

Letters: Timor Leste whistleblowers, CFMEU

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East Timor's then prime Minister Mari Alkatiri with John Howard and Alexander Downer in 2006 after signing a "Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea". *MickTsikas*

Prosecution adds to shameful act

In 2004, agents of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) planted listening devices in the cabinet room of the Timor Leste government. The purpose of this action was to obtain information to advantage Australia in its negotiations over the Timor Leste-Australia maritime boundary, which straddles a major submerged oilfield. Knowledge of ASIS' actions became public in the course of Timor Leste's preparation for the hearing of its dispute with Australia at the International Court of Justice. Now, in 2018, the Commonwealth Attorney-General has authorised the Director of Public Prosecutions to prosecute Timor Leste's legal representative in that case, Bernard Collaery, for breaching Australia's secrecy laws ("[Timor bugging case whistleblower charged](#)", [June 28](#)). This prosecution is to be pursued in secret.

The actions by ASIS in 2004 are quite clearly a matter of national shame. We should be grateful to Mr Collaery. The exposure of these actions presents us with an

opportunity for reflection, to reset our moral compass and review our culture, structures and processes.

Democracy requires that the electors know what is being done in their name. We like to distinguish ourselves from other countries by pointing to the openness of our government. We should celebrate Bernard Collaery's action with a memorial. A suitable location would be Magna Carta Place.

Gold Coast, Qld

Charges a vindictive act of revenge

True to form, the Turnbull government has obscenely deflected the Howard government's corrupt machinations to rip off the poorest country in Asia, Timor Leste, by charging Timor champions Witness K and his lawyer Bernard Collaery with criminal offences.

The real criminals are Howard and Downer who, Witness K revealed, under the pretext of a generous refurbishment of the Timor government's cabinet room, illegally planted bugging devices that gave them a massive advantage in the oil and gas negotiations that severely disadvantaged impoverished Timor Leste.

These charges are a vindictive act of revenge that adds to Australia's shame of defrauding the little nation that saved the lives of our young 2/2 and 2/4 commandos in the Second World War.

Vacy Vlazna

Collaroy, NSW

First-world theft should be condemned

Pictures of then foreign minister Alexander Downer toasting the "success" of the unfairly advantageous agreement reached with the then unwitting Timor Leste officials (a type of First-World theft that should be (and is) condemned by all) are now so shameful that they would make any fair-minded Australian want to puke.

Philip Carman

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