



# Europe, Land of the Free?

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## *The Economist* has declared Europe the Land of the Free.

One proof is that in Europe, no tech oligarchs are “spending their weekends feeding bits of the state ‘into the wood chipper.’”

This is an ill-considered allusion to the efforts of Elon Musk and the Department of Government Efficiency to reduce the bloat and fraud in U.S. government spending. And the trillions in U.S. federal debt. Which are unsustainable. Because magic doesn’t work.

“Europeans can say almost anything they want, both in theory and in practice.”

In Britain you can be arrested or jailed for praying,

tweeting a wrong-thinking tweet, reading from the Bible, holding up street signs.

Nor is freedom of speech safe in Germany. To prove the continent’s theoretical and practical freedom of speech, *The Economist* piles up carefully unelucidated half-truths but declines to cite, for example, the conviction of German journalist David Bendels.

In February, Bendels, the editor in chief of *Deutschland-Kurier*, published a satirical post slamming a German minister, Nancy Faeser, for opposing freedom of speech. An obviously doctored photo showed Faeser with a sign saying “I hate freedom of speech.” Faeser, who loves freedom of speech, filed a criminal complaint after being alerted by German police, who also love freedom of speech.

Bendels has been fined 1,500 pounds, given a suspended prison sentence of seven months, and ordered to apologize.

He is appealing the verdict, and others are fighting the law under which he was prosecuted.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.