

## The Politics of Raw Milk in NSW

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The flagrant injustices, appalling application of Law and clear victimisation of market stall vendor, Mr Peter Melov, at the hands of the NSW Food 'Authority,' for selling raw cow's milk products has now drawn the attention of [Australia's mass media](#) - for very valid reasons.

Raw or unpasteurised cow's milk continues to be sold all over the State/nation labelled as a 'cosmetic' product -- exploiting a loophole -- though it is clearly consumed by people who swear by its superior qualities and health giving properties. People complain that the pasteurised variety is difficult to digest, is 'bowel loosening' and phlegm producing, a result of essential digestive enzymes being destroyed during the pasteurisation process.

One would think with so many people consuming the 'dangerous' (according to the FA) raw milk product the media would be full of stories of milk borne illnesses, food poisonings and other harmful effects, YET not ONE negative story over the two year period I have followed this case is to be found!

During Mr Melov's prosecution, at the Industrial Court, Sydney's Downing Centre, for those who may wish to access additional information - the regulator's own expert micro-biologist witness, refuted claims made by the authority that Mr Melov's products carried dangerous pathogens, citing instead inadequate storage procedures by the regulator as the cause of any dangerous bacteria occurring!

Nevertheless, the regulator appeared desperate to convict Mr Melov of as many charges and breaches as possible regardless of the cost to the taxpayer - little wonder with so many suppliers legally selling the 'cosmetic' product under the Food Authority's impotent nose!

The extraordinarily wasteful (of taxpayer funds) case brought against Mr Melov and the ease with which retailers continue to sell the 'cosmetic' milk, probably accounted for the regulator's frustration and the uncompromising 'vigour' with which the case was pursued; even court officials commented on the unusual length of time for judgement to be passed and the heavy nature of the fines incurred -- total costs and fines imposed by the court on the person of Mr Melov amounted to \$183,000! This extremely severe penalty in view of the fact that the regulator could not produce a single witness, person or testimonial that anyone had suffered any ill effects from consuming Mr Melov's products, leads to the obvious conclusion that the case was politically motivated!

Clearly, resorting to bureaucratic 'labelling breaches' in order to convict Mr Melov after the original pursuit of 'dangerous dairy products' FAILED, supports the view that the case brought against Mr Melov was politically motivated.

Perhaps the new Premier of NSW, Mr Barry O'Farrell may see fit to look into the matter and make some much needed adjustments to senior bureaucratic positions in the Food Authority - the Melov case was a legal travesty from start to finish, a 'witch hunt' would not be an inaccurate description. Indeed, the State government overseeing the regulator at the time, was in rapid decline; it

subsequently went on to suffer an historic overwhelming defeat at the State elections.

Of interest are recent fines issued by the Food Authority (FA) to Corporate supermarket chains [Coles and Woolworths](#) for labelling breaches; these mega-corporations were fined \$1540 and \$880, respectively, after prior warnings were given – a courtesy not extended to Mr Melov, who copped a \$53,000 fine for compounded labelling breaches.

It is interesting to note that the political nature of the case has led to spontaneous COMMUNITY support for Mr Melov. A [local paper](#) published a story of a fundraiser event that has since been held at the Bondi Pavillion. The event was so successful and enjoyable that it has become a regular social event.

Federal and State governments like to make much of the Australian tradition of the ‘fair go’ for everyone; however, what is clearly evident in the Melov case is the victimisation and extreme bias he suffered at the hands of the Food Authority and Court. Compare supermarket chain fines and warnings and those received by Mr Melov – ‘fair go,’ my arse!

Whatever else could be said about this case, one thing stands out, the need for a thorough investigation of the regulator to determine whether or not Mr Melov was sacrificed or scapegoated for political reasons. An appeal with perhaps support from local university Law Faculties may be an option which could reveal much.

In any event, the Melov case promises to attract the attention of State government ministers and officials who can ill afford to ignore public concerns relating to the unfair application of Law. Expensive, imported, *unpasteurised* cheeses consumed by social elites continue to be sold at specialist stores in Sydney without interference from government regulators!

Double standard, anyone?

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Cleaves Alternative News. <http://cleaves.lingama.net/news/story-2504.html>