

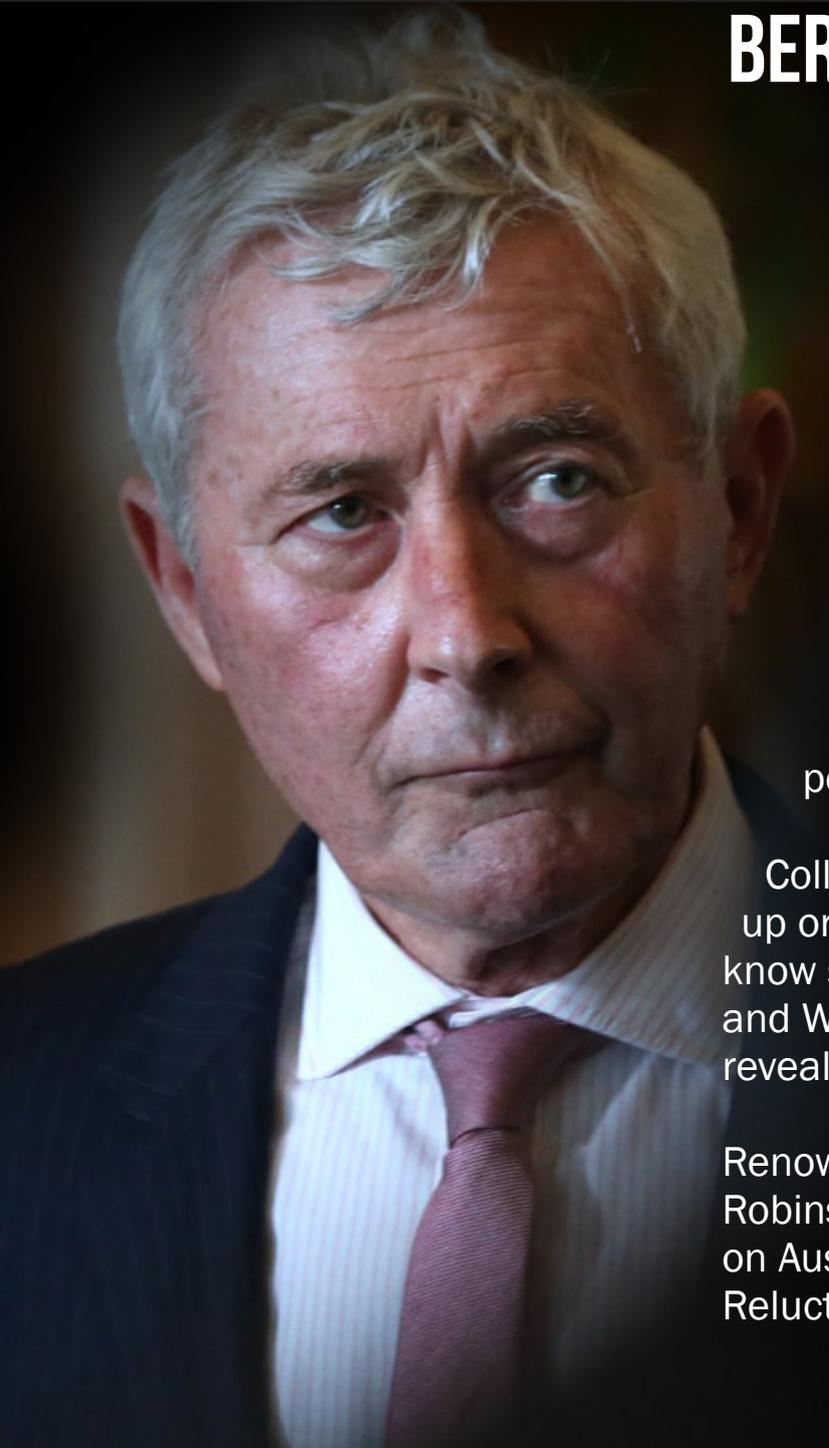


RELUCTANT SAVIOUR

A FEATURE DOCUMENTARY BY GIL SCRINE

AUSTRALIA'S SECRET
WAR ON EAST TIMOR

“ We live in a country that understands the boomerang. There's a boomerang out there. It's gonna come back. – Bernard Collaery



BERNARD COLLAERY KNOWS TOO MUCH.

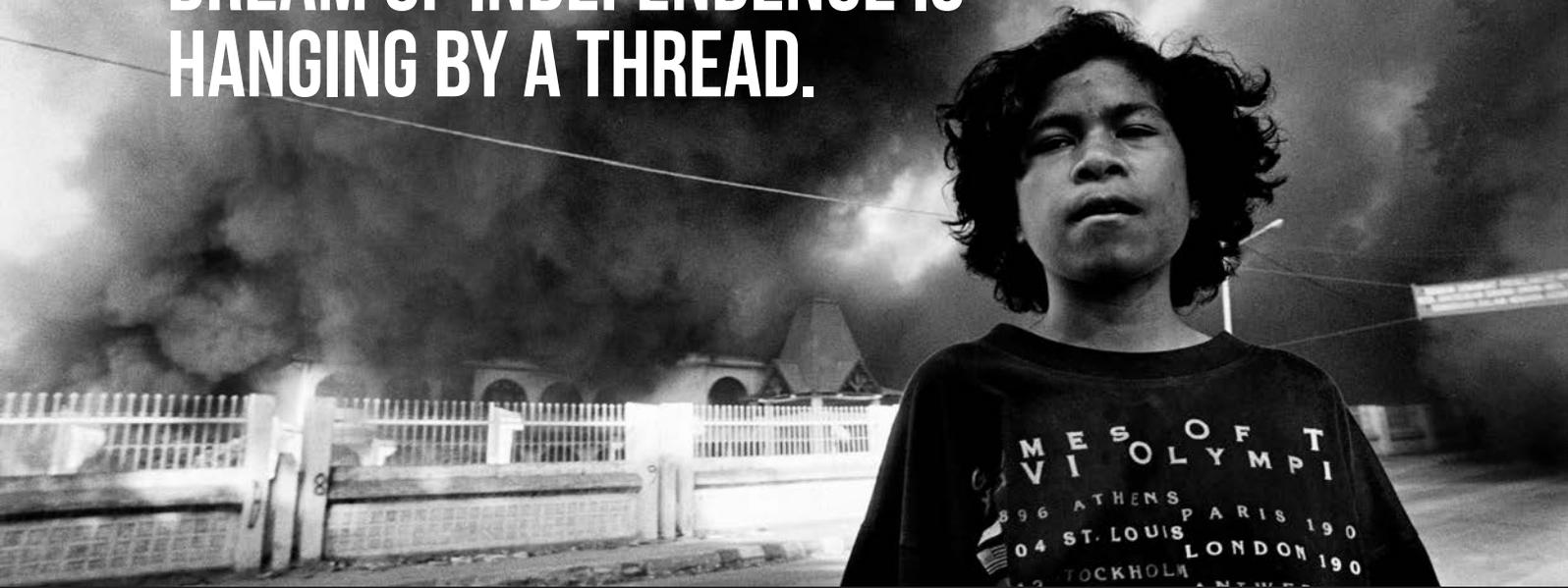
His activism for East Timor's independence and legal advice to the Timor Leste government have made him some enemies from the wrong side of history.

With clearance to represent spies with grievances, he took the case of Witness K, the ASIS spy who revealed to him how his team, disguised as AusAid workers bugged Timor's petroleum talks in 2004.

Collaery can't figure out if this was a set-up or sheer incompetence but once you know something you cannot un-know it. He and Witness K now face prison for what they revealed.

Renowned human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robinson has called East Timor, “the country on Australia's conscience”. Reluctant Saviour tells us why.

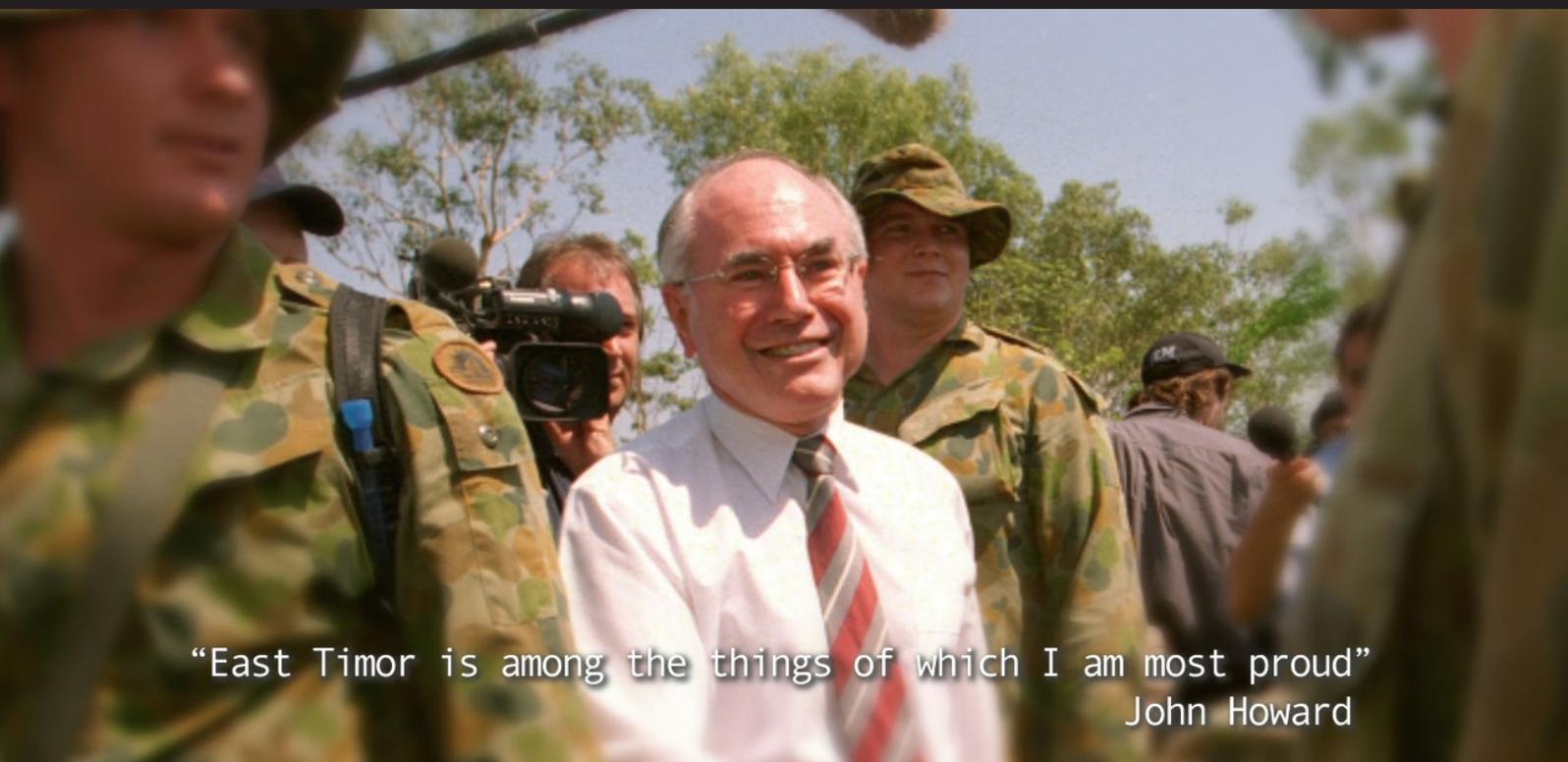
SEPTEMBER 1999: EAST TIMOR'S DREAM OF INDEPENDENCE IS HANGING BY A THREAD.



After 24 years of brutal occupation by Indonesia and an overwhelming vote for independence by the East Timorese, the Indonesian army begins a reign of terror to annul the vote and hold the territory.

After 6 days under violent siege in their Dili compound the UN are preparing to evacuate leaving some 2000 refugees to their fate. Australia's staunch support for Indonesia's invasion and genocidal occupation of East Timor, has Prime Minister Howard on a white-knuckle ride.

Mass demonstrations are calling for peacekeepers and Howard knows his job is on the line.



"East Timor is among the things of which I am most proud"
John Howard

WHEN YOU WANT TO KEEP THE TRUTH IRREGULAR...



TWENTY YEARS LATER A SECRET TRIAL IS ABOUT TO BEGIN IN CANBERRA.

Two men are accused of conspiracy under Australia's so-called "terror laws". One of them, the ASIS agent Witness K, led the team who bugged Timorese petroleum talks in 2004. The new nation of Timor Leste, the poorest country in Asia, was desperate for income.

Did the Timorese know there was a windfall in the gas trapped under the Timor Sea, on their side of the halfway line?

Helium is a rare commodity discovered there in abundance, its value estimated to be the same as all the oil and gas put together. This was kept secret from the Timorese and the Australian Parliament by a mendacious fossil fuel lobby drunk on profit

The bugging of Timor's negotiations would have revealed the Timorese knew nothing about this swindle.



RELUCTANT SAVIOUR?

Soon after, a purpose-built helium plant opens in Darwin and the money pours in to foreign-owned fossil fuel company coffers yet remarkably the secret is kept, until Witness K has an attack of conscience. He tells his lawyer Bernard Collaery what he knows about the “Petroleum Coup”.

Collaery, eminent Canberra barrister and long-time friend to the Timorese smells a rat. There is not much about Australia’s secret war on East Timor Collaery doesn’t know: from the Balibo murders in ’75 to Australia’s reluctant saviour role in ’99. Bernard grew up tough in Wollongong and doesn’t like being threatened. His fearlessness stems from his WWII fighter pilot father and his own past connections to Australia’s deep state. Collaery has enemies from the wrong side of history who are out to get him. He knows, “publicity is the soul of justice” and he opts for a trial by jury.

An open court would allow defendant Collaery to expose the Petroleum Coup to scrutiny and to history. His enemies cannot let that happen. Time is on their side.

Revenge is a dish best served cold.

 **10MIN REEL**

 **WATCH THE TRAILER**

ESTIMATED COMPLETION - JUL /AUG 2021

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER - GIL SCRINE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER - TRISH LAKE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER - JUDITH EHRlich
CINEMATOGRAPHER - RANDALL WOOD
EDITOR - SCOTT WALTON

@RELUCTANTSAVIOUR

