it is two different
3 worlds. You have one election going on in
4 Clydebank and one in Milngavie and nothing
5 that you say in Clydebank is reported in
6 Milngavie and vice versa. I think more or less
7 the universal opinion of the population over
8 there is that no one would worry if Clydebank
9 and Milngavie are sundered. There will be
10 very great disquiet if all that happens is that
11 Bearsden is slotted in with Clydebank in place
12 of Milngavie. Now, it is a natural boundary. It
13 makes sense to put the cut where the
14 Boundary Commission has put it and we are in
15 full support of that.

16 Moving over to the other end of East
17 Dunbartonshire to the seat of Kirkintilloch,
18 Chryston and Kilsyth – by the way, I will admit
19 responsibility for the map over there
20 suggesting the alternative name of
21 Kirkintilloch and Chryston Valley. Whether
22 anybody supports it is another matter but it
23 was me that thought of that because I thought
24 it was nice and more succinct. We have heard
25 much talk about whose Royal Burgh is the

1 oldest and so I cannot resist putting in the
2 point that Kirkintilloch's Royal Burgh Charter
3 is supposed to be so old that nobody is quite
4 sure which King signed it. Rumours have it
5 that it was either Macbeth or Duncan. It has
6 been around quite a long time, and
7 consequently boundaries through the middle
8 of a town that old would not go down too well
9 with the local populace. We have tremendous
10 sympathy with Airdrie. Over in East
11 Dunbartonshire we understand these
12 problems. We have had a fluctuating boundary
13 through Bearsden for something like 30 years.
14 We have had a boundary through the centre of
15 Lenzie where I live which is a pretty small town
16 for about 20 years and we are very relieved
17 that the present plans managed to keep all our
18 towns in one piece. We have tremendous
19 sympathy with other towns who are being split
20 in exchange, but .. well, you have our
21 sympathy but ultimately we are delighted with
22 the result of that in our part of the world.

23 I first cut my political teeth in 1982 in the
24 Strathclyde regional elections and I was
25 standing for the division of Chryston and

1 Kelvin Valley, and I can assure you that at that
2 stage – I don't think things have changed very
3 much since, but then Chryston and Kelvin
4 Valley which is essentially what we now call
5 Chryston plus South Lenzie and Milton of
6 Campsie, both of which have already been
7 taken into East Dunbartonshire, it was
8 regarded as the natural partner to the
9 Kirkintilloch and Lenzie Division next door, so
10 natural that in that election the hustings for
11 both seats were in one hall because it was the
12 most convenient place for all the people in
13 Kirkintilloch, Lenzie, Moodiesburn, Stepps and
14 all the other towns there to get to, and it was
15 universally accepted at the time.

16 Moving over after that I stood twice since then
17 in what was first called Monklands West and
18 has now turned into Coatbridge and Chryston
19 and again while that did not strike me as quite
20 as sundered a seat as Clydebank and Milngavie
21 it was certainly very much a case of two
22 worlds. I even on one occasion saw Tom Clarke
23 being handed over from one set of minders to
24 another when he crossed the boundary from
25 Coatbridge territory to Chryston territory. I

1 think that North Lanarkshire council are a bit
2 disingenuous in latching on to that boundary.
3 For a start it is a fairly recent boundary line
4 and I think that we need to remember that it
5 was a boundary line that was very much
6 created by politicians, not a Boundary
7 Commission. And should anybody who was
8 around at the time will remember the disquiet
9 of all political parties at just what was
10 happening in drawing that boundary line
11 arbitrarily across Strathkelvin to sunder off the
12 Kelvin Valley from the rest of Strathkelvin and
13 into North Lanarkshire . I don't think it is a
14 boundary line that the Boundary Commission
15 should take too much notice of. The Boundary
16 Commissioners I think do a better job of in-
17 depth analysis in drawing boundary lines than
18 politicians do. Sooner or later somebody will
19 probably have to revisit those council lines,
20 but that is what that boundary line came from
21 and I suspect quite a lot of people present
22 remember that.

23 The towns and villages around there and the
24 local press more or less decided to ignore
25 that. If you want to find out what is going on

1 in the villages of Gartcosh, Moodiesburn or
2 whatever, you turn to the Kirkintilloch Herald.
3 You do not turn to the Coatbridge Press. The
4 towns and villages of the area have looked to
5 Kirkintilloch for I dare say almost two
6 centuries. When you're dealing with small
7 towns and villages they're always naturally
8 known to be nervous of the Big Brother town
9 just down the road which they have to join in
10 with and if you took a survey around there I
11 don't think you would find greater antagonism
12 to Kirkintilloch than you would to
13 Cumbernauld or Coatbridge.

14 Looking further upstream to Kilsyth I totally
15 grant that Kilsyth does not have the same
16 natural affinity with Kirkintilloch, but that
17 said, the coaching road that has now become
18 the A803 is has been a pretty natural link for
19 centuries and I suspect if we did do a survey
20 we would probably find that more of the
21 citizens of Kilsyth were coming down that road
22 through Kirkintilloch towards Glasgow than
23 heading in the direction of any of the other
24 towns in the area but I haven't done that
25 survey and so we cannot prove it. I totally take

1 Rose McKenna's point about the natural links
2 between Kilsyth and Milton and Lennoxton,
3 the hill towns that were brought into the mix
4 in Strathclyde from Stirlingshire. They have a
5 natural affinity, yes. People from Lennoxton
6 and Milton attend schools in Kilsyth but I think
7 that link cuts both ways. It was being used this
8 morning to suggest that the East
9 Dunbartonshire towns should be taken in with
10 Kilsyth into the North Lanarkshire-based
11 constituency. From our point of view we think
12 it is perfectly natural to do it the other way
13 and Kilsyth can come in with the other hill
14 towns. There is an affinity out there. It is a
15 question of how you satisfy it. Our opinion
16 differs from North Lanarkshire. We leave it to
17 the Commissioners to sort out.

18 One last point I would throw in on
19 communications. You may not be aware but
20 the Kirkintilloch Relief Link Road, as it is
21 called, though those of us in Lenzie
22 universally call it the Lenzie by-pass - has
23 now been started, which will link Kirkintilloch
24 into the M80/A80 which means that probably
25 by the time the next election is held and

1 certainly by the time they it representatives
2 have to get round their constituents there will
3 be very effective road and I hope public-
4 transport links from the towns along the A80
5 in the Kelvin area to Kirkintilloch. It may not
6 be connected now but they will be by the time
7 the come into that new era.

8 Just to summarise the opinion of East
9 Dunbartonshire it is that we think that a
10 natural cut which was the first decision by the
11 Boundary Commission has led in our part of
12 the world to 2 totally natural constituencies
13 which certainly appears - longer than my
14 memory goes back in the area - it is the first
15 time that we have not seen any boundaries
16 cutting through any of the towns or across
17 open country. I know that this is not the same
18 elsewhere. People who are having their towns
19 split have our sympathy, but we have got
20 natural communities in a natural setting.

21 COUNCILLOR FAGAN: given the criteria that
22 you have used in forming your opinion and
23 your satisfaction with the proposals for Lenzie
24 and the surrounding areas, do you think that
25 the proposals for Airdrie are satisfactory?

1 MR ACKLAND: the way you phrase the question
2 you are leading me through it, but no, my
3 party believes in communities, that you try to
4 keep communities together and they vote
5 together and no, from the standpoint I am
6 coming from, no, I do not like what is
7 happening to a great, but that is not my brief.
8 We have seen too much trouble this morning
9 with people trying to come up with solutions
10 for other people's areas and I'm not going to
11 fall into that trap.

12 MR FLEMING: a couple of questions, Mr
13 Ackland. I was conscious that I'm not a
14 resident of East Dunbartonshire or Lenzie but
15 another gentleman here today was and he
16 expressed a view that there were really no
17 links whatsoever between Kirkintilloch, the
18 communities of Chryston, Millerston,
19 Moodiesburn etc. Was he totally wrong in that?

20 MR ACKLAND well, I hesitate to say that
21 anybody is totally wrong, but I had an
22 opportunity to speak to him at the interval and
23 we agreed to disagree with that. I think I
24 made clear as somebody who lives in Lenzie
25 and has stood as a candidate in the Chryston

1 Valley I think that they are natural partners.

2 MR FLEMING: so, while we appreciate that it
3 can only be your view you would accept that it
4 is a view not universally shared in Lenzie?

5 MR ACKLAND: no view is universally shared in
6 any community.

7 MR FLEMING: I think that you mentioned about
8 the recent nature of the boundaries. The old
9 county of Dumbartonshire embraced I think
10 both West Dumbartonshire and East
11 Dumbartonshire. Is that not the case?

12 MR ACKLAND: yes, but I have only lived up
13 here for 30 years and that was before my time.
14 When I came in you had what was called the
15 Dumbartonshire sub-region of Strathclyde, but
16 if you can remember that Bishopbriggs came in
17 from Lanarkshire and Milton, Lennoxton, and
18 Kilsyth came in from Stirling. The old East and
19 West Dumbartonshire was two different
20 universes. There was no way of driving from
21 one end to the other end.

22 MR FLEMING: so, what you had was probably a
23 centuries-old boundary and centuries-old
24 links with Dumbartonshire perpetuated
25 through Strathclyde region by the Dumbarton

1 subdivision and therefore fairly close links,
2 fairly traditional links, between West and East
3 Dunbartonshire?

4 MR ACKLAND: if I can digress slightly, in 1984
5 I remember having a long discussion in the
6 local paper with a gentleman who
7 subsequently became leader of Strathkelvin
8 Council, Councillor Charles Kennedy - no
9 connection to my party's Charles Kennedy -
10 about whether or not we should have a ward
11 named after the feudal Gartshore Estates, the
12 ancestral home of the Whitelaw family. The
13 reason I am saying that is I think that that is
14 what you are alluding to. Yes, and a guy
15 opened the door with a charter with the King's
16 signature on it but I don't really think we need
17 to worry too much about counties that were
18 essentially reflecting which family was more
19 important in the eyes of the King of Scotland
20 who gave them their fiefdom. I think the
21 divisions of Strathclyde were more natural in
22 terms of administrative boundaries. The old
23 Dumbarton was very unnatural.

24 MR FLEMING: and I think that you mentioned
25 also about the Lanark county boundary. Are

1 you aware of whether Lanark County boundary
2 lay in that area ?

3 MR ACKLAND: the answer is No. I believe that
4 in Lenzie it went slightly south of the railway
5 line and then moved up to the railway line and
6 the road but again that is before my time.

7 MR FLEMING: so, this really ties in with North
8 Lanarkshire Council submissions that in fact
9 areas of Lenzie do have fairly long-standing
10 and indeed centuries-old links with
11 Lanarkshire and indeed the areas of Chryston,
12 Neilston etc which were all part of Lanarkshire
13 .

14 MR ACKLAND: well, I think the point is the area
15 in which Lenzie now stands was part of
16 Lanarkshire. Yes, that is indisputable, but
17 easily two-thirds or possibly three-quarters of
18 South Lenzie which is the portion that was in
19 Lanarkshire was not built 30 years ago. It was
20 part of the major expansion of those years. So,
21 whether we should lump the people who now
22 live in those houses with the fact of what the
23 ground underneath the houses belonged to
24 before they were born and they moved there ..

25 MR FLEMING: the final question, which you

1 would be perfectly entitled to duck but as a
2 matter of principle I am sure you won't; you
3 speak about the severing of communities. Is
4 your view that it is justified to take and
5 jettison the two Clydebank wards from their
6 surrounding land area and attach them across
7 the Clyde estuary?

8 MR ACKLAND: I will try to be perfectly honest
9 with you. My brief is to make the point that we
10 don't think it is natural to join them with
11 Bearsden and Milngavie with which they have
12 very little sociologically in common nowadays.
13 I think that nowadays .. okay, we are crossing
14 the Clyde but you are crossing the Clyde on a
15 bridge which the Toll has now been abolished
16 on and I doubt if it is much more difficult to
17 get across that bridge – certainly I have never
18 had any trouble travelling from one side to the
19 other – than it is to get across Glasgow. In
20 fact, it is a lot easier.

21 MR FLEMING: so, am I being a tad uncharitable
22 in summarising your view as that anybody
23 could have these wards as long as you don't?

24 MR ACKLAND: I think that I would refer back to
25 what I said earlier on, that I'm not going to

1 make plans for other people's areas.

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: the point is that
3 you are happy with the present arrangement?

4 MR ACKLAND: I am only speak you for East
5 Dunbartonshire area but we are in full support
6 of what is proposed for that area.

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: so, if it was the
8 other way around and it was Airdrie who were
9 keeping their boundaries and you had been
10 carved up you would be in the same position
11 as the people who are here before us? Where is
12 it equitable than the line should be drawn – is
13 that right?

14 MR ACKLAND: well, I have seen them the other
15 way. There was a time when I stood for a
16 Coatbridge seat and the southern end of
17 Coatbridge was in the Airdrie constituency
18 and people were not too happy about that
19 either. Ideally – again I don't want to lay into
20 other people – but the line I think that there is
21 a very natural link between Coatbridge and
22 Airdrie but I realise that this is restricted by
23 the numbers game.

24 COUNCILLOR ROSS: I am intrigued by the fact
25 you're using the word "sociological" in relation

1 to the two wards of Clydebank that had been
2 referred to. I take it what you are trying to get
3 at there is that they are a different social class
4 from the wards of Bearsden and Milngavie and
5 that is why you don't think that they fit?

6 MR ACKLAND: I realise that I was having
7 trouble with the word when I spoke there. The
8 line is not exactly there, if you want to pursue
9 it. It is actually further over at Hardgate which
10 has a lot more in common with Bearsden and
11 Milngavie than it does with Clydebank, but it is
12 more to the point that "sociological" was the
13 wrong word, but people in Bearsden and
14 Milngavie do not shop in Clydebank. People
15 from Clydebank do not shop over in Bearsden
16 and Milngavie. They do not use each other's
17 leisure facilities. There is remarkably little
18 cross-traffic between the two communities.

19 COUNCILLOR ROSS: I am intrigued that
20 someone who is here with a brief to speak
21 purely on the East Dunbartonshire end of
22 things, that you now claim to have such
23 substantial evidence on sociological trends in
24 Western Dunbartonshire. Certainly I have
25 friends in the Clydebank area and I know that

1 they use facilities throughout West
2 Dunbartonshire and into East Dunbartonshire
3 as well and I was just intrigued at the
4 standpoint that you take there.

5 MR ACKLAND: we are both ..

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think "noted" is
7 the answer there. Thank you very much . That
8 is very helpful. I am much obliged, Mr Ackland.

9 MR ROLINK: good afternoon, Sheriff Principal.
10 First of all it would be very remiss of me not
11 to say I do have an affinity with Coatbridge,
12 especially Albion Rovers. I am still wallowing
13 in the 6-1 victory on Saturday. All my efforts
14 are concentrated on the town of Airdrie. I must
15 admit that I have found today quite surprising
16 on two fronts. First of all I am surprised at the
17 empathy shown by yourself and I think that is
18 down to the fact that a lot of the arguments
19 being displayed today have been very natural
20 arguments and very straightforward and
21 spoken with real passion. The second thing
22 that has somewhat surprised me is the lack of
23 anger from some of the people speaking here
24 today because my first reaction when I saw
25 these Boundary Commission proposals was

1 utter anger on two lines. First of all how
2 could they get it so wrong? How could people
3 appointed by Scottish Ministers makes such a
4 glaring error as they have done in these
5 proposals? Second there, why does Airdrie
6 once again have to be the town that takes it on
7 the chin? I don't see why we, the people of
8 Airdrie, should have to be considered a bit of
9 putty to be manipulated and used and put in
10 such a fashion that we can accommodate other
11 people without spoiling their democratic
12 process where ours is equally as important. I
13 will make my point very very brief. First of all,
14 the only links between here and Cumbernauld
15 are for those people who do orienteering and
16 are prepared to go out in the wild country with
17 a map so that they can actually get there.
18 There is absolutely no link between ourselves
19 and Cumbernauld. Airdrie and Shotts too - at
20 the age of 18 I worked in Shotts at Hartwood
21 Hospital and there has been a big connection
22 between people from Airdrie and Shotts for a
23 number of years and I think that the
24 constituency has worked very well since its
25 inception, but I think the most important point

1 for me in all of this is the fact that if the town
2 of Airdrie is split up we lose the most
3 fundamental democratic right that anyone has,
4 and that is the right for us to elect a champion
5 to serve us in a Scottish parliament every five
6 years, and I know that Karen does that at the
7 moment and whether you voted for her and
8 support her or not the fact of the matter is
9 that we have the great honour of having
10 someone who specifically represents us, the
11 people of Airdrie and Shotts, in our own
12 parliament in Scotland. The minute you divide
13 this town you divide the impact and effect that
14 that representation has. That would cost us
15 jobs, inward investment, and also costs us our
16 identity as a town. Consider the fact that the
17 Airdrie is so strategically placed between
18 Glasgow and Edinburgh off the M8. I believe
19 the town has got a bright future and part of
20 that future is people like Karen and our other
21 champions and local authorities carrying on
22 the good work we have done in promoting this
23 town and bringing more jobs and more inward
24 investment. This Boundary Commission
25 proposal would jeopardise that and would put

1 the future of my children and my children's
2 children in danger and I am not prepared to
3 accept that, and neither are most of the people
4 I have spoken to regarding this issue.

5 The other point is regarding the community.
6 We recently had a battle on our hands in this
7 area in a fight to keep Monklands casualty
8 unit opened. The whole town united as one
9 and we united as one as a community to fight
10 that battle. Now, if the town was split in two
11 we could have the prospect of one MSP in one
12 part of Airdrie supporting the closure and one
13 MSP in another part of Airdrie not supporting
14 the closure. That would do no-one any good.
15 It would give us a democratic deficit and for
16 me that point alone shows how wrong the
17 Commission has got the proposal here today
18 for this new constituency. I would like to finish
19 off by saying, to endorse what was said earlier
20 on; if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Airdrie is a
21 town on the up. We are going places. We're
22 happy with the way things are. The community
23 is starting to bind together more than ever
24 before. Housing is picking up in the area.
25 Education is picking up. We want the town to

1 move forward and we want it to grow and we
2 have a bright future for our children but one
3 way of ensuring that this to protect the status
4 quo. One way of jeopardising that is by this
5 proposal from the boundary commission if you
6 accept it .

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: thank you very
8 much indeed. Any questions?

9 A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: I would like to put a
10 question to yourself and to all the MSPs and
11 members of the council etc. It is to do with the
12 police force. I am actually ex-police. I was in
13 the police a number of years ago and I know
14 that there has been a number of cases thrown
15 out of the courts by the judge by police that
16 have arrested somebody outwith their area,
17 like somebody in Coatbridge arresting
18 somebody in Airdrie. Now, surely if there is
19 more towns divided into more parts it would
20 put the police at a bigger stretch?

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: well, I cannot give
22 you a dissertation on the law. I am here to act
23 as a Commissioner and I cannot tell you the
24 grounds on which people get discharged from
25 the courts, but I appreciate that and I maybe

1 have some sympathy with a particular case but
2 it is not really relevant as you appreciate to
3 what we're dealing with, although I understand
4 you.. The more confusion, the more difficulty
5 and the more bad men get off, which we don't
6 want. I understand. Thank you very much for
7 your contribution.

8 That just leaves Mr Tosh who was purposely
9 kept to last. Does anybody else want to make a
10 contribution at this stage?

11 MR GRUNDY: just myself, Sir.

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER Yes, I have you
13 listed together. This is a presentation on
14 behalf of the Conservative Party. Are you
15 leading, Mr Grundy?

16 MR GRUNDY: my name is James Grundy and I
17 am here representing the Scottish
18 Conservative and Unionist Party. I was formerly
19 the Conservatives' head of local government in
20 Scotland at the time of this consultation being
21 carried out and I was heavily engaged in a
22 production of the technical aspects of a
23 response to the Commission's provisional
24 recommendations. I am here largely to put the
25 technical case on our counter-proposals. So, I

1 do apologise if I cannot answer one or two of
2 the community questions that I am asked but I
3 am sure that Mr Tosh will be able to deal with
4 that. I'm just going to start off with what we
5 propose as regards the groupings. We do have
6 a lot of sympathy for what has been said today
7 by many members of the public and the
8 political parties. I would refer to page 8 of our
9 submissions and I will start off with West
10 Lothian. I do apologise to many of the people
11 today who are more concerned with places like
12 Airdrie but this is part of this particular
13 Inquiry and so I shall try to be as brief as
14 possible.

15 In effect we oppose, as do I believe all the
16 parties, the grouping of West Lothian council
17 with North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire,
18 East Dunbartonshire, East Ayrshire and South
19 Ayrshire. We note that West Lothian council
20 has an electorate of 122,893 electors. That
21 would give a theoretical electorate amounting
22 to 2.25 constituencies. Obviously that is too
23 many for just two constituencies on its own. It
24 does need to be grouped with somewhere and
25 so we support the decision of the Commission

1 to combine the local authority with other
2 council areas for the purposes of allocating
3 constituencies and we feel this is consistent
4 with the application of Rule 2 of the
5 constituency rules, and I shall not go into the
6 full lengthy title of those rules. We oppose the
7 decision of the Commission to combine this
8 local authority in a proposed grouping,
9 namely, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire,
10 East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council areas
11 for the purposes of allocating constituencies
12 as we feel this is not consistent with the
13 application of Rule 1/1 and Rule 2/1 and Rule
14 4 A and Rule 4 B of the constituency rules in
15 Appendix A, Schedule 1, of the Scotland Act
16 and so on and so forth. We partially support
17 the decision of the Commission to combine the
18 local authorities in a proposed grouping,
19 namely, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire,
20 East Dunbartonshire, East Ayrshire and South
21 Ayrshire as we feel this is consistent with the
22 rules and we propose however that the
23 grouping be split into two separate groupings,
24 namely, South Lanarkshire, East Ayrshire and
25 South Ayrshire and East Dunbartonshire and

1 North Lanarkshire. It is worth noting actually
2 that if you combine just North Lanarkshire
3 and East Dunbartonshire they have a combined
4 electorate of 330,843, giving a theoretical
5 entitlement to 6.25 seats, and we propose that
6 this part of the grouping should be allocated
7 six constituencies. Basically as regards West
8 Lothian obviously that is combined here as
9 part of the wider grouping that includes the
10 authorities already mentioned and in terms of
11 numbers it seems to come out very well as an
12 entitlement of 16.07 constituencies. On the
13 basis of the mathematics that looks great but
14 we feel that all the inclusion of West Lothian
15 in this grouping actually does is it doesn't
16 address the disparity in electorate at the
17 western end of the grouping, ie the Ayrshire
18 end, but it does cause a great deal of
19 disruption in Lanarkshire, and it also does as
20 has been previously mentioned by other
21 people create rather unnatural-looking
22 constituencies.

23 I shall now transfer to our specific counter-
24 proposal for West Lothian. We propose that
25 West Lothian and Falkirk be linked and in

1 addition the proposal linking it with
2 Clackmannanshire and Stirling which between
3 them would give a theoretical entitlement of
4 6.19 constituencies and we propose that the
5 grouping be allocated six constituencies. This
6 is because of the established link between
7 West Lothian and Falkirk in the allocation of
8 Westminster seats which in that case a
9 grouping of West Lothian and Falkirk was
10 supported whereas obviously here an attempt
11 to put North Lanarkshire with West Lothian is
12 very much opposed. I do not know of anyone
13 who seems to support it. We realise however
14 that Falkirk is entitled to two seats pretty
15 much on its own. It is worth noting at the
16 other end of a proposed grouping that if you
17 only group as the Commission proposed to do
18 Clackmannanshire with Stirling those two seats
19 have an electorate at the very low end of what
20 the Commission has considered acceptable.
21 They are only just above 50,000 or
22 thereabouts, and we know that the
23 Commission has not proposed any
24 constituency of under 50,000, and so in effect
25 you can transfer the excess electorates of West

1 Lothian through Falkirk as has been done at
2 the Westminster Review and then go through
3 Falkirk to combine the top end of Falkirk
4 which of course is historically part of
5 Stirlingshire with Stirling and Clackmannan.
6 Clackmannanshire is the smallest mainland
7 county and we notice that it is a three-
8 authority solution, and somewhere in Scotland
9 there would be a three-authority solution and
10 it is worth noting that historically
11 Clackmannanshire has been part of the three-
12 authority solution and we realise that this
13 departure here where it is proposed to
14 combine West Lothian with North Lanarkshire
15 and South Lanarkshire when the Commission
16 are proposing a three-authority solution - we
17 note that it is remarkably unpopular and I
18 don't think that there is any part of any local
19 authority of which it is comprised that
20 supports it. I don't think there is any great
21 groundswell of support from local people or
22 elected representatives for any of the three
23 components of that seat and I think it has
24 been referred to by Margaret Mitchell, the
25 Conservative MSP for Central Scotland as

1 "Frankenstein's monster".

2 Not only does it comprise parts of the three
3 separate local authorities, it comprises parts
4 of three different Scottish parliament regions,
5 namely part of the Lothians region, part of the
6 South of Scotland region and part of central
7 Scotland region. So, at the minute you have
8 got about 24 MSPs – and that is just MSPs –
9 who can lay claim to some part of this
10 territory. It does feel like rather an unnatural
11 seat and we do feel that there are other
12 alternatives to this and as we say we cannot
13 find anyone who supports the current Lanark
14 Shotts and Whitburn constituency.

15 Just moving quickly on, I won't go into great
16 detail on that Falkirk Stirling and
17 Clackmannanshire link because obviously it is
18 not of interest to most of the people here
19 today but I am happy to take questions on it
20 should anyone wish to do so.

21 Moving swiftly on, just briefly at Page 13, sir,
22 we note that as regards the Commission's
23 proposed Milngavie and Bishopbriggs seat
24 basically once again just as about everyone
25 seems to oppose the proposed Lanark, Shotts

1 and Whitburn seat this seat seems to have
2 gathered almost universal support as a very
3 natural combination of communities and in
4 fact the only submissions are regarding the
5 seat seem to be that people are suggesting a
6 slight change of name because the seat
7 contains Bearsden which is the largest
8 community in that proposed constituency and
9 we are going along with what everyone else
10 seems to be suggesting, which is that the seat
11 may be changed from Milngavie and
12 Bishopbriggs to Bearsden, Milngavie and
13 Bishopbriggs.

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: there seems to be
15 general agreement about that.

16 MR GRUNDY: and just briefly since it has been
17 raised at the Clydebank and Paisley Inquiries,
18 there was only one gentleman there who
19 briefly referred to it - and there was a
20 gentleman from the Liberal Democrats, but
21 there has been no great support for the
22 combination of Bearsden and Clydebank but I
23 should point out that such a link would be
24 entirely artificial. It would combine chalk and
25 cheese, which I believe are the exact words

1 that I used at the Clydebank Inquiry. As I say,
2 the only person there who attended from East
3 Dunbartonshire was vehemently against it.

4 Moving on to North Lanarkshire, by sheer
5 coincidence ..

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: what page is that?

7 MR GRUNDY: this is page 30, sir. May I just
8 briefly refer to North Hamilton and Bellshill.
9 Obviously I am going to save the majority of
10 the South Lanarkshire submissions for the
11 Inquiry in South Lanarkshire. North Hamilton
12 and Bellshill constituency as proposed by the
13 Commission – because as I have already noted
14 North Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire
15 have an almost exact entitlement to six season
16 so we feel

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: just a minute. Are
18 you adding a bit into your submission here?

19 MR GRUNDY: no.

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: because I'm not
21 following you here.

22 MR GRUNDY: no, page 30, so, three-quarters
23 of the way down the heading is North
24 Lanarkshire council area and East
25 Dunbartonshire Council area and the statistic I

1 have just referred to was from the earlier part
2 of our submission regarding the specific
3 groupings on individual seats.

4 The Commission's proposed North Hamilton
5 and Bellshill Burgh constituency, we note that
6 it is entirely possible to draw six seats just
7 within the combined Council area of North
8 Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire. So,
9 therefore we would look to draw attention to
10 Rule 1 so far as is practicable that regard must
11 be had to the boundaries of local authority
12 areas. So, we would modify that constituency
13 to create a Motherwell North and Bellshill
14 constituency which would be very similar to
15 the historic Motherwell North constituency
16 which existed until the 1997 election. The
17 quota of this constituency would be 56,610
18 electors approximately - and I say
19 approximately because postcodes have been
20 used to create new constituencies and in
21 certain cases they overlap the ideal boundary
22 and so it may be one or two electors out but it
23 will be no more than at maximum 100
24 electors. We cannot be exactly sure whether
25 the Commission will be tidying that up should

1 our counter-proposals be accepted.
2 Our second counter-proposal is as regards the
3 Motherwell and Wishaw Burgh constituency. We
4 propose a Motherwell South, Wishaw and
5 Shotts constituency. Now, we propose that
6 Fortissat, Ward 12, be included in this
7 constituency rather than the proposed Lanark,
8 Shotts and Whitburn constituency and this is
9 because, as already had been referred to by Mr
10 Tosh, it was historically part of the Motherwell
11 District Council.

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: are you saying that
13 Shotts should go to Motherwell and not
14 Airdrie?

15 MR GRUNDY: yes, on the basis that it was
16 historically a part of the Motherwell local
17 authority before North Lanarkshire came into
18 effect barring the small settlement of
19 Salsburgh as has been already mentioned.

20 Then, because we are proposing quite radical
21 changes to a number of the other
22 constituencies we have grouped our counter-
23 proposals for Coatbridge and central Airdrie,
24 Cumbernauld and East Airdrie and
25 Kirkintilloch, Kilsyth and Chryston. We have

1 proposed a slightly different combination of
2 communities based largely on the existing
3 constituencies. In effect – and where to start
4 off .. we have already discussed the extant link
5 between North Lanarkshire and East
6 Dunbartonshire and Lenzie area. That we know
7 does exist. The Coatbridge and Chryston
8 constituency is the current cross-authority
9 constituency, and so in effect we are going to
10 propose a Coatbridge and Kirkintilloch
11 constituency as a natural successor seat to
12 this constituency. This would have a total
13 electorate of 56,253 which is obviously well
14 within quota, albeit an acceptable deviation
15 from quota, I should say, and the natural
16 knock-on effect of this .. I believe that we are
17 proposing an almost identical seat to what the
18 Labour Party are proposing, to take in the
19 Campsies in effect and Lennoxton, Milton of
20 Campsie etc and combine those with the
21 current Cumbernauld and Kilsyth constituency.
22 We propose a slight difference of name. We
23 propose to call the constituency Cumbernauld,
24 Kilsyth and Campsie, but I believe it is almost
25 indistinguishable from what the Labour Party

1 have proposed and I believe that that has been
2 spoken of extremely well by the local
3 representatives and so I'm not going to go into
4 the detail of that. Just as previously mentioned
5 it takes the Campsie part of the country and
6 Kirkintilloch North Ward, leaving the remainder
7 of Kirkintilloch to be included in our proposed
8 Coatbridge and Kirkintilloch constituency. This
9 constituency would have an electorate of
10 55,610 electors approximately.

11 Finally this leaves our final constituency. We
12 have a great deal of sympathy with local
13 people as regards the division of Airdrie. It is
14 true that across Scotland many towns are
15 divided. They are normally divided in fairly
16 equitable East/West or North/South divisions.
17 However, we think the way that the
18 Commission has proposed to divide Airdrie is
19 an extremely unnatural way and there is a
20 better division, and we propose that all of
21 Airdrie be combined in one constituency. The
22 constituency we propose to create is Airdrie
23 and Old Monklands constituency, which takes
24 the areas of parts of Coatbridge that were in
25 Monklands East constituency. This

1 constituency would have a total electorate of
2 57,674 electors.

3 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I imagine that that
4 is a mistake. It should be Coatbridge East, I
5 take it, because you have already the
6 Coatbridge West in your proposed constituency
7 of Coatbridge and Kirkintilloch. Isn't that
8 right? As I understand it you go through
9 Coatbridge East and ..

10 MR GRUNDY: I don't think.... I will have to
11 check the Ward remains briefly, sir. The wards
12 are I believe Coatbridge itself, Coatbridge
13 North and Glenboig, Coatbridge West,
14 Coatbridge South ..

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: you believe that
16 there is not a Coatbridge East?

17 MR GRUNDY: I shall check on that if I may.

18 MR TOSH: the wards are No. 6, Coatbridge
19 North and Glenboig, No. 9, Coatbridge West
20 and No. 10, Coatbridge South.

21 MR GRUNDY: and there is not an equivalent ..

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: so that would
23 appear, what you are suggesting is that Airdrie
24 should all be kept together?

25 MR GRUNDY: yes.

1 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: but you are
2 dividing up Coatbridge?

3 MR GRUNDY: yes.

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: you understand my
5 concern?

6 MR GRUNDY: yes, I understand, sir.

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: if this had been
8 going out for consultation the people of
9 Coatbridge might have been in the position in
10 which the Airdrie people are in?

11 MR GRUNDY: that is entirely possible, sir. The
12 issue is – and this is why we are standing here
13 today, but because of the groupings that have
14 been used it is almost impossible .. I believe it
15 is impossible – to draw up seats in North
16 Lanarkshire that don't include combining
17 either some part of the Airdrie with Coatbridge
18 or some part of Coatbridge with Airdrie
19 because of the electoral geography of the local
20 authority. You have a substantial number of
21 large towns in close proximity to each other
22 and so I have no doubt the Commission when
23 faced with drawing up these constituencies did
24 indeed think long and hard about which
25 communities to divide. I can see why they have

1 gone with what they have gone for, but I think
2 that it is a rather unnatural divide. As I
3 previously said, many towns are divided across
4 Scotland – Paisley, Perth, Falkirk for example,
5 and it is just often about finding the best
6 split, and when specifically referring to the
7 rules I do agree with the vast majority of what
8 most people have said today, but I think that
9 they have done themselves a disservice by
10 relying on Rule 4, the breaking of local ties,
11 because that would make almost any boundary
12 review impossible because on any review some
13 ties must be broken by the nature of the
14 change in levels of population. So therefore we
15 have been able to achieve most of what had
16 been wanted by local people by applying the
17 rules and that is why the argument moves on
18 to with regard to local authority boundaries
19 and the quota. The simple truth is that quota
20 must be reflected and that is because there
21 are a fixed number of constituencies. So, to
22 have one constituency substantially undersized
23 means that another constituency somewhere
24 else must be substantially oversized and the
25 irony is that the person who wrote these

1 ruules as we are working with them now it was
2 one Helen Liddell who I believe was the local
3 MP and Secretary of State for Scotland at the
4 time the rules were reviewed in 2004. So, I
5 suspect that some people might find that
6 rather ironic.

7 So, that is in effect the conclusion to a
8 technical case and I am happy to take
9 questions.

10 COUNCILLOR ROSS: I thank you very much,
11 Sheriff Principal, for the opportunity to put
12 questions to the Conservative representative.
13 Having heard both the Liberal Democrats and
14 from yourselves I do sometimes wonder what
15 the poor people of Clydebank have done to
16 deserve the abuse that you and they have been
17 heaping up on them and perhaps the cynic in
18 me suggests that it is perhaps that the people
19 Clydebank choose to vote a different way and
20 that may be part of the reason why the
21 proposals you put forward are as they are.
22 Having looked through the extract of your
23 submissions that are pertinent today and the
24 area that we're looking at today one thing that
25 disturbs me most about the way you have put

1 together your submission as opposed to the
2 nature of it is up as the number of wards
3 where you have (Part) afterwards. Not only are
4 you proposing throughout your submissions to
5 rip some of the local communities apart, but
6 you are even proposing to go down to some of
7 the neighbourhoods themselves which are
8 already constituted as electoral wards and rip
9 them to pieces as well. I note that you use the
10 term "historic" when referring to Motherwell
11 North, but I would put it to you that there is
12 nothing historic about Motherwell North.
13 Motherwell North was a seat that existed for
14 20 or so years from the 1970s to the 1990s
15 and what is historic is the re-creation of
16 Motherwell and Wishaw as it is, represented by
17 Frank Roy. That is where the real history lies
18 there. What you are proposing to do is to take
19 the Motherwell town centre out of Motherwell
20 North and put it into a seat which is
21 predominantly a Wishaw seat. If this had been
22 - and you have already hinted at it - on the
23 cards at the beginning there would not just be
24 a busload here from Airdrie. There would be a
25 busload here from Wishaw, a busload here

1 from Motherwell, to go with a busload who
2 would have been turning up in Coatbridge to
3 shout down and decry these proposals are.

4 MR GRUNDY: excuse me, I'm sorry, but is there
5 a question here?

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: it is about to
7 come.

8 COUNCILLOR ROSS: yes, it is about to come.
9 Your apparent opposition to paying any weight
10 at all to Rule 4, where is the community basis
11 within any of your proposals because it is
12 certainly not anywhere I can see?

13 MR GRUNDY: well, you have used rather
14 emotive terms when it comes to it as you say
15 ripping communities apart. I'm sorry, but I
16 don't agree that is the case. There will always
17 be unfortunate divisions within any set of
18 boundary reviews and I have no doubt for
19 example that there are certain parts of
20 Edinburgh that don't like being divided but
21 unfortunately Edinburgh is divided into a
22 number of constituencies and I would
23 specifically say it is not just ourselves who
24 have used parts of Wards. The Commission has
25 used parts of Wards and the simple truth is

1 that in order to create seats that approximate
2 to quota these multi-member wards which are
3 very large have to be divided and once again
4 the simple truth is because there are for a
5 fixed number of constituencies quota is
6 important because creating large seats
7 somewhere means that you automatically
8 create a small seat somewhere else. As I said
9 at the Clydebank Inquiry, which I do not know
10 whether you were in attendance at that – I said
11 that I had no wish to divide Clydebank. I could
12 find no alternative to doing so. It wasn't
13 ourselves that proposed the cross-Clyde seat.
14 It was the Commission and so therefore the
15 Commission does not take into account
16 political voting patterns or any such thing. The
17 reason the Commission proposed the cross-
18 Clyde seat was because they could not find any
19 alternative and I should point out that nobody
20 – not the Labour Party or ourselves, the Liberal
21 Democrats or the SNP or local representatives
22 and not cabinet ministers, not Wendy
23 Alexander and not Douglas Alexander – nor
24 anybody else could come up with a viable
25 alternative to crossing the Clyde. I personally

1 as I said at Clydebank said I found it a
2 regrettable necessity in order to meet quota
3 and I specifically said that I had no particular
4 ill-will against Clydebank but sometimes
5 towns have to be divided in order to create
6 viable constituencies. Your argument has been
7 somewhat emotive. This is not .. I realise that
8 sometimes emotive issues are raised. This is
9 largely a technical exercise and as you
10 appreciate how difficult it is to both meet the
11 rather strict rules the Commission has been
12 given and also keep communities happy. I do
13 not say that there is no weight to Rule 4. It is
14 just that Rule 4 is often referred to as
15 paramount. It cannot be. Otherwise you would
16 never change any constituency, however large
17 or small its electorate became. That would
18 inevitably lead to rotten boroughs. I would say
19 that the reference to Rule 4 was this. It is not
20 about never changing constituencies. It is
21 about which constellation of communities is
22 the most appropriate provided you can fulfil
23 the other rules, primarily rules 1 and 2. Rule 3
24 as regarding special geographic considerations
25 the Commission has used only once during

1 this review and that was in regard to the
2 Western Isles which happens to be another
3 case where everyone is in agreement. So, I
4 hope I have answered your question there.

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think the
6 essence of it is really we are presently faced as
7 I understand it with Airdrie being divided up
8 and what I think is being said to you is that
9 under your proposals we are in a situation of
10 Coatbridge and Motherwell being divided
11 instead. The question essentially is ..

12 MR GRUNDY: yes, what is the benefit to
13 dividing this community as opposed to that
14 community? I understand. As regards
15 Motherwell, yes it does divide Motherwell, but
16 the two Motherwell seats would be entirely
17 contained within one local authority and so
18 this does not offend against Rule 1. In
19 addition by creating two seats out of
20 Motherwell and surrounding communities you
21 could unify Hamilton within one constituency
22 which is also within one local authority and so
23 you are dividing one community at the
24 expense of another, but it is with regard to
25 Rule 1. It offends against less of the rules as

1 set out by the legislation, and as I say all of
2 the communities around Motherwell, part of
3 the historic local authority ..

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: the answer to the
5 question is that you say that your
6 configuration offends less of the rules?

7 MR GRUNDY: yes, in effect

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think that we
9 have got a number of other questions.

10 MR GRUNDY: yes, I want to specifically deal
11 with it as in essence with Coatbridge as
12 opposed to Airdrie as well because when it
13 comes to crossing local authority boundaries
14 there we note the excellent link between the
15 Chryston area in the Strathkelvin Ward as it is
16 now and East Dunbartonshire. It seems a much
17 more natural split and the Commission
18 propose to split up the north and east of
19 Airdrie and they have done it in a very peculiar
20 way, crossing a sort of rural hinterland to do
21 so, whereas we have split Coatbridge
22 North/South and it seems a much more natural
23 divide and it is a boundary where we have used
24 the railway line and in part a disused railway
25 line and we point out as previously that many

1 of the parts of Coatbridge they propose to
2 combine with Airdrie were parts that Mr Tosh ..
3 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think you'll get a
4 further chance to develop that, if necessary.
5 MR ROLINK: I actually found that contribution
6 quite chilling. We obviously come from
7 different schools. You come from the school
8 where there is no such thing as community.
9 Your lack of affection for using Rule 4 I found
10 astonishing and the whole basis of your
11 contribution, the way that you're so happy and
12 so easy to split communities and take this
13 apart and that apart, shows that what you
14 think is a technical exercise is exactly the
15 reason why people are feeling disaffected, that
16 the people you serve don't realise the
17 implications it has for the lives of ordinary
18 people in constituencies throughout Scotland.
19 This is not a technical exercise. This is our
20 democratic rights we're talking about and they
21 cannot be dismissed as you have. I would ask
22 you one question. Is it not the case that the
23 only people who will benefit from your
24 proposals is yourselves because you are
25 figuring out a way to get more votes for the

1 Tory party?

2 MR GRUNDY: I am sorry but that is not correct.
3 None of the changes that we have suggested in
4 North Lanarkshire would allow us to win any of
5 those seats in any way. What we are trying to
6 do is we have looked at the constituencies as
7 proposed by the Commission and we have
8 found flaws and we have tried to come up
9 with the best solution. I would say they may
10 not be perfect, but I understand how you to
11 many people Rule 4 may seem as though it
12 should be paramount but unfortunately it
13 cannot be. You will always in any review break
14 any number of rules because constituencies
15 have to be redrawn to be more of equal size
16 and so that each man or woman's vote is worth
17 the same as another man or woman's vote. If
18 you can point out which constituency in North
19 Lanarkshire we have redrawn in a manner that
20 we can win it I would be delighted to find out
21 which one it is there.

22 MR ROLINK: that would take a miracle.

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: this is not a
24 political meeting, as you will appreciate.

25 MRS CULLEN: surely, sir, what amazed me

1 there was you trying to align Old Monklands
2 with Airdrie. Would it not be more sensible to
3 join Old Monklands with Bellshill and keep
4 Shotts with Airdrie because for Airdrieonians
5 to go to Old Monklands they would need to go
6 through Coatbridge. So that in itself is
7 ridiculous, to suggest that. I would suggest
8 that you change your attitude here and be
9 geographically a wee bit more astute. As I say,
10 Old Monklands is sitting parallel to Bellshill.
11 Shotts with Airdrie and there is nothing
12 between Shotts and Airdrie apart from
13 Salsburgh and what have you and open
14 ground. It is actually a better bargain than
15 joining us up with Old Monklands and forbye
16 anything else the biggest electorate of old
17 Monklands is sedentary (sic) to be quite
18 honest with you.

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think you have
20 answered that, really.

21 COUNCILLOR FAGAN: COUNCILLOR FAGAN: just
22 to follow on from that point, maybe to get a
23 rational argument from you, Mr Tosh
24 explained a great length this morning to
25 disestablish or de-establish the social

1 community links between Shotts and Airdrie.
2 So, can you explain to me then what the
3 community and social links are between
4 Airdrie and Old Monklands?

5 MR GRUNDY: I'm sorry but I think you are
6 operating under a false premise. Mr Tosh was
7 trying to point out that there may be links
8 between Airdrie and Shotts, but there were
9 also links between Motherwell and Shotts . I
10 was under the impression that that is what he
11 was trying to point out. I certainly can. I
12 believe indeed that at the last Westminster
13 Review the Labour Party proposed to combine
14 Coatbridge and Airdrie into one constituency
15 in their entirety. So, I believe that it is not an
16 entirely alien concept. I have also brought a
17 book from my library here, Scottish Burghs,
18 and this is from 1959, and the constituency of
19 Coatbridge and Airdrie and for entertainment
20 purposes, because I doubt that we're ever
21 likely to see this again, the result was
22 Dempsey, James, Labour, 22,747 and Morton,
23 Mrs C, Conservative, 21,953 - a Labour
24 majority of just 794. Obviously there have
25 been some changes in voting patterns over the

1 past 50 years. They have been combined
2 before and they have been combined in part at
3 least relatively recently. The Labour Party at
4 the most recent review proposed to combine
5 them and I have no doubt that they will be
6 combined again at some point in the future.
7 They are neighbouring towns.

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: but you appreciate
9 the point that is being made, that whatever
10 may have been in the past, as far as the
11 present is concerned the line from the floor as
12 I understand it is that there are not links
13 between Coatbridge and Airdrie.

14 COUNCILLOR FAGAN: the question really was
15 about the historic boundary line ..

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: just a second, Mr
17 Fagan. The point is I understand it is whatever
18 may have been the position in the past, what
19 the people are saying from the floor – this is
20 for your comment – is as of now there is not a
21 link between Coatbridge and Airdrie which
22 would justify that as opposed to going to
23 Shotts.

24 MR GRUNDY: currently that is correct. There is
25 not a part of Airdrie combined with Coatbridge

1 or a part of Coatbridge combined with Airdrie.
2 What I was trying to point out was that in the
3 recent past there has been and very recently,
4 at the 5th review, the Labour Party has
5 proposed to do so and they are part of the
6 same local authority, and just because there is
7 no part of one combined with another now
8 does not preclude it as a possibility in the
9 future. I understand that it may be in some
10 ways controversial. However, that sometimes
11 happens. Once again we are constrained by
12 quota. As I have said with the current
13 grouping, which is very difficult to
14 disaggregate, you have the problem with a
15 number of large towns in close proximity to
16 each other, and so you can avoid dividing one
17 but only at the expense of dividing another.
18 The only way to do this is to come up with a
19 counter-proposal which does not have the
20 domino effect which falls apart somewhere
21 else and that is to try and come up with a
22 division that offends less than the current one,
23 and that is the basis we have been working on.
24 COUNCILLOR FAGAN: I think that you picked
25 up on .. I accept that you're saying that and I

1 said that there is many problems to be solved,
2 but the question I was asking was – and you
3 may not see this as an important point – but
4 what were the social economic links between
5 Airdrie and South Coatbridge now? For an
6 outsider looking at it in might appear that
7 these are two relatively combined communities
8 but actually if you look at the history of them,
9 one is a market town and the other one is
10 based on heavy industry. One is the hub for
11 the mining villages round about it and I'm not
12 aware of any strong links, and that is the basic
13 point I'm trying to make and obviously clearly
14 in recent politics there has been quite a lot.....

15 MISS WHITEFIELD: I have got a couple of
16 questions for you. The first relates to
17 consultation. Can you tell me how widely the
18 Conservative Party has consulted on these
19 proposals to find out how people in North
20 Lanarkshire would feel about your proposals
21 and particularly perhaps you would want tell
22 those of us who are here today what size your
23 membership is in North Lanarkshire and how
24 many elected representatives you have in
25 North Lanarkshire which perhaps would give

1 those present today an idea of just how
2 representative you are as a party?

3 MR GRUNDY: I do not know whether what size
4 a party is in North Lanarkshir is of particular
5 relevance, but I do know that we have one
6 councillor in Motherwell and we have one MSP.
7 It has not traditionally been fertile territory for
8 us. However, that does not prevent us from
9 putting forward a counter-proposal.

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think how widely
11 have you consulted, is perhaps what Miss
12 Whitefield was asking, which is perhaps the
13 more relevant point.

14 MR GRUNDY: I can honestly say that I do not
15 know. I know that Margaret Mitchell, our
16 regional member, has consulted in so far as
17 she can. Obviously there are a number of
18 problems where you are very much a minority
19 party in a region and I know that she
20 consulted with people in Shotts and I know
21 that she consulted with people in Airdrie. She
22 is from Coatbridge. She was very concerned
23 about the proposed Lanark, Shotts and
24 Whitburn seat and she was concerned about
25 the division of Airdrie. We have done the best

1 we can working within the rules to come up
2 with an alternative which as I say is not perfect
3 but it is less offensive. As you already heard
4 we were not able to come up with a counter-
5 proposal that put Shotts in with Airdrie but we
6 have already heard here today that Shotts also
7 has links with Motherwell and so we think that
8 rather than link it with West Lothian we think
9 it would be better been a constituency fully
10 within North Lanarkshire and so we have tried
11 to address those concerns that way. We have
12 been able to come up with a solution which
13 gets rid of the unnatural division of Airdrie
14 and we have substituted what we consider a
15 more natural division of Coatbridge.

16 MISS WHITEFIELD: I have one further question
17 which is related to the last one. However, I
18 would have to say that if Margaret Mitchell
19 consulted with the people of Airdrie on these
20 proposals or in Shotts for that matter I think
21 given the strength of feeling about how
22 strongly people feel about this I would have
23 heard about the consultation with people if
24 that was taking place and she was proposing
25 to put Airdrie and Coatbridge together. In your

1 little political almanac from 1957 I wonder if
2 perhaps you looked at some of the other
3 election results because I would have thought
4 that in 1957 the North Lanark constituency
5 included Shotts.

6 MR GRUNDY: it did.

7 MISS WHITEFIELD: and Plains and Caldercruix
8 also.

9 MR GRUNDY: : yes.

10 MISS WHITEFIELD: which was also a Labour win,
11 I hasten to add.

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: not relevant.

13 MISS WHITEFIELD: however, I want to add one
14 point, that in the post-war history has Shotts
15 ever been in the same parliamentary
16 constituency as Motherwell?

17 MR GRUNDY: I do not believe that it has, but I
18 should also point out that that in the North
19 Lanark constituency, that did not link Shotts
20 with Airdrie, but the reason we have for
21 linking Shotts with Motherwell is that they
22 were part of the same local authority before
23 the creation of North Lanarkshire, and as I say,
24 you undermine your own case because at that
25 point Shotts was not part of an Airdrie

1 constituency. As I say, the constituency that
2 Airdrie was in was Coatbridge and Airdrie.

3 MR ACKLAND: I want to check my ears. You
4 slipped it through rather quickly, but I think I
5 heard you say that you were proposing a new
6 constituency of Coatbridge as Kirkintilloch
7 that managed not to contain either of the two
8 towns in the title of the seat.

9 MR GRUNDY: I do not believe that is correct.
10 They I believe that our Coatbridge and
11 Kirkintilloch constituency contains the whole
12 of Kirkintilloch. You may have misheard me. I
13 said part of Kirkintilloch North and Campsie
14 ward. That would be the Campsies themselves,
15 Milton of Campsie, Lennoxton and so on and
16 so forth. They would as the Labour Party have
17 proposed be linked with Cumbernauld and
18 Kilsyth, but this proposal would not divide the
19 town of Kirkintilloch.

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mrs Cullen, did you
21 have a question or was it just a comment?

22 MRS CULLEN: the question was would it not
23 been more worthwhile to have Old Monklands
24 part of Bellshill because geographically it is
25 just across the road from each other because

1 we have got to go through Coatbridge to get
2 to Airdrie?

3 MR GRUNDY: what I would say is that we have
4 not done a detailed examination of this
5 prospect. We may perhaps refer it to the
6 Commission to see what they made of it
7 because I think Labour proposed what I might
8 call a counter-proposal but I haven't had time
9 to examine it and as I say the best people to
10 do so would be the Commission themselves .

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: yes, that is one of
12 the courses open to them of course.

13 MR FLEMING: I am conscious of a degree of
14 frustration in this Inquiry in as much as partly
15 through the Boundary Commission and partly
16 through other submissions we have been
17 referred to other inquiries which effective lay
18 had very severe constraints on our ability to
19 consider the matter but I have noted in your
20 evidence you indicated that without the two
21 Clydebank wards it would not be possible to
22 come up with viable alternatives for
23 constituencies to the south of the Clyde.

24 MR GRUNDY: that is correct.

25 MR FLEMING: can I ask you to expand on that

1 because as a man with obviously clear
2 mathematical ability is it your evidence to the
3 Inquiry that it would have been impossible to
4 come up with constituencies which are within
5 the parameters of quota?

6 MR GRUNDY: what I would say is first of all
7 thank you for being so flattering. Secondly, I
8 believe that our counter-proposal only uses
9 one Clydebank ward rather than two. We did
10 try to minimise the division of Clydebank and
11 we found that it was not entirely possible to
12 meet quota South of the Clyde without using
13 part of Clydebank and crossing the Clyde, and
14 I honestly believe that the reason the
15 Commission crossed the Clyde in their
16 constituency was because it was the least
17 worst option. It is notable, I would say, that
18 we were not able to find an alternative which
19 did not involve crossing the Clyde and as I
20 have already mentioned neither has anybody
21 else. Mr Tosh actually put in a paper at the
22 Clydebank Inquiry which showed what the
23 negative results would be if you did not cross
24 the Clyde, and it would have meant some
25 incredibly unnatural constituencies. You would

1 start off with some fairly reasonable ones
2 around Paisley but very quickly you would
3 degenerate and end up with first of all a
4 constituency which went from Elderslie on the
5 edge of Paisley all the way out to the
6 Cumbraes, and then you'd have to divide both
7 Irvine and Kilmarnock and from then on we
8 were not able to speculate because no one had
9 been able to come up with some meaningful
10 counter-proposals. Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock
11 Labour Party did put in a counter-proposal but
12 it was opposed by all six .. in fact, every
13 proposition to link the local authorities in
14 Ayrshire and Renfrewshire would be opposed
15 by all six local authorities and have been. The
16 Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock Labour Party did put
17 in a proposal to link Ayrshire and
18 Renfrewshire, linking Largs and Greenock and
19 then splitting Largs, and the Inverclyde
20 Council opposed it and there was no Inquiry in
21 North Ayrshire because the people and North
22 Ayrshire basically said we are OK with our
23 seats. That is one of the few areas where there
24 has not been a local inquiry. The Labour Party,
25 the council, the Conservative Party, and pretty

1 well everybody else in East Renfrewshire said
2 that they would oppose any link with either
3 Kilmarnock or Cumnock or even East Kilbride
4 which was posited at one point and then
5 swiftly withdrawn by the Labour Party. I can't
6 be exactly clear on that. They proposed it and
7 then they said it wasn't a counter-proposal.
8 They never formally withdrew it so ..

9 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I don't think we
10 need to go into all of that .

11 MR GRUNDY: so, the only move left that was
12 not proposed by anyone formally was to
13 remove the Garnock Valley which led to some
14 complex and unnatural constituencies being
15 created. I as I say, the problem with that is
16 that nobody has been able to formulate viable
17 constituencies south of the Clyde without
18 some form of Clyde crossing. There is some
19 debate about how much of Clydebank you
20 should taking when you cross the Clyde. I
21 should point out that local people in the
22 Clydebank Inquiry considered that three wards
23 comprised Clydebank – the Kilpatrick Ward,
24 the Clydebank Central ward and the Clydebank
25 Waterfront ..

1 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: that is not really
2 relevant for me. I did allow the submission of
3 what was put in my way of documents, but I
4 can't really go into a rehearsal of all was said
5 at another Inquiry because I do not know what
6 the various sides were saying about that and I
7 have to say that that is not appropriate that I
8 hear that.

9 MR FLEMING: I am very grateful for that
10 description of a very confused situation. I'm
11 not altogether sure that I received an answer
12 to my question. Would it be mathematically
13 possible to devise constituencies within the
14 parameters of quota?

15 MR GRUNDY: it is mathematically possible to
16 create a constituency anywhere. Whether those
17 constituencies then are viable from a
18 community standpoint is a different matter.
19 That is where Rule 4 does come in. First of all,
20 referring back your question earlier, the
21 constituencies must satisfy Rules 1 and 2.
22 Then - and this is where it ceases to be a
23 technical exercise and becomes where you
24 start looking for the best constellation of
25 communities - that is where Rule 4 starts to

1 come into play and I have no doubt that it is
2 mathematically possible to combine any
3 number of areas but whether you can create
4 viable seats that represent local communities
5 is a different matter. I'm fully aware that in
6 America for example they draw up seats which
7 are scorpion tails and funny shaped S-es and
8 funny little strings and they are not based on
9 communities. They normally have numbers to
10 represent them but that is purely a
11 mathematical basis and I would not like to go
12 down that road.

13 MR FLEMING: so, possibly inviting you to
14 extend your description of constituencies, how
15 would you describe the Boundary
16 Commission's proposals for constituencies in
17 North Lanarkshire in that spectrum of natural
18 or unnatural?

19 MR GRUNDY: I would say that as currently
20 comprised there is no doubt that there are
21 some severely unnaturally drawn
22 constituencies. The primary one which I would
23 draw attention to it is the Lanark, Shotts and
24 Whitburn constituency which I think is perhaps
25 the most unnaturally drawn constituency I

1 have ever come across, and I do tend to read
2 through the various papers that have been
3 produced. I do not think that I have seen a
4 more unnatural seat. There might have been
5 one on Merseyside, but ..

6 MR FLEMING: can I ask how unnatural you find
7 the cross-Clyde link?

8 MR GRUNDY: I found that what I would
9 describe as a regrettable necessity. I have
10 written it as such in my report for in my
11 submissions to the Commission. The simple
12 truth is that were there another way of
13 drawing that constituency we would have
14 done so. We know that the Liberal Democrats
15 in their submission put in something almost
16 identical completely independent of ourselves.
17 The simple truth was that without crossing the
18 Clyde you had great difficulty coming up with
19 seats which were not thoroughly unnatural. I
20 would say that you would create seats by not
21 crossing the Clyde that are as unnatural as
22 Lanark, Shotts and Whitburn constituency. As I
23 said, what we're trying to do in our counter-
24 proposals - and this is across Scotland -
25 we're trying to keep within rules 1 and 2. So,

1 you will see that all our seats cross as few
2 local authority boundaries as possible. That is
3 external local authority boundaries, and that
4 they are very close to the level of quota of
5 54,728, but what we have then done as we
6 then take a look at the Commission's
7 proposals because we have largely agreed with
8 their groupings. We proposed a couple of
9 alterations here and there, but we have said
10 for example what you couldn't do - and I
11 think that the successors of the Dumbarton
12 constituency, Dumbarton and Helensburgh ..
13 that was rather unnatural. Now, you couldn't
14 comfortably get rid of the unnatural elements
15 of that seat because of the constraints put on
16 by Rules 1 and 2. The Dumbarton constituency
17 both split Clydebank and Helensburgh. So,
18 what we did there was we unified Helensburgh
19 within an Argyll and Bute constituency and we
20 tried to contain as much of Clydebank within
21 the Dumbarton and Clydebank North
22 constituency. So, therefore it was only
23 splitting one community instead of two and it
24 only cost one local authority boundary instead
25 of several. So, I would say that in many cases

1 all across Scotland the Commission has
2 proposed imperfect solutions. We have
3 proposed imperfect solutions and the Labour
4 Party and the Liberal Democrats have proposed
5 imperfect solutions. We are tied down by quota
6 which is very important to ensure that one
7 man's vote and one women's vote is worth the
8 same as another man or woman's vote. We are
9 tied by that.

10 MR FLEMING: I fully appreciate that, but
11 possibly if I could develop what you yourself
12 are saying, wouldn't it normally be the case
13 that if any area were to fall short of quota you
14 would expected to be a rural area rather than
15 an urban area? Would that not be basically
16 fair, that a rural area, a very much larger area,
17 could justify less than quota more readily than
18 perhaps an urban area ?

19 MR GRUNDY: I would not support such a
20 measure. There is nothing in the rules which
21 says that urban seats should be smaller or
22 larger .. there is nothing to say that one type
23 of seat, whether rural or urban, should be
24 larger or smaller than another. There is one
25 specific instance in this case of the Western

1 Isles where that has been applied. There was
2 statutory protection for the Northern Isles
3 which are extreme examples. What you're
4 saying .. I do remember actually there is a
5 specific type of gerrymandering which was
6 used in Australia which is where the Premier of
7 - I cannot remember which state - specifically
8 wrote into the rules that rural seats be smaller
9 than urban seats, which specifically meant that
10 his party benefited because his party was the
11 party with the most rural seats, to give
12 deliberate mal-apportionment of one type of
13 seat as opposed to another, whether it is rural
14 or urban. I can say personally that I would
15 oppose it and I believe the Conservative party
16 would oppose it.

17 MR FLEMING: can I possibly paraphrase your
18 answer which was no?

19 MR GRUNDY: I think in short, no.

20 MR FLEMING: I was really leading to the point
21 that the Argyll seat which is a rural seat is
22 above quota.

23 MR GRUNDY: no.

24 MR FLEMING, from memory it was 56,000
25 not your proposal but the Boundary

1 Commission proposal?

2 MR GRUNDY: I believe the Boundary
3 Commission proposal divided the Lomond
4 area. I believe that it was about quota, but it
5 was well within the sort of margin of error as
6 it were. I don't have the exact figures in front
7 of me.

8 MR FLEMING: my memory is that it was in fact
9 55,000, slightly above quota. The question
10 was really this. Taking the Clydebank seats
11 into the North, would you accept that it would
12 be perfectly possible, taking a strip from
13 Argyll through West Dunbartonshire, East
14 Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire, to devise
15 constituencies which meet in full absolutely all
16 the constituency rules?

17 MR GRUNDY: no, because I have seen someone
18 tried to do that in the Labour party who ended
19 up with 49,000 Argyll and Bute. I know that
20 you say the current Argyll and Bute is 200
21 above quota but that is 6000 below quota and
22 that is well below. I don't believe that the
23 Commission has considered any seat below
24 50,000 and so you would be creating a
25 horrendously undersized seat.

1 MR FLEMING: can I ask you why of necessity
2 would it involve such a constituency? I have
3 asked, would it be possible to create
4 throughout that link constituencies which meet
5 in full all the constituency rules -
6 mathematically?

7 MR GRUNDY: I would say from a purely
8 mathematical viewpoint - a purely
9 mathematical viewpoint - with regard to quota
10 only and Rule 2 only, ignoring Rule 1 and
11 ignoring Rule 4 and obviously Rule 3 we did
12 apply in this case. If you were to ignore the
13 other two rules, Rules 1 and 4, and purely
14 using quota you could draw up constituencies,
15 but we would not recommend such a course of
16 action because you would end up with some
17 incredibly odd combinations there. As the
18 gentleman at the back said before this area is
19 slightly different to that area. I think you
20 would have to combine Clydebank and
21 Bearsden in order to do that or you might have
22 to split Bearsden, and the thing is that that
23 really would be one of those unnatural chalk
24 and cheese constituencies.

25 MR FLEMING: so, it would be more unnatural

1 than perhaps Airdrie and Coatbridge South,
2 more unnatural than ... you have in fact I
3 think heard the evidence today?

4 MR GRUNDY: yes, it absolutely would, because
5 first of all Airdrie and Coatbridge are within
6 the same local authority. So, that does not
7 offend against rule No. 1. Crossing a local
8 authority boundary between East and West
9 Dunbartonshire clearly offends against Rule 1.
10 It is also combining two completely dissimilar
11 areas, absolutely different. I am sure the
12 gentleman here said Clydebank is
13 fundamentally different in every way from
14 Bearsden. Bearsden is a wealthy Glasgow
15 suburb almost - but I do not know whether
16 they would consider themselves as such, being
17 so closely linked to Glasgow and Clydebank is
18 a former heavy engineering area and Singers I
19 think were there and it is a former shipyard
20 town and deprived and under-going post-
21 industrial large amounts of regeneration.
22 Bearsden ... I don't think there is any two
23 areas quite so dissimilar as Clydebank and
24 Bearsden. I would say the short answer is yes,
25 that they would be a far more unnatural

1 combination and Coatbridge and Airdrie which
2 as I have pointed out has been combined
3 before and very recently the Labour Party
4 proposed to combine those.

5 MR FLEMING: I'm sorry but I may be being
6 entirely unfair to you, but I'm reaching the
7 conclusion that your only objection to the
8 North Lanarkshire proposals and to working
9 westwards from them right through to Argyll is
10 the fact that this would involve the
11 combination of a rather prosperous and a
12 slightly less prosperous area.

13 MR GRUNDY: that would not be our only
14 objection. There are a number of knock-on
15 effects. First of all not only would you be
16 combining two areas which are fundamentally
17 dissimilar, the public, the Council and virtually
18 everyone else in East Dunbartonshire as has
19 been shown by the record supports the
20 proposed Milngavie and Bishopbriggs seat. It
21 is not just I who is supporting it. The Liberal
22 Democrats and all groups on the East
23 Dunbartonshire local authority support it. The
24 only issue is the change of name which has
25 already been referred to. Once again by doing

1 so you would create great problems south of
2 the Clyde because no one has been able to
3 come up with – and I emphasise no one – a
4 coherent counter-proposal south of the Clyde
5 without some form of cross-Clyde seat.

6 MR FLEMING: I don't wish to be rude and
7 interrupt you, but I had noted your evidence
8 to be mathematically it could be achieved and
9 that indeed it was only because of natural
10 boundaries and the Boundary Commission
11 proposals again on your own evidence are
12 inflicting on North Lanarkshire an unnatural
13 boundary.

14 MR GRUNDY: I specifically said that if you only
15 draw seats up on the basis of pure
16 mathematics and you ignore Rule 1 and Rule 4
17 which we are not allowed to do. We have to
18 take Rules 1 and 4 into consideration when
19 drawing constituencies. You could
20 mathematically draw any constituency. You can
21 mathematically draw up a seat in which – I do
22 not know. Let us just see – you could take all
23 the coastal towns starting from the border
24 with England right up all the way to Edinburgh
25 taking Leith for example and that constituency

1 if drawn in the right way could meet quota but
2 would cross three local authorities.

3 MR FLEMING: at the risk of interrupting,
4 however, as far as the area from Argyll to
5 North Lanarkshire north of the Clyde goes the
6 only objection to working from North
7 Lanarkshire proposals westwards is the
8 Clydebank/Milngavie and Clydebank/Bearsden
9 connection. All the rest would fall in very
10 naturally?

11 MR GRUNDY. No, that is not correct. As I have
12 already stated you would have to create a very
13 undersized Argyll and Bute constituency in
14 breach of Rule 2. You would cross the local
15 authority boundaries between East
16 Dunbartonshire and West Dunbartonshire in
17 breach of Rule 1. You would be combining two
18 dissimilar areas. You would have the knock-on
19 effect, the domino effect, of trying to create
20 viable constituencies south of the Clyde. You
21 would be going against the will of the people
22 of East Dunbartonshire and all the political
23 parties in East Dunbartonshire and practically
24 everyone else who has put in a submission on
25 East Dunbartonshire, and moving on from

1 there we agree with you about West Lothian.
2 We agree with you about Cumbernauld and
3 Kilsyth ..

4 MR FLEMING: possibly if I could pause you
5 there, my very possibly last question. Would
6 you accept that there may well be a difference
7 between acquiescence or even support for one
8 proposition and immediately assuming that an
9 alternative proposition would attract strong
10 opposition? You seem to equate what seemed
11 to be fairly lukewarm support from East
12 Dunbartonshire for one proposal with the
13 consequence of absolutely vehement
14 opposition to another. Is that not a tad
15 presumptuous?

16 MR GRUNDY: I think you are being slightly
17 disingenuous. I fail to see how unanimous
18 support from all political parties on a council
19 can be considered lukewarm. It is I believe
20 almost unique in Scotland in that it is pretty
21 much the only constituency where a large
22 number of people have written in and said we
23 support this constituency. We think it is
24 superb and please just consider changing the
25 name. If you can point to an example of

1 another constituency in Scotland where people
2 have written in in substantial numbers saying
3 that we like the seat, I may have missed it, but
4 if you can point to one of those I would be
5 happy to accept that, your definition of
6 lukewarm support, but when you have a big
7 political party and the Independent vote on
8 East Dunbartonshire Council supporting the
9 seat and the MP and people writing in saying
10 yes, we support this, please just change the
11 name, I fail to see how that seat can be viewed
12 as unsupported.

13 MR FLEMING: you're saying you are doubting
14 that either your own proposals for North
15 Lanarkshire or the Boundary Commission's
16 proposals would attract support. No further
17 questions.

18 MR GRUNDY: I would say that the issue is that
19 our proposals would be less controversial than
20 those of the Commission, and I would argue in
21 the grand scheme of things that they may still
22 be controversial in one area, but they manage
23 to solve a number of other problems. For
24 example, the West Lothian link – we agree with
25 you that we're able to deal with that problem.

1 We seem to be in agreement as regards
2 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth almost down to the
3 elector. So, that problem is dealt with. We are
4 able to unify Airdrie and so that problem is
5 dealt with. Unfortunately the price is
6 Coatbridge and so we have narrowed down a
7 number of problems to one. So, the simple
8 truth is it is not whether a proposal is perfect.
9 It is whether we can deal with the majority of
10 objections, and I believe that it can. It may
11 still be controversial in some quarters, but I
12 do not know .. I have looked and looked for a
13 way to try and keep Coatbridge and Airdrie
14 separate. It was not possible under the
15 groupings that we have and no alternative
16 viable groupings have been able to be put
17 forward by anyone that does not fall apart
18 somewhere else in Scotland. I realise that this
19 may not be something of interest to the people
20 of Airdrie, but it would certainly be of interest
21 to the people of Kilmarnock Irvine or Lanark or
22 somewhere else down the line, possibly even
23 Highlands, Inverness and Moray.

24 MS WATSON: just a brief question, Mr Grundy.
25 I know that the Conservative Party's

1 submission is in disagreement with what the
2 Boundary Commission propose for the council
3 groupings of East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire,
4 North and South Lanarkshire, West Lothian and
5 East Dunbartonshire.

6 MR GRUNDY: yes, that is correct.

7 MISS WATSON: so do the Labour Party disagree
8 with those council groupings?

9 MR GRUNDY: yes.

10 MS WATSON: you suggest that West Lothian
11 council that could be linked with Falkirk?

12 MR GRUNDY: yes.

13 MISS WATSON: I was just wondering what
14 consultation the Conservative Party have done
15 in Falkirk on West Lothian to get support for
16 that because we believe in the Labour Party,
17 that West Lothian has its own strong separate
18 identity.

19 MR GRUNDY: I would say is as regards West
20 Lothian first of all we know that it is too big
21 for two constituencies on its own and so we
22 need to link it with somewhere. No one came
23 to the Edinburgh Inquiry arguing that it should
24 be linked with Edinburgh. It would have been
25 opposed. Obviously it is a very unpopular link

1 with North Lanarkshire and both ourselves and
2 the Liberal Democrats and yourselves opposed
3 it. However, it is important to put forward
4 something that the Commission will accept
5 and so therefore West Lothian has to be linked
6 with somewhere. There is a link at Westminster
7 between West Lothian and Falkirk. It is the
8 Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency, and
9 we note at the last Westminster Review the
10 Labour Party turned its opinion on his head. At
11 the Westminster Review the Labour Party were
12 intimating strong support for a link between
13 West Lothian and Falkirk. So, for you to
14 suddenly change your mind now I find rather
15 confusing. There are historical links between
16 West Lothian and Falkirk which I ..

17 MISS WATSON: Mr Grundy, I am sorry to
18 interrupt, but I wasn't really asking you about
19 historical links. I was asking you about the
20 consultation you had done in the area.

21 MR GRUNDY: I can honestly say that I do not
22 believe we have carried out widespread
23 consultation.

24 MISS WATSON: have you carried out any
25 consultation, sir?

1 MR GRUNDY: I cannot answer that question.

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: so you say the
3 combination of the two constituencies in West
4 Lothian leads to 2 constituencies which are too
5 big, but by how much?

6 MR GRUNDY: I believe they would be
7 something like 61,200 each which are more
8 than 10 per cent each above quota. Normally
9 this wouldn't be an issue but at this review we
10 have a fixed number of seats and so in effect a
11 the electors of West Lothian would be under-
12 represented to the tune of 25 per cent of a
13 representative. Also, you would take 25 per
14 cent out of two seats ..

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: you mean 0.25 of a
16 member?

17 MR GRUNDY: yes, or 25 per cent of the
18 constituency, yes. Now, it has got to come
19 from somewhere else because we have a fixed
20 number of constituencies. In some places you
21 can try and sort of even it out across a wide
22 area, but in the case of West Lothian you
23 would just end up with two massive
24 constituencies. Not only that, but I would
25 argue that this would be a matter for a future

1 review, but it is entirely possible that these
2 two constituencies would continue to grow.

3 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think that the
4 lady's point was that that is a possible
5 solution and had you consulted the people of
6 West Lothian on such a view but you obviously
7 hadn't?

8 MR GRUNDY: I think the problem is, sir, during
9 the statutory consultation period of one month
10 it is very difficult to consult with the whole of
11 Scotland on what they would want. The simple
12 truth is that West Lothian has to be linked with
13 somewhere. We know that no one has
14 proposed to link it with Edinburgh except the
15 council which they did not come to propose at
16 the Edinburgh inquiry. We know that it is
17 extremely unpopular as a solution here in
18 North Lanarkshire. The only solution would be
19 at Falkirk where there is an excellent link at
20 Westminster level which was at the time quite
21 popular.

22 MISS WATSON: yes, Mr Assistant
23 Commissioner. I do not want to speak on
24 behalf of the Labour Party's submission. Greg
25 Cook will do that in summation but I just don't

1 want you to be misled by the fact that our
2 proposal in West Lothian does put forward a
3 proposal for two seats in West Lothian which
4 are only slightly larger than the Boundary
5 Commission's highest number of electors, one
6 of the seats that they propose, which I believe
7 is Highlands at 61,690, which is not that
8 different from what we propose, but Greg
9 Cook will speak to that. I just wanted you to
10 have that information today.

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: well, I'm getting a
12 submission from the Labour Party in due
13 course?

14 MISS WATSON: absolutely.

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: well, I think that
16 we have had a full exposition of the position.
17 Is there any final point? Well, thank you very
18 much.

19 MR TOSH: can I start by saying for the record
20 my name is Murray Tosh and I am appearing
21 for the Scottish Conservative and Unionist
22 Party. I am not a party employee. I am from
23 the voluntary side of the party. I was formerly
24 a member of Scottish parliament for the South
25 of Scotland region in the first parliament

1 which covers the Clydesdale, Cumnock, Ayr,
2 North Ayr & Doon constituencies in it which
3 will be part of the Ayr Inquiry and the Lanark
4 Inquiry. The second parliament I was a member
5 for the West of Scotland which included the
6 areas of Dumbarton, Clydebank and Bearsden
7 and Milngavie right across to the boundary
8 between Strathkelvin and Bearsden and
9 Cumbernauld. I had no previous track record
10 representing Central Lanarkshire apart from
11 the fact that I know a bit about the urban
12 areas. The point on which I wish to
13 concentrate is the application of the quota,
14 because the approach to quota by the
15 Commission is radically different in this review
16 from what it has been in the past. In the past
17 the boundary reviews have been constrained
18 by the use of electoral wards as building
19 blocks. Now, the Commission has used
20 electoral wards as building blocks in this
21 review as well, but it has not been constrained
22 to follow them entirely, and there are a
23 number of proposed constituencies which
24 involve parts of Wards. What that has
25 facilitated is particularly in the former

1 Strathclyde region where until now boundaries
2 have been formed almost entirely with some
3 exceptions in the third review of the regional
4 electoral divisions which were around
5 17,000/18,000 electors on average, that
6 produced fairly significant variations in the
7 quota of the constituencies which were
8 produced. At the last review for example we
9 had a constituency of Clydesdale which has
10 now grown to 66,000, a constituency of East
11 Kilbride which was past 66,000, and yet there
12 were other constituencies across the
13 boundaries which had around 50,000 and in
14 some cases fewer than 50,000 electors. Those
15 are quite sharp variations, and in its approach
16 to this review the Commission has departed
17 from that view that it must follow electoral
18 wards and has placed much greater priority on
19 application of the quota reflecting of course
20 the injunction given to it by Parliament under
21 Rule 2. Now, the Commission on its website as
22 part of the documentation for all the reviews,
23 for all its proposals, has published an
24 illustrative map which uses nice graphics and
25 colours to show those constituencies which

1 vary from quota by up to nine per cent down
2 the way and up to nine per cent up the way. It
3 draws attention to one constituency which falls
4 outwith a nine per cent variation in each
5 direction. It does not explicitly state a nine
6 per cent variation is the rule but I think it is
7 very clear from the guidance given by the
8 Commission that unless there are compelling
9 reasons to depart from it that degree of
10 variation nine per cent is the matter within
11 which it is operating, and that takes you to a
12 range of quota just shy of 55,000 votes and
13 takes you to a range from the low Fifties to the
14 upper Fifties. No mainland constituency has
15 been proposed with an electorate of fewer
16 than 50,200 electors, and on one constituency
17 which I believe will be the subject of an
18 Inquiry in Inverness, it exceeds the nine per
19 cent variation in the opposite direction and
20 that is the Highlands East constituency .

21 It is within that context that the Commission
22 has set itself the challenging task of
23 producing the most equal distribution of
24 constituencies which has ever been produced,
25 and that is the issue of one-person, one-vote,

1 and following statute in so doing.

2 That if I may begin with is the problem that we

3 have for West Lothian. West Lothian has in

4 excess of the quota by more than the nine per

5 cent variation. The two West Lothian

6 constituencies as proposed by Mary Mulligan,

7 MSP, on the map at the back of the hall, both

8 lie between 61,000 & 62,000 electors. That

9 would be two constituencies together very

10 much larger than all the constituencies round

11 about and considerably in excess of what the

12 Commission has recommended. Moreover,

13 there is evidence which was given by

14 Councillor Morris who was the leader of the

15 Labour group on West Lothian Council to the

16 2002 review of Westminster boundaries, where

17 he submitted evidence that according to his

18 projections which he maintained were founded

19 on the Lothian structure plan and the General

20 Registrar's Office for Scotland, he projected

21 that by 2016 the the electorates of both

22 constituencies would be something over

23 68,000. Now, that is conjecture, but that

24 comment is echoed in the document which was

25 produced for this Inquiry by West Lothian

1 council. West Lothian council has accepted
2 that the quota cannot be achieved entirely
3 within West Lothian and in its own evidence
4 submitted that it would be better if West
5 Lothian were to be linked with Edinburgh
6 and/or Falkirk and I believe that there were
7 specific proposals put forward by West Lothian
8 council to that effect.

9 Now, our difficulty with respect, sir - and
10 ultimately your difficulty - with that is that no
11 evidence was given at Edinburgh Inquiry in
12 support of that case. It is inherently
13 improbable therefore that the Assistant
14 Commissioner or the Boundary Commission
15 will decide to introduce a link between West
16 Lothian and Edinburgh. That leaves only two
17 options, given that the council itself has
18 recognised that that its population growth has
19 already placed it and will place it to a greater
20 degree as the years pass above the acceptable
21 quota. The options are either to link with
22 Falkirk or to link it with Lanarkshire. Now, we
23 believe that the Lanarkshire link is not
24 necessary and is not justified and has had no
25 support. We have not conducted a consultation

1 in the Falkirk area, but we are founding firstly
2 on the request from West Lothian council that
3 there be a link with Falkirk and secondly on
4 the 2002 review of Westminster
5 constituencies, which was conducted in
6 Livingston, in which the representatives of
7 West Lothian Council, Falkirk Council, the
8 Labour MP for Livingston, Falkirk East and
9 Falkirk West, the Labour MSPs for Livingston
10 and Falkirk East, the constituency Labour
11 parties for Livingstone, Falkirk East and
12 Falkirk West, and the former convenor of the
13 central region council who was also a former
14 provost of Bo'ness council in the pre-regional
15 period as well as a number of other community
16 witnesses brought forward to attest to the very
17 close and deep links which existed among the
18 communities within both constituencies and
19 specifically the ties which were highlighted
20 were those between Linlithgow and Bo'ness
21 and Grangemouth. Reference was also made to
22 what is now called in local government Ward
23 terms the Upper Braes and Lower Braes. Our
24 belief is that if you could be persuaded to the
25 extent of reading material ..

1 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: was that the 2002
2 ..?

3 MR TOSH: Yes. Nearly all the people in
4 question – not, sadly, Robin Cook who has
5 since passed away – but all the other people in
6 question are still active in politics and still
7 represent that area. We have not asked lightly
8 for what is a radical departure from the
9 grouping because we are not aware from the
10 third, 4th and 5th reviews of parliamentary
11 boundaries that the Commission has ever
12 departed from the published figures. We
13 simply believe that there is no alternative here
14 to the proposed grouping at present unless
15 West Lothian is extricated. We would not have
16 a difficulty politically in supporting two West
17 Lothian constituencies. We have no
18 expectation of winning either of them
19 whatever the boundaries are in these areas. We
20 simply see them as incompatible with the
21 legislation and incompatible with the
22 Commission's approach and that is why we ask
23 respectfully that you have a look at the Falkirk
24 question and the Inquiry which will be held in
25 Stirling at which we will be raising these

1 issues in relation to the grouping of
2 Clackmannanshire and Stirling and Falkirk,
3 because as has been pointed out Falkirk itself
4 is entitled to 2 whole representatives, and if
5 you group Falkirk with West Lothian you do
6 not achieve an equitable solution. You require
7 to group it with somewhere else. We believe
8 that an equitable solution can be found if you
9 extend into what is effectively the former
10 Central Regional Council and consider Falkirk
11 and West Lothian along with Stirling and
12 Clackmannanshire.

13 Turning to the position in the grouping across
14 Dunbartonshire and Lanarkshire by the
15 Scottish Labour Party, I think supported in its
16 entirety by North Lanarkshire council, Mr
17 Grundy has highlighted a number of flaws
18 there which I will not repeat. I do not propose
19 to go in detail into the implications for
20 Renfrewshire and Ayrshire. If I am asked
21 questions about that of course I will be happy
22 to answer those, but essentially the difficulty
23 that the Inquiries in Paisley and Clydebank
24 came up with was that the Labour Party and
25 East Renfrewshire Council and West

1 Dunbartonshire Council in slightly different
2 ways argued against including within the
3 Renfrewshire grouping the electoral divisions
4 of Barrhead in East Renfrewshire council and
5 Clydebank Waterfront and Clydebank Central
6 in the West Dunbartonshire council areas. That
7 effectively took 35,000 electors out of the
8 equation, and that was what required
9 discussion of a cross-county or a cross-
10 council constituency – at least one – between
11 Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. I am not opposed
12 in principle to that because you will be
13 dealing, sir, with a proposal to link a
14 constituency across the boundary between
15 Ayrshire and Lanarkshire, and if one is
16 possible in principle so is the other in
17 principle. The difficulty that we had with that
18 was that nobody submitted a workable scheme
19 which commanded any support, and indeed the
20 councils in Renfrewshire all opposed such a
21 proposal as did the councils in Ayrshire. There
22 was a submission from Dalmellington in South
23 Ayrshire on behalf of the constituency Labour
24 Party, but there was no support for a cross-
25 Ayrshire/Renfrewshire constituency in Ayrshire

1 and there was no specific proposal brought
2 forward for Renfrewshire. I can expand on that
3 later if you wish, but I appreciate the need to
4 progress through this review.

5 I agree with what Mr Grundy said about the
6 proposal for Clydebank. It does not look a very
7 good constituency even although it is compact
8 and the boundaries are very clear, which are
9 the principal arguments advanced by the
10 Commission. I do not think that we would ever
11 have suggested such a constituency ourselves.
12 The difficulty was that when you tried to
13 unpick that constituency you were led into
14 conflicts and divisions and splits in other
15 areas and that is reflected in the Boundary
16 Commission's paper both to this Inquiry and to
17 the Inquiry in West Dunbartonshire and
18 Renfrewshire.

19 It is for that reason that we think that the
20 boundary between East and West
21 Dunbartonshire has to be respected. We have
22 already alluded to the total support which that
23 boundary has had from the entire East
24 Dunbartonshire community in so far as there
25 has been a response with over 30 individual

1 letters in support of uniting Bearsden and
2 Milngavie. There have been representations
3 from two community councils in Bearsden, and
4 although there is no representation from
5 Milngavie Community Council you may
6 remember, sir, at your Inquiry in 2002 ..

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: it wasn't me.

8 MR TOSH: it was your predecessor. I beg your
9 pardon. There was in fact a representative
10 then from Milngavie to argue in support of
11 linking Milngavie with that constituency, and
12 at that Inquiry that position was supported by
13 Mr Benning (sic), arguing for the Labour Party,
14 and by John Blyth who was the MP for the
15 former Strathkelvin and Bearsden constituency
16 and also by Brian Fitzpatrick, the MSP for the
17 same constituency. There was in fact no
18 substantial or significant opposition to linking
19 Milngavie, Bearsden with Bishopbriggs and
20 Kirkintilloch. So, we believe that that is
21 precedent. The issues there have all been
22 examined and have been validated from a
23 Westminster point of view and reflect the
24 change to our local government boundary
25 which took place in the 1990s, and we think

1 that there is no alternative but to rationalise
2 the Scottish parliamentary constituencies
3 along the same line.

4 Now, the difficulty arises of course because
5 once you depart from the western boundary of
6 this grouping of East Dunbartonshire and
7 North Lanarkshire you are dealing with the
8 Scottish parliamentary review with a much
9 lower quota. The quota from a Westminster
10 point of view for elections is over 69,000 and
11 the quota for these constituencies is just
12 under 55,000. So, it is impossible to get
13 exactly the same groupings across a wider
14 region there. We do acknowledge that there is
15 opposition from Kirkintilloch to the proposals
16 for Kirkintilloch, but the issue about
17 Kirkintilloch in the last review was the unity of
18 the town, the bringing-together of the
19 constituent parts, and we believe that the
20 proposals which have been brought forward
21 today by ourselves and also by the Labour
22 Party appear to create a single united
23 community of Kirkintilloch within a
24 constituency. We do not agree on the
25 constituency but we both put forward a

1 solution which appears to unite Kirkintilloch.
2 We're also agreed on the treatment of
3 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth. I take very much the
4 points which Rose McKenna and Kathy Craigie
5 made this morning about Cumbernauld and
6 Kilsyth. Kilsyth was not historically part of the
7 Cumbernauld area. It came from Stirlingshire.
8 When the Strathclyde region was formed and
9 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth District were formed
10 in 1974 these were areas which had no
11 previous history together, brought together
12 with all the complications that arise from so
13 doing and in the past 30 years the elected
14 representatives of both of those areas have
15 worked very hard to create a community
16 around Kilsyth and Cumbernauld and that of
17 course was a local authority district which
18 existed from 1974 until 1996. It also is the
19 case that the area structure of North
20 Lanarkshire council today recognises the
21 existence of a coherent Kilsyth/Cumbernauld
22 grouping because it groups wards 1/5 in that
23 North area and of course it is all of
24 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth and the Strathkelvin
25 Ward, formerly the Chryston Valley ward. So,

1 we believe that is a very coherent grouping. It
2 is not possible however to make that the
3 Scottish Parliament constituency but we
4 believe the core of that, the
5 Cumbernauld/Kilsyth wards, should be the
6 Scottish Parliament constituency and we have
7 suggested that the constituency can meet the
8 quota if attached to it are Milton of Campsie
9 and other communities coming down from
10 Lennoxton, and that you will be able to
11 satisfy yourself from the mapping at the back
12 that the proposals made by the Conservatives
13 and Labour Party are almost identical in
14 respect of that constituency and I think that
15 the evidence given this morning by Councillor
16 Morgan and others pointed very firmly against
17 an assumption that Cumbernauld links readily
18 to Airdrie. I think it is very clear that
19 Cumbernauld links towards Kilsyth and Kilsyth
20 links primarily to Cumbernauld.

21 Now, the difficulty that we have is that if you
22 look at the next area committees recognised
23 by North Lanarkshire Council they are the
24 Coatbridge and Airdrie areas, and they consist
25 of six wards whose names and numbers I have

1 given you on my single sheet of paper. These
2 wards with the exception of the community of
3 Salsburgh which has been referred to a
4 number of times today comprise precisely all
5 of the settlements which are associated with
6 Coatbridge and Airdrie. They are also not
7 coincidentally the same settlements which
8 form the former district of Monklands within
9 Strathclyde region and that is because the
10 commission which established those
11 communities, the Monklands District, in the
12 first place clearly paid very close attention to
13 that pattern of settlements as has North
14 Lanarkshire Council in choosing to create two
15 groupings around Coatbridge and Airdrie.
16 Now, there was some discussion, some
17 controversy, about the proposal to divide the
18 town of Coatbridge and we think that there
19 were two essential difficulties. One is that the
20 people in Coatbridge will not like it and the
21 second is that they have not had the
22 opportunity to hear those proposals put. Can I
23 deal with each of those points.

24 There are several local authority areas in
25 Scotland in which it has not been possible to

1 keep the major towns intact without dividing
2 the associated communities and you yourself,
3 sir, will preside over that Inquiry and that
4 debate in that area where the Commission is
5 proposing that Ayr be split in order to group
6 towns to the north of Ayr with Ayr and towns
7 and villages to the south of Ayr with Ayr. They
8 cannot all be part of Ayr. The Commission has
9 chosen to divide Ayr in order to group all the
10 places which lie within the same local
11 authority as Ayr. The Commission has taken
12 precisely the same approach in Perth which the
13 Commission has divided down the middle,
14 associated communities to the north and east
15 of Perth with part of Perth and communities to
16 the south and west of Perth with part of Perth.
17 It has taken precisely the same approach to
18 Paisley, proposing to link communities of
19 Barrhead and East Paisley and Johnstone and
20 other communities to the west of Paisley.
21 Paisley does not have a proposed entire
22 constituency. Paisley is divided. Precisely the
23 same approach has been taken in Dumfries
24 where the Commission has proposed to divide
25 Dumfries on a line along the River Nith

1 associating therefore with Dumfries East and
2 Dumfries West, if you like, the communities
3 immediately adjacent to Dumfries. Now, that
4 approach can be debated, and there will be a
5 debate in Dumfries as there has been a debate
6 here. Curiously there have been no public
7 objections to the proposed division of Perth.
8 There are no representations from anywhere in
9 South Ayrshire about the proposed division of
10 Ayr other than the local MSP and there were no
11 representations made in Renfrewshire either
12 about the division of Paisley other than from
13 the Conservative Party I think and possibly
14 some individuals in the landward area, but
15 there were no representations from Paisley
16 itself that I recall.

17 Now, essentially what the Commission has
18 done there is accepted that certain areas have
19 inevitably two or possibly more constituencies
20 and that they require to group towns and they
21 require to group them with the areas with
22 which they are associated, but that has
23 required division of the dominant town, and
24 with respect that is what we think we propose
25 in Motherwell which is the dominant town

1 within the Southern three areas of North
2 Lanarkshire, we propose being the areas of
3 Bellshill and District, Motherwell and District,
4 and Wishaw. Again these are not areas which
5 have happened by accident. Again with the
6 single exception of Salsburgh, which is a piece
7 of grit in the system which the Local
8 Government Boundary Commission and the
9 council were unable to resolve when the local
10 government boundaries were drawn up. I do
11 not know why it was not possible but the
12 Commission wouldn't agree to that. With the
13 exception of Salsburgh, all of the communities
14 within Bellshill, Motherwell and Wishaw are the
15 same communities as were in the former
16 Motherwell District Council area within
17 Strathclyde region, and again that is not a
18 coincidence, because the Commission which
19 established Motherwell District Council and
20 North Lanarkshire council itself in determining
21 those areas identified the pattern of
22 settlements in those areas and saw this as a
23 coherent unit. Now, we maintain that there is
24 no more injustice done to Motherwell by
25 creating a constituency of part of Motherwell

1 and the communities to the north and west of
2 it and a constituency containing the other part
3 of Motherwell with Wishaw and the
4 communities which lie around for that part of
5 Motherwell and Wishaw. It is the same
6 treatment as has been applied in Ayr, Dumfries
7 and Perth and Paisley, and we think that there
8 is logic to that because it means that everyone
9 who has been historically associated with
10 Motherwell will be associated with one part of
11 Motherwell or another, and it is in that context
12 and that context alone that I wish to refer to
13 the Fortissat ward which has been the subject
14 of debate today.

15 It is not our contention that there are no links
16 between Fortissat and Airdrie. Clearly there
17 are links and that has been heard in the
18 evidence given today, and I would say from
19 what I have seen of the dispute between the
20 council and the local government Boundary
21 Commission it is clear today that Salsburgh is
22 the village which is associated primarily with
23 Airdrie rather than Motherwell. The remainder
24 of the Fortissat Ward however, it is clear to
25 me, does associate also with Wishaw and

1 Motherwell possibly also to a lesser extent and
2 a proposal therefore we have made is that that
3 area should be associated with Wishaw and
4 part of Motherwell reflecting the connectivity
5 which has been identified by the council, not
6 when it was considering electoral boundaries
7 but when it was considering how they would
8 group those wards in order to create coherent
9 area committees. The evidence that the council
10 has done it that way is strong evidence indeed,
11 particularly given the importance which was
12 attached and again I would have to ask you to
13 read it to verify this and if you do read the
14 transcript of the 2002 Inquiry you'll find Mr
15 Fleming and councillor Ross gave extensive
16 evidence about the importance the council
17 attached to what was then the area committees
18 that were then nine – they are six now – and
19 they considered these to be very important
20 building blocks for the Westminster
21 constituencies and I think consistency would
22 dictate the same approach now.

23 Turning to what is clearly the most difficult
24 and least satisfactory part of the entire area of
25 North Lanarkshire, how do we balance the

1 competing claims of Coatbridge and Airdrie?
2 I take to heart what was said this morning by
3 one of the representatives – I think it might
4 have been Councillor Morgan but I wouldn't
5 insist on that – and I think Councillor Morgan
6 said that Airdrie had always seemed to be the
7 junior partner in the relationship between
8 Coatbridge and Airdrie, and as someone who
9 for much of his adult life has lived in Prestwick
10 and worked in Ayr, two adjacent towns which
11 overlap each other, I understand the issues
12 about one town and another, and I think in
13 fact Airdrie and Coatbridge may not be as
14 imbalanced numerically as Councillor Morgan
15 was saying, depending on which villages you
16 associate with Airdrie. If you take the Burgh of
17 Airdrie as the evidence is that Airdrie has felt
18 that its voice has not been heard and I think
19 somebody used the expression "swamped".
20 Now, that may be an emotive term and I do not
21 wish to base too much on the use of that
22 word, but that does appear to be to be the way
23 that people in Airdrie see these proposals, and
24 we think that there is merit in creating at
25 constituency which would contain Airdrie. It

1 cannot contain only Airdrie. It must contain
2 some other areas, but as has been said Airdrie
3 is a very old Burgh. It was a Burgh in his own
4 right. It came to Parliament in the century
5 before the first World War, grouped with the
6 Falkirk group of burghs before Coatbridge was
7 ever given that parliamentary status, and since
8 1918 until 1983 Coatbridge and Airdrie sat in
9 the same constituency, and even after 1983
10 when Monklands East and Monklands West
11 were constituted as the Airdrie constituency,
12 the Airdrie-based constituency of Monklands
13 East contained the regional electoral division
14 which was the division of Chapelhall and
15 Salsburgh. That contained four district wards
16 which were Woodhall & Chapelhall, which were
17 Airdrie-based wards, and Shawhead and a
18 ward which included I think part of Carnbroe
19 and Greenend and Sykeside and I think that
20 was called the Calder Ward. Those were two
21 wards which were essentially Coatbridge
22 wards, and as a result of that there was an
23 element of Coatbridge included in the
24 Monklands East constituency until the fourth
25 Review and effectively therefore until the 1997

1 election.

2 That could be dismissed as ancient history
3 were it not for the fact that in considering the
4 5th periodical review of parliamentary
5 constituencies as recently as 2002 North
6 Lanarkshire Council, supported by the Labour
7 Party and a number of their elected
8 representatives from the Labour Party, urged
9 the creation of the constituency of Coatbridge
10 and Airdrie, and I'm not saying that what we
11 are proposing for Coatbridge is the best
12 solution for Coatbridge. What I am saying is
13 that in the very recent history powerful and
14 representative political voices had been raised
15 to argue for a constituency which contained
16 Coatbridge and Airdrie and it appears to us to
17 be an acceptable solution for Coatbridge which
18 reflects what we are urging for Motherwell,
19 reflects what the Commission has accepted as
20 proposed for the Dumfries area and Paisley,
21 and reflects what the Commission and for that
22 matter the Labour Party had proposed in Perth.
23 Coatbridge is seen as the larger town in this
24 Coatbridge and Airdrie former Monklands area
25 and Coatbridge is the one which can most

1 equably be defined as a clear dividing line. It
2 has been identified and is mapped in our
3 proposals on the wall and it would be
4 reasonable for Coatbridge, comparing its
5 context and its circumstances with other
6 towns, for Coatbridge to be divided.

7 It is clearly the case - and this is the second
8 point that I would raise - that we have no
9 evidence from the people of Coatbridge as to
10 how they would feel about that. I regret that.
11 When the Boundary Commission operated in
12 the 3rd and 4th and 5th reviews, in all of
13 which I took part - I took part in the
14 Strathclyde local inquiry and gave evidence at
15 Glasgow in the third review and in the 4th
16 review and I took part in a number of the 5th
17 review public inquiries in the 2000 period.
18 Always before the papers which have been
19 lodged by political parties, councils and all
20 individuals had been photocopied and had
21 been placed by the Commission in central
22 points in all the affected areas, and libraries
23 and post offices, and it has always been
24 possible in the past easily for local
25 newspapers to see the papers which had been

1 produced for local inquiries and it was always
2 possible for other political parties to see the
3 counter-proposals which were made, and it
4 has always been possible for publicity to be
5 generated, debates to be had, petitions to be
6 run, additional letters to be put forward, and I
7 am afraid that that the approach which has
8 been taken this time has not lent itself as well
9 to that. Political parties have been made aware
10 of representations from other areas but I'm
11 not conscious that the public at large have had
12 the full information, or that the local media
13 had the full information which in previous
14 reviews they would have had. We ourselves
15 were in some difficulty in this respect because
16 we have asked for comprehensive counter-
17 proposals from the Labour Party. Now, in
18 1995, I think it was, in the 4th review, and in
19 2001/2, the 5th review of parliamentary
20 constituencies, the Labour Party produced a
21 comprehensive counter-proposal for the whole
22 of Scotland, mapping out all the knock-on
23 consequences for every changed proposal, and
24 whether it was all agreed and not, it all made
25 perfect sense internally and could be debated.

1 The difficulty we have had in this particular
2 review is that we have a counter-proposal
3 from the Labour Party which links the councils
4 of Argyll and Bute free to South Lanarkshire,
5 and that has been supported by the
6 administration of North Lanarkshire, but there
7 are inevitably knock-on consequences for
8 Renfrewshire and Ayrshire because as things
9 stand the Commission has proposed to group
10 some of these councils with Renfrewshire and
11 some of these councils with Ayrshire, and I use
12 Ayrshire and Renfrewshire in a generic sense
13 of the three councils in each former county.
14 Without knowing what the detailed counter
15 proposals would be for Ayrshire and
16 Renfrewshire it is impossible to evaluate
17 properly the relative merits of what is
18 proposed for Dunbartonshire and Lanarkshire.
19 We attempted to elicit information from the
20 representatives who appeared at Paisley and
21 Clydebank - and Mr Grundy has referred in
22 there to a number of prominent MPs and MSPs
23 and Mr Cook who represented the Labour
24 Party. Mr Cook defined the Labour Party's
25 approach to that Inquiry as not having

1 counter-proposals but having a position, and
2 his position was that the Commission should
3 go away and think again, and although I think
4 there is a counter-proposal showing detailed
5 constituency proposals for Ayr, Carrick,
6 Cumnock constituency Labour Party which you
7 will have seen there is no authoritative
8 proposal from the Labour Party and there is
9 nothing which is proposed by anyone which
10 has had the opportunity of public scrutiny or
11 which has had expressions of public support
12 behind it. This makes it extremely difficult for
13 us to come here today and put up a case of
14 what is actually quite a difficult thing to argue
15 for Clydebank .. sorry, that Coatbridge should
16 be divided and Motherwell should be divided,
17 because we're doing that in a vacuum. We can
18 say that the consequences will be that the
19 other towns in other areas will be split and
20 there will be controversy in these areas but
21 without the opportunity to know what is
22 proposed it is very hard to argue the
23 respective merits of that, and ultimately we
24 have had to found on what the Commission
25 says in its paper for this Inquiry and the

1 Renfrewshire and Dunbartonshire Inquiry
2 which is that their secretariat examined the
3 method of grouping constituencies which was
4 to go down through Ayrshire and Renfrewshire
5 to the west of Glasgow and to come round
6 from Dumbarton through to Lanarkshire for
7 the north and east of Glasgow and they found
8 that in the papers they produced for the
9 Commission, which the Commissioners
10 accepted, they found that the disruption to
11 settlements, the disruption to communities,
12 the disruption to towns, would be even worse.
13 I cannot tell you because I haven't been privy
14 to the Commission's internal discussions what
15 the alternative changes would have been. I
16 daresay that they will brief you on that, sir, if
17 you ask them to do so. That means that people
18 who wish to participate on a comprehensive
19 basis, coming up with counter-proposals, do
20 so a little in the dark and there is not even
21 now a coherent counter-proposal for Ayrshire
22 and Renfrewshire, and in the absence of one
23 which commands support and which can
24 demonstrably be shown to be acceptable we
25 find it impossible to accept a different

1 grouping in the councils which run to the west
2 and north and east of Glasgow. We have tried
3 to minimise the disruption to the existing ties
4 by proposing a separation between South
5 Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire. Mr Grundy
6 spoke to that, and we have tried to minimise
7 the disruption in North Lanarkshire, calling for
8 a different configuration of the councils in
9 relation to West Lothian and its neighbouring
10 councils to the east.

11 I wish finally to say that I do recognise the
12 difficulties which the Commission has faced
13 and I dare say the officials who have drawn
14 these proposals up did not enjoy hearing some
15 of the public criticisms of them. I do not like
16 making proposals which will divide any
17 community because I understand the desire of
18 all communities to be together but
19 unfortunately there is a need to group councils
20 and there is a need to apply quota. The
21 settlement patterns of Scotland require that
22 some places somewhere will not get their
23 preferred outcome. That means that we must
24 all attempt to do our best to find what is the
25 least disadvantageous current overall and I

1 close at that point and I'm perfectly happy to
2 take questions.

3 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: thank you very
4 much for all that. I've got all that of course in
5 the notes.

6 MR ROWLAND: thank you. First of all I would
7 like to start off by saying that I'm sure the
8 people of Salsburgh would like been referred
9 to as being about of grit in the system. I think
10 that that was unfortunate at the very least. I
11 think your attitude is also unfortunate too,
12 just to shove that off when people have made
13 an effort to come along here and contribute as
14 well as members of the public. What I would
15 like to ask is, you keep referring to "we" and I
16 would like to ask: obviously your presentation
17 was well-resourced and well-documented but
18 who actually worked on the report to bring it
19 along today? Was it a think tank? Was it
20 political anoraks? Did you actually involve any
21 other members of the public? You talked about
22 the Labour Party and the fact that they have
23 failed to ..

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think if you stop
25 at that point before you go on, I think you

1 should answer, who was it who financed or
2 organised the report?

3 MR TOSH: the paper which was submitted to
4 the Commission was prepared by Mr Grundy
5 following a series of meetings which were held
6 within the Conservative Party. We believe that
7 all political parties hold internal meetings and
8 they form proposals and counter-proposals
9 and we believe that the Labour Party for
10 example all agreed on this counter-proposal
11 for Dunbartonshire and Lanarkshire but were
12 unable to agree a common approach in
13 Renfrewshire and Ayrshire. We have managed
14 to resolve that internally. As to who resourced
15 it, what I've said here just now is without note.
16 I don't have a document. I have responded to
17 issues which were raised today. So far from
18 any disrespect to Salsburgh I could have sat
19 here and said the local government Boundary
20 Commission has resolved this matter. They put
21 Salsburgh in with Shotts. Shotts clearly is
22 linked with North Lanarkshire council and
23 Motherwell and that should be the end of it. I
24 haven't said that. What I'm done is
25 acknowledge very freely and volunteered and

1 think that in my judgment Salsburgh does not
2 fit within the Fortissat ward, and if it is your
3 decision ultimately to recommend that the
4 Fortissat ward should be linked with
5 Motherwell and Wishaw, and if it is possible
6 and you recommend that that Ward should be
7 divided so that the Salsburgh community can
8 be united with Airdrie I would regard that as a
9 small victory for a small community who is
10 entitled to respect as any other community,
11 and it will not have escaped your attention,
12 sir, that we were criticised earlier for
13 proposing a number of part-wards. It will not
14 have escaped your attention that the Boundary
15 Commission propose part-wards and indeed
16 that the Labour Party counter-proposal splits a
17 number of wards and there are extensive part-
18 wards of long lists in the documents which I
19 have in the polling districts which they
20 propose to take away from the main Ward and
21 I think that that reflects the efforts, the
22 genuine efforts, that everyone has made in
23 trying to link communities rationally and
24 evenly and I think if you can find a way to
25 resolve the issue of Salsburgh it is necessary

1 to resolve it separately from Fortissat then
2 you would have my support in so doing. If
3 what I said sounded disrespectful to Salsburgh
4 and its inhabitants it certainly was not
5 intended to. Quite the opposite.

6 MR ROLINK: thank you for your answer that.
7 Just one final question. You made remarks
8 during your presentation about the public
9 scrutiny and public support for submissions
10 and proposals. Can you tell me if the
11 proposals that you have made have any public
12 scrutiny or any public support?

13 MR TOSH: well, the proposals that we made
14 were given to the Boundary Commission and as
15 I have said on previous occasions the Boundary
16 Commission published them widely. I don't
17 think it did that this time to the same degree
18 but that is perhaps something that the
19 Boundary Commission will look at again for
20 future purposes. I have to say in defene of all
21 political parties who have been involved in this
22 process we were all given very detailed
23 electoral data, very sophisticated GIS
24 information to allow us to formulate counter-
25 proposals. We were all urged by the

1 Commission – not required, but we were
2 encouraged by the Commission – to formulate
3 counter-proposals which are entirely
4 comprehensive so that all the knock-on
5 consequences are addressed. So, I'm not
6 saying that we didn't get support from the
7 Boundary Commission. None of the political
8 parties are resourced by the Commission to
9 publish documentation, put it in libraries and
10 hold meetings and have consultations, and all
11 that we can do and all other people can do is
12 to put proposals forward and have then heard
13 that Inquiry such as this in the best way they
14 can. I appreciate that the gentleman may not
15 have been involved in this before, but that is
16 how these things are run, and I could, but I
17 think I would try everybody's patience if I went
18 through areas where other political parties
19 made proposals without having done extensive
20 local consultation. We heard this morning that
21 ..

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: well, we have a
23 relatively short time ..

24 MR TOSH: absolutely. We had this morning
25 proposals made for Bearsden which were

1 purely to achieving numerical quota and they
2 don't think that a comprehensive survey was
3 done of Bearsden electors and I could predict
4 for you the outcome if it were done. I'm afraid
5 that we're all operating within these
6 constraints and I can only apologise for our
7 shortcomings but I think that they are
8 reflected in those of other political parties by
9 necessity.

10 COUNCILLOR FAGAN: just a short point, but as
11 the former councillor for Salsburgh prior to
12 2007 I actually accept that there was no slight
13 meant at all. I think that is clear, for clarity
14 you are absolutely right in saying that the
15 people of Salsburgh as represented by myself
16 and as represented by the Community Council
17 and various other groups were very clear about
18 the strong links with Airdrie and that was
19 certainly my position as the councillor for
20 Salsburgh. That was the position of the vast
21 majority of people with whom I spoke in
22 Salsburgh. So, clearly that would be a benefit
23 but I am arguing that Shotts should be
24 retained within Fortissat and I do not think
25 there is in debate about that.

1 MR TOSH: may I say in fairness that I don't
2 think the constituency of Airdrie and Shotts as
3 exists is flawed. I have been a member of the
4 Scottish parliament for 8 years and I am very
5 well aware of Airdrie and Shotts. It is legend
6 within the Scottish parliament, the
7 constituency of Airdrie, Shotts and
8 surrounding villages, and I'm privileged to be
9 part of a discussion which has involved the
10 names of many of those villages, and they
11 have become live for me today in a way which
12 very few of my former parliamentary
13 colleagues probably can attest to. I think that
14 the member of the Scottish parliament for
15 Airdrie and Shotts has worked very hard to
16 make that a very good constituency and that
17 what has been said today by people about
18 Airdrie and Shotts has been entirely fair
19 comment. I am simply trying to put it in a
20 slightly different context in the structure of
21 areas within North Lanarkshire Council and I
22 think what I have proposed is fair and would
23 not be unreasonable for Shotts and the
24 Fortissat ward, except for the people of
25 Salsburgh, they do have a much closer affinity

1 with Airdrie.

2 MR FLEMING: very briefly, Mr Tosh; I think in
3 your evidence you have been more than fair as
4 to the description of your own proposals. I
5 think that you would accept that these
6 proposals are of necessity constructed without
7 the benefit of hearing the evidence you have
8 heard today of community ties and lack of
9 community ties?

10 MR TOSH: I haven't heard anything today which
11 has surprised me because in the file which I
12 was given - I did read the CDs, and there are
13 1545 pages on file and while many of them are
14 standard letters which I could scan quite
15 quickly there were many individual e-mails
16 and letters which I think addressed all the
17 issues which we have listened to today and
18 they came here today very well aware of the
19 views of the local communities about the
20 proposed three Council constituencies around
21 Shotts and of the issues at surrounding
22 Airdrie and some of the issues around
23 Kirkintilloch Bearsden which have not been so
24 central to the debate today. There was
25 remarkably very little said in the

1 representations about Cumbernauld and
2 Kilsyth. It struck me as curious that other than
3 councillors and parliamentarians there had
4 been only two people from Cumbernauld and
5 Kilsyth who made representations against the
6 break-up of Cumbernauld and Kilsyth, but I
7 hope that in assessing the proposals for
8 Cumbernauld and Kilsyth I didn't listen to the
9 volume but considered the arguments and the
10 links with which I am familiar, without
11 pretending to know Cumbernauld in any great
12 detail, but which I respect.

13 MR FLEMING: thank you for that, Mr Tosh. You
14 were very fair in your comments about your
15 own proposals in acknowledging the
16 deficiencies and the difficulties of splitting the
17 southern part of Coatbridge from Coatbridge
18 town centre and the remainder and the
19 difficulties of splitting Motherwell, and from
20 the evidence you have heard today, the fairly
21 unnatural marriage of Coatbridge and
22 Kirkintilloch. I take it from that that if we were
23 looking at North Lanarkshire in a vacuum you
24 would acknowledge that the current
25 arrangements are to be preferred to your own

1 recommendations?

2 MR TOSH: I think the difficulty with that, to be
3 honest – let me take that in one of two ways.
4 Let me concede one point, that if we look at
5 North Lanarkshire in a vacuum your proposals
6 would work. They would create constituencies
7 which would meet the quota. The difficulty is
8 that you cannot operate North Lanarkshire in a
9 vacuum. It was a gentleman here who said that
10 if it ain't broke, don't fix it. The difficulty that
11 North Lanarkshire has is the adjacent
12 constituencies in West Lothian are over
13 60,000. Clydesdale and East Kilbride sit at
14 60,000. Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley sits
15 at 65,000, Kilmarnock and Loudon at over
16 60,000, and I am afraid it is not possible for
17 any local authority to look at its proposals in a
18 vacuum. If you look at it in a vacuum you
19 could devise an acceptable set of
20 constituencies for every part of Scotland but
21 unfortunately that vacuum option is not open
22 to any of us.

23 Would the constituencies be satisfactory? They
24 may very well be acceptable to a lot of local
25 people in that they are constituencies with

1 which they are familiar. The difficulty I think
2 in recommending them as preferable to the
3 constituencies which we propose – and indeed
4 which the Commission has proposed – is that
5 they do not appear to be – that is your
6 proposals do not appear to me to follow the
7 pattern of settlements, that they do not reflect
8 the reality of the continuum of inhabitants of
9 towns and villages clustered around
10 Motherwell and Wishaw and they do not appear
11 to me to reflect the reality which is historical
12 and current of the Coatbridge and Airdrie hub.
13 There is a further difficulty in your proposals
14 which involves a constituency which borrows
15 from South Lanarkshire, and it does not just
16 take an act as community like Bothwell &
17 Uddingston – you can debate whether Bothwell
18 & Uddingston should be in north or south, but
19 it has been in South through being in Hamilton
20 district since 1974 and that is more than 30
21 years, and nobody has challenged that. I
22 remember for example that there was a
23 challenge between Monklands and Motherwell
24 District Councils which led to the village of
25 Chapelhall been transferred away in the early

1 days of those councils from Motherwell to
2 Monklands. No such challenge has been made
3 of Bothwell and Uddingston but I appreciate
4 you could argue the point about Bothwell and
5 Uddingston. It seems very difficult to me to
6 argue - and I did go to Hamilton for the
7 Inquiry in 2002 of the Westminster
8 constituencies, and because nobody appears in
9 these things to argue for the Commission I
10 found myself grilled for the whole morning by
11 a succession of community representatives
12 from Hamilton including half of the local
13 authority about our proposals for Hamilton,
14 because they were opposed until then at the
15 Westminster Review because their town was be
16 split in two. Now, I recognise that what is
17 proposed for Hamilton this time for the
18 Scottish parliament is better because most of
19 Hamilton is now intact, but it still is the case
20 as I'm sure you're familiar with, that the
21 northern part of Hamilton - not just Whitehill,
22 which you could argue is an outlying suburb,
23 although it seems pretty well integrated to me,
24 but part of the old town centre of Hamilton, is
25 detached from the bulk of Hamilton and is

1 associated through Bothwell & Uddingston and
2 clustered across Bothwell Brig and across the
3 motorway through the Raith interchange with a
4 succession of towns which bore the name of
5 Bothwell Parish - and still does for
6 registration purposes. So, for all practical
7 political and local government purposes
8 Bothwell Parish has not been in existence for a
9 long, long time and I think what is proposed
10 for that part of Blantyre which would come
11 with that under the Commission proposals and
12 for that section of Hamilton, and also I would
13 argue for Bothwell and Uddingston that that is
14 not the best outcome for them because they
15 are primarily South Lanarkshire communities
16 with good and well-attested and strong ties to
17 Hamilton who would be placed in what is
18 overwhelmingly a North Lanarkshire
19 constituency, and I think although there are no
20 substantial objections from those places I
21 suspect that that that is probably down to lack
22 of public information about it. The only
23 representation which did come from that area
24 was hostile to the proposal and that the war
25 Hamilton should come together was to put

1 think that that was from somebody in the SNP.
2 So, no - I wouldn't accept that your proposals
3 were better. I would accept that if you could
4 treat North Lanarkshire in a vacuum - and
5 if sometimes we could talk about the Republic
6 of North Lanarkshire - if you could treat it as
7 a separate political entity then it may be
8 possible to argue for the constituencies but I
9 think it is very very difficult within the
10 grouping in which you have been placed.

11 MR FLEMING: thank you. I think you have just
12 answered my next question which was, were
13 you aware of any particular dissatisfaction
14 with the current boundaries of Hamilton North
15 and Bellshill, and I think that you have given
16 us your answer on that. I think in the question
17 to myself you indicated that going further west
18 the town of Helensburgh was split.

19 MR TOSH: I didn't make that comment, no . I
20 haven't referred to Helensburgh at all.

21 MR GRUNDY: it was myself, sir.

22 MR TOSH: Mr Grundy referred to Helensburgh.
23 No, I have sought to try and confine as much
24 of my discussion as possible to this area.

25 MR FLEMING: are you aware that there is a split

1 in the town of Helensburgh in the Boundary
2 Commission proposals?

3 MR TOSH: the Boundary Commission proposals
4 propose a division between I think it is called
5 the Lomond north ward and the other two
6 wards which are situated in the Helensburgh
7 and Lomond area and the Argyll and Bute
8 Council and evidence was given at Clydebank
9 by a group of councillors representing all of
10 the political groupings on the council, who
11 argued that there are three wards should be
12 kept together. They argued primarily for a co-
13 terminous Argyll and Bute constituency with
14 the council and Westminster constituency.
15 That had a quota of 68,000 and I don't think
16 that that will be sustained by that Assistant
17 Commissioner. If If they couldn't have that,
18 there was a discussion about whether the
19 Helensburgh wards could be linked with
20 Dumbarton, but they did wish to keep those
21 wards together because .. I think it is actually
22 highly doubtful in any constituency but
23 particularly a marginal constituency like
24 Argyll and Bute that an elected politician for
25 that constituency could not serve all the

1 people to the best of his or her ability.
2 Concern expressed was that one of the
3 Helensburgh wards was put with Argyll and
4 Bute and two would be to Dumbarton and then
5 the two would be to Dumbarton what the
6 people here would argue as being Airdrie to
7 Coatbridge and Lomond north would be to the
8 rest of Argyll and Bute .

9 MR FLEMING: again I think you are probably
10 answered my next question. The split of
11 Helensburgh is inevitable in your view and
12 then the point at which Helensburgh is split
13 could be debatable.

14 MR TOSH: the split of Helensburgh is not
15 inevitable because we have put forward
16 proposals - and I am most reluctant to get
17 involved in the Highland Inquiry but we have
18 also proposed a change to the groupings in
19 Highland, because we are very well aware that
20 in the last four or five years the communities
21 in Oban and in Fort William have worked very,
22 very closely together on a number of issues,
23 particularly with the shared future of the two
24 hospitals which service the communities, and
25 we have put in a proposal which says that the

1 northern section of Argyll and Bute, the Oban
2 wards, could clearly be linked with Highland to
3 create a West Highland constituency and with
4 knock-on consequences which we have
5 addressed and we would therefore be able to
6 propose an Argyll and Bute constituency which
7 began at the eastern boundary of Argyll and
8 Bute council and included all of the electoral
9 wards except the two Oban wards linking Oban
10 with Fort William. It must be desperate for
11 people here who came in to talk about Airdrie
12 to have all this talk about other parts of
13 Scotland, but it does illustrate the difficulty,
14 that once you start to carve up a part of it you
15 can actually run round the whole country and
16 find yourself talking about places that would
17 beggar belief for the people of Airdrie.

18 MR FLEMING: I should perhaps acknowledge
19 the total disadvantage of not having been
20 round the various Inquiries, but to pursue the
21 question; if we assume the northern boundary
22 of Argyll remains as it stands, Helensburgh
23 then has to be divided and the question is
24 where?

25 MR TOSH: that is a matter now for the

1 Commissioner, but it is possible that the
2 Commissioner there will not divide
3 Helensburgh or I would have suggested that he
4 would divide probably along the lines of one
5 of the electoral ward boundaries but since we
6 put in a counter-proposal and virtually
7 everyone else involved at the Inquiry had
8 proposals of their own I couldn't speculate
9 which proposal that Assistant Commissioner
10 really favours.

11 MR FLEMING: so, the boundary of Helensburgh
12 could lead to a marginally smaller Argyll
13 constituency with a greater electorate going
14 into Dumbarton, to Clydebank and giving the
15 Boundary Commission an option for a variety
16 of options coming down through West
17 Dunbartonshire, East Dunbartonshire and
18 North Lanarkshire. Is it not the case that there
19 seems to be very great desperation in your
20 own part to defend a very small and new
21 constituency of Milngavie and Bearsden, which
22 is well short of the electoral quota, is not a
23 constituency of any particular history, but
24 everything seems to be being built round it?

25 MR TOSH: Mr Grundy is telling me what the

1 piece of paper in front of me says. It says that
2 Labour Party counter-proposal for Argyll and
3 Bute was 1-8, 49,370 electors. Now, I'm sorry.
4 I began by drawing attention to the nine per
5 cent disparity and ..

6 MR FLEMING: I represent North Lanarkshire
7 Council. I have no representation from any
8 political party.

9 MR TOSH: I apologise. I understood you'd be
10 speaking along similar lines to that.

11 MR FLEMING: I would take exception to that.

12 MR TOSH: no offence was intended. The people
13 I mix with generally do not seem all that
14 offended by being associated with the Labour
15 Party but I appreciate that you're an official
16 and would wish your independence from all
17 political parties to be respected. I'm sorry.
18 Could you put to me again what you are
19 proposing for Argyll and Bute?

20 MR FLEMING: working on the assumption that
21 the northern boundary of Argyll and Bute
22 remains unchanged you have I think said or
23 accepted that there has to be some division of
24 the town of Helensburgh, but the point of
25 division of the town of Helensburgh is

1 variable.

2 MR TOSH: I think that the Commission
3 proposed an Argyll and Bute constituency of
4 around 55,000 people, which included the
5 Lomond north ward with the traditional Argyll
6 and Bute area and put the two Helensburgh
7 town wards with Dumbarton with which
8 constituency it is of course currently
9 associated.

10 MR FLEMING: so, it would be possible to divide
11 Helensburgh along another point to bring the
12 Argyll constituency even nearer or possibly
13 slightly below quota and thus give the
14 Boundary Commission, taking in the Clydebank
15 wards, a number of options throughout the
16 remaining part of West Dunbartonshire, East
17 Dunbartonshire, linking in with the northern
18 part of Cumbernauld and Kilsyth
19 constituencies?

20 MR TOSH: the literal answer to that would be
21 Yes, that it would be possible to reduce the
22 Argyll and Bute constituency but since it is
23 proposed at around 55,000 and quota is
24 54,700 I would have thought that the
25 Commission at the very most will agree to

1 move a very small community, and the nearest
2 one is Rhu which is some 1500 electors and I
3 think that is probably too many, but even if
4 1500 electors were moved I don't think that is
5 very much variation in a pattern of settlements
6 as you come east from there to create the
7 different constituencies.

8 MR FLEMING: I think that the difficulty I find is
9 that everybody seems to be very desperate to
10 defend an urban constituency, not a rural one
11 with any difficulties of rural representation – a
12 new urban constituency with an electorate
13 which must be on the margins of acceptability,
14 Milngavie and Bearsden constituency, with an
15 electorate of just over 51,500.

16 MR TOSH: that falls within the parameters of
17 what the Commission has laid down. The
18 Commission has not differentiated between
19 urban and rural areas. It does propose Burgh
20 constituencies and County constituencies, but
21 these I think are based on historic patterns
22 well before 1918. The only practical
23 consequence that I am aware of is of the
24 different rules there are for expenditure by
25 parliamentary candidates in these elections.

1 There is nothing in the guidance that I'm
2 aware of from the Commission and certainly
3 nothing in the rules which suggests that quota
4 should be applied differently as between rural
5 and urban areas. Now, it is certainly the case
6 that in some rural areas of Scotland in the past
7 there have been smaller constituencies, and to
8 widen the thing out further the Borders
9 constituencies have historically been between
10 40,000 & 50,000 electors, well below the
11 quota. Equally in other constituencies -
12 Dumfriesshire and some of the Highland areas
13 and Inverness which has an electorate of
14 closer to 70,000 than 60,000 and I think the
15 key to the Commission's thinking on this is
16 that in the current wave of proposals they have
17 proposed in Argyll and Bute constituency of
18 just slightly above quota and in Highland
19 where the entitlement I think is 3.18 if I
20 remember they have proposed three
21 constituencies. It is now clear to me that the
22 Commission is applying no special
23 geographical considerations in those areas and
24 that it has applied no weighting to favour rural
25 areas, and I recognise that for the members of

1 those constituencies that can create some
2 operational difficulties and of course that is
3 why they are resourced for their offices and
4 staff and telecommunications to try to allow
5 them to cope with the larger constituencies.
6 There are equally very large constituencies in
7 the non-Highland and non-Argyll and Bute
8 parts of Scotland - the Perthshire
9 constituencies, the Galloway constituencies,
10 whatever constituencies will be formed in
11 South Ayrshire. There are also substantial
12 issues of practical manageability for the
13 successful candidates in the elections, and
14 clearly if you're a member of the Scottish
15 parliament it will be easier to operate in
16 Glasgow Central to make arrangements than it
17 will be in even the Western Isles where the
18 distances and transport logistics are
19 formidable. These are I am afraid the functions
20 of the geography of Scotland.

21 MR FLEMING: so I take it that you have closed
22 your mind to the possibility of other
23 configurations in an area which could possibly
24 give rather better numerical balance and also
25 provided any good community links,

1 particularly with regard to the two Clydebank
2 wards.

3 MR TOSH: I am anticipating that by the time we
4 get to Lanark or Ayr that Mr Cook will come up
5 with a full counter-proposal for all the 23
6 constituencies which are proposed across the
7 two Inquiries of West of Scotland outside
8 Glasgow and I will be a bit annoyed not getting
9 it until the Inquiry because they have had our
10 proposals now for many, many weeks, but if he
11 brings forward proposals at that hearing - or
12 indeed if anyone else brings forward
13 unanticipated proposals at those hearings I
14 will certainly consider them. Just to go back to
15 what was your core question, it is not so much
16 that I have closed my mind, but I have
17 recognised that the Commission itself in
18 allocating constituencies to Argyll and Bute
19 and to the Highlands has not accepted any
20 argument to give them any advantage and I
21 think the reason for that, as Mr Grundy said
22 earlier, is that in the past my party - though I
23 have not personally been to a public inquiry in
24 the Highlands - my party in the past has
25 supported proposals to give favourable

1 treatment to the far northern areas of
2 Scotland, and there have been times in the
3 past where difficulties have been overcome by
4 creating an extra seat but because this time
5 we're operating under a different statute that
6 option is not available. This time the number
7 of constituencies must be 73. On the last
8 Westminster Review the number of
9 constituencies was supposed to be 57 and
10 ended up being 59, so that everyone's
11 aspirations could be accommodated, and that
12 has been historic. That is not possible this
13 time and if you take from one area – I'm sorry.
14 If you give to one area you must take from
15 another area and I think that makes it very
16 difficult to create a logical basis for favouring
17 the Highlands or Argyll and Bute.

18 MR FLEMING: and I think possibly my last
19 questions. Mr Tosh, you will appreciate that
20 North Lanarkshire Council will not be
21 represented at either of the future Inquiries
22 and it has not been represented at any of the
23 previous Inquiries. North Lanarkshire Council's
24 submissions are here and here today, and
25 would you then support a North Lanarkshire

1 Council's submissions that it is entirely unfair
2 of the Boundary Commission to have regard to
3 considerations elsewhere, but to lead to North
4 Lanarkshire proposals which fundamentally fail
5 to meet any of the constituency rules?

6 MR TOSH: I can understand why people here
7 will see it in that way. And I understand that in
8 this review we are dealing with a radically
9 altered map of local government and therefore
10 it is like the review which took place after the
11 Wheatley Commission and the changes of
12 constituencies following the changes in
13 councils in the 1970s. There will necessarily
14 be radical changes. There will be a desire in
15 some areas to try and fit the new Scottish
16 parliamentary constituencies along the same
17 lines as were used in the Westminster
18 constituencies where the quotas are now
19 different and you cannot use co-terminosity
20 any more and also being very different local
21 authority wards and a different shape and size
22 of those wards. While in many areas - I
23 appreciate you are dealing with North
24 Lanarkshire - while in many areas they follow
25 a better pattern of community grouping for

1 representative purposes it has created a
2 challenge for the Commission in that they have
3 been led to abandon the rules that they have
4 applied for the previous three reviews of using
5 only individual wards and they have espoused
6 part-wards. All of those issues come together
7 in a context of a ceiling of 73 constituencies
8 to give the Commission very severe difficulties
9 to manage. I don't think that it is possible. I
10 am sure that the Commission did not set out
11 to annoy anybody but I don't think it is
12 possible to come up with a comprehensive set
13 of proposals which did not leave somebody
14 feeling left out and I don't believe that there is
15 any discrimination against North Lanarkshire.
16 In fact, the groupings don't entirely end in
17 North Lanarkshire because they also move
18 down into South Lanarkshire and Ayrshire
19 where there are issues also to be addressed. I
20 speak as someone who has lived in Ayrshire
21 for many years and we always used to feel in
22 Strathclyde that the Boundary Commission
23 started with Argyll and Bute, worked down into
24 Renfrewshire and worked down into
25 Lanarkshire , most of Lanarkshire, and they

1 worked down into Ayrshire, and on the last
2 occasion that this was done they found
3 themselves in Renfrewshire, Ayrshire and
4 Lanarkshire with a surplus electoral division
5 which they put in the last constituency in each
6 case, so that you had three very large and very
7 populous constituencies in Clydesdale and
8 Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley and
9 Eastwood, now East Renfrewshire. So, I feel
10 that that has perhaps been an issue for the
11 Commission in the past and I cannot speak for
12 the Commission. I do not know what the
13 Commission's thinking is on this but I suspect
14 that that is one of the reasons why in the 5th
15 periodical review, the last of the Westminster
16 constituencies, and this one, the Commission
17 has departed from what was its practice
18 previously of issuing proposals for groups of
19 councils over several months. This time and
20 the last time they have issued their proposals
21 together for the whole of Scotland and I think
22 what they are trying to demonstrate by doing
23 that is that they are trying to demonstrate that
24 they have looked at the picture in the round
25 and they have tried not to leave anyone to the

1 last, and I can think of no reason .. I used to
2 complain what the Commission did to Ayrshire
3 but I didn't seriously think that they had done
4 it deliberately, and though I can understand
5 why you might think that it is not perfect here
6 – and I'm not saying it is perfect – I do not
7 think that there has been any discrimination
8 against North Lanarkshire Council.

9 MR FLEMING: I think I would not complain that
10 I have considered that it is deliberate, but my
11 last question, Mr Tosh: are you aware North
12 Lanarkshire Council unanimously supported its
13 stance?

14 MR TOSH: Yes, and number of Councils
15 unanimously supported their stances including
16 East Dunbartonshire Council and North
17 Ayrshire Council. A lot of other councils split
18 along party political lines. There would have
19 been a time when one might have said that
20 unanimity in North Lanarkshire council was
21 focused on that but I understand ..

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think the answer
23 is just a straightforward Yes or No.

24 MR TOSH: but I think the gentleman has tried
25 to make a point which is fair to recognise, that

1 the position in North Lanarkshire Council is
2 that there are representatives of more than
3 one political party and it is no longer one
4 monolithic bloc and so I accept that is a point.

5 MISS WATSON: Mr Tosh, very briefly you told
6 us earlier that you don't speak for the
7 Boundary Commission obviously. I was just
8 wondering why you state it as fact that in West
9 Lothian it is impossible as fact to comprise
10 two seats within that local council area.

11 MR TOSH: it is not impossible, but the
12 Commission has made it clear the terms upon
13 which it is prepared to vary quotas and that is
14 nine per cent margin. The entitlement in West
15 Lothian is already beyond their entitlement for
16 two constituencies and evidence has been
17 brought before the last review for
18 parliamentary boundaries in West Lothian and I
19 don't think it can be disputed that West
20 Lothian has grown in size steadily since the
21 1960s under the impact of Livingston New
22 Town and continues to be an area where very
23 substantial areas of land are allocated for
24 housing and the Commission will be aware of
25 the trends in the electorate but West Lothian is

1 not an area where if you create two
2 constituencies of around 61,000 electors you
3 will need to review these boundaries again in
4 20 years and still have constituencies of
5 around 61,000 electors. You will clearly have
6 constituencies which are very, very heavily in
7 excess of quota. The only numbers which the
8 Commission are obliged to formulate are the
9 electorates as at July of last year but the
10 Commission is entitled to – and I believe does
11 – take into account trends and I think that it is
12 clear that what you're asking for West Lothian
13 is unlikely to find favour with the Commission.
14 It wouldn't regard these as sustainable
15 constituencies. They are constituencies which
16 would very quickly be very substantially above
17 the allowable electorate and also the
18 Commission will be able now as a result of the
19 representations made to point to this
20 submission from West Lothian council which
21 itself acknowledges that and rejects
22 population growth and acknowledges that
23 there is a need to combine West Lothian with
24 another area. What you have going for you is
25 that they don't appear to want to be linked

1 with North Lanarkshire any more than North
2 Lanarkshire wishes to be linked with West
3 Lothian and I am sure that we can agree on
4 that at least.

5 MISS WATSON: I won't for a moment ask you
6 to speak on behalf of the Boundary
7 Commission and what they may come to a
8 conclusion about after all the representations
9 made, but you mentioned Highland East
10 constituency as proposed by the Boundary
11 Commission at the start of your statement and
12 I believe that that is 61,690 and I am sure you
13 know from the Labour Party submission, which
14 you have no doubt read, that two seats, each
15 with an average electorate of 61,447, can be
16 comprised within West Lothian, and I just want
17 to ask you one other question. Do you agree
18 with me that 61,447 is less than 61,690?

19 MR TOSH: well ..

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Yes or No?

21 MR TOSH: well, if it is a Yes or no answer then
22 I would have to agree with you, but I would
23 have to qualify that. I would have to qualify it
24 by saying I'm actually dubious about the
25 sustainability of the Highland seats because I

1 think Highlands East is another area which will
2 rapidly increase in numbers and those
3 numbers are likely to grow in the years to
4 come. If that has a point in your favour it is a
5 point that I don't just concede, I offer it to you
6 in the interests of transparency, but I think the
7 issue for the Highlands .. you see, you cannot
8 shake the Scottish parliament point off,
9 Caroline. The issue for the Highlands is that if
10 you did apply the mathematical quota there as
11 you could with the three constituencies of
12 about 56,000, 57,000, to do that would
13 require you to take an area like Badenoch and
14 Strathspey and either take it all away from
15 Inverness and give it all to a Fort William-
16 based constituency creating an enormous
17 constituency or you put it all with Inverness. I
18 think that that is what the thinking is but I
19 cannot give you any more information on that
20 because the Boundary Commission, unless it
21 has done it in the last day, it has not posted
22 its paper for the Highlands as yet and
23 therefore I am not privy to any of the bases
24 on which the Commission will advance a
25 defence in favour of a Highland East

1 constituency but I do recognise that it is a big
2 constituency in electoral terms but it is not
3 the biggest constituency geographically. That
4 belongs to the two constituencies with which it
5 is grouped.

6 A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: on a lighter note in
7 actual fact we have a connection between
8 Kirkintilloch and Monklands. The first railway
9 line in Scotland was built in 1826. Seriously, a
10 question for you, sir: I found when ing in the
11 volunteer section, I am afraid, that we didn't
12 have enough time and notification of the
13 Boundary Commission's reviews. The position
14 in the local library where the papers and March
15 were sent to were actually placed in a very
16 obscure airier and I would as that in future
17 reviews that the library been made certain that
18 the necessary documents are placed in a very,
19 very prominent terrier. Also in light of the
20 communities groups etc, public forums, that in
21 actual fact we get the necessary information
22 readily and also marks a readily that would
23 enable us to engage our communities and
24 community groups better than what we have at
25 present.

1 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I have noted that.
2 Thank you very much indeed. Well, thank you
3 very much indeed. I have sat on purposely
4 because you're all here to provide an
5 opportunity to complete the evidence of today.
6 I hope that everyone here today has had the
7 say that they wish. Mr Alex Neil, who was not
8 able to attend today, will be giving evidence
9 tomorrow at 10 o'clock. I am prepared – as
10 you will see, the last item on the order of
11 business is the summing-up as far as this area
12 is concerned as opposed to any others. I am
13 right that the Labour Party people are coming
14 to Ayr, is that right?

15 MISS WATSON: Ayr on Monday, that is right.

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: so, they will not be
17 here tomorrow? So, I am prepared to consider
18 after we have heard Mr Neil tomorrow if any of
19 you who have been here today including Mr
20 Fleming and Mr Tosh who have been involved
21 to some substantial extent, I am quite happy
22 to listen to any closing submission or
23 summing-up which you would wish. It would
24 be a matter entirely for you whether you wish
25 to do that.

1 MR TOSH: I don't at present wish to do that. It
2 may be that Mr Neil will raise some issues
3 tomorrow but I don't standing here today
4 intend to do that.

5 MR FLEMING: I won't have the privilege of
6 attending Ayr and Lanark and so yes; I would
7 wish to take up that offer tomorrow.

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: that is fine. Well,
9 thank you very much for the patience you have
10 all shown. It has been a lengthy day. I am very
11 obliged to you for all your assistance and all
12 your contributions. As I say, every word has
13 been recorded and I will have the privilege of
14 reading that in due course.

15

16

.....

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25