

**slackbastard**

Anarchy and apathy battle it out on  
@ndy's blog.

**S11: \$1.3 million for lawyers**

Posted on [March 5, 2007](#) by @ndy

Hmmm. Six-and-a-half years later, [lawyers](#) from [Slater & Gordon](#), representing 47 litigants, have earned themselves \$600,000, and Government lawyers have earned themselves \$700,000, following an out-of-court settlement over allegations of police misconduct at [S11](#). As for the 47 protesters who took part in the class action, they may now celebrate an early retirement... well, providing that they are *exceedingly* frugal with the approximately \$2,000 each will receive (on average) for being subjected to police violence — including broken bones — in the course of taking part in legal protest activity.

That a settlement of this kind has finally been reached, and lawyers have pocketed \$1.3 million dollars, is unsurprising, and predicted. So too, the opportunity the settlement presents for media hacks to reinforce the counter-narrative established at the time of S11. Thus Chris Tinkler and Kelvin Healey's lies (*see below*) regarding the supposed fact that "[Protesters spat at and poured urine on police and hurled ball-bearings, marbles, nails, nuts and bolts](#)"; lies of the sort [repeated](#) in regards to more recent protests against the [G20](#) last November.

*'Taxpayers fund secret compo payout for S11 rioters' / 'Protesters win compo'*

*Chris Tinkler and Kelvin Healey*

*Sunday Herald Sun*

*March 4, 2007*

*PROTESTERS who clashed with police in the violent S11 [police] riots have been given a [not-so] secret payout by the Bracks Government in return for dropping legal action.*

*The Government and Victoria Police have agreed to a \$700,000 payment to protesters in the confidential deal.*

*The cash is on top of \$600,000 taxpayers have paid in fees for the Government's solicitors.*

*Forty-seven demonstrators and law firm Slater and Gordon will share the windfall. The lawyers are believed to be allocating about \$600,000 to cover their fees.*

*All parties in the legal dispute were tight-lipped about the deal yesterday.*

*The protesters sued authorities after wild [police] riots outside the **World Economic Forum** at Crown Casino in September, 2000.*

*Protesters spat at and poured urine on police and hurled ball-bearings, [marbles](#), nails, nuts and bolts.*

*Those who sued alleged their injuries, including fractures to vertebrae, sternums and wrists, and shock and anxiety, were caused by police action.*

*News of the payout has fuelled [completely irrational] worries that the S11 protesters' success*

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*It is understood agreement was reached when the event's insurers — who will cover the payout — bowed to the prospect of even higher legal costs. And authorities caved in to concerns that even if they beat the protesters and were awarded costs, they would not have been able to get the money from them.*

*S11 litigants included comedian Rod Quantock, serial protester [Ciaron O'Reilly](#) and an SBS TV cameraman.*

*They alleged they were hurt [when police cleared a path for WA Premier \[1993–2001\] Richard Court](#).*

Here Tinkler and Healey are referring to Dick's attempts to reach the conference — contrary to police instructions — by driving through protesters on the morning of the first day of the conference. As the Tory remarked at the time: "I'm not interested in exotic forms of transport. If I go to a convention I like to roll up at the front door". (Other delegates were forced to reach the conference by boat and/or helicopter.)

Unable to penetrate the crowds, Dick was trapped inside his car until police arrived. Before then, however, in one of the more memorable pieces of political poetry I've witnessed:

"Aborigine Ivan Wyatt-Ring, 29, [did a war dance on the car roof](#) and said later: "I looked [Court] in the eye and said, 'Shame, brother.' Mate, you should have seen his expression. I said, 'Have a taste of what you've done to my people.'"

Police then proceeded to give protesters a further taste of violence when, mounted and on foot, they smashed into those assembled with batons and fists. Among many other injuries sustained during the course of the police assault, one man had his teeth knocked out and was taken to Alfred Hospital. Dick, of course, escaped without a hair on his head being touched, and has since gone on to profit from the neoliberal restructuring of WA's economy that took place during his eight years in office, now ensconced as [Chairman](#) of Perth-based mining company [GRD Minproc](#). (Incidentally, Dick's daddy *Sir Charles Court* was also WA Premier, from 1974 to 1982.)

*Luke Roche* was the SBS camera operator police assaulted, and at the time he [stated](#): "I was knocked to the ground, I wasn't sure what happened. I rolled over to try and get a couple of point of view trampling shots as they occurred and I copped a couple of batons as they went over. And it's pretty obvious why I'm there. I was making myself known to as many police as possible that I'm part of the media and I'm there doing my work."

*The protesters sued the state of Victoria and 953 officers who worked at the riot, including former deputy commissioner Neil O'Loughlin — in charge of the police operation — and former traffic assistant commissioner Ray Shuey.*

*Inspector Glenn Weir, of Victoria Police, said the settlement resolved all proceedings against police and the state relating to the protest.*

*"The parties . . . are all satisfied that an appropriate resolution has been reached without the need for costly and time-consuming court proceedings," Insp Weir said.*

*Lawyers from Slater and Gordon refused to discuss the case this week.*

*Opposition Leader Ted Baillieu said the deal was another shady deal by Premier Steve Bracks, who was already under the microscope over a secret pre-election agreement with the **Police***

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*“The Victorian public will be rightly outraged,” Mr Baillieu said. “This is yet another backroom deal and people are sick of Labor’s backroom deals.”*

*The police paid out more than \$6 million after strip-searching hundreds in a raid on **Tasty** nightclub in 1994.*

*In 2000, 30 protesters baton-charged by police outside **Richmond Secondary College** in 1993 were paid \$300,000.*

See also : [Furore over protesters’ payouts: report](#), **AAP**, *The Age*, March 4, 2007 — essentially a recapitulation of the account in the *Herald Sun* | [Beating Up: A Report on Police Batons and the News Media at the World Economic Forum, Melbourne, September 2000](#), Dr. Bernard Barrett (2000) | [‘Protesting Legalities’](#), *The Law Report*, **ABC**, October 24, 2000 | The Tasty nightclub raid, in which Victoria Police forced 463 patrons to strip naked, is the subject of a terrific documentary, directed by Stephen MacLean. For more details, read *The Tasty Bust Reunion* press kit [[PDF](#)] | The police assault on picketers, and the unsuccessful struggle to keep Richmond Secondary College open — one of 55 state schools closed by the thoroughly depressing former Victorian Premier [Jeff Kennett](#) — is also the subject of a book by Stephen Jolly, [Behind the Lines](#) (1996); an [account](#) of the successful struggle to save Northlands Secondary College, “a significant event in the history of Aboriginal people in Victoria and the need for their history and difficulties within this society to be acknowledged”, is provided by Georgina Meyer (June, 1999)

I said, “Tomorrow John” and he said, “I know where your sympathies lie”, and I said, “I couldn’t give a fuck. I have no sympathies any more. **You’re all a pack of shits** and tomorrow I’m going berserk”. Well he went off his brain and in the end I said to him, I said, “Howard. **You’re a cunt**. You haven’t got my support, you never will have and I’m not going to rubbish you or the party tomorrow but I feel a lot better having told you **you’re a cunt**.”

— Jeff Kennett, March 23, 1987



#### About @ndy

I live in Melbourne, Australia. I like anarchy. I don't like nazis. I enjoy eating pizza and drinking beer. I barrack for the greatest football team on Earth: Collingwood Magpies. The 2021 premiership's a cakewalk for the good old Collingwood.

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## 9 Responses to S11: \$1.3 million for lawyers



#### lumpnboy says:

March 5, 2007 at 2:01 pm

I would in NO WAY suggest that Slater & Gordon would have tried for a quick settlement because of a desire to avoid any conflicts which might have arisen from the fact that they have now done a deal to start representing the Police Association, but I do note that S&G will no longer represent anyone against the police because of this presumably lucrative development...



#### Miss Politics says:

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It is always the lawyers that win such things. What a shame the cops were not held to account in any way. I was at the protest when the cops came in with all guns a blazing. I shat myself.

I guess I can look forward to some more police brutality.



**MrLefty** says:

March 7, 2007 at 8:23 am

Does anyone have any of the footage of the police beating up protesters? I know it exists, because I saw some shortly afterwards; but I haven't seen it since. Digitising it and uploading it to YouTube for us to link to would be an EXCELLENT way of responding to the idiotic rants from people like Bolt.



**@ndy** says:

March 7, 2007 at 2:33 pm

Certainly. In addition to the corporate/state media, there were lots of independent filmmakers @ S11, and a considerable amount of footage taken, both of the protest in general, and police violence in particular. Much of this would, I imagine, be in the possession of not only the police, but Slater & Gordon. In addition, Access News/SKA-TV produced a doco later that mth called 'Melbourne Rising' —

<http://www.accessnews.skatv.org.au/index2.html>

— of which I have a copy but, as I haven't watched it in yrs, I can't recall its exact contents, or exactly what footage it contains. Nevertheless, I can recommend it: my memory of it is that it's a good doco (maybe I'll sit down and watch it again).

Access News/SKA-TV has an archive of materials, so it's possible — barring police theft — that much raw footage — including footage of police beating protesters — is still in existence \*somewhere\*; although, like every other volunteer project, its organisation and availability is subject to considerable constraints of time and energy.

Further, bear in mind that many, many violent incidents were \*not\* filmed; a case in point being the assault upon a friend of mine: at one stage on Monday, September 11, she was trapped by the crowd against a car. She was completely unresisting, but nevertheless an incredibly brave policeman, considerably larger than she, as you may imagine, took the opportunity to punch her in the face, fracturing her cheekbone, an injury which later required her hospitalisation, forced her to take considerable time off work, and left her feeling... well, suffice it to say that it's really not good PR for policemen to bash girls. I also recall witnessing one poor bastard being actually 'arrested' — that is, he was dragged from the crowd, taken behind the lines, abused, beaten, pushed down stairs, and then released, understandably in shock.

Finally, note further that only a very, very small proportion of instances of police abuse — 47, of literally hundreds — actually made it into the loving arms of Slater & Gordon, most subjects being of the opinion that filing complaints was and is a complete waste of time and resources, time and resources that most people — unlike, say, Rod Quantock — simply do not have to dedicate to pursuing such matters through the courts.



**MitH** says:

March 7, 2007 at 4:52 pm

Hi all  
great memories coming back  
how they forget (the facts)

now look here to see the AccessNews special on just this —  
MELBOURNE RISING

Super special on the world famous s11 protests outside the World Economic Forum, Crown Casino Melbourne — 1 hour long!

<http://clients.loudeye.com/imc/melbourne/melb-rising.rm>

150mb realmedia file — requires a very fast internet connection

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**dj says:**

March 7, 2007 at 5:29 pm

Aye, my brother was working as a volunteer medic during S11 and I'll take his account over that of the Vic Police anyway. Anyone who naively believed in the honesty of the media (ABC included) would have had their beliefs challenged if they were an eyewitness to events.

**@ndy says:**

March 7, 2007 at 6:07 pm

Cheers MitH, yr a champ!

dj: I'd take the word of a lying liar over the word of VicPol any day. And anecdotal evidence suggests that there were actually many hundreds, if not thousands, of people — esp young people — who received a crash-course in both Police Studies and The Political Economy of the Mass Media as a result of their exps @ S11. That is, the corporate/state media not only tells outright lies, but systematically frames events in such a way as to radically distort their meaning and interpretation in ways favourable to the authorities, esp police and government... Unfortunately, an honest (professional) journo is as rare as fucking hen's teeth these days.

Vandana Shiva, September 10, 2000:

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The real democracy

And then there's real beings in the world, all the species, all the humans, all the struggling people. We don't exist, we don't exist in the new constitution enshrined around global capital and its freedoms. And it's time to correct that error because we do have rights. And as that very, very famous case here in this country, the Mabo case, made clear that — the errors of rulers in recognising rights do not extinguish rights.

And it is this new democracy, that is pluralistic, in which the local leads to change the global, because it's the only way the global can change, in which all who have been on the margins unleash their creative forces to create new freedoms for all in an inclusive way.

That's the kind of threshold at which we are, and we will not be criminalised, we will not be terrorised, we will not be afraid, we will just enjoy and have fun in this new freedom movement in which we all participate.

Thank you.

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**Luke Williams says:**

September 18, 2009 at 7:02 pm

Hi all...

I was one of the protesters at s11 on the tuesday night having come down with a bunch of students from southern cross uni where I was enrolled to study. At the time I was doing some freelance video work for a fellow by the name of manfred stevens of Lismore nsw (famous for his long stint in a tree during the kuranda skyrail protest era).

Me and a girl called Kat who had blond dreads were caught in the tuesday night baton charge and were on sbs news that night I heard. We suffered some psychological stress/trauma as a result. Just seeing other beautiful people being treated in such a horrible manner really came as a disillusionment for me and I lost faith in this society completely for a while.

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to find that. I'm surprised to hear now that protesters got some compensation. Even though the lawyers took a lot at least some valuable legal work was done and they won't do it next time hopefully. I wonder if there's any chance I can be compensated a bit seeing as I was there caught in it?

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