

## A good man gets taken down

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It's a terrible thing to watch a good man get taken down, but that's what's about to happen.

The ASIS officer who came forward to reveal details of the Australian black op to bug East Timor government offices in 2004 is going down. He will be charged. He will be convicted. He will be jailed.

He will not be pursued and punished for carrying out an illegal operation, but for revealing it to a lawyer, Bernard Collaery, who is currently in the Hague to argue that the treaty between Australia and East Timor to divide the returns from the Greater Sunrise gas and oil fields should be voided.

Why should it be voided?

Because Australia used ASIS to spy on the East Timorese executive government during those negotiations, giving the much larger, richer and more powerful party even more leverage over the outcome.

Another way of looking at this is to remember that the ASIS operation took place less than three years after September 11 atrocity, and less than two years after the Bali bombing. It took place while Australian personnel were engaged in active combat with the al Qaeda franchise in Afghanistan and with the insurgent forces in Iraq.

Were the full resources of the Australian government devoted to prosecuting that war, to protecting the personnel fighting it, and avenging the deaths of those, civilian and military, in New York, in Afghanistan and in Bali who had already been added to the casualty list?

No. The Australian government was using one of its most powerful weapons, the secret intelligence service, to serve the ends of petrol companies which did not wish to deal with the new government in Dili when they could get a much sweeter deal from their mates in Canberra.

The only reason we've heard anything of this operation is that the ASIS agent who ran it was so disgusted with the man who allegedly authorised it that he decided to hazard his freedom to blow the whistle.

Alexander Downer was Foreign Minister when ASIS went to work against the fledgling democracy thousands of Australian troops had helped to usher into existence in 1999.

Alexander Downer won't be charged with anything.

Alexander Downer refuses to comment on national security matters.

But that's understandable because Alexander Downer is very busy in his post parliamentary life. Amongst many interests he **became a consultant to Woodside Petroleum**, one of the developers of the Greater Sunrise field.

It's a terrible thing to watch a good man get taken down, but that's not what's about to happen to Alexander Downer.

*This story was found at: <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/comment/blogs/blunt-instrument/a-good-man-gets-taken-down-20131205-2yrqm.html>*