

True Power Comes from True Faith

One of the clearest examples of uncritical idealism in today's world is the global movement to replace the carbon-based fuels of coal, oil and gas with the renewable resources of solar and wind. The central idea of this cultural movement is that the transition from fossil fuels to renewables can occur within the existing structures of global business and government, and the orienting ideal is that this world could transition more or less smoothly from the petrodollar to a green economy. This idealism is based on assuming that the captains of industry and the leaders of politics have the ecological well-being of the world at heart. Certainly, some of them do. But it can also be said with equal certainty that many, perhaps most, do not. Increasing the wealth of the few at the top is obviously the primary aim of most politicians and most business leaders, and the fossil fuel economy best serves this aim. It is undeniable by anyone capable of critical thought that these leaders will prosecute that aim above all others.

The symbolic figurehead of this agenda today is Donald Trump. He is first and foremost the PR man not just for the global fossil fuel industry, but for what this industry represents as a whole: maximizing profit for a minimum of individuals. His discourse is rooted not in reason, but in his own vested interests, and concern for others is a rhetorical device furthering this aim. This is why there is something inherently frustrating in any attempt to debunk his ludicrous claims.

This recent video from the climate scientist Adam Levy is a good case in point:

<https://youtu.be/IEEwAcQ-zpU>

In this video, Adam Levy is right about everything. The problem is that being objectively wrong doesn't matter at all to Donald Trump. What matters to Donald Trump is being powerful, because he can then dictate his own subjective truth as the dominant discourse, which is why he calls his individual social media mouthpiece "Truth Social".

It is not just the dogmatic opinions of the likes of Donald Trump that pose an insuperable barrier to environmentalism's idealism. One only has to consider for a moment the war-torn politics of the Middle East or the situation in Venezuela to realize that the economics of oil is inextricably entwined in global politics, whose domain is constituted by power, not by reason. In confusing human beings with rational agents, environmentalists play the role of Mr Spock in the old TV show Star Trek, raising one eyebrow at the irrational humans, remarking to Captain Kirk "most curious." To think that humans will always (or even usually) act in their own best interests is a grave mistake.

Not to be outdone by his Supreme Leader in this culture of ever-escalating contradiction, paraconsistent Pete Hegseth says Jesus (history's leading example of a pacifist whose central teaching is "turn the other cheek") is [his lord and saviour](https://youtu.be/w8jnMQ1ZKuo) (<https://youtu.be/w8jnMQ1ZKuo>), while at the same time denouncing pacificism as "naïve and dangerous":

https://youtu.be/8BA5EwsR_rl?t=121

“I have often wondered that persons who make a boast of professing the Christian religion, namely, love, joy, peace, temperance, and charity to all men, should quarrel with such rancorous animosity, and display daily towards one another such bitter hatred, that this, rather than the virtues they claim, is the readiest criterion of their faith.”

These words might have been written about “Secretary of War” Peter Hegseth’s now famous speech in Quantico Virginia on 30th Sept 2025, but in fact they were written in 1670 by Baruch Spinoza in his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. In this profound work (which would no doubt have gotten him either assassinated or executed if he hadn’t published it anonymously, and was only re-issued under his name after his death) Spinoza ruthlessly exposes the hypocrisy of using either the Jewish or the Christian religion (or both) as a pretext for personal arrogance or political chauvinism. Either is an affront to true religion, which Spinoza maintained is based on reason and justice, not superstition and the lust for power.

Such theses as the following are explained by Spinoza in this work, and defended with an extremely thorough knowledge of scripture: Israel are not the chosen people in a religious sense but only in a political sense, and only temporarily and only long ago; Christianity can never justify militarism; God and nature are not opposed, but are actually one and the same thing; true religion is rooted in reason, not ceremony; superstition has no place in true religion; denying God’s existence makes no more sense than denying nature’s existence, or denying reason’s existence, for the existence of God and/or nature and/or reason are not a matter of belief, but rightly understood, the existence of these three are simply one and the same fact; reason and faith, far from being opposed, are perfectly aligned; true Judaism no less than true Christianity is consistent and rational, free from contradiction and superstition; humanity is one, and all people and all nations are universally equal; the nature we see in the heavens above, and the natural world here below, both mirror the human nature within us, divine and inspired, and immediately accessible to all without mediation by priest or rabbi; humans have fallen into contradiction through arrogance and the love of slavery, exploiting their fellow man due to the love of money; false religion and corrupt politics are the two sides of one coin, each corrupting the other in a mutual embrace of irrationalism over reason.

Spinoza’s critique of the interconnection of religion and politics is uncannily prescient when it comes to Trump’s America, the defining trait of which is the intensification of contradiction. Dogmatic and blatant contradiction is crucial to the intensification of corrupt power. To have to agree with instructions which go against reason is the clearest demonstration of corrupt power possible, clearer even than instructions which force one to go against one’s ethics, one’s personal convictions, or even the law. Why were the august generals assembled in Quantico so obviously uncomfortable when they were forced to sit and listen to Hegseth and to Trump lecture them? Because they knew that their unquestioning obedience was being abused to intensify the Trump/Hegseth feeling of power as a preparation to undermine democracy through the use of military force to suppress criticism of and the demonstration of political protest against the Trump administration.

Televising this meeting was crucial to its meaning: the point was to demonstrate to the world at large that the military always obeys the President, no matter what, even if it means that the top brass have to endure the humiliation of a fatuous lecture from the likes of Peter Hegseth. This was a safe bet on Trump's behalf, and he relished the opportunity to make "his" generals sit, stay, roll over, and listen, because he knew very well that these generals have been trained in the crucial value of military obedience since day one of their joining the armed forces. Much as each and every one of them resented it and would have dearly loved to have walked out in disgust, they all knew that their master had them on a leash. Their deafening silence and solid phalanx of faces as stony as Mt Rushmore said this more clearly than any words could. Trump's message was addressed not so much to the audience physically present, but to his critics from Washington State to Washington DC, from California to Massachusetts, and from Florida to Michigan (as well as to every other country in the world). The message was loud and clear: the military will respect the office of the president because they must, *even if they do not respect the president himself*. And they will obey me, if I, Donald Trump, set them upon you. Or rather, *when I do*.

National Security Presidential Memorandum Seven ([NSPM7](#)) which Trump issued on Thursday Oct 2nd 2025 specifically designates anti-Christian behaviour and/or anti-capitalist activity as terrorism -- as if Jesus was a capitalist! Peter Hegseth's designation of pacifism as naïve and dangerous is in fact a clear instance of anti-Christian behaviour. So logically, the Joint Terrorism Task Force should arrest Hegseth. But of course, that won't happen. Thus, Trump is demonstrating that he is more powerful than not only the laws of the land, but even the laws of logic. Of course, what will happen is that gangs of masked ICE thugs will continue to roam the poorer neighbourhoods of the USA targeting black and Latino individuals, while Trump issues edicts to go easy on white collar crime. The non-white criminals whose non-white collar crime profits hundreds of dollars will be beaten, incarcerated and deported, while the white criminals whose white-collar crime profits millions of dollars will suffer no adverse consequences, but rather win awards and be publicly congratulated and celebrated. Thus, white supremacy is shamelessly paraded in a country traditionally called the United States of America, but which can no longer accurately be designated as united, but ought rather to be called disunited.

What does fossil fuel fundamentalism have to do with Trump's move towards a fascist regime? What links them is the shameless and blatant attack upon reason. For it is only reasonable to attend to the undeniable data of climate science and do what is clearly within our power to mitigate and eventually reverse the looming threat of climate instability bearing down upon us. Likewise, it is only reasonable to acknowledge the shared humanity in each and every person and to respect that humanity, making punishments proportional to crimes and prosecuting criminals justly and without hypocrisy, without racial and cultural bias. The fact that neither of these things are occurring in Trump's America illustrates just how irrational Trump's America is becoming, his MAGA agenda thus succeeding in turning the USA into the DSA.

Perhaps the greatest affront to a rational ethics is that Trump/Hegseth/Netanyahu warmongering will now be used to distract the American public from the Epstein scandal in

all its odious depravity, with war plans being presented as peace plans and colonization plans being presented as liberation plans. Jared Kushner and Tony Blair: it's hard to imagine two less trustworthy individuals. [The conviction of Trump's "spiritual advisor" on child sex charges](#) symbolizes the depth of the corruption of American ideals, and Trump will now begin slaughtering innocent Iranians in an attempt to distract from this scandalous situation, so little does he value human life, as Netanyahu rubs his blood-stained hands in glee.

What we see here writ large in huge letters across the sky is the truth that the end of an era does not arrive as a peaceful transition from a less reasonable to a more reasonable organization of human civilization. On the contrary Hegel was right about at least this much: contradictions on this scale tear whole nations to pieces and rip lives to shreds on a scale measured in millions of individuals. Oceans of blood have been spilled by the diremptions of Libia, Tunisia, Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria by the unholy alliance of Israel and America, and Iran is the now finally in their crosshairs, a seventh regime-change operation planned in detail quite openly by Netanyahu for over thirty years. But the Persian giant will not crumble so easily as those previous six, with the Russians and the Chinese hovering menacingly behind the Iranians. It now seems that the Israeli-American military hybrid may be about to meet its Waterloo. Tehran has demonstrated during the Friday the 13th twelve-day war that it could crush Tel Aviv if it so chose, but it well knows that Washington will crush Tehran in turn if they do. Would Moscow and Beijing then crush Washington in consequence, as the ICBMs are unleashed across the globe and nature's great experiment that was humanity proves itself to have failed in an all-too-brief cascade of nuclear explosions?

Greta Thunberg is a crucial symbol for our situation today. Her [brutal treatment at the hands of her Israeli captors](#) puts the lie to decades of the uncritical idealisation of Israel by us in the West. And the rose-tinted glasses that we in the West have worn as we have looked at Israel, seeing not what Israel actually is, but what we wish Israel was, have been all the more powerful when we look in the mirror. The West's uncritical idealism with regards to itself has been reified in the conviction that the western media is an objective mirror held up to reality, reflecting what is happening in some neutral kind of way. But in fact, it has been devoted to engineering a clear conscience for ourselves by imaging that episodes like our amplification of Israeli hasbara have put us on "the right side of history."

Here we see "History" substituting for the role "God" used to play in the now secularised western thinking (not incompatible with a religion demoted to the status of a merely subjective belief). The superstitious story of transcendence used to be that God will achieve justice on judgement day, but this narrative is no longer credible, so instead we hear that it is "History" rather than God who will judge the unjust. A future humanity stands in for divinity in this secularised superstition, which in fact postpones the imperative for justice in the here and now no less than did the old narrative about God judging the unjust on judgement day. What we actually need is for us to discern and to enforce justice in the present.

To divine the direction in which humanity should move in order to head towards increasing justice, the incongruity between appearance and reality is our orienting compass. For on the one hand, the west lives today within the appearance of national democracies, each country

understanding itself as a sovereign entity participating in an international community of such entities. [But the suspicion lurks](#) that this appearance is actually only “mere,” an appearance orchestrated by transnational corporations ruled not by democracy, but by the movements of global capital which govern the democratically elected “governments,” rather than being governed by them. Elections matter only to the extent that the choices they decide matter in some real sense, that they are the choice between two or more really different alternatives. But as the American example illustrates so clearly, the choice between Biden and Trump was no choice at all. Trump is almost right when he says that Biden was the worst President the USA has ever had, obviously a doddering senile fool easily manipulated by the non-elected forces of corporate interest – only almost, because Trump himself is equal worst, a conceited arrogant fool easily manipulated by the non-elected forces of corporate interest. There really is no way to say which is worse, for each are equally bad in their own way, a situation increasingly replicated in one way or another throughout all western democracies. As party-politics comes to be ever more controlled by financing through corporate lobbying and donations, the ideal of democracy as governance by the people for the people becomes an ever more distant memory and the democracy game gradually turns into a mere charade played only in order to engineer the deluded conviction among the people that they are governing themselves. Meanwhile in reality, it is the transnational corporations which are doing all the governing and the people are being exploited like mere resources.

Reversing this insidious development is a crucial task for critical idealism. While uncritical theories of paranoid conspiracy might identify the culprit as the “deep state,” there is actually nothing deep about corporate control. It is in fact simply shallow, a mere backslide into the premodern forms of governance characteristic of the medieval world. The shallow state of fake democracy is just feudalism dressed up as progress, the attempt of greed to pass itself off as idealism and of materialism to pass itself off as progressive. The problem is that reversing this regress is far from easy, for it would need the rich to realise that they themselves are the problem, and that it is their wealth which blinds them to their own injustice. It would mean that the ten millionaires at the top of the Australian ABC’s corporate structure no less than the corporate millionaires running Rupert Murdoch’s empire, along with the Vice-Chancellors and the CEOs occupying the positions once inhabited by the archbishops and the dukes and the duchesses, would have to realise that they themselves and the values they represent are in fact the very problem itself. This might sound like a Marxist critique of capitalism, but it’s not. The ever-growing gulf between rich and poor predates capitalism by millennia and would probably outlast its predicted collapse. It is a matter not of the economy but of the heart and soul of humanity, the one great issue at the common root of religion and politics, which are really two words for the same thing.

Which brings us back to the idealistic push for solar and wind to replace fossil fuels. What solar and wind industries share with the fossil fuel industry is exactly that: industry. The manufacture of solar cell panels and wind turbines remain industrialised processes, and the manufacture, distribution, sale and maintenance of these technologies remains paradoxically entangled with the fossil fuel industry within the wider web of the military-industrial complex: concrete, copper, glass, aluminium, magnesium, gold, steel (and hence not just iron but also coal), plastics (and hence oil), silicon and rare earth minerals; all crucial

components which go into manufacturing the nuts and bolts and insulation and wires and semiconductors and carbon fibre and polycarbonate sheets and aluminium frames and rubber grommets among thousands of other components all required to get solar panels, batteries and wind turbines installed and operating and distributing electricity all across the world. All this combined with the facts which sceptics from Trump on downwards love to rehearse, that solar panels and wind turbines depend upon the sun shining and the wind blowing, but not too strongly or they fall over and blow away, means that the challenge posed by these renewables is tolerated because they are not in fact incompatible with the continued hegemony of the giant fossil fuel corporations which still run our world. Hard-nosed fossil fuel use and starry-eyed renewable advocacy thus take their place alongside religious orientation among the leading lifestyle choices occupying today's busy consumer, who is above all concerned with squabbling about the right subjective opinions one ought to hold and espouse on one's social media platform of choice.

Religion and politics are thus both equally corrupted and dragged down to the level of mere subjective opinion. Reason, Nature and/or God stands neglected and ignored and attacked and slandered, but like the Earth itself, untouched and undamaged by human hubris and hypocrisy, immutable and eternal, and thereby thus also permanently available to recollection and to revolutionary return to centre stage, the one source of true optimism.

Having now dropped the pretence of calling their military a "defence department" and been honest enough to call it the "war department," the Trump administration have actually taken the first step on the path of what Nietzsche called "the means to real peace." But this is only the first step, and the achievement of that real peace (and real Christianity too) comes only with the crucial second step: to actually show Hamas the way and to lead by example: to disarm out of strength, rather than to be armed out fear. To beat their swords into ploughshares by decommissioning their entire nuclear arsenal would be to show the whole world what true strength really is. And then the final step would become clear: to then show the world where true power actually comes from: from faith in the Earth:

https://youtu.be/5U8-KoKB6_8 <https://youtu.be/oYHcCsFID2Q>
<https://youtu.be/zJoYqXMYk8o> <https://youtu.be/FhxzMKnbr-g>

The means to real peace —

No government admits any more that it keeps an army to satisfy occasionally the desire for conquest. Rather the army is supposed to serve for defence, and one invokes the morality that approves of self-defence. But this implies one's own morality and the neighbour's immorality; for the neighbour must be thought of as eager to attack and conquer if our state must think of means of self-defence.

Moreover, the reasons we give for requiring an army imply that our neighbour, who denies the desire for conquest just as much as does our own state, and who, for his part, also keeps an army only for reasons of self-defence, is a hypocrite and a cunning criminal who would like nothing better than to overpower a harmless and awkward victim without any fight.

Thus all states are now ranged against each other: they presuppose their neighbour's

bad disposition and their own good disposition. This presupposition, however, is inhumane, as bad as war and worse. At bottom, indeed, it is itself the challenge and the cause of wars, because, as I have said, it attributes immorality to the neighbour and thus provokes a hostile disposition and act.

We must abjure the doctrine of the army as a means of self-defence just as completely as the desire for conquests. And perhaps the great day will come when people, distinguished by wars and victories and by the highest development of a military order and intelligence, and accustomed to make the heaviest sacrifices for these things, will exclaim of its own free will, "We break the sword," and will smash its entire military establishment down to its lowest foundations.

Rendering oneself unarmed when one had been the best-armed, out of a height of feeling—that is the means to real peace, which must always rest on a peace of mind; whereas the so-called armed peace, as it now exists in all countries, is the absence of peace of mind. One trusts neither oneself nor one's neighbor and, half from hatred, half from fear, does not lay down arms.

Rather perish than hate and fear, and twice rather perish than make oneself hated and feared—this must someday become the highest maxim for every single commonwealth. Our liberal representatives, as is well known, lack the time for reflecting on the nature of man: else they would know that they work in vain when they work for a "gradual decrease of the military burden."

Rather, only when this kind of need has become greatest will the kind of god be nearest who alone can help here.

The tree of war-glory can only be destroyed all at once, by a stroke of lightning: but lightning, as indeed you know, comes from a cloud—and from up high.

(Nietzsche, *Human All Too Human* "The Wanderer and His Shadow" §284.)