

## Seeking Carmel Travers

by barra *Sunday, Nov 4 2007, 11:09am*

national / injustice/law / commentary

The title indirectly hints at the fact that this intro is an indictment of the current crop of Oz journalists and a tribute to Carmel Travers - who it seems was the last real Australian journalist willing to pursue the Truth at any cost.

In the wake of a damning report assessing declining press freedoms and disappearing government transparency, Travers' outstanding professionalism and character shines like a beacon in the dark mire of selective, biased and servile reporting. Travers clearly refused to accommodate the new neatly 'tailored' form of journalism, which has more in common with propaganda and entertainment than investigative reporting.



***Carmel Travers***

Real integrity comes at a cost and Travers was soon targeted by ASIO for daring to report the facts on the illegal invasion of Iraq and the collusion of the Howard government with the Bush regime in this flagrantly criminal endeavour. The 'handiwork' of the coalition of willing criminals is today a 'work' in progress; not content with one million civilian dead, they continue to pursue greater numbers in Iraq, Pakistan and now Afghanistan!

For her efforts in reporting the facts - I repeat, simple reporting -- ASIO trashed all her records, confiscated and destroyed all her computer hard drives and terrorised her for pursuing her profession as a journalist, documentary film maker and producer.

Her case clearly highlights the fact that the 'new sweeping terrorist laws' were designed to suppress the people and voices of dissent NOT combat the 'bearded terrorist' threat! Travers proved her point and validated her thesis in more ways than anyone would have anticipated.

However, today, far from consolidation in the ranks, drunken spineless journos are toeing the dictated line! We draw attention to the uncontested introduction of new sweeping terrorist laws and VERY OLD SEDITION LAWS designed to muzzle rather than protect the public. Where have all the journalists gone, its been a long time passing?

The public expected a united front from journos unwilling to compromise their 'professional

integrity' (what a fuckin' joke) but we saw only drunks and servile sycophants ducking for cover and signing themselves into detox clinics; anything to avoid the issue and the ugly Truth that they have become whores to media moguls like Murdoch.

Perhaps a gentle reminder of a few oversights or failed follow-ups may serve to highlight the fact:

- The 'aluminium tubing' scandal and Howard's current status as war criminal at large.
- Two flagrant examples of collusion with AFP Chief, Keelty in relation to the Bali nine surrender and the Haneef case.
- The political sacrifice of David Hicks.
- Gifting our sovereignty to the USA and surrendering our economic welfare to rapacious Transnationals. BHP continues to extract - FREE OF CHARGE - 30 million litres/day of high quality drinking water for its filthy mining concerns while farmers are deprived water for necessary food crops!

I was surprised to learn that Travers, like Penny Wong and Natasha Stott-Despoja fares from the South. It seems integrity remains an important aspect of character for our South Australian belles.

The following is really a progress report of lost rights and diminishing freedoms - all brought to you by the apathy of the population and the timidity of today's journalists.

## **Australia governed in secret: report**

By Erin Tennant

The Australian government's commitment to transparency is a "sham", with a culture of secrecy that thwarts public access to information, according to a major report into media freedom in this country.

The independent audit, chaired by former NSW Ombudsman Irene Moss, claims that the ability of people to learn about the workings of government and the courts is under "serious threat".

"Governments — particularly the Federal Government — govern in secrecy," the audit's final report, which was launched today, said.

The audit was commissioned by Australia's Right to Know, a coalition of media organisations that include FreeTV Australia (including National Nine News), Sky News, News Limited, Fairfax, ABC, SBS and commercial radio.

Moss, also a former ICAC Commissioner, and a team of researchers examined attempts by government to control the media in its reporting functions, using surveys and interviews with journalists, submissions from law firms and academics, and other published material.

The audit also found that a surge in court-issued suppression orders "for reasons that often mystify" undermined the principle of open justice.

Public access to government-held information and the failure of freedom-of-information (FOI) laws

also came under attack.

"The lure of political advantage increasingly trumps principles of democratic transparency when governments decide to withhold or bias the release of information," the report states.

"The often-stated commitment to a transparent democracy is a sham."

NSW Council of Civil Liberties president Cameron Murphy supported the report's findings, saying that FOI had become "a joke".

"Freedom of information is almost as bad as it was before we started to talk about the importance of open government and introduced FOI laws a couple of decades ago," he said.

"Anything that's embarrassing to the government is just hidden from public view".

The audit suggested greater legal protections for whistleblowers prosecuted for leaking confidential information to journalists, as well as better protections for journalists who withhold their sources of information from government and court scrutiny.

The raft of anti-terrorism laws introduced after the September 11, 2001 attacks "significantly reduces the judicial watch" on law enforcement agencies and restricts the ability of people to communicate with journalists and others.

"The effect of anti-terrorism legislation means we are almost certainly unaware of the number of cases in which the legislation has been applied and the extent to which reporting on them has been prevented," the report said.

Mr Murphy said the Federal Government was using its fight against terrorism to stifle free speech.

"If the government wants us to trust it with extra powers, they need to be more open and transparent so we know they are not abusing those powers," he said.

While acknowledging that privacy is a "value to be respected", the report described Australia's privacy laws as "complex and confusing, with large areas of overlap, gaps and inconsistencies".

The report said that uniform defamation laws enacted in January 2006 have improved the balance between freedom of expression and the right to reputation, but that there is still uncertainty over the definition of "public figures" when mounting a defence against libel suits.

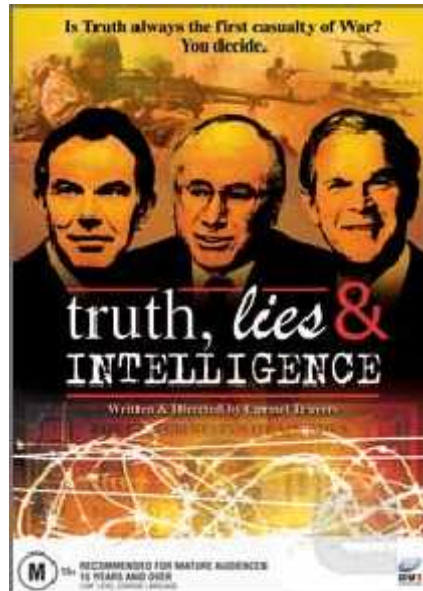
Australia also lags behind other countries in protecting publishers who take "reasonable precautions" when publishing matters of public interest, the report said.

Ninemsn's Erin Tennant was a researcher and contributor to the audit.

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See also:

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,22704582-7582,00.html>



***Despite ASIO interference Travers completed her film***

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Cleaves Alternative News. <http://cleaves.lingama.net/news/story-769.html>