

The rise of end times fascism

Naomi Klein, Astra Taylor

The movement for corporate city states cannot believe its good luck. For years, it has been pushing the extreme notion that wealthy, tax-averse people should up and start their own high-tech fiefdoms, whether new countries on artificial islands in international waters (“[seasteading](#)”) or pro-business “freedom cities” such as [Próspera](#), a glorified gated community combined with a wild west med spa on a Honduran island.

Yet despite backing from the heavy-hitter venture capitalists Peter Thiel and Marc Andreessen, their extreme libertarian dreams kept bogging down: it turns out most self-respecting rich people don’t actually want to live on floating oil rigs, even if it means lower taxes, and while Próspera might be nice for a holiday and some body “upgrades”, its extra-national status is currently being [challenged in court](#).

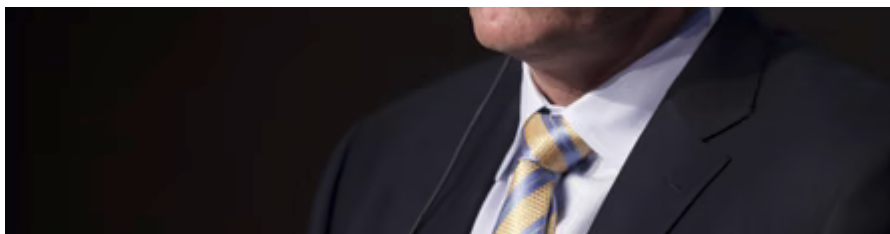
Now, all of a sudden, this once-fringe network of corporate secessionists finds itself knocking on open doors at the dead center of global power.

The first sign that fortunes were shifting came in 2023, when a campaigning [Donald Trump](#), seemingly out of nowhere, promised to hold a contest that would lead to the creation of 10 “[freedom cities](#)” on federal lands. The trial balloon barely registered at the time, lost in the daily deluge of outrageous claims. Since the new administration took office, however, would-be country starters have been on a lobbying blitz, determined to turn Trump’s pledge into reality.

“The energy in DC is absolutely electric,” Trey Goff, the chief of staff of Próspera, recently [enthused](#) after a trip to Capitol Hill. Legislation paving the way for a bevy of corporate city-states should be complete by the end of the year, he claims.

Inspired by a warped reading of the political philosopher Albert Hirschman, figures including Goff, Thiel and the investor and writer Balaji Srinivasan have been championing what they call “exit” – the principle that those with means have the right to walk away from the obligations of citizenship, especially taxes and burdensome regulation. Retooling and rebranding the old ambitions and privileges of empires, they dream of splintering governments and carving up the world into hyper-capitalist, democracy-free havens under the sole control of the supremely wealthy, protected by private mercenaries, serviced by AI robots and financed by cryptocurrencies.





📷 Peter Thiel in Tokyo in 2019. Photograph: Kiyoshi Ota/Bloomberg via Getty Images

One might assume that it is contradictory for Trump, elected on a flag-waving “America first” platform, to lend credence to this vision of sovereign territories ruled over by billionaire god-kings. And much has been made of the colorful flame wars between the Maga mouth-piece Steve Bannon, a proud nationalist and populist, and the Trump-allied billionaires he has [attacked](#) as “technofeudalists” who “don’t give a flying fuck about the human being” – let alone the nation state. And conflicts inside Trump’s awkward, jerry-rigged coalition certainly exist, most recently reaching a [boiling point](#) over tariffs. Still, the underlying visions might not be as incompatible as they first appear.

The startup country contingent is clearly foreseeing a future marked by shocks, scarcity and collapse. Their high-tech private domains are essentially fortified escape pods, designed for the select few to take advantage of every possible luxury and opportunity for human optimization, giving them and their children an edge in an increasingly barbarous future. To put it bluntly, the most powerful people in the world are preparing for the end of the world, an end they themselves are frenetically accelerating.

That is not so far away from the more mass-market vision of fortified nations that has gripped the hard right globally, from Italy to Israel, Australia to the United States: in a time of ceaseless peril, openly supremacist movements in these countries are positioning their relatively wealthy states as armed bunkers. These bunkers are brutal in their determination to expel and imprison unwanted humans (even if that requires indefinite confinement in extra-national penal colonies from Manus Island to Guantánamo Bay) and equally ruthless in their willingness to violently claim the land and resources (water, energy, critical minerals) they deem necessary to weather the coming shocks.

Interestingly, at a time when previously secular Silicon Valley elites are [suddenly finding](#) Jesus, it is noteworthy that both of these visions – the priority-pass corporate state and the mass-market bunker nation – share a great deal in common with the Christian fundamentalist interpretation of the biblical Rapture, when the faithful will supposedly be lifted up to a golden city in heaven, while the damned are left to endure an apocalyptic final battle down here on earth.

If we are to meet our critical moment in history, we need to reckon with the reality that we are not up against adversaries we have seen before. We are up against end times fascism.

Reflecting on his childhood under Mussolini, the novelist and philosopher Umberto Eco observed in a celebrated [essay](#) that fascism typically has an “Armageddon complex” – a fixation on vanquishing enemies in a grand final battle. But European fascism of the 1930s and 1940s also had a horizon: a vision for a future golden age after the bloodbath that, for its in-group, would be peaceful, pastoral and purified. Not today.

Alive to our era of genuine existential danger – from climate breakdown to nuclear war to sky-rocketing inequality and unregulated AI – but financially and ideologically committed to deepening those threats,

contemporary far-right movements lack any credible vision for a hopeful future. The average voter is offered only remixes of a bygone past, alongside the sadistic pleasures of dominance over an ever-expanding assemblage of dehumanized others.

And so we have the Trump administration's dedication to releasing its steady stream of real and [AI-generated](#) propaganda designed solely for these pornographic purposes. Footage of shackled immigrants being loaded on to deportation flights, set to the sounds of clanking chains and locking cuffs, which the official White House X account [labeled](#) "ASMR", a reference to audio designed to calm the nervous system. Or the same account [sharing](#) news of the detention of [Mahmoud Khalil](#), a US permanent resident who was active in Columbia University's pro-Palestinian encampment, with the gloating words: "SHALOM, MAHMOUD." Or any number of homeland security secretary Kristi Noem's sadism-chic [photo ops](#) (atop a [horse](#) at the US-Mexican border, in front of a crowded [prison cell](#) in El Salvador, [slinging](#) a machine gun while arresting immigrants in Arizona ...).



📷 Kristi Noem speaks during a tour of an El Salvador prison in March. Photograph: Alex Brandon/AP

The governing ideology of the far right in our age of escalating disasters has become a monstrous, supremacist survivalism.

It is terrifying in its wickedness, yes. But it also opens up powerful possibilities for resistance. To bet against the future on this scale – to bank on your bunker – is to betray, on the most basic level, our duties to one another, to the children we love, and to every other life form with whom we share a planetary home. This is a belief system that is genocidal at its core and treasonous to the wonder and beauty of this world. We are convinced that the more people understand the extent to which the right has succumbed to the Armageddon complex, the more they will be willing to fight back, realizing that absolutely everything is now on the line.

Our opponents know full well that we are entering an age of emergency, but have responded by embracing lethal yet self-serving delusions. Having bought into various apartheid fantasies of bunkered safety, they are choosing to let the Earth burn. Our task is to build a wide and deep movement, as spiritual as it is political, strong enough to stop these unhinged traitors. A movement rooted in a steadfast commitment to one another, across our many differences and divides, and to this miraculous, singular planet.



Not so long ago, it was primarily religious fundamentalists who greeted signs of apocalypse with gleeful excitement about the long-awaited Rapture. Trump has handed critical posts to people who subscribe to that fiery orthodoxy, [including](#) several Christian Zionists who see Israel's use of annihilatory violence to expand its territorial footprint not as illegal atrocities but as felicitous evidence that the Holy Land is getting closer to the conditions under which the Messiah will return, and the faithful will get their celestial kingdom.

Mike Huckabee, Trump's newly confirmed ambassador to Israel, has [strong ties](#) to Christian Zionism, as does [Pete Hegseth](#), his secretary of defense. Noem and Russell Vought, the Project 2025 architect who now leads the office of budget and management, are [both staunch](#) advocates for Christian nationalism. Even Thiel, who is gay and [notorious](#) for his party lifestyle, has been heard [musing](#) about the arrival of the antichrist of late (spoiler: he thinks it's Greta Thunberg, more on that soon).

But you don't need to be a biblical literalist, or even religious, to be an end times fascist. Today, plenty of powerful secular people have embraced a vision of the future that follows a nearly identical script, one in which the world as we know it collapses under its weight and a chosen few survive and thrive in various kinds of arks, bunkers and gated "freedom cities". In a 2019 [paper](#) titled Left Behind: Future Fetishists, Prepping and the Abandonment of Earth, the communication scholars Sarah T Roberts and Mél Hogan described the longing for a secular Rapture: "In the accelerationist imaginary, the future is not about harm reduction, limits or restoration; rather it is a politics driving toward an endgame."



📷 Mike Huckabee touring Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem in 2008. Photograph: David Silverman/Getty Images

[Elon Musk](#), who dramatically grew his fortune alongside Thiel at PayPal, embodies this implosive ethos. This is a person who looks up at the wonders of the night sky and apparently sees only opportunities to fill that inky unknown with his own space junk. Though he burnished his reputation warning about the dangers of the climate crisis and AI, he and his so-called "department of government efficiency" (Doge) henchmen

now spend their days escalating those same risks (and many others) by slashing not only environmental regulations but entire regulatory agencies, with the apparent [end goal](#) of replacing federal workers with chatbots.

Who needs a functioning nation state when outer space – now reportedly Musk’s singular obsession – beckons? For Musk, Mars has become a secular ark, which he claims is key to the survival of human civilization, perhaps via uploaded consciousnesses to an artificial general intelligence. Kim Stanley Robinson, the author of the sci-fi Mars Trilogy that appears to have partially inspired Musk, is blunt about the dangers of the billionaire’s fantasies about [colonizing Mars](#). It is, he [says](#), “just a moral hazard that creates the illusion we can wreck Earth and still be okay. It’s totally not true.”

Much like religious end-timers who long to escape the corporeal realm, Musk’s drive for humanity to become “multiplanetary” is made possible by his inability to appreciate the multispecies splendor of our only home. Evidently uninterested in the vast bounty that surrounds him, or in ensuring Earth can continue buzzing with diversity, he instead deploys his vast fortune to bring about a future that would see a handful of people and robots eke out survival on two barren orbs (a radically depleted Earth and a terraformed Mars). Indeed, in a strange twist on the Old Testament tale, Musk and his fellow tech billionaires, having arrogated god-like powers to themselves, aren’t content to just build the arks. They appear to be doing their best to cause the flood. Today’s rightwing leaders and their rich allies are not just taking advantage of catastrophes, shock-doctrine and disaster-capitalism style, but simultaneously provoking and planning for them.

What of the Maga base, though? Not all are sufficiently faithful to earnestly believe in the Rapture, and most certainly don’t have the cash to buy a spot in a “freedom city” let alone on a rocket ship. Fear not. End times fascism offers the promise of many more affordable arks and bunkers, these ones well within reach for lower-level foot soldiers.

Listen to Steve Bannon’s daily podcast – which bills itself as Maga’s premier media outlet – and you will be barraged with a singular message: the world is going to hell, the infidels are breaching the barricades, and a final battle is coming. Be prepared. The prepper message becomes particularly pronounced when Bannon switches to hawking his advertisers’ products. Buy Birch Gold, Bannon [tells](#) his audience, because the over-leveraged US economy is going to crash and you can’t trust the banks. Stock up on ready-to-eat meals from [My Patriot Supply](#). Sharpen your target practice using a laser-guided at-home system. The last thing you would want to do is depend on the government during a disaster, he reminds listeners (left unsaid: especially now that the Doge boys are selling off the government for parts).

Bannon doesn’t only urge his audience to make their own bunkers, of course. He also advances a vision of the United States as a bunker in its own right, one in which Ice agents stalk the streets, workplaces and campuses, disappearing those deemed enemies of US policy and interests. The bunkered nation lies at the heart of the Maga agenda, and of end times fascism. Inside its logic, the first job is to harden national borders and expunge all enemies, foreign and domestic. This ugly work is now well under way, with the [Trump administration](#), enabled by the supreme court, having invoked the Alien Enemies Act to deport hundreds of Venezuelan immigrants to Cecot, the now infamous mega-prison in El Salvador. The facility, which shaves prisoners heads and packs up to 100 people into a single cell, stacked with bare bunks,

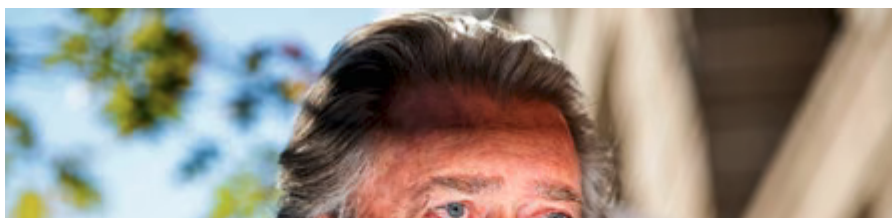
operates under the civil liberties-destroying “state of exception” first declared over three years ago by the country’s crypto-loving, Christian Zionist prime minister, Nayib Bukele.

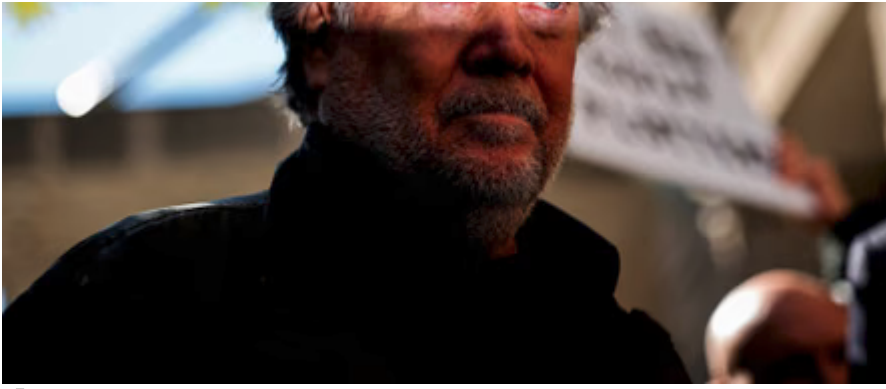
Bukele has offered to provide the same fee-for-service system for US citizens the administration would like to drop into a judicial black hole. “I love that,” Trump [said](#) recently, when asked about the proposal. No wonder: Cecot is the sick if logical corollary of the “freedom city” fantasy – a zone where everything is for sale and due process does not apply. We should expect much more of this sadism. In a chillingly candid statement, the acting Ice director, Todd Lyons, [told](#) the 2025 Border Security Expo that he wanted to see a more “business”-oriented approach to these deportations, “like [Amazon] Prime, but with human beings”.

If policing the boundaries of the bunkered nation is end times fascism’s job one, equally important is job two: for the US government to lay claim to whatever resources its protected citizens might need to get through the tough times ahead. Maybe it’s Panama’s canal. Or Greenland’s fast-melting shipping routes. Or Ukraine’s critical minerals. Or Canada’s fresh water. We should think of this less as old-school imperialism than super-sized prepping, at the level of the national state. Gone are the old colonial fig leaves of spreading democracy or God’s word – when Trump covetously scans the globe, he is stockpiling for civilizational collapse.

This bunker mentality also helps explain JD Vance’s controversial forays into Catholic theology. The vice-president, who owes his political career in no small part to the largess of the premier prepper Thiel, explained to Fox News that, according to the medieval Christian concept of *ordo amoris* (translated both as “order of love” and “order of charity”), love is not owed to those outside the bunker: “You love your family, and then you love your neighbor, and then you love your community, and then you love your fellow citizens in your own country. And then after that, you can focus and prioritize the rest of the world.” (Or not, as the Trump administration’s foreign policy would indicate.) In other words, we owe nothing to anyone outside our bunker.

Though it builds on enduring rightwing tendencies – justifying hateful exclusions is hardly new under the ethno-nationalist sun – we simply have not faced such a powerful apocalyptic strain in government before. The “end of history” swagger of the post-cold war era is rapidly being supplanted by a conviction we are in the actual end of times. Doge may wrap itself in the banner of economic “efficiency”, and Musk’s underlings may evoke memories of the young, US-trained “Chicago Boys” who designed the economic shock therapy for Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorial regime, but this is not simply the old marriage of neoliberalism and neoconservatism. It’s a new, money-worshipping millenarian mashup that says we need to smash the bureaucracy and replace humans with chatbots in order to cut “waste, fraud and abuse” – and, also, because the bureaucracy is where the Trump-resisting demons hide. This is where the tech bros merge with the [TheoBros](#), a real group of hyper-patriarchal Christian supremacists with ties to [Hegseth](#) and others in the Trump administration.





📷 Steve Bannon advances a vision of the United States as a bunker in its own right. Photograph: Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

As fascism always does, today's Armageddon complex crosses class lines, bonding billionaires to the Maga base. Thanks to decades of deepening economic stresses, alongside ceaseless and skillful messaging pitting workers against one another, a great many people understandably feel unable to protect themselves from the disintegration that surrounds them (no matter how many months of ready-to-eat meals they buy). But there are emotional compensations on offer: you can cheer the end of affirmative action and DEI, glorify mass deportation, enjoy the denial of gender-affirming care to trans people, villainize educators and health workers who think they know better than you, and applaud the demise of economic and environmental regulations as a way to own the libs. End times fascism is a darkly festive fatalism – a final refuge for those who find it easier to celebrate destruction than imagine living without supremacy.

It's also a self-reinforcing downward spiral: Trump's furious attacks on every structure designed to protect the public from diseases, dangerous foods and disasters – even to [tell](#) the public when disasters are headed their way – strengthen the case for prepperism at both the high and low ends, all while creating myriad new opportunities for privatization and profiteering by the oligarchs powering this rapid-fire unmaking of the social and regulatory state.



At the dawn of Trump's first term, the New Yorker investigated a phenomenon that it [described](#) as “doomsday prep for the super-rich”. Back then, it was already clear that in Silicon Valley and on Wall Street, the more serious high-end survivalists were hedging against climate disruption and social collapse by buying space in custom-built underground bunkers and building escape homes on high ground in places like Hawaii (where Mark Zuckerberg has downplayed his 5,000 sq ft underground pad as a “little shelter”) and New Zealand (where Thiel purchased nearly 500 acres but found his plan to build a luxury survivalist compound rejected by local authorities in 2022 for being an eyesore).

This millenarianism is bound up with a suite of other [Silicon Valley](#) intellectual fads, all premised on an end-times-inflected belief that our planet is headed towards a cataclysm and it's time to make some hard choices

about which parts of humanity can be saved. Transhumanism is one such ideology, encompassing everything from minor human-machine “enhancements” to the quest to upload human intelligence into a still illusory artificial general intelligence. There is also effective altruism and longtermism, both of which skip over redistributive approaches to helping those in need in the here and now in favor of a cost-benefit approach to doing the most good in the long term.

Though they can appear benign at first glance, these ideas are shot through with dangerous racial, ableist and gender biases about which parts of humanity are worth enhancing and saving – and which could be sacrificed for the supposed good of the whole. They also share a marked lack of interest in urgently addressing the underlying drivers of collapse – a responsible and rational goal that a growing cohort of figures now actively shun. Instead of effective altruism the Mar-a-Lago regular Andreessen and others have embraced “[effective accelerationism](#)”, or the “deliberate propulsion of technological development” without guardrails.

Meanwhile, even darker philosophies are finding a wider audience, like the neoreactionary pro-monarchy rants of the coder Curtis Yarvin (another one of Thiel’s intellectual touchstones), or the “[pro-natalism](#)” movement’s obsession with dramatically increasing the number of “western” babies (a Musk fixation), as well as the exit guru Srinivasan’s vision of a “tech Zionist” San Francisco where corporate loyalists and police join forces to politically cleanse the city of liberals to make way for their networked apartheid state.



📷 Marc Andreessen and Balaji Srinivasan speak during a panel discussion about bitcoin in San Francisco in 2014.
Photograph: Paul Chinn/San Francisco Chronicle via Getty Images

As the AI scholars Timnit Gebru and Émile P Torres have [written](#), though the methods may be new, this “bundle” of ideological fads “are direct descendants of first-wave eugenics”, which also saw a small subset of humanity making decisions about which parts of the whole were worth continuing and which needed to be phased out, cleared out, or terminated. Until recently, few paid attention. Much like Próspera, where members can already experiment with human-machine mergers such as having their Tesla keys [implanted](#) into their hands, these intellectual fads seemed to be the marginal hobby horses of a few Bay Area dilettantes with money and caution to burn. No longer.

Three recent material developments have accelerated end times fascism's apocalyptic appeal. The first is the climate crisis. While some high-profile figures might still publicly deny or minimize the threat, global elites, whose ocean-front properties and datacenters are intensely vulnerable to rising temperatures and sea levels, are well-versed in the ramifying perils of an ever-heating world. The second is Covid-19: epidemiological models had long predicted the possibility of a pandemic devastating our globally networked world; the actual arrival of one was taken by many powerful people as a sign that we have officially arrived at what US military analysts [forecasted](#) as "the Age of Consequences". No more predictions, it's going down. The third factor is the rapid advancement and adoption of AI, a set of technologies that have long been associated with sci-fi terrors about machines turning on their makers with ruthless efficiency – fears expressed most forcefully by the same people who are developing these technologies. All of these existential crises are layered on top of escalating tensions between nuclear-armed powers.

None of this should be written off as paranoia. Many of us feel the imminence of breakdown so acutely that we cope by entertaining ourselves with various versions of life in a post-apocalyptic bunker, streaming Apple's [Silo](#) or Hulu's [Paradise](#). As the UK analyst and editor Richard Seymour reminds us in his recent book, *Disaster Nationalism*: "The apocalypse is no mere fantasy. We are living in it, after all, from deadly viruses to soil erosion, from economic crisis to geopolitical chaos."

Trump 2.0's economic project is a Frankenstein's monster of the industries driving all of these threats – fossil fuels, weapons and resource-ravenous cryptocurrency and AI. Everyone involved in these sectors knows that there is no way to build the artificial mirror world that AI promises to construct without sacrificing this world – these technologies consume too much energy, too many critical minerals, and too much water for the two to coexist in any kind of equilibrium. This month, the former Google executive Eric Schmidt admitted as much, [telling](#) Congress that AI's "profound" energy needs are projected to triple in the next few years, with much of it coming from fossil fuels, because nuclear can't come online fast enough. This planet-incinerating level of consumption is necessary, he explained, to enable an intelligence "higher" than humanity, a digital god rising from the ashes of our relinquished world.

And they are worried – just not about the actual threats they are unleashing. What keeps the leaders of these entangled industries up at night is the prospect of a civilizational wake-up call – of serious, internationally coordinated government efforts to rein in their rogue sectors before it's too late. From the perspective of their ever-expanding bottom lines, the apocalypse is not collapse; it's regulation.

The fact that their profits are predicated on planetary devastation helps explain why do-gooder discourse among the powerful is giving way to open expressions of disdain for the idea that we owe each other anything by right of our shared humanity. Silicon Valley is done with altruism, effective or otherwise. Meta's Mark Zuckerberg [pines](#) for a culture that celebrates "aggression". Alex Karp, Thiel's business partner at the surveillance firm Palantir Technologies, [rebukes](#) the "losing" "self-flagellation" of those who question American superiority and the benefits of [autonomous weapons systems](#) (and, by association, the lucrative military contracts that have made Karp's vast fortune). Musk informs Joe Rogan that empathy is "the fundamental weakness of western civilization" and he [vents](#), after [failing](#) to purchase a supreme court election in Wisconsin: "It increasingly appears that humanity is a biological bootloader for digital

superintelligence.” Meaning we humans are nothing but grist for Grok, the AI service he owns. (He did tell us he was “dark Maga” – and he’s not the only one.)

In arid and climate-stressed Spain, one of the groups calling for a moratorium on new datacenters [calls](#) itself Tu Nube Seca Mi Río – Spanish for “your cloud is drying my river”. The name is fitting, and not just for Spain.

An unspeakably dismal choice is being made before our eyes and without our consent: machines over humans, inanimate over animate, profits over all else. With stunning speed, the big tech megalomaniacs have quietly rolled back their net-zero pledges and lined up by Trump’s side, hellbent on sacrificing this world’s real and precious resources and creativity at the altar of a vampiric, virtual realm. This is the last great heist, and they are getting ready to ride out the storms they themselves are summoning – and they will try to defame and destroy anyone who gets in their way.

Consider Vance’s recent European sojourn, where the vice-president harangued world leaders for “handwringing about safety” in relation to job-destroying AI while demanding Nazi and fascist speech go uncurtailed online. At one point he made a telling aside, expecting a laugh that never came: “If American democracy can survive 10 years of Greta Thunberg’s scolding, you guys can survive a few months of Elon Musk.”



📷 JD Vance speaks at the Munich Security Conference in February. Photograph: dts News Agency Germany/REX/Shutterstock

His comment echoed those made by his equally humorless patron Thiel. In recent interviews focused on the theological underpinnings of his far-right politics, the Christian billionaire has repeatedly compared the indefatigable young climate activist to the antichrist – a figure he warns was prophesied to come bearing a misleading message of “peace and safety”. “If Greta gets everyone on the planet to ride a bicycle, maybe that’s a way to solve climate change, but it has sort of this quality of going from the frying pan into the fire,” Thiel intoned.

Why Thunberg, why now? In part, it’s clearly the apocalyptic fear of regulation eating into their super-profits: [according](#) to Thiel, the science-based climate action Thunberg and others demand could only be

enforced by a “totalitarian state”, which he claims is more dire a threat than climate breakdown (most distressingly, the taxes under such conditions would be [“quite high”](#)). There may also be something else about Thunberg that frightens them: her steadfast commitment to this planet and the many life forms who call it home – not to simulations of this world generated by AI, or to a hierarchy of those deserving of life and those who are not, nor to any of the various extra-planetary escape fantasies the end times fascists are selling.

She is committed to staying, while the end times fascists have, at least in their imaginings, already left this realm, ensconced in their opulent shelters or transcended to the digital ether, or to Mars.

Shortly after Trump’s re-election, one of us had the opportunity to [interview](#) Anohni, one of the few musicians who have attempted to make art that wraps its arms around the death drive that has gripped our world. Asked about what connects the willingness of powerful people to let the planet burn and the drive to deny bodily autonomy to women and to trans people like her, she responded by drawing on her Irish Catholic upbringing: it’s “a very long-held myth that we are enacting and embodying. This is the culmination of their Rapture. This is their escape from the voluptuous cycle of creation. This is their escape from Mother.”



How do we break this apocalyptic fever? First, we help each other face the depth of the depravity that has gripped the hard right in all of our countries. To move forward with focus, we must first understand this simple fact: we are up against an ideology that has given up not only on the premise and promise of liberal democracy but on the livability of our shared world – on its beauty, on its people, on our children, on other species. The forces we are up against have made peace with mass death. They are treasonous to this world and its human and non-human inhabitants.

Second, we counter their apocalyptic narratives with a far better story about how to survive the hard times ahead without leaving anyone behind. A story capable of draining end times fascism of its gothic power and galvanizing a movement ready to put it all on the line for our collective survival. A story not of end times, but of better times; not of separation and supremacy, but of interdependence and belonging; not of escaping, but staying put and staying faithful to the troubled earthly reality in which we are enmeshed and bound.

This basic sentiment, of course, is not new. It is central to Indigenous cosmologies, and it lies at the heart of animism. Go back far enough and every culture and faith has its own tradition of respecting the sanctity of here, and not searching for Zion in an elusive ever-distant promised land. In eastern Europe, before the fascist and Stalinist annihilations, the Jewish socialist Labor Bund organized around the yiddish concept of *Doikayt*, or “hereness”. Molly Crabapple, who has written a forthcoming book about this neglected history, [defines](#) *Doikayt* as the right to “fight for freedom and safety in the places where they lived, in defiance of

everyone who wanted them dead” – and rather than be forced to flee to safety in Palestine or the United States. Perhaps what is needed is a modern-day universalization of that concept: a commitment to the right to the “hereness” of this particular ailing planet, to these frail bodies, to the right to live in dignity wherever on the planet we are, even when the inevitable shocks forces us to move. “Hereness” can be portable, free of nationalism, rooted in solidarity, respectful of indigenous rights and unbounded by borders.



📷 Anti-Trump protesters march against the administration in New York in January. Photograph: Julius Constantine Motal/The Guardian

That future would require its own apocalypse, its own world-ending and revelation, though of a very different sort. Because as the scholar of policing Robyn Maynard has [observed](#): “In order to make earthly planetary survival possible, some versions of this world *need* to end.”

We have reached a choice point, not about whether we are facing apocalypse but what form it will take. The activist sisters Adrienne Maree and Autumn Brown touched on this recently on their aptly named podcast, *How to Survive the End of the World*. In this moment, when end times fascism is waging war on every front, new alliances are essential. But instead of asking: “Do we all share the same worldview?” Adrienne urges us to ask: “Is your heart beating and do you plan to live? Then come this way and we will figure out the rest on the other side.”

To have a hope of combating the end times fascists, with their ever-constricting and asphyxiating concentric circles of “ordered love”, we will need to build an unruly open-hearted movement of the Earth-loving faithful: faithful to this planet, its people, its creatures and to the possibility of a livable future for us all. Faithful to here. Or, to quote Anohni again, this time referring to the goddess in which she now places her faith: “Have you stopped to consider that *this* might have been her best idea?”

Spot illustrations by Sophy Hollington