
WE NEED OPEN GOVERNMENT

By David Brooks

The Assange affair has brought to the public notice much that has lingered in the public perception for many, many, years. Politicians, in a plainly “holier than thou” mode, have played the secrecy game. “We cannot make deals in public”. Why not? PPP’s, secret behind closed doors deals, public money being spent by the truckload but no public input. The politicians see themselves as the public, when it suits them. We know there has been a rip off! But we are never allowed to see the deals. Is it any wonder that we distrust the politicians whichever party they belong to. Some examples are: desalination plants, Court Houses, \$46m for Soccer, how much for Grand Prix’s, Afghanistan “We are there for the long term” should send their own sons and daughters. Detention of refugees and their children. No means of recall for a government on the nose. Secret deals, secret deals, secret deals with Oprah! This is sick.

Then along come Julian Assange and friends and the Internet. And so much is suddenly public. And politicians show their true belief in the democracy they represent. Below is a quote from the Russian paper Pravda. (It raises the question as to who is now the dictatorship.) It applies to us in Australia.

“What WikiLeaks has done is make people understand why so many Americans are politically apathetic... After all, the evils committed by those in power can be suffocating, and the sense of powerlessness that erupts can be paralyzing, especially when ... government evildoers almost always get away with their crimes. ...”

And they speak from experience.

We need open government. Open government is the lifeblood of the people. Without it, our civilisation is corrupt to an extent where we cannot see the corruption. And the people generally abhor corruption. The enforcers tell us that “If you have nothing to hide you have nothing to fear.” The same applies to the politicians. If you have nothing to hide, why the secrecy? Stop giving us platitudes, and sops. It's not only in the financial areas that there is corruption. There is corruption in the law itself. Indeed, there is corruption in every walk of political and corporate life. And little or no redress in law for what these thieves do. I use the term “thieves” advisedly. For what they steal, is our freedom. Our rights to live without let or hindrance. The Golden Rule is to “do unto others as you would have done unto you”. Government that practised this would reign for years. We need to take a long look in the mirror of our political selves. The picture, much akin to Dorian Gray, is not nice.

