

REVENGE AND WARNING

Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? Who will watch the watchers? The Roman poet Juvenal penned these lines, which have come to express the age-old problem of people having to oppose their own governments. Who will protect us from the “protectors”?

Two of the problems which lie at the base of the persecution of Witness K and Bernard Collaery are governments’ desire for revenge, and governments’ desire to warn.

First, there is a deep desire to take revenge on these men. The outcome of the truth-telling by our two heroes included the display to the world of Australian greed, and the Australian willingness to feed that greed by illegal and fraudulent means. We spied on a trading partner to whom we owed, and promised, “good faith” negotiations. Spying on a partner just emerging from a brutal oppression. Spying on a partner whom we were pretending to help, using AusAid to camouflage a grubby confidence trick.

The upshot was that we have been humiliated internationally:

- We received orders from the International Court not to use material confiscated in a raid on these men’s homes;
- We were forced to take part in a hitherto unused UN instrument, the Compulsory Conciliation, to sit down and talk “border” with the Timorese;
- We saw all of our six objections to the jurisdiction of that body shot down in flames;
- The whole world can see how low Australia will go to slurp up more money.

But, horror of horrors, the establishment of the border (a direct result of the willingness of Witness K and Bernard Collaery to tell the truth) has reduced the profits we thought we’d make. Australia is going to get LESS MONEY as a result of the integrity of these men. We’ve made a LOSS!

So, how good is revenge?

Second, the pursuit of Witness K and Bernard Collaery is all of one piece with the mistreatment of other people who speak truth to power, including David McBride, also appearing here at the ACT Supreme Court today.

The parliament has passed oceans of national security legislation since the September 11, 2001 attacks. So much so, that these efforts to protect Australians are themselves becoming a threat. They are being used to conceal government fraud. Laws designed to uphold freedom, democracy and safety are morphing into instruments of oppression and unfettered control.

Those who challenge this abuse are the first to be attacked. Witness K and Bernard Collaery are basically being accused of treason. Their families and livelihoods are placed under enormous pressure, and they themselves endure unmerited personal duress. This is happening to them after a lifetime of service to the very government system now intent on destroying them.

How good is a warning this huge!

The whole Australian community is being warned. The warning is this: If you dare to obey your conscience in a manner which challenges government, this is what will happen to you. You will be pursued, persecuted, prosecuted. We will find people willing to grind you down, working tooth and nail to break you under the pressure.

Australia is turning on its “best and fairest” like some mad Sports Club kicking out the top players because they caught the General Manager with his hand in the till.

Who will protect us from these “protectors”? There is no one to protect us. There is no one but ourselves. That is why civil resistance is crucial. We must resist until the tipping point is reached and Australians gather together to reclaim our democracy.

Witness K and Bernard Collaery are men of integrity, patriots, heroes. They deserve this nation’s highest honours.

Sister Susan Connelly PhD 22 August 2019