

Preserving Life, Transforming **Power**

The conditions of corrigible transition
and civilizational healing.



Based on the **Civilizational Healing** research programme by Bichara Sahely

The Successor-Viability Paradox

We cannot dismantle the incumbent until the alternative is viable.

We refuse to grant it authority and resources until we see it is completely viable.

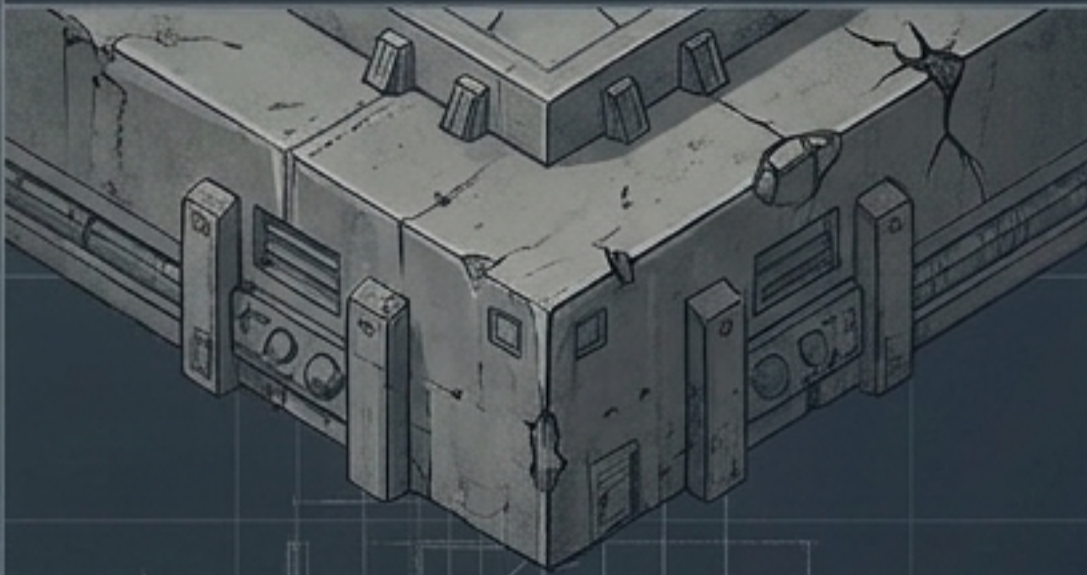
The alternative cannot become viable until we grant it authority and resources.

Path dependence creates institutional lock-in.

Persistence of an arrangement does not prove it is the most legitimate—only that previous investments and political arrangements make alternatives progressively harder to pursue.

Escaping the Institutional Trilemma

Path 1: Preservation (Status Quo)



Approach: Maintain incumbent powers because people need the service.

Result: Essential needs are met, but domination and preventable harm persist.

Path 2: Indiscriminate Breakdown (Rebellion)



Approach: Destroy the controller because the arrangement is harmful.

Result: Domination ends, but essential life-enabling provisions collapse.

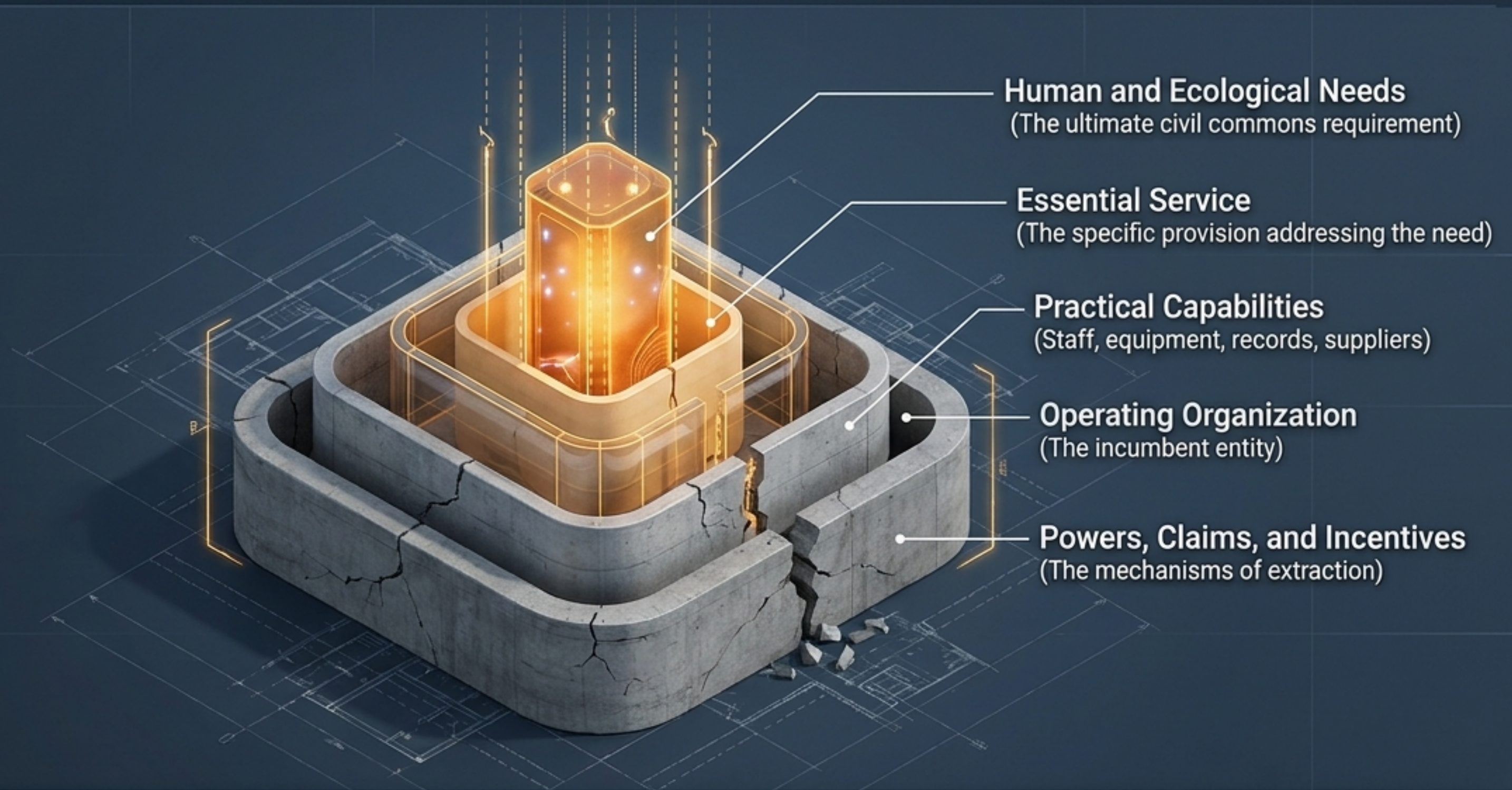
Path 3: Corrigible Transition (Civilizational Healing)



Approach: Decouple the essential function from its controller.

Result: Essential needs are protected while incumbent authority is replaced.

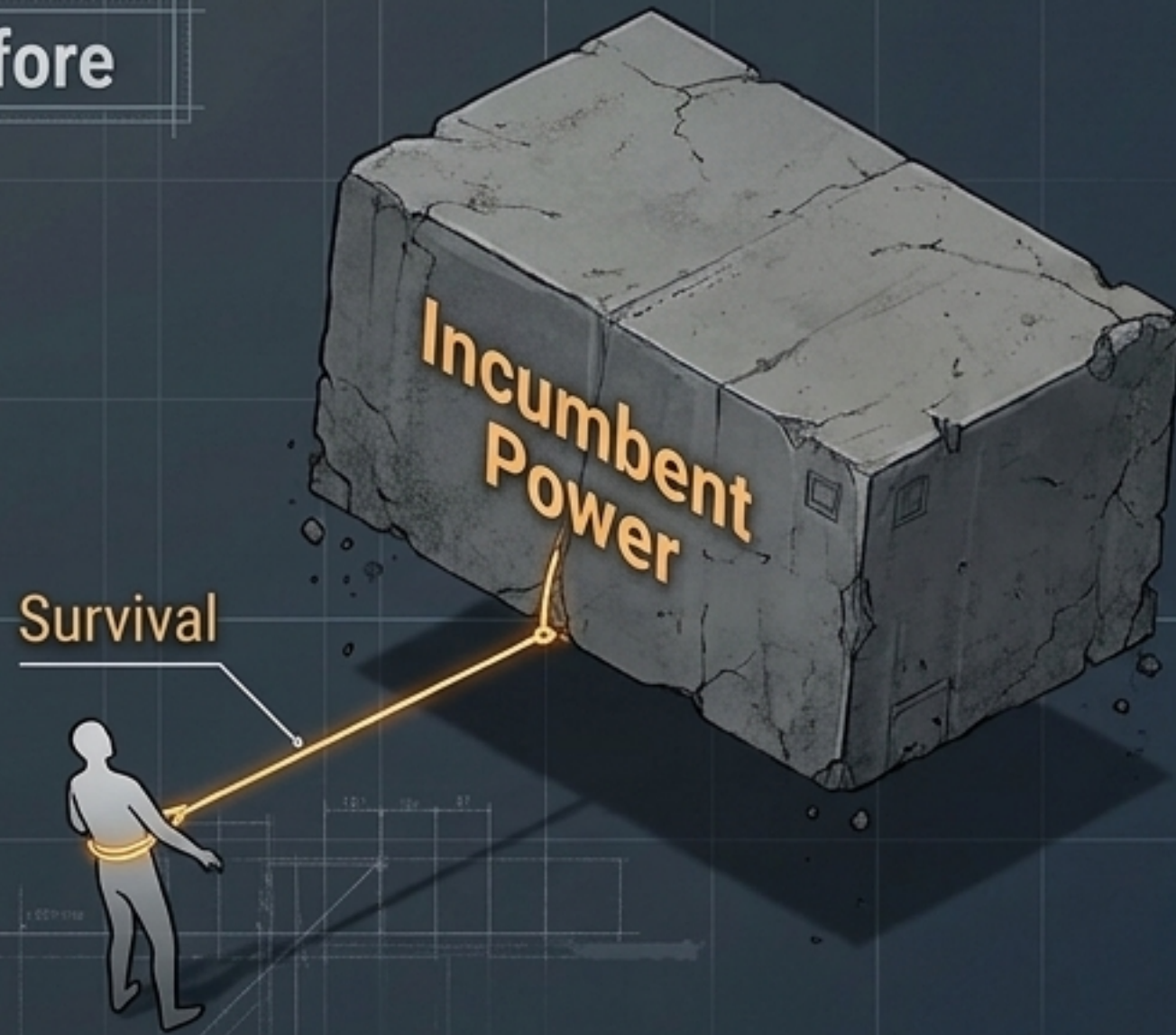
Separating Function From Control



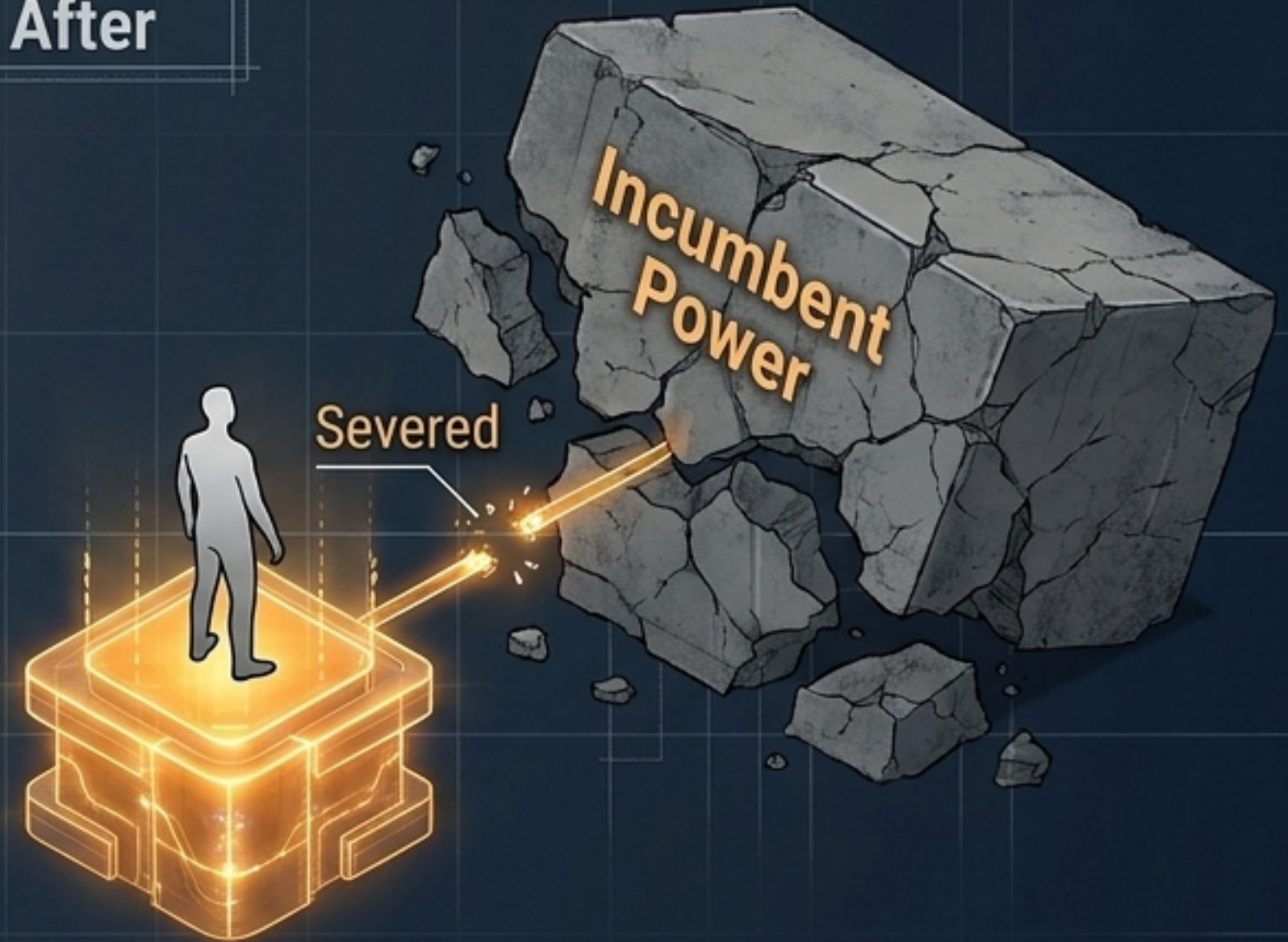
Continuity does not mean preserving all existing consumption or the incumbent organization.
It requires asking: **What would stop functioning if the current controller lost authority?**

Protection is a Prerequisite, Not an Aftermath

Before



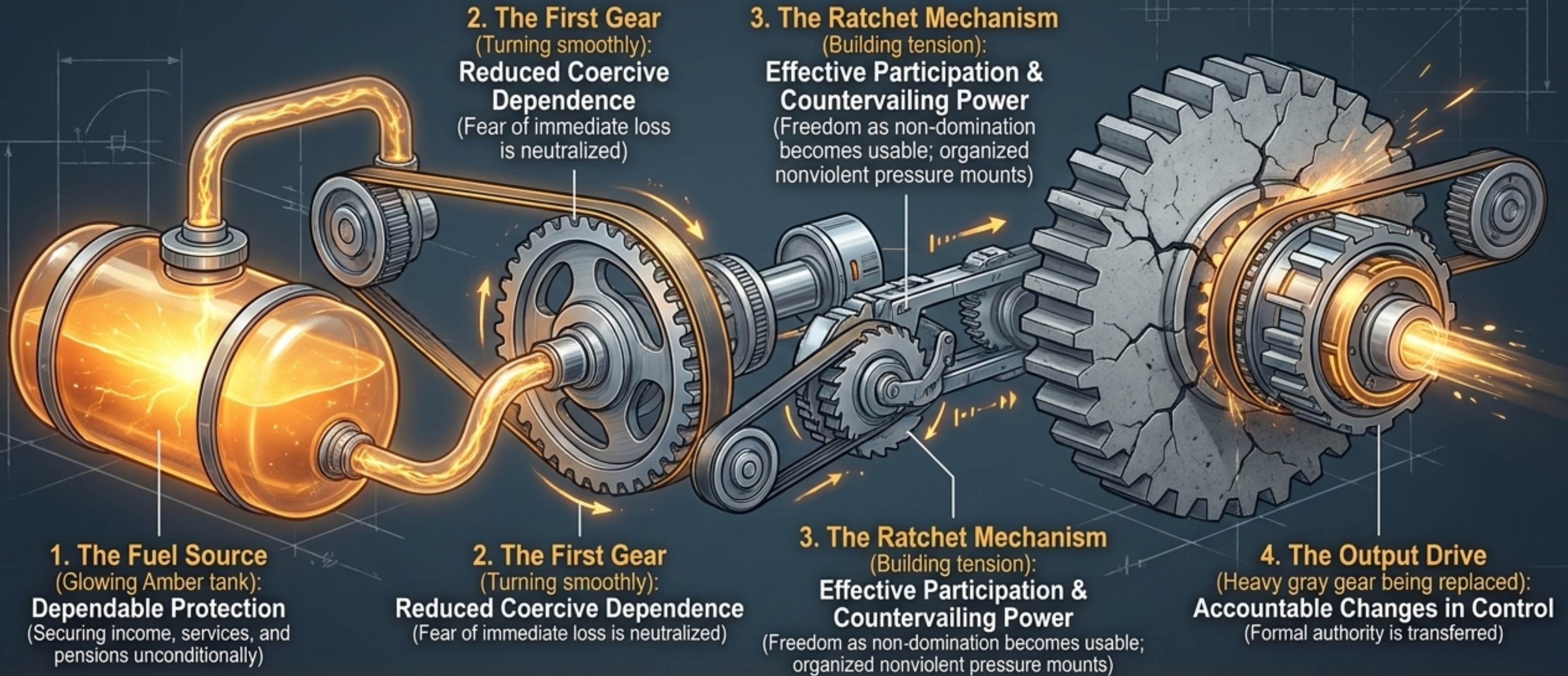
After



Core Argument: The central causal hypothesis is that credible protection during transition fundamentally alters the dependencies that sustain an incumbent's position.

Distilled Insight: When a worker's livelihood or a community's water supply is genuinely secured, the incumbent loses their coercive veto over change. Disarming a monopoly requires providing the civil commons.

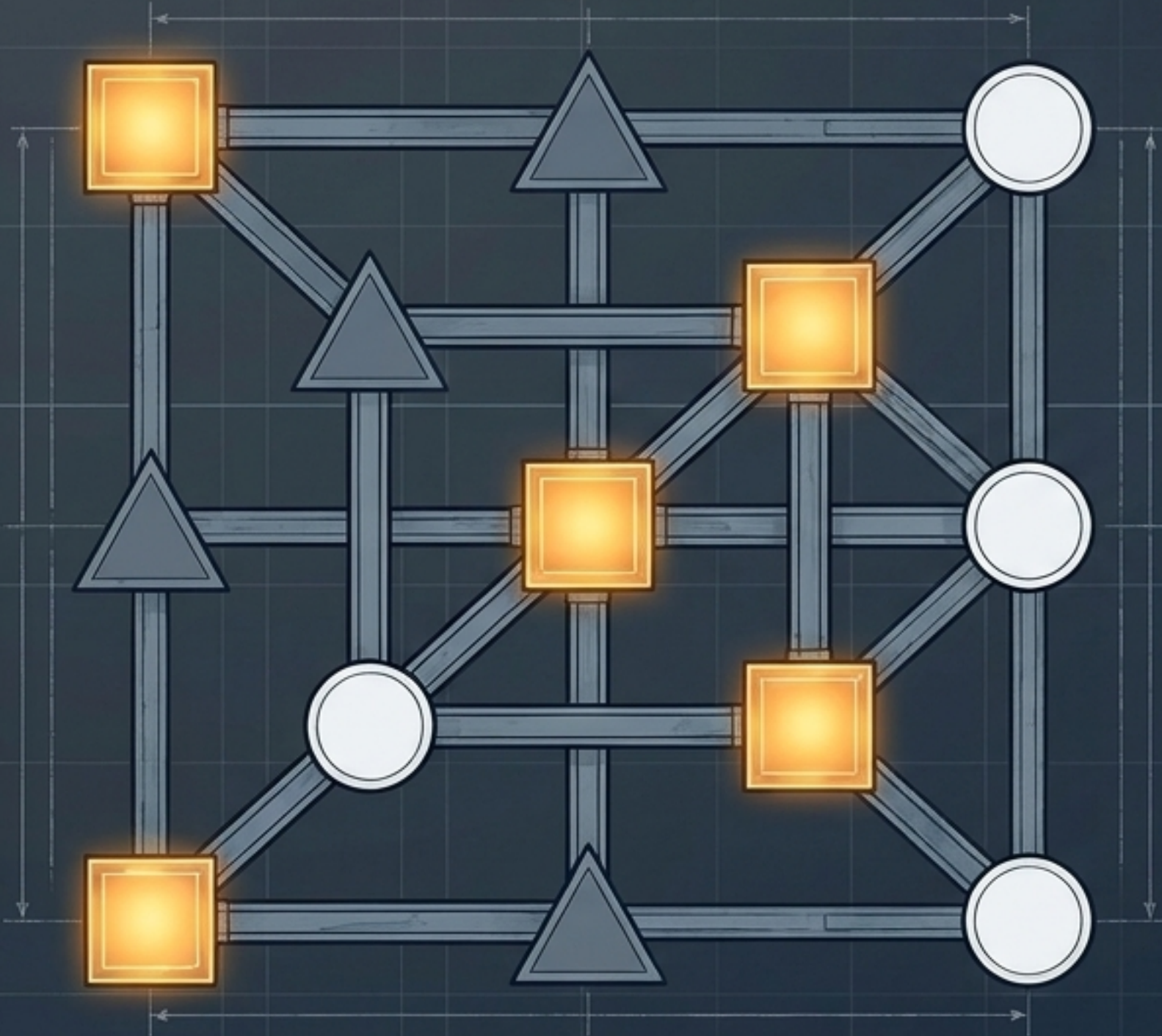
The Causal Engine of Change



Unconditional Normative Commitment: Access to necessities must never become conditional on political support for the reform. Rights remain obligations even if this causal engine stalls.

Living Coordination

The capacity to change together without compulsory agreement.



Structural Conflict Over Emotional Labor:

Transition does not require emotional harmony or convincing everyone of the same destination.



Professional Dissent:

A worker may reject a reform ideologically yet cooperate professionally in maintaining the essential service.



Consequential Participation:

A justified objection must be capable of changing a decision. Coercive civility and compulsory trust are rejected.



Preserving Contestation:

Bargaining, public criticism, and refusal must remain compatible with protection.

The Institutional Puzzle Pieces Already Exist

Precedents	Maintained Physical Continuity	Replaced Bad Management	Funded the Transition	Separated Function from Control
Financial Resolution Framework (FSB)	✓			✓
UK Energy Administration (Bulb Energy)	✓			
Jackson Drinking Water Intervention	✓	✓		
The Montreal Protocol			✓	

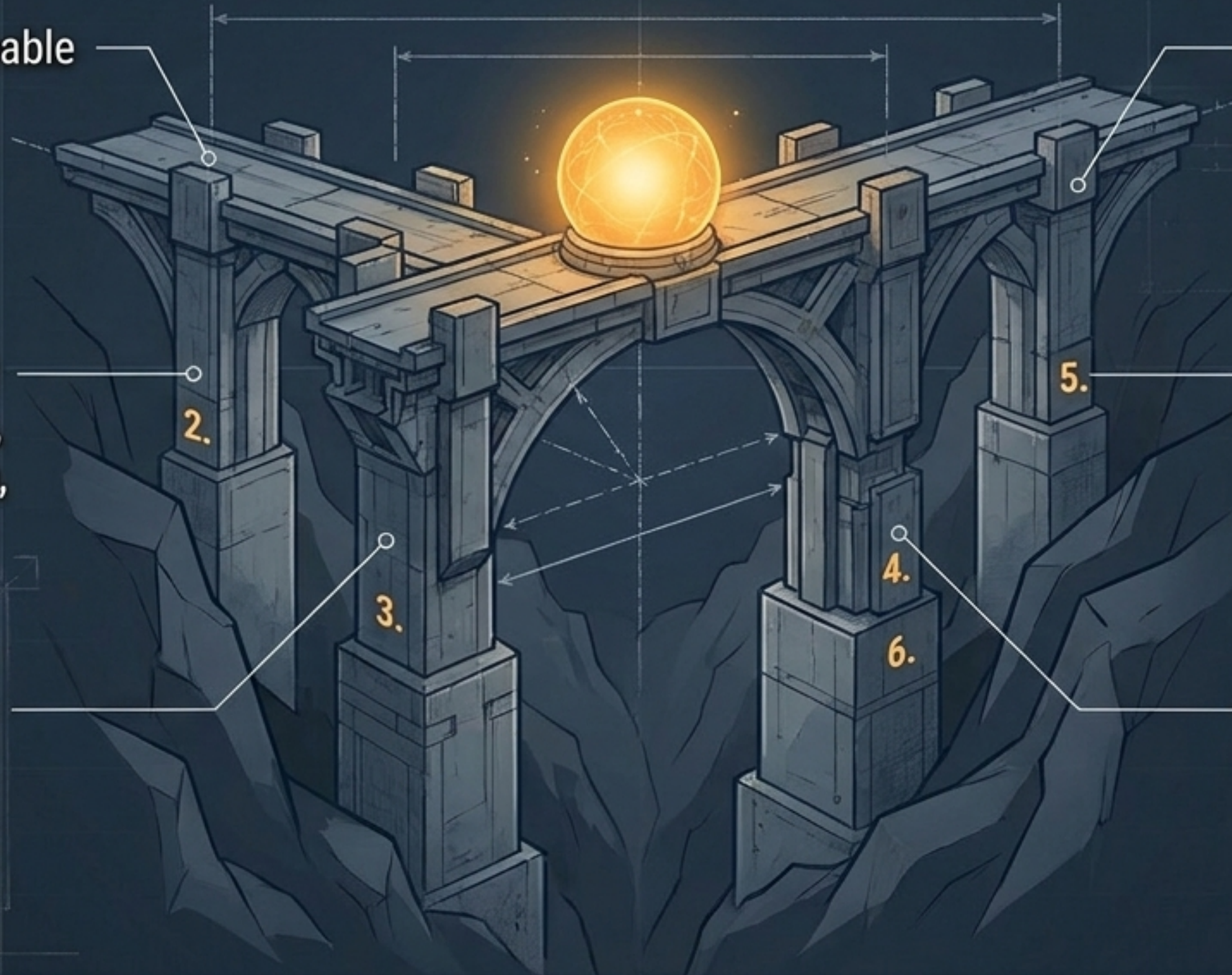
Synthesis Note: While no single precedent executed the complete framework, every required institutional capability has already been stress-tested in reality.

The Architecture of a Binding Transition Agreement

1. Protection: Enforceable minimums for human protections and ecological limits.

2. Continuity: Defined responsible operators, fallback infrastructure, and vital records.

3. Resources: Explicit payment authority, available finance, and burden allocation.

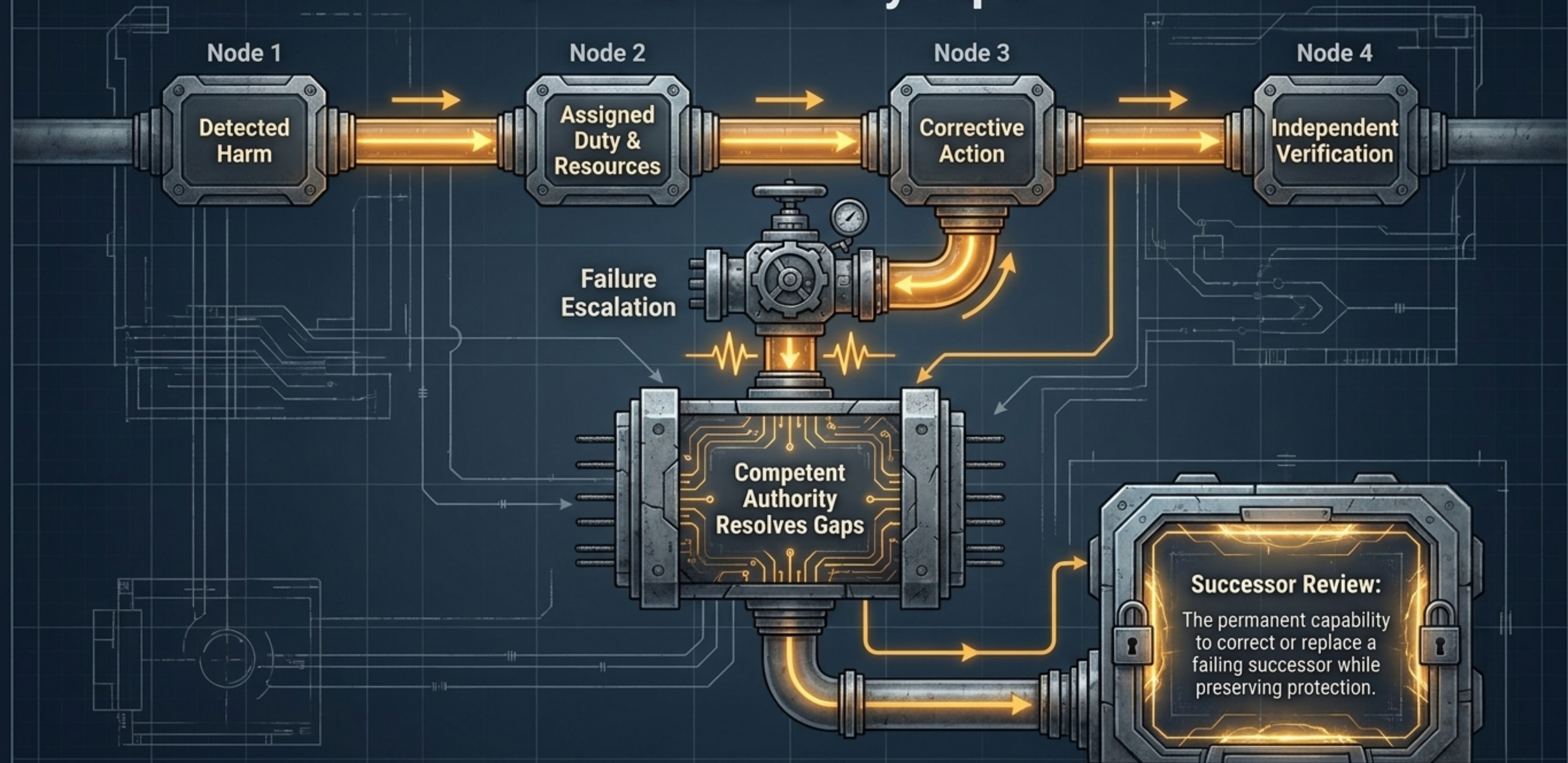


4. Change in Control: Precise legal triggers to alter powers, incentives, and ownership.

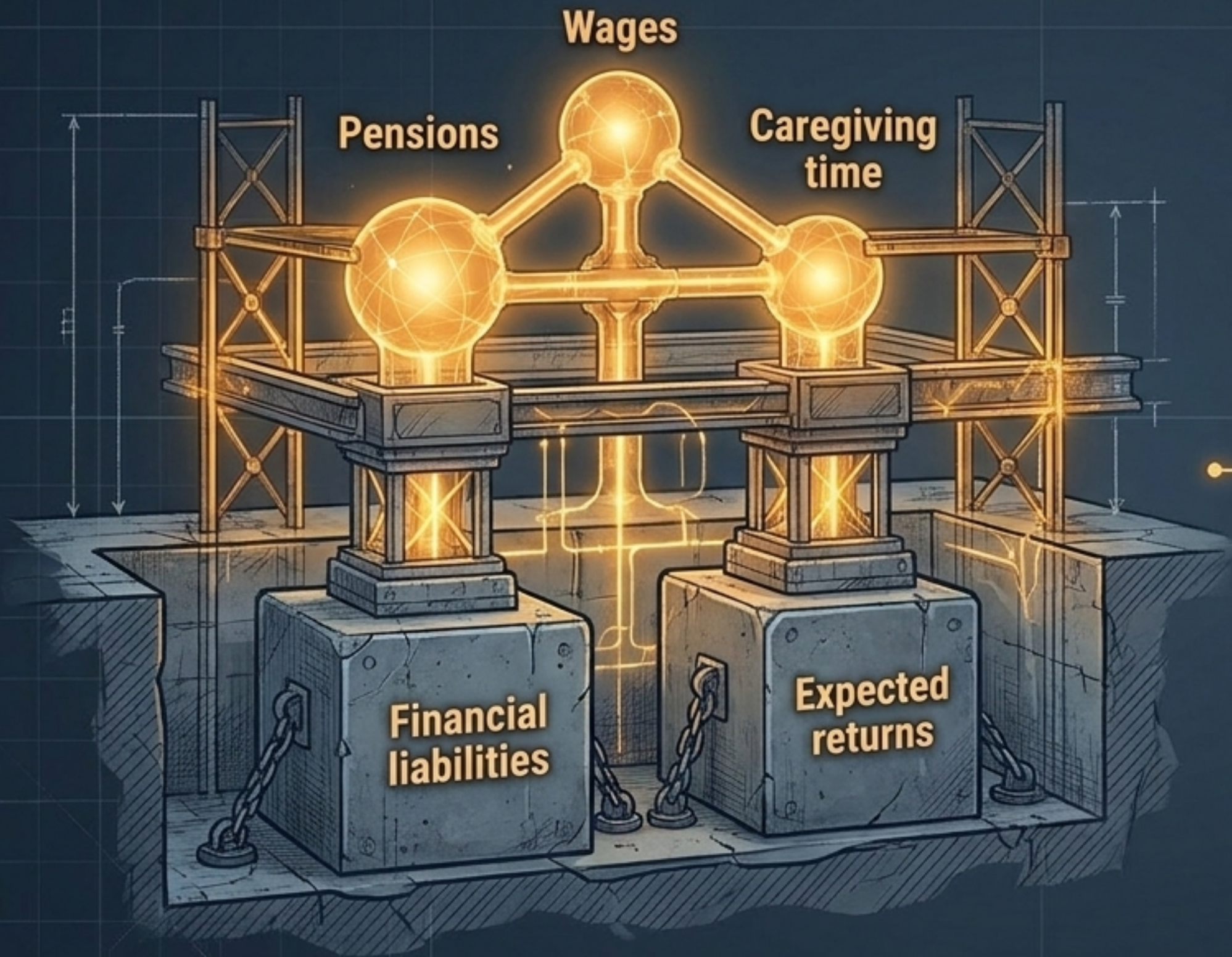
5. Answerability: Affected-party standing, independent scrutiny, and accessible remedies.

6. Revision & Completion: Verifiable milestones and the legal power to correct or replace a failing successor.

The Accountability Pipeline



Governing Loss Without Exploitation



Distinguishing Stakeholders:

Protecting workers' incomes and pensions differs entirely from protecting owners' expected returns. Continuity is not a bailout.

Visibility of Friction:

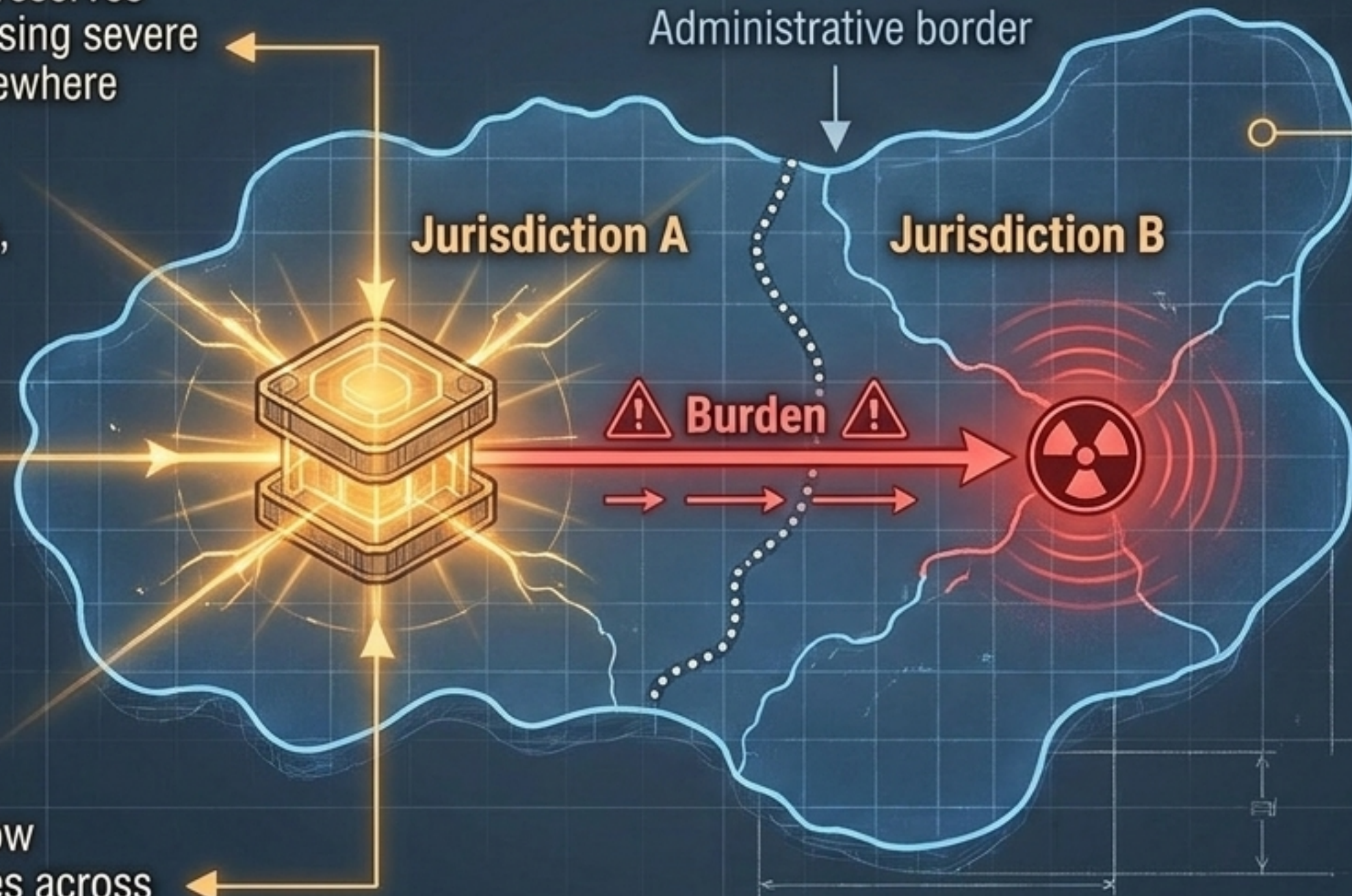
Transport, caregiving, administrative work, and time spent in legal proceedings cannot fall silently on people already carrying the original harm.

Fiscal Reality: Assigning local responsibility without providing intergovernmental fiscal support is not meaningful decentralization—it is abandonment.

The Boundary Limit: Bioregional Responsibility

Core Concept: Continuity cannot be purchased through displacement.

A transition fails if it preserves local services by imposing severe avoidable burdens elsewhere for an replacement (e.g., replacement infrastructure burdens, upstream watershed pollution).



Indigenous jurisdictions must not be reduced to mere stakeholder participation within lines drawn by others; prior and informed consent is foundational.

Obligations must follow material consequences across administrative boundaries.

Preventing Successor Capture

The Threat

A change in formal control leaves effective power untouched if the successor relies on the same exclusive contractor, proprietary technology, or inaccessible financing.

The Safeguards



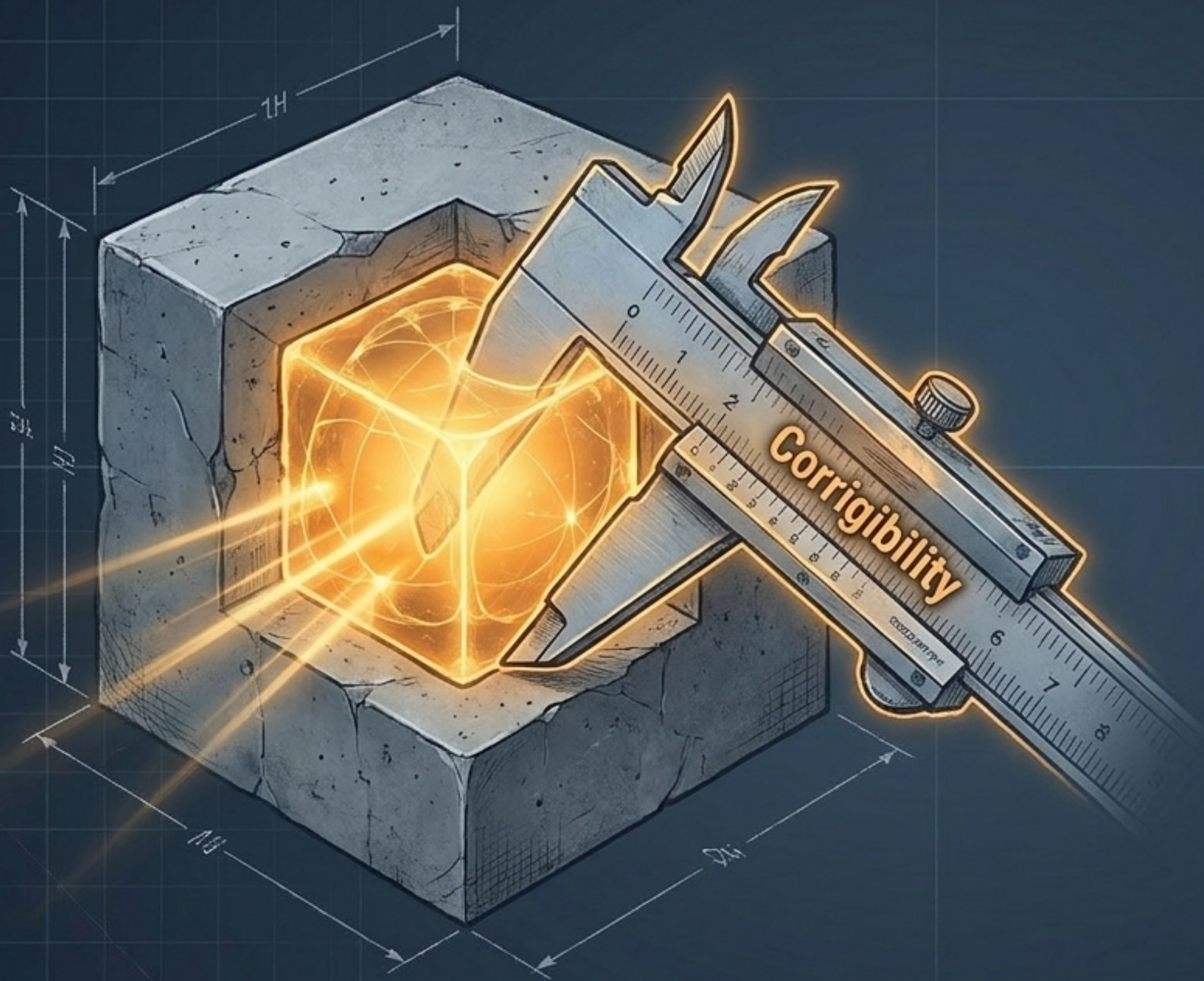
Operational knowledge must be retained and transferable.



No AI or vendor lock-in: Systems must have identifiable human authority, independent review, and a non-AI fallback pathway.



People must be able to challenge the new institution without losing the services on which they depend.



Constitutional Corrigibility

Proposed Legal Architecture

The Mandate:

Where an institution controls an essential life-supporting function, public authority shall maintain lawful arrangements for continuity, independent review, and transfer of that function.

The Protection:

These arrangements shall prevent the essential character of the function from conferring unreviewable authority on its controller.

Strategic Imperative: Make institutional correction a prepared condition before crisis, not an exceptional upheaval during one.

The Civilizational Mandate

1. Preserve the conditions of life.

Do not weaponize survival to force political outcomes.

2. Transform the arrangements that reproduce domination.

Extract the function from the coercive controller.

3. Protect the capacity to correct whatever comes next.

Ensure the successor never becomes unanswerable.

The decisive achievement is ensuring no institution can ever again make its continued dominance the price of everyone else's security.