We The People
Program 172
Fear and The War Against Common Sense

Good day to you. Have you ever wondered what's happening to the world and our society. Do you reflect back to those ubiquitous old days and wonder where common sense has gone. Do you worry about your grand children's future and why the legacy left by so many is being wasted. Indeed it seems as if common sense is lost somewhere in the dust behind us like a car driving down a country road. There seems to be a kind of decay and deterioration and a legislative mildew growing on so many things and it seems unstoppable as the rot sets in. I think there is a war on common sense driven through fear.

These days fear pervades everything we do. Once upon a time, common sense meant living by simple, sound social and financial rules. Yes, believe it or not, respect for elders was once a reliable principle we could live by……. adults, not children, were in charge. But something has changed, and common sense seems missing. Have you ever felt like you couldn't just act on what was the right thing to do. An employer today wastes important resources documenting a file to avoid a lawsuit before they discharge a bad employee. Your doctor orders yet more tests and medical opinions, simply out of fear of being sued for malpractice. Your child's teacher fails to take control in the classroom over young students fearing a parent might file a civil claim against them. How about court awards for spilling hot coffee after carelessly pulling away from a fast food outlet. Or a playground that is closed after standing for two generations in a community after a child falls and is injured and the local council is sued.

Today, social and business interaction is often driven by distrust and out of fear of litigation. Even volunteering is risky, in case someone claims you've done something wrong. It's not a fear of doing something incorrectly rather the real fear is that someone might later claim that you didn't act appropriately and therefore you could be held accountable for someone's invented damages. Worse yet, making choices burdened with fears of lawsuits, claims of damages, or potentially huge legal fees drives our actions. We no longer dare to act or speak out from the norm. Is it just me, or does it seem the once normal and ordinary choices of civility in our society are buried in history.

Feeling free to do what you think is the right thing is a source of human accomplishment. The self-confidence of the early settlers was based upon their independent, self-acting, have a go spirit. Sure, some things didn't always go right, but somehow they got the job done. We have taken the initiative out of getting things done, and replaced it with a system of overbearing and authoritative rules, interfering with people acting and achieving great things. We have ambulance chasing legal people making a quid out of it and therefore extending and embedding those tentacles of fear. Our forefathers created a world based upon a unique and special spirit of cooperation in working with others, not out of fear of what others might think. Take away that spirit, and what do we have left. Instead, today, we are worried about being extra safe in what we say or do and this has become the norm. Actions are directed towards avoiding legal risks. Concerns of taking on too much liability is more important than assisting someone or taking on new opportunities. Too frequently we feel compelled to take the easy road, even being politically correct, if only to avoid being harassed or prosecuted.

The law is undoubtedly essential in a free society and it sets the standards of conduct for which we must act. When the legal system functions adequately we hardly notice it is there. It sits quietly in the background to govern when we need it. It doesn't become the central focus of daily decisions and drive good people to act around it…. or not act at all. Legal fear <u>should not be</u> a defining feature of a free society.

So if you agree that Australia is in trouble then rise up and tell your neighbour, your friends and your elected members. Develop an opinion and make it known loud and clear. Flood the media and the internet with your views and demand a better deal for all of us. There are simply too many people with their snout in the trough who neither sow nor reap and who have hijacked the legal system and this fine country. Enough is enough. A sign of a society in decay is that it's over governed. Now that does make common sense doesn't it.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley