

I am asking for this legislation to be withdrawn. Not only do I ***not*** support the extension of these very racist measures for a further 10 years, I urge the government to reverse the damage done by the intervention and to reassess and replace the very racist and punitive assumptions on which the intervention was based.

In the panic which was whipped up in response to the “Little Children are Sacred” report, the creation of special measures to deal with any child abuse was particularly offensive and unhelpful. In light of the child abuse which has been exposed in white Christian organisations, it smacked of the psychology of displacement for non-indigenous men. In the dying days of the Howard government, sending in the army to impose morality on remote communities was a desperate attempt to pretend it was concerned and active. We don’t need that theatre any more.

The intervention was imposed on communities, denying those communities the control which only they can decide and regulate, according to their own cultural strengths.

It is not up to the government to plan the future direction of Indigenous peoples’ lives, but to ensure that food, security, health services and education are provided to all Australians and to ensure that Australian law is written to be obeyed by all its citizens.