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**From:** Debra&Daniel Gibson [mailto:dgibson02@yahoo.com.au]

**Sent:** Friday, 30 July 2004 1:30 PM

**To:** Committee, Indigenous Affairs (SEN)

**Subject:** Opposition to Howard's abolition of ATSIC

To whomever takes the time to read submissions,

Just a brief note from one of many non-indigenous Australians who vehemently opposes the Howard Government's approach to indigenous affairs. I cannot believe that after all these years we are being led by a Government who actively wishes to return us to the racist days of the pre-70s. The recent announcement of the abolition of ATSIC is yet another blow to both indigenous and non-indigenous Australians committed to real reconciliation. This Government has chosen to listen to only a portion of its own recommendations, that to dismantle ATSIC, without putting anything else in its place. We have seen that mainstream services fail to adequately address indigenous concerns (and are themselves already choked) nor can they offer appropriate representation of indigenous people.

Yet again, Howard has robbed the indigenous peoples of this country of their right to self-determination. We are returning to an ever-more paternalistic, welfare-dependent type "arrangement" of indigenous affairs. This racist government has made every attempt to back peddle on the road to reconciliation. I implore you to stop them in their tracks by giving back the voice to indigenous Australians and the chance to control their own destinies. ATSIC must be replaced with a fair, transparent and representative indigenous body at the national level and a strengthening of community-based initiatives with direct indigenous input and control.

Please give respect back to the people who cared for this country for thousands of years. They don't deserve the treatment Mr. Howard and his team have doled out to them.

From a very concerned Australian,

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