

To whom it may concern,

I have been informed that there has been a proposal to reinstate the Northern Territory Intervention for another 10 years. This news saddened me deeply, and I write to implore you not to reinstate such a marginally effective and paternalistic scheme for a new decade.

I am a student of politics at the University of Adelaide and have had the opportunity to study the Intervention in detail recently, and have come to the personal conclusion that it has it all wrong.

Regardless of the imperative of improving life in Aboriginal communities and how incredibly important that should be to our country, I see no true value in the Intervention. This system acts to marginalise Aboriginal authority, trust and social structures in the same tradition of Australia's insensitive treatment of the original occupants of this country for the past 200 years. Not to mention raise suspicion of the political utility of the Aboriginal situation and the potential for abuse of their land for profit.

I believe the government should enact a broad range of policy to help improve the situation in remote communities, rather than behaving in the almost colonial manner of installing a blanket scheme for a raft of symptoms of greater social breakdown. It's harder to pull off than sending the army in and putting up signs, but building levels of education, skills and education in these communities is the smart way forward.

Please, I implore you to think it through, consult with Aboriginal communities and devote resources intelligently to the goal of closing the gap.

Yours sincerely

John Dexter