

Thinking Out Loud: Governance in Disarray



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The world over, organisations are struggling to cope with disruptive behaviour. Too often, the real danger is within. Those entrusted with maintaining organisational unity and probity prefer their personal and/or political agenda to the organisation's well-being.

Power, position and financial gain are a heady combination. To argue for ethics and integrity is characterised as naïve, out of touch. To be honourable is regarded as stupid.

Of course, the economic pressures of the pandemic cause many to consider shortcuts as necessary for near-term survival. By doing so, they unravel the fabric which holds the organisation together.

We can look across the oceans and "tut, tut" at the behaviour of those who rule the greatest democracy in the world. But, strip it to the bones, is that any worse than filling company boards with loyalists who will comply with the owner's demands, and forcing the resignation of those who champion checks and balances, and believe in accountability?

Is it worse to direct organisational spending toward the CEO's existing business interests, than it is to organise a cartel amongst friendly interests to corner the supply of essential commodities?

Is it acceptable under any circumstances to publicly harangue those who stand in your way, or to subject them to invective and expletives?

At least, when we look across the oceans, we see a system under great stress which, so far, is holding together the agreed fabric of laws and processes. Importantly, it continues to protect those who shine a bright light on others who work in the shadows.

Can we be as comfortable in our own back yard?

Everywhere, we need a cadre of “tailors and seamstresses”, the independent directors and key office bearers, to continue holding together the fabric of governance. Our organisations will find themselves in tatters otherwise.

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