

Perrett breaks Labor's long silence on K, Collaery

A federal Labor MP has finally spoken out about the government's malicious campaign of intimidation against Witness K and Bernard Collaery.

<https://www.crikey.com.au/2019/12/05/graham-perrett-bernard-collaery-witness-k/>

[Bernard Keane](#) – Crikey - 5 December 2019



Labor MP Graham Perrett (Image: AAP/Daniel Munoz)

Queensland MP Graham Perrett has finally broken federal Labor's stolid silence on the government's persecution and harassment of Witness K and Bernard Collaery, labelling the Howard government's bugging of the Timor-Leste cabinet room a "dog act" and lauding K and Collaery for revealing it

Perrett rose in the House of Reps [adjournment debate](#) on Wednesday night to condemn the Howard government's spying, its diversion of precious counter-terrorism resources to do it, the restraints on parliament's intelligence committee to investigate it, and the current government's attempt to keep K and Collaery quiet.

"We would never have known about this dog act if not for the valiant ASIS officer now known as Witness K," Perrett said. "Witness K tried to do the right thing. Witness K obtained permission to talk to an approved lawyer. Witness K and that lawyer, Bernard Collaery, are now both on trial. These are trials the Morrison government wants to hold in secret. What message does this trumped-up harassment send to whistleblowers? Shut up or else.

"I asked the Attorney-General, 'What possible purpose is there in pursuing these prosecutions if not to send a message to future whistleblowers?' Sometimes standing up and speaking out is just the right thing to do, but this coalition government doesn't like it."

Perrett is only the second Labor MP anywhere, after [NSW MP Paul Lynch](#), to depart from Labor's policy of refusing to say anything about either the prosecution of K and Collaery or Attorney-General Christian Porter's interference in the case.

Kudos to him: at least someone in the major parties has finally found their voice on the greatest Australian political scandal in decades.