

Nationwide protests against secret trial of Bernard Collaery and Witness K

Jim McIlroy and Alex Salmon – *Green Left Weekly* – 9 November 2020

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/nationwide-protests-against-secret-trial-bernard-collaery-and-witness-k>



Witness K and Bernard Collaery secret trial protest in Sydney on November 9. Photo: Coral Wynter

"Today is the 43rd hearing of charges in the shameful saga of Bernard Collaery and Witness K. All around Australia, groups of people are gathering to let Australians know the truth about the prosecutions of these two heroes," Sister Susan Connelly, spokeswoman for the Coalition of Supporters of Collaery and Witness K (COSOCK) told *Green Left* on November 9 at one of three banner drops held in Sydney as part of a national day of action.

Fifty people also protested outside the outer suburban electorate office of Australia's Attorney-General Christian Porter in Perth on the same day.

Protests were also held in Adelaide, Alice Springs, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin and Hobart.

See also

[Protesters gather as Witness K Timor oil spying case begins](#)
[Susan Connelly: Secret trial a cover up of Australia's swindling of Timor-Leste](#)

The Australian government spied through hidden listening devices at East Timorese government offices in Dili during negotiations over access to oil and gas resources in 2004.

COSOCK condemns this as "espionage for the commercial benefit of resource companies, to the disadvantage of the people of East Timor, our close neighbour and the poorest nation in South East Asia".

This bugging might have remained secret but for the courage and integrity of one of the spies, Witness K, and his lawyer, Collaery.

"Collaery and Witness K should not be on trial. It should be the government officials and ministers who let us all down in the first place," Connelly told *Green Left*.

The trial faced constant delays and postponements, strict secrecy provisions concerning evidence, and frequent closures of the court to the public. It has not met international standards for a fair trial.

"These prosecutions threaten the rights and values of every Australian," warned COSOCK.

The federal attorney-general has the power to discontinue the prosecutions under Section 71 of the *Judiciary Act 1903* and the protest called on him to drop the prosecutions of Witness K and Collaery immediately.

To support the COSOCK campaign, sign the petition and help the GoFundMe appeal go to www.bernardcollaerysupporters.com



Protest outside the outer suburban electorate office of Australia's Attorney-General Christian Porter in Perth on November 9. Photo: Alex Salmon



Brisbane rally in support of Bernard Collaery and Witness K