

Interview with Sister Susan Connelly, of the Timor Sea Justice Forum, on 25-5-2020
by Paul Oboohov, for Green Left

Transcript:

Green Left: How did you think the protest went this morning, and the state of the court case, and what you think about that court case, etcetera.

Susan: Yes, well I thought there were more people at the protest this morning, and I'm also glad that in Sydney, outside the Commonwealth Offices, there would have been people as well, also in South Australia they were doing something, but the more people get to know about this, the more horrified people become, because this is Australia, we've got the rule of law, we supposedly have the separation of powers, the executive separated from the judiciary, but I'm starting to really wonder: why is it that the Attorney General's lawyers are really taking the front running in these hearings against Bernard Collaery and Witness K. You go into the courtroom, though I didn't get in there this morning, the last time I was there, there was the Attorney General's lawyers, the defence, and up by video link was supposed to be the Commonwealth Department of Public Prosecutions, and they didn't say anything! So what's all this about? I think I know what it's about. This is the politicisation of the legal process to conceal government wrongdoing. And that wrongdoing was the illegal, fraudulent attempt to swindle the Timorese people over the Timor Sea. Now this was back in 2002, 2004. I'm not talking about Greater Sunrise, we're talking about the deal that was made in 2002, 2004. That's the one that was spied on. The money's nearly all gone, we got a lot of that money, our commercial interests got a lot of that money, and we diddle the Timorese, we swindled [them] basically. I'm amazed at the capacity of the Timorese people to keep forgiving, and forgiving of course is the hardest thing in the world. Anybody can stand up and, you know, pull down fire and brimstone on people. It takes a magnanimous human being to say, look, you know, we're going to be geographically here for eternity, we may as well try to get on with these people. Imagine what would've ... the outcry in Australia if anybody had done to Australia, what Australia has done to Timor Leste! Oh! We'd be screaming blue murder! You know, ... But no, we do it to the little brown people. There's so much racism tied up in this.

Green Left: So, did you get into the court today?

Susan: No, I didn't get into court, but some people got into court, and they have reported to me that the judge, after an introduction, asked people to leave. It wasn't done in any peremptory way, he actually asked if anybody had any objection to that, and nobody actually made an objection. We sort of knew this was coming, I mean this is a secret trial, any objection wouldn't have worked anyway, so it would only be ... prolonged the business. This is all secrecy, and for the life of me, I cannot see, and I defy anybody to tell me, what is the link between national security, and what is being done to Bernard Collaery. Because that's the principle upon which he is being subjected to these interminable hearings. I mean, we are up to about number thirty three, and we haven't even got to the trial yet. And talking about the trial, we don't know whether Mister Collaery will be able to see all the evidence in his trial. He wants a jury trial, and that is his right as an Australian citizen. If it comes to that, the jury may not even be allowed to see all the evidence. This is Australia, friends, in the twenty first Century! The jury may not be allowed to see all the evidence! I don't know whether that will happen, but it is a possibility!

Green Left: That sounds like extraordinary lengths, the government is going to!

Susan: And it is as if we didn't all know about this sort of thing. It is the most abysmal act of, pardon the French, bastardry, in Australian history, as far as I can see. But we would try to swindle people, who had just come out of a twenty four year occupation, their infrastructure was decimated, we go in there, ho, ho, ho, you know, great big Interfet troops, and God bless Interfet, they were great, but then we turn around and do this underhanded, nasty, fraudulent swindle. That's all it is. And now they are trying to cover it up. For God's sake, come clean, you know. Come clean! And say, we did it wrong ... we did it wrong. That's it. Why don't we do that? I don't know.

Green Left: How many people did you think were at the protest today?

Susan: About thirty people were at the protest, of course social distancing makes it all different. But the banners told it all. People know, we're not stupid. I mean I wonder what this government thinks ... how clueless they think we are. That's what it is, it's a tremendous insult to think that we don't know what they're up to. And I'd like to end by saying "we're watching, we are watching, and we will continue."

Green Left: Thank you very much.