

TURMOIL ON THE TIMOR SEA

SOME FACTS

Australia halved the Joint Petroleum Development Area (JPDA - the old "Timor Gap") with Indonesia in 1989 while Timor was being subjugated.

We withdrew from the maritime jurisdiction of both the *International Court of Justice* and the *International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea* in March 2002, just two months before East Timor's independence, thus forcing the Timorese to negotiate with us without an international umpire.

We have received billions of dollars in tax revenue from the disputed area Laminaria-Corallina since September 1999, more than the total of all assistance Australia has ever given to East Timor.

Through the Timor Gap Treaty we now get 90% of the old JPDA even though it lies 100% on Timor's side of half-way. With all the processing done in Darwin, we get all the jobs.

In Timor Sea disputes we still cling to defunct Continental Shelf principles, while the rest of the world determines maritime boundary disputes on the basis of the median line. (And so does Australia when any other nation except Timor is involved, e.g. New Zealand.)

After claiming 82% of yet another field, **Greater Sunrise**, which is far closer to Timor than to Australia, we finally agreed in 2006 to split the resources 50/50 with the Timorese on condition that they do not raise the issue of maritime boundaries until 2056. The lack of a maritime boundary reduces stability and security Timor Leste, trying to get on its feet.

Timor Leste ranks at 134 (out of 187) on the Human Development Index. Australia's rank is 2, with Norway No. 1.

Spying Accusations

On 29 May 2013 it was reported that Australia had bugged the Timorese Prime Minister's office in 2004 when the **Greater Sunrise** and boundary negotiations were being undertaken through the CMATS Treaty (*Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea*).

The office of a Canberra lawyer acting on behalf of Timor in the oil and gas dispute was raided on December 3, 2013 by ASIO, and documents were seized. The Attorney-General said that the documents related to matters of 'national security' and were not connected to the case concerning the CMATS Treaty which Timor Leste was mounting against Australia in The Hague.

(Major news outlets are providing information and comment as the saga unfolds....)

ALL RESOURCES IN QUESTION ARE ON TIMOR'S SIDE OF A HALF WAY LINE

Our elected representatives act in our name.

You could write to your Member, to the Attorney General, Senator George Brandis, and the Prime Minister and ask:

- Given the shared history of Australia and Timor, wouldn't it be good international relations to define the Timor Sea boundaries once and for all?
- Everyone knows that Australia has spied on Indonesia and now it is apparent that we spied on Timor too. In light of this reality and the rights of Timor in this dispute, are you prepared to re-negotiate the CMATS Treaty?
- Do you believe that it would be ethical for Australia to continue to take resources from disputed areas in the Timor Sea?
- How do you respond to the Timorese claim that the bugging of a neighbouring Government's office and the break-ins on premises of a legal representative and an associated witness are 'not worthy of a close friend and neighbour, or of a great nation like Australia'?
- Can you give me any reason why a full judicial inquiry should not be mounted to investigate these actions?

WRITING TO OUR REPRESENTATIVES

A signed letter which is handwritten or typed is the most effective means of communication other than a face to face meeting. It is more effective than photocopied form letters, postcards or emails. (However, they have their place.....)

- Include your name and address and keep the letter brief
- Use your own words where possible
- State the topic clearly, or include a subject line at the beginning of your letter
- Start with a clear statement of purpose, e.g. "I am concerned about...." or "I wish to bring your attention to....." etc.
- Focus on one or two points
- Ask a question, or ask a few questions
- Ask for a response to your letter
- Personalise your letter. Where possible, include a personal story and/or information on how the issue affects you, or people you know
- Be polite. Thanks is as important as criticism. Give credit where it is due.
- Send a copy of the letter to the recipient's 'opposite number', e.g. if you write to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, send it also to the Opposition Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs
- Follow up any response received. If your questions haven't been answered or the response is inadequate, write and say so, expecting another reply.

Your Federal Representative can be found at <http://www.aph.gov.au>

The Hon Tony Abbott MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Senator The Hon George Brandis QC
Attorney-General
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

The Hon Bill Shorten MP
Leader of the Opposition
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

The Hon Mark Dreyfus QC
Shadow Attorney-General
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

All Representatives can be contacted at this address: Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

The Timor Bugging Scandal ~ think about the following, then write.....

Bernard Collaery, the Canberra lawyer working for the Timorese Government on the CMATS Treaty said:

"The director-general of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) and his deputy instructed a team of ASIS technicians to travel to East Timor in an elaborate plan, using Australian aid programs relating to the renovation and construction of the cabinet offices in Dili, East Timor, to insert listening devices into the wall, of walls to be constructed under an Australian aid program," he told the ABC.

Mr Collaery said that the former director of all technical operations at ASIS decided to blow the whistle after learning that Alexander Downer had become an adviser to Woodside Petroleum in his years after politics. Woodside has a major interest in the exploitation of the oil and gas reserves in the Timor Sea. Alexander Downer was the Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time of the negotiations and was a major player in all the Treaty proceedings at that time

The whistleblower's affidavit is understood to refer to the alleged 2004 bugging operation as "immoral and wrong" because it served not the national interest, but the interests of big oil and gas.

Mr Collaery says ASIS's alleged spying amounts to "insider trading".

"If this had happened in Bridge Street, Collins Street, Wall Street, people would go to jail."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-12-04/asio-arrests-key-witness-in-east-timor-spying-scandal/5132954>