

## Muzzling the Media

- In February 1996, Mick Skrijel decided to take the issue of corruption in the National Crime Authority to Mr Duncan Kerr's electorate in Tasmania.
- Mick distributed leaflets detailing his allegations. Before he started he asked Mr Kerr if anything in the pamphlet was untrue. Mr Kerr declined to comment.
- **Mr Kerr's response** was to write to Tasmanian media outlets warning he would be "*obliged to take legal action if any of the false and defamatory material were to be repeated in the media*".
- **Mr Kerr then ordered** the Australian Federal Police to interrogate a local ABC Radio host who had planned to interview Mick.
- **The Australian public has a right to know about this cover up.**

Support for a Royal Commission into Mick Skrijel's allegations, as recommended by Mr Quick, has come from

- Whistleblowers Australia Inc
- Law Watch Inc
- Hamilton City Council (VIC)
- North Belconnen Baptist Church (ACT)
- Senator Sid Spindler (Democrat)
- Mr Paul Filing (Independent MP)
- Mr Richard Ackland, lawyer and journalist

## What can we do?

We all know that illegal drugs are killing thousands of kids across the country and that corrupt politicians, lawyers and police protect Australia's multi-billion drug trade.

**Mr Kerr** is well placed to root out corruption in the NCA, or protect the NCA from those who would. He claims that he rejected the recommendation of Mr David Quick, QC for a Royal Commission because of "the associated cost and the availability of suitable alternatives."

If **Mr Kerr** has nothing to hide, let him explain how his government justified the expenditure of \$3 million of taxpayers' money for **Carmen Lawrence's** legal bills, but could not justify the cost of a Royal Commission to establish the reason the NCA would frame an individual who has repeatedly made public statements about drug importations.

**If you care about justice, demand a Federal representative who also cares.**  
**Think carefully whether Mr Kerr is a suitable person to be Minister for Justice**  
**and**  
**whether he deserves your vote on 2 March**

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# CRIME

# JUSTICE



# and

# MR KERR

## Background to the Issues

Mick Skrijel was a former crayfisherman operating in 1977/78 out of Southend in South Australia. He witnessed heroin drops in the shipping lanes off the SA coast. Mick was offered a choice — join the importation ring or suffer the consequences.

Mick informed SA and Federal authorities.

## The consequences

- His pregnant wife and young daughters were terrorised
- Sabotage of his fishing vessel and equipment
- Larceny of his catch
- Primary and secondary trade boycott
- Attempted rape of his 12 years old daughter
- Attempted murder by shotgun
- Vicious assault on Mick and his family
- Numerous raids and harassment by the police
- Total destruction of his fishing vessel and his wife's car by an arsonist
- Arson attack on the family home in Southend, SA - extensive damage
- Frame-up by the National Crime Authority which led to his imprisonment

## What the authorities did

- In 1978, Mick gave a statement to the Mt Gambier, SA District Superintendent. A week later the police officer was dead. The replacement officer took another statement, altered it, and then shelved the matter.
- Premiers Dunstan and Corcoran ignored Mick's letters re drug trafficking and police protection.
- Premier Tonkin sent two police to interview Mick. One of the officers was Barry Moyse, the Operation Noah officer currently serving a 22 year sentence for involvement in drug trafficking.
- In 1984, the Costigan Royal Commission investigated Mick's allegations. The Federal Government terminated the investigation before it could be concluded.
- Former Senator Peter Baume referred Mick's allegations to the National Crime Authority (NCA).
- The NCA framed Mick on drug and explosive charges. Mick was imprisoned. In 1988, Mick successfully appealed his conviction and the Supreme Court of Victoria quashed all his convictions.
- In September 1993, under threat of a civil action, **Mr Duncan Kerr**, the Federal Minister for Justice, appointed a South Australian Queen's Counsel, **Mr David Quick**, to review Mick's case.
- In April 1995, Mr Quick, QC **concluded**: "... *evidence has been fabricated in order to incriminate Mr Skrijel on serious criminal charges involving drugs and explosives.*"
- Mr Quick, QC **recommended a Royal Commission into the frame-up.**

## Cover-up by MR KERR

- The public volume of Mr Quick's report was withheld by Mr Kerr for nine weeks. The version of the public volume which he finally sent to Mick had been gutted of hard evidence.
- Mr Kerr informed Mick:  
*"Because of the associated costs and the availability of suitable alternatives, I have not accepted Mr Quick's recommendation that there be a further inquiry conducted under the Royal Commission Act 1902."*
- In classic "Yes Minister" style, Mr Kerr asked the Victorian Deputy Ombudsman (Police Complaints) to conduct yet another inquiry, knowing that the Ombudsman has no power under his Act to investigate the NCA.
- The Dep. Ombudsman himself suggested that if a person had a grievance against the NCA, he should "write to the Honourable Duncan Kerr MP, the Commonwealth Minister for Justice."
- When Mick proved to the Joint Parliamentary Committee of the NCA that Mr Quick's report had been gutted, Mr Kerr refused to allow Mr Quick to give evidence to the Committee.
- Mr Kerr has never stated what he is doing to address the very serious matters contained in the **Confidential Volume** of Mr Quick's report, or even acknowledged that the volume exists.

