

# Real Change Is Impossible While Our World Is Shrouded In Secrecy



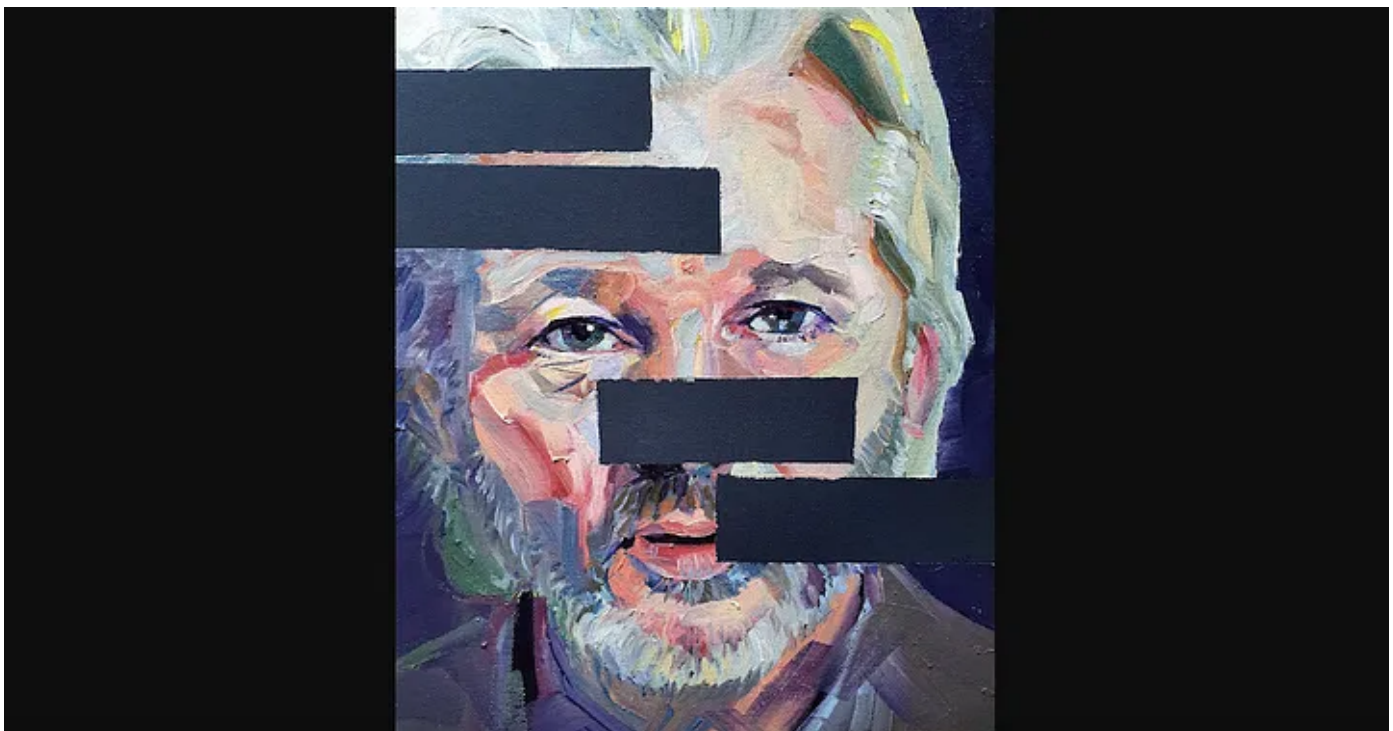
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I saw a [video clip of Julian Assange](#) speaking in London in 2010 where he made an important observation while explaining the philosophy behind his work with WikiLeaks. He said that all our political theories are to some extent “bankrupt” in our current situation, because our institutions are so shrouded in secrecy that we can’t even know what’s really going on in the world.

“We can all write about our political issues, we can all push for particular things we believe in, we can all have particular brands of politics, but I say actually it’s all bankrupt,” Assange said. “And the reason it’s all bankrupt, and all current political theories are bankrupt and particular lines of political thought, is because actually we don’t know what the hell is going on. And until we know the basic structures of our institutions — how they operate in practice, these titanic organizations, how they behave inside, not just through stories but through vast amounts of internal documentations — until we know that, how can we possibly make a diagnosis? How can we set the direction to go until we know where we are? We don’t even have a map of where we are. So our first task is to build up a sort of intellectual heritage that describes where we are. And once we know where we are, then we have a hope of setting course for a different direction. Until then, I think all political theories — to greater and lesser extents of course — are bankrupt.”

It's an extremely important point if you think about it: how can we form theories about how our governments **should** be operating when we have no idea how they **are currently** operating? How can a doctor prescribe the correct treatment when he hasn't yet made a diagnosis?

Political theories are in this sense "bankrupt", because they are formed in the dark, without our being able to see precisely what's happening and what's going wrong.

The nature of our institutions is hidden from us, and that includes not only our government institutions but the political, media, corporate and financial institutions which control so much of our society. Their nature is hidden not only by a complete lack of transparency but by things like propaganda, internet censorship, Silicon Valley algorithm manipulation, and the fact that all the most loudly amplified voices in our society are those who more or less support status quo politics.

The fact that all the most important aspects of our civilization's operation are hidden, manipulated and obfuscated by the powerful makes a joke of the very idea of democracy, because how can people know what government policies to vote for if they can't even clearly see those policies? How can people know what to vote for when everything about their understanding of the world is being actively distorted for the benefit of the powerful?

Democracy is impossible when the public is flying blind, and so is any other means by which the public might impose their will on existing power structures. You will never see a collective uprising of the masses against their rulers when the dominant message being inserted into everyone's mind is that everything is basically fine and if you don't like the way things are you can change it by voting. If the veil of secrecy was ever ripped away from the US empire's inner workings and everyone could see the full scale of its criminality in the plain light of day you'd probably have immediate open revolution in Washington. Which is precisely why that veil exists.

We can't form solid political theories while everything's hidden from us, and even if we could we're unable to organize any means to put those theories into action for the same reason. The fact that the nature of our world is being so aggressively obfuscated from our view keeps us from knowing exactly what needs to change, **and** keeps us from effecting change.

For this reason I often argue that our most urgent priority as a civilization is rolling back all the secrecy and obfuscation, because until that happens we'll never get change, and we'll never know what **should** be changed. I have my ideological preferences of course, but I'm just one person taking their best guess at what needs to happen in a world where so many of the lights are switched off. Not until our society can actually see the world as it really is will we have the ability to begin, as Assange says, "setting course for a different direction."

And those who benefit from our current course are lucidly aware of this. That's why we're not allowed to see what they're up to behind the veils of secrecy, that's why our entire civilization is saturated in nonstop propaganda, that's why the internet is being increasingly censored and manipulated, and that's why Julian Assange is in prison.

We can only begin fighting this from where we're at. None of us individually have the power to rip the veil of secrecy away from the empire, but we do each individually have the ability to call out its lies where they can be seen and help wake people up to the fact that we're being deceived and manipulated. Every pair of eyelids you help open is one more pair of eyes looking around helping to get an accurate picture of what's going on, and one more pair of eyes helping to open the eyes of others.

Once we have enough open eyes, we will have the potential for a real course of action.

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