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28. 7. 04.



The Secretary,

Senate Select Committee

Administration of Indigenous Affairs

Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600.

Dear Sir / Madam,

We write this letter because of our very great concern for recent decisions of the government to abandon the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (A.T.S.I.C), announced some weeks ago.

It is essential that our Indigenous people have the right to determine who represents them at all levels, and in fact to make decisions which directly affect them, and their communities.

There needs to be a national body of Indigenous Australians who can put forward their own needs and aspirations, in the knowledge they will be acted on.

Too often in the news, we are alarmed, and feel frustrated, that money seems not to be allocated to those services which would help Aboriginal communities where there are serious social problems - alcoholism, hygiene, drugs, etc. - these and others result in a low living standard. Women and children seem to suffer most.

If A.T.S.I.C is to be replaced, it must be in consultation and negotiation with Indigenous people.

Yours Respectfully,

Groffrey A. Buchanan

Gemma M. Buchanan